

THE BOOK OF DANIEL
Daniel 2:1-13 | Session 4 | B.C. 603

REVIEW

Chapter one presented an overview of Daniel's life, approximately 65 years, from his deportation from Judah to Babylon (at the age of 15), his first three years in the Chaldean education system and the royal court of Nebuchadnezzar, to a brief conclusion (while in his 80's) **unto the first year of Cyrus**, King of Persia (Daniel 1:21) who overthrew Babylon in B.C. 539. Nebuchadnezzar would make three sieges on Judah and this first wave was to capture the young, bright people.

Daniel and his three friends were among the best and the brightest in Jerusalem/Judah and Nebuchadnezzar's goal was a three-year brainwashing and indoctrination for these boys into Babylonian culture and thinking. After which they would enter into the king's service. They were castrated to be made eunuchs, their diets were changes, and Nebuchadnezzar changed their Godly Hebrew names which reflected God's character into names which were antithetical; names of pagan deities. Brainwashing these boys to become upstanding Babylonians would make Nebuchadnezzar's job of destroying all of Judah and taking all the people captive much easier.

Daniel must have had good parents who brought him up in the way of the Lord, for once in Babylon he **purposed in his heart** (really, his mind) **that he would not defile himself** (1:8). No matter what the culture Daniel would continue to obey the law of Moses as he had been instructed as a child. God blessed him with the ability to understand and interpret visions and dreams (Daniel 1:17). Daniel was a Jew. He was of God's People who were set apart from the Gentile nations and he knew God's purpose and plan for his nation of Israel.

God set Israel apart to be a kingdom of priests¹ (Exodus 19:6), and Israel was to be God's light to the world (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6). Israel's intended role was to receive God's revelation and communicate it to the nations that were ignorant of God, which they will ultimately do in the millennial Kingdom (Zechariah 8:21-23). But Israel is now under the **Times of the Gentiles** (See note in box below). They dropped the ball through disobedience to God's Law and lost their nation to the Gentiles. God would raise up spokesmen and prophets who would foretell of a day when Israel would be restored through the Redeemer, Messiah and to whom the nations will come to *worship the King* (Zechariah 14:16). Even outside of his nation, Daniel was determined to live according to the Laws put down by God. We do not follow Law today, but we are to guard ourselves from not being conformed to this world (Romans 12:2). We can model our lives after Daniel in that we can live a successful Christian life, even in our pagan godless world. We can speak as the Lord's ambassadors, and will see throughout Daniel that he was God's spokesman to the Gentiles.

¹ The Church (or Body of Christ: (Romans 7:4; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 12:27; Ephesians 4:12) is not the Kingdom of Priests as is so often misapplied in 1 Peter 2:9.

THE KING'S DREAM FORGOTTEN

Chapter 2:1—

And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel recalls (looks back on) what happened soon after his captivity and Nebuchadnezzar's accession to the throne (which happened nearly simultaneously). **Nebuchadnezzar dreamed** (singular) **dreams** (plural). We will see later that he had the same dream (singular) over and over (plural). Whatever this dream was it **troubled** him and caused him to lose **sleep**. These dreams were revelation, trying to get Nebuchadnezzar's attention. Keep in mind as we study this passage the interpretation, or even the significance of dreams is unnecessary in our *dispensation of grace*. We have the perfect Word of God. This account is historical. A primary rule of interpreting Scripture is "never make a doctrine from an historical account." That means, dreams you and I have are of no account in this dispensation. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10, "*Prophecies (this would include dreams) shall fail, tongues shall cease, knowledge shall vanish away...But when the perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*" The **perfect** is the Word of God. There is nothing more we need. We have the completed Word of God which is why it is so important to *Study to show ourselves approved unto God* (2 Timothy 2:15).

Verse 2—

So they came and stood before the king. Likely the pronoun **they** refers to all of the men who were practiced in the art of the occult; combined they were called the *wise men*. As it was in Daniel's day the same holds true for today: *Wise men* without a Biblical worldview are foolish (Romans 1:21,22). Later, in Daniel 2:48, Daniel will be promoted as *chief of governors over all the wise men of Babylon*. He would turn the tables on king's attempt to brainwash him and his friends (1:4), and instead he will teach the Biblical worldview truth to these pagan tools of the Devil. God would use the teaching of Daniel, five hundred years when *wise men from the east* would come to Jerusalem, and Bethlehem, searching for the Messiah (Matthew 2:1). Daniel had great influence on world events and the heralding of the coming Savior.

Verses 3—

I have dreamed a dream. The **Chaldeans** (Were they perhaps the wisest or the wise?) appear to be the spokesmen who **spake...to the king in Syriack** (that is, *Aramiyth*. The Book of Daniel is written in two languages: Chapters 1:1-2:4a, and chapters 8-12 are written in Hebrew. Chapters 2:4b-7:28 are written in Aramaic beginning with **O king** (the word *Syriack*, translates as "Syrian language"). *What concerns the Jews is written in Hebrew, what concerns the Gentiles is written in Aramaic.*

TIMES OF THE GENTILES

The Times of the Gentiles—

This expression is not found in the Old Testament, but is a New Testament phrase only used once by the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 21:24). It refers to the time period when Jerusalem will be controlled (Literally, trodden down; trample or crush with feet). The Times of the Gentiles began with the Babylonian Captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, and when the “glory of the Lord” departed from Jerusalem. The prophet Ezekiel describes the Lord’s departure from the city in B.C. 594 (Ezekiel 11:22,23). The dominion that once as Israel’s because the throne of God was in their midst has been taken away and transferred to the Gentiles; even to this day. God has given over His glory to the glory of man (Jeremiah 27:5-9). God’s glory will not be seen again until the Lord Jesus Christ returns in the *glory of his power* (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 15:8).

DECREE TO SLAY THE WISE MEN

Verses 4-13—

O king (first Aramaic word), **live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.** This is a reasonable request. Most likely they have interpreted dreams before. But in this case, it was different. **The king...said...the thing is gone from me.** The king knew he had a troublesome dream, but could not remember what the **thing** (apparently the thing was the dream). His demand was for all the wise men to tell him the dream and then interpret it. What seems impossible, the wise men try to *buy some time*, and the king knows that is what they are doing; **that ye would gain time....** The wise men plead with the king that **there is not a man upon the earth that can** tell the king what his dream was, no one. Why not? Because they were God induced dreams; they were spiritually discerned. The things that come from God, the Spirit of God are understood only through spiritual means. The apostle Paul wrote, “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. It is interesting these Babylonians believe in a higher power since they said only **the gods, whose dwelling is not with** flesh could tell him the dream. The problem was, these wise men worshipped the wrong god. What was needed was someone who had the Spirit of God within him, then the God induced dream could be revealed. For the wise men, admitting no one was capable of doing what the king wanted, it was the sentence of death. **The decree went forth that the wise men should be slain;** We find out in verse 13 that **Daniel and his fellows** were included in the company of the wise men and they too were to **be slain.** But remember chapter 1:8, **God gave them** (Daniel and his three friends) **knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.** It is Daniel alone who can tell the king what he wants to hear, but he’s just been sentenced to death.