

(8-4-24) DANIEL 2- THE KING DISTURBED - DANIEL'S DELIVERY .

Intro: We are presently in the book of Daniel, one of the most astounding records of Israel's history and world history in the bible.

- * It's packed with fulfilled prophecy, and also contains prophecy about things future to us, and gives us much practical truth about standing for God in a hostile world.
- * We left off walking through Daniel ch. 2, and to review what we've explored so far in Daniel's story, we've seen the small nation of Judah taken by the Babylonian Empire. (last 2 tribes)
- * To begin the takeover in 605, Babylon took dozens of teenage boys captive, and removed them back to Babylon to paganize them for 3 years.
- * This was a common tactic, and their plan was to use them later, to lead the Jews to follow Babylonian culture and religion, once Judah's populace was brought there in 586.
- * Among those boys, were 4 spiritually dedicated, determined young men who refused to disobey God by eating the pagan food given to them, which violated Moses Law.

- * **As Daniel approached** his superior about this, he and Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah gained permission to live on a vegan diet during their training.
- * When training was over and the king and the wise men tested them, it became evident that God had rewarded their obedience by making them 10 times smarter and wiser than all the other wise men in Babylon.
- * Because of this, they were giving specific positions serving the king himself.

- * **With that scenario in place**, Ch. 2 begins. At this point King Nebuchadnezzar was new to his position, having lost his father while he was away conquering Judah.
- * As he went to bed one night, as a new king, he was contemplating what the future of the Babylonian Empire would look like.
- * **At that time**, God intervened and gave him visions and dreams that brought him great fear.
- * The next day, he called in all the wise men of the land, for them to explain his dream
- * They asked to know the dream so they could interpret, but it appears that Nebuchadnezzar didn't trust these men, probably for several reasons.
- * And that being so, the king demanded they reveal the dream to him first, and then tell him what it all meant.

- * **The wise men tried to dodge the issue**, and ended up making 4 terrible excuses why they could not reveal the dream, and should not be required to reveal it.
- * And their excuses exposed them as the phonies the king expected they were.
- * So the king decreed that all the wise men be killed and their homes destroyed.

- * **Daniel and his friends** were retrieved for execution, and Daniel, with wisdom and tact, persuaded the commander to give him an audience with the king.
- * For various reasons, the king allowed Daniel a little time to learn the dream and its meaning.
- * Daniel called his 3 friends to prayer, and God graciously answered them, revealing the dream and its interpretation to Daniel.

- * **In humble response** to God's answer we read this from Daniel in **vs 19b-23**.
- * The praise Daniel gave showed how well Daniel and his friends understood who God is.
- * Daniel described God as the completely eternal Holy God of heaven, who is all-powerful and all-wise, with all-knowledge and authority, and the Revealer of all truth.

- @ From there, we pick up the story in 2:24, to see the 3rd main point of the chapter which is--

III. DANIEL'S PRESENTATION BEFORE THE KING. (24-30 - read)

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- * In v24- As soon as Daniel learned the dream and its interpretation, he immediately informed the commander of his understanding, and instructed Arioch to take him to the king.
- * Notice- Daniel's first instruction was not to execute the wisemen. This showed compassion for them, when in reality, Daniel had no human reason to care for their lives---- because--
 - 1) They were the king's advisers, who led the king to take Judah. (all kings consulted their wisemen before going to war). So humanly speaking, Daniel was captive because of them.
 - 2) They were Daniel's competition. Daniel (friends) had recently humiliated them before the king at graduation, and in their jealousy, they would probably try to discredit Daniel, going forward.
 - 3) These men practiced magical arts (This was satanic stuff).
If these kind of people were found in Israel, the OT law said they were to be executed.
 - 4) They were a terrible pagan influence on this king, who desperately needed a godly influence.
- * **For these reasons**, Daniel could have used his success and influence to encourage the king to go ahead and execute these lying flatterers, and let Daniel appoint new wisemen.
- ** But he called for them to be spared, because for all their wickedness and uselessness, they were spiritually dead sinners, headed for hell, and in need of faith in the true God.
(We need to always remember that about the lost) (righteous indignation)
- * **Now notice 2 main points in this passage.**

A. ARIOCH'S INTRODUCTION. (25)

- * Notice- the commander wasted no time rushing Daniel to the king, and when he got there, he immediately took credit for finding the man who could interpret his dream.
- * When Arioch was dispatched, he wasn't looking for someone with an answer for the king, he was looking for all those he had been commanded to execute.
- * And Daniel was the one who earlier, asked to see the king about the problem.
- * Arioch didn't find anyone, but he tried to gain some credit for being part of the solution.

B. DANIEL'S EXPLANATION. (27-30)

- * Now Daniel comes before this frustrated fearful furious king a 2nd time, to do what no one else could.
- * And while the Wisemen planned to lie to the king, Daniel tells the truth about 4 things.

1. He told the truth about the wise men. (27)

- He informed the king that none of his wise men could ever give him the truth he needed.
- Daniel didn't try to get them in trouble, because he just asked for their lives to be spared.
- But he wanted the king to see how helpless man is to solve life's mysteries, on their own.

2. He told the truth about God. (28a- "but there is a God in heaven")

- In this crisis, Daniel used his godly faithful life to point out the uselessness of the world's wisdom, and the reality of God, who alone has all the truth and all the answers.

App- When the world rejects God's truth, they have no true and lasting remedies for man's problems. They only have bandaids to cover the real problem, as they ignore the inevitable.

3. He told the truth about the time frame of the dream. (28b-29)

- God had revealed truth to the king about "things to come". (most versions-- "Latter days")
- This is a key bible phrase referring to the future, which especially focuses on the final time period on earth when the Messiah comes to set up His kingdom.
- Daniel was probably familiar with this phrase, since both Moses and Jeremiah spoke of it. (Deut. 4:30, Jer. 23:20 [ESV], 30:24 [NASB], 48:47, 49:39)

Simply- The king wandered about the future, and Daniel told him that God had revealed it to him, and as Daniel explains, we'll see that this dream covers the rest of world history.

4. Daniel told the truth about himself. (30)

- Here, Daniel had opportunity to gain personal honor and praise from the king.
- He was 10 times smarter and wiser than the others, had true God-given ability in visions and dreams, was young, good looking, and quickly resolved this issue when faced with it.
- But he refused to follow the same path as the arrogant wisemen.
- In humility he forfeited any personal greatness, and gave all the credit to God. (Like John Baptist- wouldn't give his name, saying- I am not the light, I must decrease)
- And notice- Daniel humbly told the king that God didn't give this to Daniel because of himself, but because God wanted to use Daniel to speak to the king.
- Daniel took this situation and brought to the king's attention, that in a spiritual sense, the king was facing God. (This is our job as witnesses to the lost) (**Heb 4:13**)

Sum- In all this, God was testing the faith of Daniel (friends), dealing with the king to humble him, and revealing His purposes to His people the Jews, and to the whole world.

IV. DANIEL'S REVELATION OF THE DREAM. (31-35)

- * After giving Nebuchadnezzar the truth about God's grace in revealing the dream to Daniel, now Daniel describes in detail what the king saw.
- * The dream centers on 2 main objects. There is a statue and there is a stone.

A. THE KING SAW AN "ENORMOUS" STATUE. (31-33- read)

- * This statue was massive. This is significant, because the king was no backwoods boy.
 - He had seen big things such as vast lands and major cities, huge armies, etc.
 - He lived in a city with 350 foot high walls, 7 miles long, 80 feet wide at the top.
- * It was also "dazzling" (shining bright). He knew what this looked like, because Babylon had much refined gold, and much of the palace was overlaid with it.
- * And what he saw was "awesome in appearance" which is a word that refers to something so astounding and overwhelming that it brought fear.
- * Also notice that the statue was made of **5 materials** from the earth. (32-33)
 - The head was **pure gold**, the Chest and Arms were made of **silver**,
 - It's stomach and thighs were made of **bronze**, The lower legs (calves) of **Iron**, and the feet were partly of **iron and partly of baked clay** (ceramic).
- * As we will see, these various parts of the statue made of different elements, represent the major kingdoms of mankind as history progressed, that would rule in the world.

@ Its important to notice 3 things-- the worth and weight of the elements, and how they are arranged. Notice 4 details.

1. The elements have decreasing worth.

- The statue begins with gold, then silver, followed by bronze, then iron, then clay.
- As the statue is viewed from top to bottom, those elements are worth less and less.
- So this shows that what they represent decreases in true value as history moves along.

2. The elements have decreasing weight.

- To determine their weight, one writer lists their density rating. Gold rates at 19, silver at 11, bronze at 8.5, Iron at 7.8, and clay has no rating, its considered porous.
- So the statue is unbalanced, its top heavy, standing dangerously on brittle feet, with most of it's weight in the upper body, which makes it vulnerable to a major fall.

3. The elements have a decreasing direction.

- When we look at others, we typically look at their head, mostly because it's the part that communicates with us (sees, talks), and it contains the brain. (maybe)
- So Daniel describes this statue in a normal way, starting at the top, and going downward.
- And what God reveals in this statue is decreasing, declining, going downward.

* Starting in v36 Daniel shows that the statue reveals world history, where the different metals picture the world's kingdoms as history moves along.

- And their decreasing worth and weight and direction show how God views man's history, which is completely different than how man views their history.
- Mankind sees history and civilizations as developing upward, advancing and progressing from bottom to top. (aps to men, from ancient to modern, from backward to advanced).
- Historians speak of the foundations of civilization and how we've grown and built on the past, becoming greater and more highly advanced, which supposedly makes man superior.
- **But here**, God shows that He sees civilization heading downward, not upward.
- Everything about this image is declining-- In value, in weight, and direction.

Q- Man began in the garden in perfection, but sin brought its curse and consequences, which brought physical and spiritual decline, and continues destroying all God created as good.

Man says we evolved and are headed for utopia, God says man is headed for ruin.
Man says civilization is improving and progressing, God says we are self-destructing.
Man says we are going from mud to gold, God says we have gone from gold to mud."
(Isa 40:13-15, 17)

- * Have we advanced? Sure! Scientifically, medically, and in technology. (But get this list)
- * Physically we are plagued by disease that antibiotics can't keep up with, And morally, spiritually and relationally there's dishonesty, immorality, sex trafficking, hate, war, terrorism, nuclear bombs, oppressive dictators, power hungry leaders, mass hunger, an internet inundated with lies and immoral filth, computer hackers, inflation, high taxes, greed, massive debt, lawlessness, uncontrolled violence, a weak judicial system- so backed up it can't keep up, which fails or refuses to convict and punish many criminals. And Christians, (the best of society), suffer growing, widespread persecution all over the world.
- @ Pardon the negativity, but this sinful world, even in the greatest country to ever exist, is digressing, and self-destructing, which has been true throughout history.

