

SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON
WEEK 33

God uses Daniel to interpret the king's dream

Daniel 2:1-49



DAY 1

God gave Nebuchadnezzar a troubling dream • Daniel 2:1-13

READ 

Daniel 2:1-13

EXPLAIN 

The truth of Daniel 2:1-13

When you have a scary dream, you probably want to forget it quickly. But when Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream (Dan 2:1), he wanted to know what it meant. The Babylonians believed that dreams were messages from the gods, and the ancient astrologers and sorcerers had created ways of interpreting dreams. But Nebuchadnezzar showed that they had no real power when he required them to first tell him what he dream was (2:5-9). The magicians' magic was worthless (2:10). They complained that only a god could know the king's dream—and they were right (2:11)! Apart from the true God, human wisdom is foolish (1 Cor 1:20), lacks understanding (1 Cor 2:14), and is spiritually blind (2 Cor 4:4). Their so-called gods could not communicate with humans, because their gods were worthless idols, unable to reveal anything about the past or the future (Isa 41:22-24; 44:12-20). In his anger, Nebuchadnezzar ordered the deaths of all the wise men, including Daniel and his friends (2:12). But Nebuchadnezzar would soon learn that there is a God unlike any idol, who both knows and speaks to man (Isa 42:8-9).

ASK 

1. Why did the king call all his wise men?
The king had a dream, and he wanted the wise men to tell him what the dream was before telling him what it meant.
2. Could any of the king's wise men tell the king what his dream meant?
No. Their magic was worthless.
3. What did the king do when no one could tell him his dream?
He ordered that all the wise men be killed.
4. How did the dream affect Daniel and his companions?
The death sentence included them.

DISCUSS 

1. Based on this story, what would you say to someone who looks for special knowledge through astrology, spiritualism, etc. (Deut 18:10-12)?
2. Explain why the magicians and sorcerers were right when they said that only a god could know the king's dream.

DAY 2

God revealed Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel • Daniel 2:14–30

READ

Daniel 2:14–30

EXPLAIN

The truth of Daniel 2:14–30

As all the wise men of Babylon trembled, Daniel came to the rescue. Daniel knew that only the God of Israel could reveal the dream (cf. Gen 41:25; Job 7:14). So Daniel and his friends did what godly people do when faced with an impossible task: they prayed, trusting God's power and depending on God's mercy (Dan 2:18). When God revealed the dream, Daniel praised God for being the sovereign God, the King of wisdom and power (2:19–20). First, God showed His wisdom by revealing the dream to Daniel. God is omniscient: He knows everything at all times, even things that humans cannot know (1 John 3:20). He knows every thought (Ps 139:2) and every secret (Heb 4:13). Not only does He have wisdom, but He also controls it. He alone decides who will receive knowledge (Dan 2:21–22). Second, God showed His power by what the dream was about. The dream was about God's rule over history and governments (2:21). Daniel understood that God was sovereign over wisdom and power, so he took no credit for himself when He explained things to Nebuchadnezzar (2:27).

ASK

1. What did Daniel do when he heard Nebuchadnezzar wanted to kill him?
He asked for time because he believed that God would reveal the dream.
2. What did Daniel and his friends do when Nebuchadnezzar gave him more time?
They prayed. They depended on God.
3. When God revealed the dream, what did this prove about God?
It showed that God controls wisdom and power.
4. What did Daniel tell Nebuchadnezzar before he interpreted the dream?
That only God could reveal such mysteries.

DISCUSS

1. What do you depend on when you face trials? How quickly do you turn to God? When you have success, do you take the credit or realize your success is from God?
2. Do you ever neglect God because you are focused on schoolwork instead? Even though studies are good, why is this imbalance foolish?

DAY 3

God revealed His future eternal kingdom • Daniel 2:31–49

READ

Daniel 2:31–49

EXPLAIN

The truth of Daniel 2:31–49

Nebuchadnezzar's dream shows that God controls history. After the Babylonian kingdom an inferior kingdom would arise, represented by the silver chest and arms (Dan 2:38). This was the Medo-Persian kingdom led by Cyrus the Great (539–331 B.C.). Then in 332 B.C. the armies of Alexander the Great attacked and defeated the Medo-Persian Empire. The Greek Empire, represented by the bronze belly and

thighs (2:39), would dominate for the next 185 years (331–146 B.C.). The fourth kingdom was represented by the iron legs. Like iron, the powerful Roman kingdom would “break and crush” all the others (2:40). The toes of clay and iron represented a version of Rome that is still future. This revived Roman Empire will consist of 10 kingdoms (7:24). At Christ's second coming, this confederation of kings will be destroyed and Christ will reign forever over God's eternal kingdom (2:44–45). Like the stone in the vision, Christ's kingdom will have its source in heaven (John 18:36), but it will be located on earth, filling the whole world (Ps 2:6–9; Dan 7:13–27; Rev 21:1–22:5).

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. What did the king's dream mean?
That God had given Nebuchadnezzar his power. The different levels of the statue represented different kingdoms that would come to power after Babylon.
2. What did the stone represent?
The stone represented God's kingdom that He will establish on the earth.
3. What can we learn about God from the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream?
God controls all of human history, leading to His own eternal kingdom on earth.

DISCUSS 

1. The Jews in Daniel's day were living in exile under a godless ruler. How did Daniel's message encourage them? How does it encourage you as you consider the nations and rulers today?
2. Why is it silly to resist God's power (Rom 14:11)?

DAY 4*Believers ought to live godly lives waiting for Jesus • 1 Peter 1:13–17***READ** 

1 Peter 1:1–17

EXPLAIN **The truth of 1 Peter 1:1–17**

Since Jesus' kingdom is coming, how should you live now? If your faith is in Christ, you should be filled with hope, holiness, and honor as you look forward to Jesus' earthly kingdom (1 Pet 1:13–17). First, live in hope of your "inheritance," which is "kept in heaven ready to be revealed in the last time" (1:4–5). Hope is an active choice of your will, not an emotional feeling. So living in hope means living expectantly, with your eyes focused on the grace that you will experience when Jesus returns (1:13). Second, be holy. With eyes fixed on your future in God's holy kingdom, don't live according to the past sinful desires and thoughts that you had before being saved (1:14). God does not expect you to be sinless in this life (Rom 7:14–25; 1 John 1:8), but He does expect you to be growing (1 Pet 1:15). Third, honor God as you wait for His Son. Show God reverence and respect during your temporary journey on earth. Live in awe of your coming King (1 Pet 1:17), because He will carefully judge your work (1 Cor 3:10–15).

ASK 

1. Are you supposed to set your mind on things in this life or the life to come?
The life to come.
2. How can you practice holiness?
By (1) putting of sinful behavior and (2) pursuing holiness in everything they do (1 Pet 1:14–15).
3. How can you honor God while waiting for His Son?
By reverencing and respecting God, and living in awe of Him.

DISCUSS 

1. Have you ever been patient or worked through something difficult because you knew something good was coming (a holiday, a prize, etc.)? Can you live your whole life this way?.
2. What can you do to grow in holiness (Eph 4:21–24)? What is one sinful behavior that you are actively putting off? If you don't love holiness now, then do you really look forward to God's kingdom, which is completely holy (Rev 21:2, 27)?

DAY 5

An everlasting dominion • Daniel 7:1–28

READ

Daniel 7:1–28

EXPLAIN

The truth of Daniel 7:1–28

Nothing can stop God's coming kingdom. The rise and fall of kingdoms throughout history will come to a climax, when the Ancient of Days, God the Father, gives the eternal kingdom to the Son of Man. His kingdom will be a "dominion" and "glory" and "a kingdom" that "shall not pass away." All the "peoples, nations, and languages" of the earth will serve Him (Dan 7:14). This eternal kingdom of Christ follows the kingdoms of the nations: Babylon (7:4), Medo-Persia (7:5), Greece (7:6), and Rome (7:7). Following the kingdoms of the nations will be a final kingdom, the rebirth of the Roman Empire in the form of a ten king confederacy occupying much of the territory once dominated by Rome (7:7, 24). After this confederacy there will be a final ruler, "a little" horn, who will rise to world-wide dominance (7:8, 20, 24). This is the Antichrist, who will carry out one last persecution of the saints (7:21, 25). But the Antichrist will be unable to stop Christ's kingdom. He will be judged and executed (7:9, 11–12), and then Christ will be King over the earth forever.

ASK

1. What do the "four great beasts" represent?
Babylon ("like a lion," 7:4), Medo-Persia ("like a bear," 7:5), Greece ("like a leopard," 7:6), and Rome ("terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong," 7:7).
2. What does the "little" horn represent?
The Antichrist who will rise to rule the world (7:8, 20, 24).
3. What is the last event before Christ's everlasting kingdom?
The divine judgment and execution of the Antichrist (7:9, 11–12).

DISCUSS

1. We are told over 50 times in the Bible to be ready for the Second Coming of Christ. How are you preparing for Jesus' return?
2. How will Jesus do the job Adam was created to do (Gen 1:26)? This shows that God has never given up on His plan for mankind.

NEXT WEEK

God protects Daniel's friends

Daniel 3:1–30

