

Daniel 2 – The King’s Forgotten Dream

By Holly Effiom

VV1-2

What is the name of the king who had the bad dream?

Is this the same king who had a bad dream of Genesis 41?

How are the dreams similar? How are they different?

Who was called to interpret the dream in each case?

How are Joseph and Daniel’s situations different? How are their situations similar?

What does this story tell us about the similarities in the Hamitic (Egyptian) and Gentile (or Japhetic, Babylonian) cultures?

LESSON: There are many similarities in Joseph’s and Daniel’s stories; however, the most important similarity in the men’s characters is that they both placed their lives in God’s hands, and the God honored their trust by giving them favor with their respective leaders. Take a lesson.

VV3-4

Who did the king summon when he wanted to understand his dream?

Were “Chaldeans” of the group that practiced divination?

What was the Chaldeans’ response when the king explained his request?

Based on this response, would you say that the Chaldeans’ specialty was dreams and visions?

VV5-9

The king seems to not like this response of the Chaldeans. What exactly is he asking them to do?

What will happen to magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans if they do not give him what he wants?

What does this section of scripture tell you about the power that a king wields over the life and death of a servant? Is there a supreme court to whom a servant can appeal?

So, is the king the absolute judge and jury in a kingdom?

Is this the case in the kingdom of heaven?

LESSON: There is no United States of Heaven. Thank God that we get to enjoy the system of government that we have for a time – without its tyrants rule.

VV10-11

What do the wise men respond to the king when he accuses them of trying to buy time to come up with an answer?

What does the response of the wise men tell you about what they believe about the powers that they have?

What does it tell you about what they believe about their gods?

VV12-16

How did the king feel about this response from the wise men?

What did the king decree?

Why were Daniel and his friends affected by this decree?

Does this mean that the practice of “divination” itself is not a sin? Why or why not?

Why did God bless Daniel and his friends if they were practitioners of divination?

What in Daniel’s response in V14 shows you he’s a wise man?

Did Daniel head up a protest of the king’s castle when he learned why Arioch was there to kill him and his friends?

Did Daniel try and bribe Arioch? Did he take up armed resistance?

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What did Daniel do? Did he behave like the wise men who were trying to buy time by arguing with the king?

Was Daniel’s interest to master the art of divination and prophesy?

VV17-23

Once Daniel secured the kings approval for time, what’s the first thing he did?

What is Daniel’s “trick” as a successful practitioner of “divination”?

Does Daniel believe in intercessory prayer? How do you know?

What does this scripture reveal about what Daniel believes about the powers he wields? How is this different from how the wise men view their powers? VV10-11

How was the answer revealed to Daniel?

What does Daniel’s praise tell you about his heart?

LESSON: Daniel had been dealt a miserable hand in life – taken captive in battle; made into a eunuch; forced to live in the midst of a blatant pagan society and forced to serve a pagan king... forever, with no hope of ever returning home. And yet, he still has a praise for God for keeping him and his friends alive. Take a lesson.

VV24-30

What did Daniel request of Arioch?

Why did he plead for the lives of all the wise men?

Was Arioch looking forward to killing off all the wise men? How do you know?

What did Daniel say when the king asked him if he knew the interpretation of his dream?

What is the major difference between Daniel and his friends and the other practitioners of divination?

Why did God give Nebuchadnezzar this vision and not Daniel or one of his friends?

Might this have been God’s way of elevating or *reminding* the king of Daniel and his friends?

Daniel 2:31-45 – Nebuchadnezzar’s Vision: Image of a Man, in excellent brightness and awesome form

← NOTE: As you descend the body, metal quality decreases →	Body Part	Metal	Function of Body Components	Interpretation
	Head	Gold	Initialize and Process thoughts and ideas: Can see, speak (thoughts & ideas), taste, hear, smell. How much decision making takes place here?	Babylon, Dan 2:37-38 Approx Date: 606-541 BC
	Breasts & Arms	Silver	Physically do the thoughts and ideas: Can Touch. How much decision making takes place here?	Kingdom inferior to Babylon, Dan 2:39a Approx Date: 541-515 BC
	Belly & Thighs	Brass	Provides intuition and power in movement; exists to serve the head. How much decision making takes place here?	Kingdom that will rule over the earth, Dan 2:39b Approx Date: -164 BC
	Legs	Iron	Provides mobility and stability; exists to serve the thighs. How much decision making takes place here?	Kingdom that will be strong like iron; and just as iron is used to break into pieces and subdue, this kingdom will break all things into pieces and bruise. Dan 2:40
	Feet	Iron & Clay	Provides improved stability; exists to uphold the whole image. How much decision making is taking place here?	This kingdom will be divided yet again into smaller kingdoms, Partially strong & partially broken. Dan 2:41-42

Analyzing the image, there are so many things to notice:

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1. As we move down the body of the image, the quality of the metal decreases – what is the significance of this?
2. Might the descent down the body of the image be viewed as a timeline?
3. What is the significance of ruler-ship being represented as an image of a man?
4. Is this vision a look at the form the prophecy spoken by Noah in Gen 9:27 will take?
5. Is it significant that the different kingdoms are described as different parts of the human body? That the different parts of the human body are equated to different types of metal and even clay?

VV34-35

Where does the stone come from?

What does it mean “cut out without hands”?

Who throws the stone at the image?

What is significant about the stone being thrown at the feet of the image?

Of what metal were the feet made?

When will this stone destroy the feet?

What happens to the whole image as a consequence?

What becomes of the stone?

What does a mountain symbolize? Rev 17:9. Does a mountain contain clay? Does a mountain contain metal?

What does the fact that this mountain fills “the whole earth” signify? Dan 2:44

Who is the mountain?

VV36-39 (see table on page 8)

What does it mean that the Babylonian kingdom is made of gold?

What is this image saying about human government?

Over whom to the human governments have dominion?

What is the image telling you about God?

Is God conferring dominion over the earth on an angel?

Will the kingdom following Babylon be superior to Babylon? How do you know?

Will the third kingdom after Babylon be superior to Babylon? Will it be superior to the second kingdom? How do you know?

VV40-42 (see table on page 8)

What is significant about the fourth kingdom being “strong as iron”?

Is it significant that it says this fourth kingdom will “break in pieces and bruise”?

Is that 4th kingdom ever conquered by another metal?

What is going to happen to that 4th kingdom over time?

What will make the image strong?

What will make the image weak?

Will the image remain strong if the feet and toes are made up of clay and iron? What does clay signify?

What do metals signify?

Who will try to “mingle themselves with the seed of men”?

Is the use of metal a symbol of the divine? Versus the “seed of men”, which is not divine; it is clay.

When will this attempt at mingling occur?

What will the attempt to mingle with the seed of men look like? Would it be like Gen 6:2?

Will the mingling be successful? Why or why not? Dan 2:42-43; Gen 3:15

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VV44-45

What kings are being referred to when the kingdom that “shall stand forever” is set up? How do you know?

How certain was Daniel about his description and interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream?

LESSON: There is so much meat in this chapter of scripture! God provides so much information for us that we can apply to our understanding today! But first, I want to make sure that I call your attention back to V25, in which Arioch, the pagan servant of the king, was overjoyed at the possibility of not having to kill anyone! Notice now he rushed Daniel to the king to describe and then interpret the dream.

Notice how Daniel advocated for all “wise men”, not just his friends and himself. I might not have batted an eye, writing them all off as “heathens”! But, I especially love how Daniel said boldly, “there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets...” V28. He took no credit for his knowledge; AND ultimately, this is the primary and most important difference between a “practitioner of divination” and a servant of the Most High God. Hallelujah!

Before I get off on a sermon... here are some gold nuggets God is giving us in this chapter:

1. God shows that He alone has the power to confer dominion in the earth to whomever He wills.
2. God has once AGAIN given dominion of the earth to man NOT angels; especially *rebellious* angels. Make no mistake, what Adam and Eve did in choosing to believe the words of a created being over the word of God is to give a place in the earth to satan; neither Adam nor Eve nor their children have the authority to give “dominion” to anyone.
3. God provides a timeline of events that will occur in the earth, starting with the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.
4. God shows us that over time, the quality of leadership will decline even as the image itself becomes stronger. Gold and silver are fairly soft metals, compared to the less valuable, stronger metals, such as brass and iron.
5. God shows us that all leadership is divine. Later in the passage, God seems to intimate that the metal signifies the divine, as opposed to the clay, which is defined as being the “seed of men” (which immediately made me think about the enmity God had placed between the seed of the woman and the seed of satan, Gen 3:15; AND how some angels had left their “first estate”, coveting that of man, Jude 6, Gen 6:2).
6. Continuing on that transition from metal to clay and the mixing of the two, God seems to be saying that there will, once again, be an attempt by those of the divine estate to try and intermingle with the “seed of men” The intermingling will not work because it goes against nature – iron and clay do not mix.

Trying to unpack the complete meaning of Dan 2:43 seems impossible, but I think it’s important to consider that the angels will try to once again mingle themselves with mankind, as they had done in Gen 6:2. What would this “mingling” look like now? Will it be “physical” again or on a “spiritual” level? Whatever the case, we know it will take place during the time of the feet and 10 toes, which are made partially of iron and partially of clay; partially strong and partially weak.

My question is why would the angels want to mingle with man?

We know that they lost their first estate in their battle against Michael and his angels. In fact, they were kicked into the earth. So, they aren’t satisfied to just move to the suburbs of the earth and be quiet... they want to rule!

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And, why did they leave their “first estate” to begin with? What is it that man has that they want? I can understand the situation now, but what about then, in Gen 6:2? I don’t think men understand their own power.

VV46-49

What did the king do when Daniel finished his interpretation?

Did Nebuchadnezzar view Daniel as some kind of god?

Did Daniel correct the king?

Do you think Daniel viewed himself as a god? How do you know?

What did the king say to Daniel after this?

Did the king begin to worship Daniel’s God, even though he said that He was a God of gods?

Did the king still have all the wise men killed?

What did the king do for Daniel?

How did Daniel help his friends?

What is it to sit “in the gate of the king”?

LESSON: God moved Daniel into a position of leadership, which, I believe, might have been the point of this whole exercise. In the beginning of this chapter, Daniel was not one of those called in when the king was looking for a wise man to not only interpret, but also describe his dream to him; however, by the end of the chapter, Daniel was not only moved up to govern all of Babylon, and to be head of all the wise men, he sat in the gate of the king – he was a close adviser to the king, if not his only advisor. Does this sound similar to what happened to Joseph, becoming second only to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt?

Furthermore, Daniel didn’t forget his friends; he made sure that they got good government jobs in the kingdom, too. Which reminds us of Jesus from Isa 53:12 – He was divided a portion with the great and shared His spoils with the strong. NOTE this pattern.

***SPIRITUAL CONCEPT ***

Those who stand with God in tribulation will be rewarded for their loyalty. BUT you have to stand with God even in tribulation.