

**Daniel #4****January 28, 2024****Series Title: Daniel's Visions Of the Ages****Today's Message: Daniel Explains and Interprets the Dream; Daniel 2:24-49**

Remember that Daniel 2 is considered to be the foundation of biblical prophecy. It is a most interesting chapter because it provides a brief look into the future of the kingdoms of the world and ending with the destruction of those kingdoms. It also is important because we see the prediction concerning the establishment of a final kingdom on earth established by *the Stone*, who, as it turns out, is Jesus Christ, God's Messiah. Equally important in this chapter we also learn about God. Some of His most attributes are revealed in Daniel 2.

Last week we looked at Daniel 2:1-23. Very simply we broke it down into two sections. In the first section Nebuchadnezzar had a dream but concealed the content of the dream. It could be that even Nebuchadnezzar could not assimilate the various visions of the dream enough to know what he ever dreamed in the first place. But his demand was that the *wizards* tell him what he dreamed. Secondly, we were touched by Daniel's humility before God in prayer and God graciously revealing to Daniel the very content of the dream. Daniel's response was to break forth into praise and thanksgiving before God!

There is something powerful in the way Daniel functioned in a highly charged pagan environment. You'll notice that Daniel quietly gives glory to his God, the God of Israel. Unlike the prophets of Israel who spoke strong words of warning to the people because of their idolatry, Daniel speaks wisely to the king concerning the God and power behind the revelation of the mysteries, which troubled the king. Instead of rebuking the king, Daniel wove the truth and reality of the God of heaven when it was germane to his conversation with Nebuchadnezzar.

A good example of this is found in the exchange between Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:26-28. Daniel explains that "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries." Now, this is a very gentle contradiction to the charges presented by the "wizards" as to why the kings demand for them to tell him the dream was outrageous. They had repulsed the kings demand by saying (concerning their gods), "What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among men." In other words, though gods they may be, they are not willing to come near to reveal mysteries.

In contrast to the wizards, Daniel told the king that the God of heaven is sovereign and willing to come near to reveal mysteries (2:28)! In this subtle way, Daniel begins exposing Nebuchadnezzar to the Truth about God. And good thing, because after Daniel got Nebuchadnezzar's attention by revealing and explaining the dream, he tells Nebuchadnezzar that this same God of heaven will set up a kingdom that is a forever kingdom ruled over by a forever king, who will never fall! Nebuchadnezzar's response is priceless in Daniel 2:46-47! **(For more Scriptures in Daniel 2 which reveal Truths about God see: 2:18; 2:19; 2:20; 2:21, 37,38; 2:22; 2:28; 2:44; 2:45; 2:47)**

Our outline today is as follows: 1) (2:23-35) Daniel revealed and explained Nebuchadnezzar's dream. 2) (2:36-45) Daniel's interpretation of the dream was trustworthy because God gave it to him. 3) (2:46-49) Daniel is promoted. (Keep in mind, that through all these verses God's invisible hand is present!)

- I) **( 2:23-35) Daniel revealed and explained Nebuchadnezzar's dream.** (Invisible Hand of God)
  - A) (2:24) "Then" (each "then" leads to another step of faith, which leads to another faith-filled step.
    - 1) (2:14-16) "When" Arioch went to put to death the wizards (including Daniel), "then" Daniel intervened. "Then" he asked the king for more time.

- 2) (2:17) “Then” Daniel went to pray and the prayer was answered.
  - 3) (2:19b-23) “Then” Daniel praised God.
  - 4) (2:24) “Then” Daniel acted courageously and with compassion.
    - (a) He went directly to plead for the lives of the wizards.
    - (b) He commanded Arioch to “take” him to the king.
    - (c) He boldly claimed to know the dream and the interpretation of it.
  - 5) Application: Courage to act in obedience to God begins with simple steps of faith in God.
  - 6) Application: Exercising compassion toward others can have long term, life changing effects.
    - (a) Daniel’s compassion for the wizards had a generational impact. The “magi” of the story surrounding the birth of Christ is evidence of Daniel’s influence on the generations.
  - B) (2:25) Arioch takes credit for finding Daniel. But it was Daniel who came to Arioch.
    - 1) Don’t worry about getting credit before men. God knows. He will not forget!
  - C) (2:26-30) Daniel speaks with Nebuchadnezzar
    - 1) (2:26-28) A “no” and “yes” answer.
      - (a) “NO”: No wise man, etc., can know or explain the dream.
      - (b) “YES”: because there is a God in heaven who reveals such mysteries.
    - 2) (2:29-30) Daniel tells Neb that this God, the Revealer of mysteries, revealed it to Daniel so that the most powerful king on the earth would understand what God was communicating to him.
      - (a) “Things to come” concerning the future.
      - (b) Jesus said, “To whom much is given, of him much more will be required...” (Lk. 12:48)
  - D) (2:31-35) Daniel reveals the dream to Nebuchadnezzar.
    - 1) (2:31-33) The Image, or statue and what it looked like and its parts.
    - 2) (2:34-35) The rock, or stone:
      - (a) its origin: not established by human hands.
      - (b) its function: to smash and destroy the image.
      - (c) its immensity: it became a huge mountain filling the whole earth.
- II) **(2: 36-45) Daniel’s interpretation of the dream was trustworthy.** (Invisible Hand of God)
- A) (2:36-38) The head of gold
    - 1) Daniel explains that Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold.
      - (a) He has been installed by the God of heaven to have all dominion over all the earth.
        - (i) God has placed everything under His rule, including man, land, animals and birds.
    - 2) The head of gold is Neb’s Babylon = to the Lion of Dan. 7:4.
      - (a) Babylon fell in 539 B.C. to the Medes and Persians (Dan. 5:28)
  - B) (2:39a) The chest and arms of silver (2:32); inferior kingdom of Medes and Persians = the Bear of 7:5 = Ram of Daniel 8:6, 20.
    - 1) This kingdom reigned from 539 B.C. to 331 B.C.
  - C) (2:39b) The belly and thighs of bronze (2:32); kingdom of Greece (Alexander the Great) = the Leopard of 7:6 = the male shaggy goat of 8:8, 21.
    - 1) Ruled the earth from 331 B.C. to approximately 146 B.C.

- 2) Upon Alexander the Great's death the kingdom was divided into four weaker kingdoms. (8:22)
  - D) (2:40-43) The legs of iron and feet of iron and clay (2:33); much stronger than all; The Roman Empire = the terrifying, ferocious beast of 7:7-8, 19-26. It crushed and devoured its victims and trampled over all that was left.
    - 1) The long **gap**. This kingdom remains until the "times of the Gentiles is fulfilled" (Luke 21:24)
      - (a) The toes of Daniel 2:41-42 = the 10 horns of 7:7 = 10 kings of 7:24
        - (i) The ten kings are in league with the Beast of Revelation 13:7
  - E) Summary of the four kingdoms: They span the time of Nebuchadnezzar to the Beast in Revelation.
  - F) (2:44-45) The Rock/ Stone of Daniel 2:34-35: The Final, Fifth Kingdom of Daniel and of history!
    - 1) The Rock/ Stone: supernatural in origin: "Cut without human hands"
      - (a) This is the Rock of our salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ!
        - (i) He will come and smash/ crush all the Gentile world powers arrayed against God.
          - (a) Smash the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom and all the others become as nothing; as chaff (Dan. 2:34ff)
            1. Garland: This is "separation" of the chaff signifies final judgment (Mt.3:12)
          - (b) Revelation 19:11-21: He defeats His foes, binds Satan for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3)
          - (c) He will set up His kingdom on earth for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4-6)
  - G) The uniqueness of this Stone in Scripture
    - 1) This Rock/ Stone is a threefold Rock/ Stone in Scripture.
      - (a) The stone of stumbling for the Jews (Isaiah 8:14-15; 1 Peter 2:7-8)
      - (b) The Foundation and Cornerstone of the Church (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Pe. 2:4-5)
      - (c) It becomes a mountain (2:35) and crushes and subdues the kingdoms of the world and **endures forever** (2:44b)
        - (i) The forever King sitting on a forever throne, ruling a forever kingdom.
    - 2) Scofield writes: "Israel stumbled over Christ; the Church is built upon Christ; Gentile world dominion is crushed by Christ!"
      - (a) It is a Rock/ Stone *of* God, *by* God, and *for* God!
    - 3) Truths about the Stone of Daniel 2
      - (a) The Stone made without human hands is Christ and His kingdom (2:34, 45)!
      - (b) The Stone had divine authority to strike down and crush the kingdoms (2:34,35)!
      - (c) The Stone became the Great Mountain, the final kingdom of righteousness (2:44), filling the whole earth (2:35)!
      - (d) The Stone becomes the everlasting kingdom, enduring forever (2:44)!
      - (e) The Stone becomes a Mountain and is future to us (2:45b).
- III) (2: 46-49) **Daniel is promoted.** (Invisible Hand of God)
- A) Nebuchadnezzar's humble response
    - 1) Rewarded Daniel by paying homage to him and rewarding him with offerings.
    - 2) Acknowledged Daniel's God: "God of gods, and Lord of kings and Revealer of mysteries."
  - B) Daniel and friends promoted.
    - 1) Nebuchadnezzar put them in power, but **promotion comes from the Lord.**
      - (a) How can this knowledge that promotion comes from the Lord help you?