

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

SESSION 3

Book of Daniel: Daniel Chapter 2 - **LEADERS GUIDE**

WELCOME

Last week we opened up **Daniel 1** and read through it. **Chapter 1** dipped into a personal story of how God worked through 4 young men - Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah – and how these 4 young men **RESOLVED** to be known as God's people. They did this though they are no longer in God's land or able to go to God's Temple. They showed themselves to be God's people no matter WHERE they are. They did this by resolving not to **defile** themselves before God.

And here's the thing - **Chapter 1** is really the prologue to the entire book of Daniel. That all of the following themes of Daniel's wisdom, and the boy's stand, and the hostility of the royalty, and the threats made to Daniel. Everything – all of this – comes as a result of their resolution to be God's people. And this continues into **Chapter 2**.

And what we are going to see in the first part of Chapter 2 is an indication of

- God's sovereign **rule**.
- And God's sovereign **reign**.

So, let's start off with a prayer and then we'll move to **Daniel chapter 2**.

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Daniel 2:1-3**

QUESTIONS

What makes this situation – God appearing to Neb in a dream – different than what we normally see?

Why appear to King Neb & not to the exiles?

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Daniel 2:4-11**

QUESTIONS

What kind of people did Nebuchadnezzar call in to tell him his dream and interpret it?

- What was unusual about Neb's request?
- What do you notice about Nebuchadnezzar and all these wise men from this passage?

Nebuchadnezzar was brilliant. He knew the hearts of his supposed wise men and their political scheming.

- Why do you think Nebuchadnezzar asked someone to tell him his dream instead of telling them the dream first?
- What do you think he was afraid of by telling them his dream?
- So why did he rely on these guys?
- Do you think Nebuchadnezzar was right in his accusations about their motives?

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Daniel 2:12**

Someone's cranky...

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Daniel 2:13-23**

Nebuchadnezzar is completely falling apart because he knows he can't control **everything**.

- Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah are completely at peace because they know they can't control **anything**.
- And in Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah we see that they **rest** in God's Sovereignty.

In this section we see 3 elements of dependence on God's Sovereignty:

1. **Petition:** In **verse 16**, Daniel was crazy bold by asking Arioch to set the time to see the king so that an interpretation can be given to the king. *By the way*, Daniel didn't have the interpretation yet. **So, what is Daniel leaning on here?**
2. **Prayer:** In **verses 17-18**, Daniel went home to tell the boys – it's time to pray. The real us is who we are in the first moments after a crisis. He is not asking God to be Sovereign...He is going to God because **HE IS SOVEREIGN**.
3. **Praise:** In **verses 19-23**, God gave Daniel and the guys the answer. And they immediately began praising God. Praise is necessary to Daniel and his friends – because it focuses their hearts towards the greatness of God. He is not rejoicing / praising in his spared life. He is rejoicing in His God.

QUOTE: *"Trials do not disappear when we praise God, but our hearts are healed from despair when we praise God."* - Bryan Chappel

QUESTIONS

What do you notice about Daniel's relationship with Arioch?

- **Did we see something similar to this in Chapter 1?** *[Yes, with the Chief Eunuch]*
- *Why do you think this has happened to Daniel?*

Daniel's first response when he hears about needing to interpret and tell Nebuchadnezzar the dream he had is to plead to God and seek out His mercy.

- *What role does prayer play in our response to a difficult situation?*
- *Do you tend to rely on God OR ignore Him and attempt to deal with the situation yourself?*

What does Daniel's response reveal about his faith and his character?

- *Did Daniel doubt God? Explain*

How does our God use our situations and circumstances that seem impossible for both His glory and our good?

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Daniel 2:24-30**

QUESTIONS

Notice in telling and interpreting the dream of Nebuchadnezzar that Daniel points back to God who gave him this wisdom and discernment and who is establishing His kingdom.

- What does this tell us about the wise men's ability as sorcerers/magicians and false religious leaders?
- What are ways that you are right now showing others in your life that God is the source of your wisdom, joy, peace, and what you have currently?

How does understanding God's omniscience and omnipotence help Christians understand the future?

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Daniel 2:31-45**

What God has given to Daniel is a secular history – a theology of all history. This is a dream of ALL history. The statue represents:

- Head of Gold - **Babylon**
- Arms of silver – **Medes & Persians**
- Middle is bronze – Alexander the Great and the **Greeks**
- Legs are iron – **Roman Empire**
- And the feet are iron and clay – Roman Empire that eventually **caves in** on itself.

But in **verse 44**, God reveals to Daniel that there is a Kingdom that is coming that will destroy ALL kingdoms – a **ROCK** not cut by human hands...

QUESTIONS

In verse 37, Who does Daniel say gave King Neb “the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory...”?

Why would God tell King Neb in his dream what would happen to him and to earthly kingdoms in the future?

We often over-analyze the statue – focusing on figuring out the statue – but that is not the main point of the vision.

- What is the main point that King Neb should have gotten AND which we must get?

How does the Rock differ from the kingdoms of gold, silver, bronze, and iron/clay?

- What does that mean to you?

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Daniel 2:46-49**

QUESTIONS

What was King Nebuchadnezzar's response to Daniel's interpretation of his dream?

- How should you respond when someone praises you for something God has done?

Does it seem ridiculous that Nebuchadnezzar could hear this from the Lord and only be impressed but not transformed?

- Can you see that this proclamation is as much about our future as it was about his?

CONCLUSION

Last week, we read that God had blessed Daniel with the ability to translate dreams. **Tonight**, we saw this in action. **Chapter 2** provided our first look at Daniel as an interpreter of dreams, and God as the One who provides understanding/ interpretation of all dreams – in this instance the earthly empires represented as the great statue. The chapter ends with Daniel and his boys receiving government jobs – which prepares the way for what happens in **Daniel chapter 3**.

We have a couple of weeks off before picking back up on the first Sunday in April!

Outline for how we will study Daniel:

- **March 17th: Hangout Night**
- **April 7th: Daniel 3: Fiery Furnace**
- **April 14th: Daniel 4: King Neb's Pride and Humility**
- **April 21st: Daniel 5: The Handwriting on the Wall**
- **April 28th: Daniel 6: Daniel in the Lion's Den**
- **May 5th: Hangout Night or Summary of Daniel**