

SBC – Feb. 16, 2025

Daniel 2:1-30 (NKJV)

*“Nebuchadnezzar’s Troublesome Dream”*

#2

*Prayer:*

**Slide # 1**

***Theme: God is Sovereign over History***

***Outline:***

- A. The personal history of the prophet Daniel – chapter 1
- B. *The prophetic history of the Gentiles – chapters 2-7***
- C. The prophetic history of Israel – chapters 8-12

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews would be taken captive to Babylon, where they would remain for 70 years (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10). This exile was fulfilled in three Babylonian sieges of Jerusalem.

**Slide # 2**

***Three Babylonian Sieges of Jerusalem***

- 605 B.C. – Daniel was taken captive
- 597 B.C. – Ezekiel was taken captive
- 586 B.C. – The Temple & the city of Jerusalem was destroyed

Daniel 1 records how Daniel and his 3 Jewish friends were taken to Babylon, made eunuchs, given pagan Babylonian names, and trained for 3 years to be able to serve in the king’s palace. The emphasis in Chapter 1 is that they were brilliant young men who excelled above all the others. And led by Daniel, they were men of no compromise. And Daniel 1 indicates that the secret of their brilliance and giftedness was from God (Dan. 1:17).

Chapter 1 emphasizes that God was sovereign over the captivity, over the favor given to Daniel, and over the special giftedness given to Daniel and his three friends, with Daniel having a special understanding of all visions and dreams.

This sets the table for the entire book, emphasizing God’s sovereignty and the special role that Daniel (in particular) would play in the events going forward. This brings us to Daniel 2, which is a key chapter in the Bible related to a prophetic outline of history from the time of Babylon on.

Whoever wishes to understand the prophetic Scriptures must come to this chapter for the broad outline of God's future program for the nations, for Israel, and for the glorious kingdom of Messiah.

– **Charles Feinberg**

### **Daniel 2:1–30 (NKJV)**

**1 Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.**

Nebuchadnezzar came to power in 605, making his second year to be 603 B.C. One night he had what we might call a "nightmare". He had dreams that terribly disturbed him so badly that he couldn't sleep.

The culture of Babylon was very occultic and superstitious and put great importance on the significance of dreams. In effect, God was speaking to this pagan king "*in his language*" (so to speak).

God used various means in the OT by which He communicated with people, but with pagans, he occasionally used dreams (cf. Gen. 20:3; 40, 41; also see Heb. 1:1-2).

Often, people today claim that God speaks to them in dreams. Certainly, in a non-canonical way, God could do this, but we should note that it is common for cults and false religions to claim this as well.

Every false religion, from Buddhism to spiritism, every cult from Mormonism to Jehovah Witnesses, claims dreams, visions and messages from some deity as foundational to their belief system. ...indeed the Muslim religion was started by a dream to Muhammad.

– **Pastor Gary Gilley**

That should give us great pause when it comes to "dreams". We must never forget that experience is very subjective and prone to misinterpretation and is not the final arbiter of truth. That is reserved for the completed Word of God alone.

We dream every night, and who knows why we dream what we dream? Sometimes, we can connect it to something we have been going through, but often, they just seem random. I have had dreams I was very ashamed of, and I have been to the throne room of heaven in my dreams. But they were just dreams of no particular significance.

Yes, God could use a dream to get someone's attention, and He did that with Nebuchadnezzar, but note that dream had particular significance because God revealed it to be so. Not all Nebuchadnezzar's dreams were prophetically significant – just this one.

We know this by special revelation. Yes, Nebuchadnezzar had this very unique dream but it was up to God's man, Daniel, to interpret it. God used the dream to get Nebuchadnezzar's attention, but the meaning of it came only by special revelation through Daniel. And as we saw in Daniel 1:17 Daniel was uniquely gifted in "*understanding all visions and dreams.*"

None of this was normative, as many want to claim today. Where in the NT do you find the special giftedness of understanding visions and dreams? I submit to you that you don't! What happened with Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel is not normative!

**2 Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.**

Living in a very superstitious culture and having that as his background, the king summoned all the "***dream specialists***" in his kingdom to come and help him out with this. Today, in general, they would be called "*psychics*". Four related categories of people are mentioned.

***Magicians:*** It is thought that these men were experts in divination – that is, in seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown by supernatural means (see also Gen. 41:8, 24; Ex. 7:11). It is thought that they were scholars in charge of the sacred writings in Babylon.

***Astrologers:*** is sometimes translated as "*conjures*" or "*enchanters*". They were supposedly skilled in the use of spells or charms. They supposedly could conjure up spirits and communicate with the dead. It is thought that they studied the stars and planets for guidance much like people might do today through the use of a horoscope.

***Sorcerers:*** These people were involved in witchcraft, claiming to be empowered by spirits to know the future or control others through the casting of spells (cf. Ex. 22:18; Deut. 18:10; Isa. 47:9, 12; Jer. 27:9).

***Chaldeans:*** These were thought to be a special distinguished class of soothsayers (those who can foresee the future) through the use of astrology. They probably served as the custodians of the Babylonian mystery religions.

These men were all, in effect, professional “occultists” making their living on their supposed ability to contact the gods and gain insight into the secret world of the spirit realm. They were all about to be exposed as con men.

In effect, the king called together all his spiritual advisers and counselors - all the wise men of his realm who might potentially have insight into his dream. This category was broad enough to include the young men in training, including Daniel and his friends – although they were not present. Perhaps this was because they were still in training.

**3 And the king said to them, “I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream.”**

**4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation.”**

Aramaic was the common language spoken in the kingdom. However, there is an emphasis here that functions as a literary marker. In the book of Daniel, the language at this point switches from Hebrew to Aramaic and continues on in that fashion through chapter 7.

The most common explanation is that this whole section (2:4b – 7:28) deals especially with the Gentiles, and this was their language (cf. Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Jer. 10:11). This message from God especially targets them. This whole section highlights “*the times of the Gentiles*”. Then, from chapter 8 on through the rest of the book, the language is in Hebrew because it targets the Jews in particular.

The content of this dream concerns the Gentile world, so the medium of revelation to the Gentiles is a Gentile language. When the prophecies concern the Jews in Jerusalem, the Hebrew language is employed. – **Dr. Charles Feinberg**

Daniel wrote these chapters in the language that the Gentiles could understand. – **Renald Showers**

When God wants to make a point to the Gentile world He speaks “their language”. He did this also in the book of Jeremiah. The entire book of Jeremiah (52 long chapters) is written exclusively in Hebrew – except for ONE single verse which is written in Aramaic. And that verse is Jer. 10:11.

**Slide # 3**

**Jeremiah 10:11 (NKJV)**

**11** Thus you shall say to them: “The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens.”

God wanted the pagan Gentile nations to know that their false gods created nothing and that these false gods were all going down. What they really needed to know was the previous verse stated in Hebrew – communicated to the world through the Hebrews...

**Slide # 4****Jeremiah 10:10 (NKJV)**

**10** But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, And the nations will not be able to endure His indignation.

Nebuchadnezzar was shrewd. He knew these characters well. He knew their spin and how they could supposedly interpret a dream once the dream was made known. One could supposedly give almost any general interpretation, and who could ever prove it wrong – so long as it was all left general and evasive? They were slick at this, and the king knew it.

And so Nebuchadnezzar came up with a surefire TEST! And it was a pass/fail test! It was all or nothing! It was life or death!

**5** The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, “My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap.  
**6** However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.”

The king, from the outset, makes it clear that he is not playing games. He just wants reality! He not only demands an interpretation, but he wants them first to tell him the CONTENTS of the dream itself.

Here is the deal: If they can first tell him the dream and then its interpretation, he will richly reward them, but if they can't, they are doomed to be cut in pieces, and their property made an ash heap. The pressure is on! His decision was ironclad firm! This is how it is going to be!

The dream and its interpretation go together. The king wisely understands that anyone can make up an interpretation, but if one really has supernatural insight, then they ought to be able to tell him the dream also. That is the TEST – to tell the DREAM and its INTERPRETATION – not merely some supposed interpretation.

**Nebuchadnezzar** is the first on record to implement **DOGE** – “*The Department of Government Efficiency.*” Nebuchadnezzar realized that if they couldn’t tell him the dream, then really, their whole profession was a deceptive sham, and he would be better off without them.

To claim supernatural knowledge without supernatural ability is a sham! Thus, Nebuchadnezzar demanded that they disclose what could only be known supernaturally. This really was a great observation. If they claimed to be supernatural “specialists” then they should also be able to tell him his dream. That is a logical deduction!

**7 They answered again and said, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation.”**

They didn’t even try to tell the king what his dream was. They simply pleaded for the king to tell them the dream so they could then provide its interpretation. But the king wasn’t having any of it.

**8 The king answered and said, “I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm:**

The king saw right through them, and he told them straight out that he knew they were just trying to buy time and somehow get around his firm decision.

**9 if you do not make known the dream to me, there is only one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.”**

The king pushed harder regarding his FIRM decree -that they either tell him the dream and its interpretation or they will all die. And he tells them flat out that he knows they are corrupt liars – trying to stall until the crisis has passed. So once again, he demanded that they tell him the dream, and thereby, he would know that, indeed, they could also give the interpretation.

Again, how wise this was: If you claim to supernaturally know the future – then why can’t you also know the past – as in the dream he has had? This was a brilliant fail-proof test, and the king knew it – and frankly, so did all these occultist counselors.

**10 The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, “There is not a man on earth who can tell the king’s matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.**

**11 It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.”**

What an admission! These Chaldeans (the most elite group of wise men) tried to reason with the king. No ruler has ever made a demand like this. It was unheard of.

And the reason being, is that no one can know the king's dream as they said, “**except for the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.**” They, in effect, admit they don’t really have supernatural insight! And they admit that only a higher power could reveal such a thing.

Ironically, this is what they claimed to be able to do – to access the secrets of the gods, but here they admit they really can’t do that (cf. Isa. 47:12-13).

### **Slide # 5**

This is a candid confession that despite all their incantations, magic, and astrology, they were not capable of receiving supernatural revelation. – ***The Moody Bible Commentary***

In truth, all fortune tellers, palm readers, horoscopes, etc., are all phonies. They don’t have a clue about the future, and they can’t make sense of the past. They are simply peddlers of lies and deceit! This is what the DARK SIDE is all about! They traffic in DECEIT!

“The reporter at the desk next to mine was excited about an upcoming assignment. All week Summer had been preparing to interview a woman known as a psychic. She wasn’t sure how seriously to take the woman’s supposed powers. “Should I have a reading done?” Summer wondered. “What if it’s bad news, like I’m going to die or something?” But the morning of the interview, the psychic called. She was going to have to postpone the interview, she said. Something UNEXPECTED had come up.” – ***Robert Carroll***

Even though they believed in all sorts of gods, these supposed “wise men” did unwittingly touch on a reality touch point here.

Only the Most High God, only the one true God, has this kind of supernatural insight! Thus, they unawares are setting this up perfectly, for the man of God (Daniel) to come on the scene and reveal it supernaturally by way of revelation from God.

**12 For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.**

The king was insulted by what he perceived as a whole culture of deceit that was only seeking to play him.

In a fit of rage, he gave the order that the entire category of wise men, involving all the various categories of occultists, should all be killed!

**13 So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.**

The better translation here is that the decree went forth “*that the wise men were to be killed.*” It hadn’t happened yet, but it was put in motion to happen. The first step was to round them all up, and so they went to find Daniel and his companions so that they, too, might be killed.

In the sovereignty of God, He first let the inadequacy of all the supposed “wise men” be totally revealed before He then made known His omniscience through His servant Daniel.

**14 Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon;**

**15 he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.**

Daniel, we believe, at this point was about 17 years old. What tremendous poise and wisdom he shows throughout.

Some translate “counsel” as “tact” or “discretion”. With counsel (tact) and wisdom, Daniel interacted with Arioch, the commander of the king’s guard. This was a very delicate situation, and Daniel handled it with great poise.

Daniel tactfully inquired about WHY the decree was so urgent. And then Arioch filled Daniel in on what was happening. This is another example of God giving Daniel favor (see Daniel 1:9). As we trace Daniel’s steps, we constantly see God’s providential care all along the way.



**16 So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.**

We don't know all the ensuing conversation, but Daniel was then allowed to go in and address the king personally. Daniel asked for a stay of execution until he might tell the king the interpretation. Ironically, this is EXACTLY what the various categories of wise men had just previously wanted (namely a delay) and had been denied (Dan. 2:8).

But I think Daniel's entire demeanor was different, and the king saw it. Daniel was not stalling. He had full confidence that God would show him the dream and its interpretation.

He just needed a little time – which the king granted!

**17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions,  
18 that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.**

The first thing Daniel did after getting a stay of execution was call for a prayer meeting. With God, nothing is impossible (cf. Lk. 1:37). God specializes in impossible situations, and He does so to demonstrate His mighty power to the end that He might be glorified.

When faced with a crisis, it is good to PRAY FIRST. We need to ask, "***Have I remembered to pray about this?***" God works through prayer! Daniel and his friends recognized this truth.

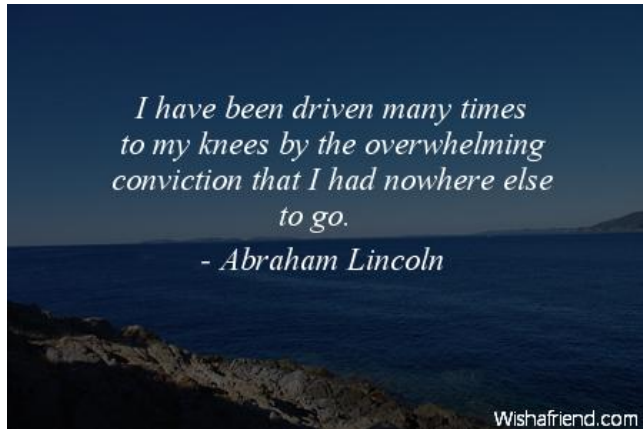
People often say there is "***power in prayer***". That is not quite accurate. There is power in God, Who works through prayer. This is how God has chosen to work. Prayer recognizes dependence upon God, and as we do so, God works to the end that He might be glorified in answered prayer.

### **Slide # 6**

**James 5:16 (NKJV)**

**16 ... The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.**

### **Slide # 7**



Daniel called on his three friends to “**seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret**” so that they might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Their lives were on the line.

**Mercy** is undeserved. God was under no obligation to reveal this. Mercy is God’s compassionate response to personal need. It is the idea of showing pity. They were looking to God to be sympathetic in their time of desperation.

The title “**God of heaven**” is a title used for God six times in Daniel (cf. Dan. 2:18, 19, 28, 37, 44; 5:23). It emphasizes His sovereign dominion over all the world. It is invoked prominently in the context of captivity or when God’s people are seemingly overpowered by the world (cf. Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel). No matter how bad the situation seems to be, God is still “**the God of heaven**,” Who is sovereign over all! (cf. Gen. 24:3, 7; 2 Chron. 36:23; Ezra 1:2; 5:11, 12; 6:9, 10; 7:12, 21, 23; Neh. 1:4, 5; 2:4, 20; Psa. 136:26, Jon. 1:9).

It is a title that belongs to the “times of the Gentiles,” when God acts from heaven rather than from between the cherubim in the temple as the God of Israel. – **John Phillips**

The idea of “**secret**” is something that only God knows and that people can know only by revelation. This is commonly called “**mystery**” in the Bible. It is a divine secret that we can only know by God revealing it.

They didn’t have to wait long.

**19 Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.**

Daniel and his friends prayed – and then the secret was revealed to Daniel. Then Daniel blessed (praised) the God of heaven. When God answers, don't forget to thank and praise Him!

Nebuchadnezzar saw dreams – Daniel had a vision. Evidently, Nebuchadnezzar saw the “*silent movie*,” while Daniel saw the same movie, only with words and an explanation.

Here was Daniel's response...

**20 Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His.**

Daniel calls on God to be praised forever, attributing WISDOM and MIGHT to Him.

God is all-wise. He is omniscient – knowing all there is to know from the beginning to the end. Our God has never learned anything because He already knows everything and orchestrates everything perfectly in keeping with His sovereign plan.

God is Almighty! He is omnipotent – all-powerful!

### **Slide # 8**

#### **Psalm 115:3 (NKJV)**

**3 But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.**

This combination of all-knowing and all-powerful is what defines the God of heaven! This is in contrast to all the false gods who know nothing and have no power.

**21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.**

He *changes the times and the seasons*, which means He determines in history when events will happen and exactly how long each phase will last. God is in charge of the course of history. It unfolds exactly according to His sovereign design and purposes. There are no accidents. All is according to providence!

God knew exactly when His people would be taken into captivity. He knew exactly when Jerusalem would fall. He knew exactly how long the Jews would be in Babylon.

God removes kings and raises up kings. Leaders are not self-made – it's just that often they don't know it.

### **Slide # 9**

#### **Romans 13:1 (NKJV)**

**1** Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is **no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.**

All the various rulers during “*the times of the Gentiles*” are established by God – there is no exception. Nebuchadnezzar was put in place by God in accordance with God's timing. Cyrus came to power by God's placement exactly according to God's timing. God controls the political affairs of humanity! Things don't just happen. History really is HIS STORY!

### **Slide # 10**

#### **John 19:10–11 (NKJV)**

**10** Then Pilate said to Him, “Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?”

**11** Jesus answered, “**You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.** Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

They say that if you see a turtle on a fence post, you know it didn't get there by itself! It was put there! And so it is with the rulers of this world – the problem is that often they just don't know it.

### **Slide # 11**



Daniel knew God raises up and puts down, which helps explain his poise and boldness in standing before (humanly speaking) the most powerful man in the world and speaking God's truth to power.

And God ***gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding***. This refers to spiritual knowledge and wisdom! To know God's ways, it has to be revealed by God. It is God-given – not self-acquired. Jesus thanked the Father for hiding things from the worldly wise and prudent and revealing them to babes (Mt. 11:25). When Peter recognized Jesus for Who He is as the Christ the Son of God, Jesus said, "*Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*" (Mt. 16:17).

Colossians 2:3 says that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ. Want to know spiritual wisdom and knowledge – it is all found in Christ. The more you know Christ, the more you will know God's hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

But Daniel's point is that it is God Who gives wisdom and knowledge! It comes from God! (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14) The occultists knew NOTHING of true spiritual insight. They had no clue as to God's plans or ways. It was only known by God's revelation through His servant Daniel.

**22 He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.**

Deep things are inaccessible things – things we couldn't possibly know anything about. But God knows all about them – and we only know because He reveals them to us.

Without divine revelation, there is only conjecture and subjective opinion. - ***Expositors***

We wouldn't know about creation unless God told us – He was the only one there! We would not know about God's love and grace unless He told us. We would not know about His sovereign plan if He didn't tell us. We wouldn't know about the church, the rapture, and on and on. We would be like so many who don't know where they came from, why they are here, or where they are going. We wouldn't know anything that really matters apart from God revealing it to us! All that we really know, we have been told!

**Slide # 12**

**Deuteronomy 29:29 (NKJV)**

**29 “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us** and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

In context, what God reveals is His sovereign plan over the nations from the time of Babylon to the Second Coming of Christ. He reveals an overview of world history, which is playing out even now.

### **Slide # 13**

Vs. 21 He changes...  
 Vs. 21 He removes and raises up  
 Vs. 21 He gives wisdom and knowledge  
 Vs. 22 He reveals...  
 Vs. 22 He knows...

There is a lot of “**He**” here! God does it! History is His Story! And it is His STORY to tell! And apart from Him revealing it we would be in the dark – which is where most of the world is at!

Verses 20-22 serve as a summary of the theme of Daniel, which is that God is sovereign over the history of the world.

**23 “I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king’s demand.”**

Daniel’s heart was full of thanksgiving and praise to God for revealing the king's dream to him. He gives all praise to God! Three times in this verse, Daniel emphasizes that God has done it!

### **Slide # 14**

***Daniel 2:23..***

You have given me...  
 Have now made known...  
 You have made known...

Daniel mentioned God’s wisdom and might at the beginning of his praise (v. 20) and at the end (v. 23) and illustrated both characteristics in between. The entire book of Daniel serves to highlight the wisdom and power of God.

This praise to God sums up the theme of the whole book, namely that God is the One Who controls all things and grants wisdom and might.

– *John MacArthur*

**24 Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.”**

The first thing Daniel said to the captain of the guard was, “***Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon***”. His first thoughts were for others. This was about saving lives.

Daniel obviously carried himself in a very convincing and yet respectable manner saying, “***take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.***” Obviously, Arioch was convinced as seen in his actions.

Understand that Arioch has probably known Daniel for a couple of years already, and I think Daniel’s entire life spoke integrity and he knew it. So, this didn’t just happen in a vacuum – there was a whole lifestyle of credibility behind it.

**25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, “I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.”**

It’s almost like Arioch wants to take a little credit, saying, “I have found a man”. “Really? I thought Daniel came to you.” It is very human to want to get in on the credit.

But the point is he brought Daniel before the king, claiming that Daniel indeed knew the secret to the king’s dream.

**26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?”**

This is almost humorous. Here God brought a lowly captive before the world’s most powerful monarch and made the king dependent upon this humble/lowly captive.

Note that Daniel did not immediately answer the king with a yes or no. Rather, Daniel was about to take advantage of this occasion to “school” the king in a winsome sort of way.

It was important that this king understand the difference between a prophet and a psychic, between a seer and a soothsayer, between the living God of the Hebrews and the false gods of the Babylonian priesthood. – **John Phillips**

So, Daniel put distance between himself and the occultists of the king's court.

**27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, “The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king.**

The first thing Daniel did was to discredit the entire category of so-called “wise men” of Babylon. This was a very politically incorrect move, if there ever was one. Daniel affirmed that they CANNOT reveal this secret – even as the king himself had surmised.

But here comes the “educational” moment...

**28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:**

Here is another of those great “**Buts**” in the book of Daniel emphasizing a great contrast. The professional occultists were worthless to reveal this, **BUT** there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets. Here was the missing piece – the God of heaven! This is where true supernatural revelation comes from. Daniel here introduces Nebuchadnezzar to the ONE true living God who is able to supernaturally reveal all unknown secrets.

Right here, Daniel put his finger on the thing that is uniquely God's glory! Only God has supernatural insight! Only God knows the future! Only God can reveal what is going to happen with certainty.

### **Slide # 15**

**Isaiah 42:8–9 (NKJV)**

**8** I am the LORD, that is My name; And **My glory I will not give to another,** Nor My praise to carved images.

**9** Behold, the former [*previously predicted*] things have come to pass, And **new things I declare**; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.”



It is God's glory alone to predict the future and then bring it to pass. This is what makes the Bible unique. It is uniquely a prophetic book. It is God's book that tells us what is going to happen, and then we see the fulfillment. We have the OT full of Messianic prophecies, but then we have the corresponding NT, which tells of the fulfillment. About half of all the biblical prophecies have already literally been fulfilled, which assures us that the other half will yet also literally be fulfilled.

There is no other prophetic faith in the world like that presented in the Bible. This is God's glory alone, and this is what Daniel was "**schooling**" Nebuchadnezzar on.

There is a lot of speculation about the future. What is going to happen in politics? What is going to happen in the Middle East? What is going to happen with the economy? Nobody knows except for God, and we only know what we have been told. God doesn't generally fill in the details but has given us a broad outline.

For example, we know that in the "**latter years**" Israel will be back in the land after having been scattered throughout the whole world.

**Ezekiel 38:8 (NKJV)**

8 After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.

This is not mere speculation – this is prophecy! This is what God says. In the latter years, Israel will be back in the land, being regathered from the nations of the world. That is what the Bible says. **And that is where we are today.** In just recent days the MAJORITY of the Jews living in the world are now back in the land of Israel – just as the Bible predicted!

For this reason, Israel being back in the land has been called, "**The Last Days' Super Sign**". We know this has significance because God tells us so. We are not setting any dates, but we affirm with Paul in 1 Cor. 10:11 that we are those "**upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**"

Daniel said to the king that God has made known to you, "**what will be in the latter days**" – literally "*in the end of days*". In other words, God has shown you where it is all going. God has shown you the end of the story. The term "**latter days**" in Scripture consistently looks forward to the time when human history will usher in the era of the Messiah and His eternal kingdom (cf. Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:1; Heb. 1:2). This is where it is all going and God showed this to the king.

**29 As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.**

Here, we are told what Nebuchadnezzar was thinking about before he went to sleep. He was thinking about the future and what was going to happen to his kingdom. And in that context, God (the reveler of secrets) made known to him what the future holds. And as we will see, God revealed to him a panoramic overview of history called “*the times of the Gentiles*” (Lk. 21:24) that will culminate in the Messianic kingdom.

By the way, every part of the dream has been fulfilled to the letter, with only the very last part yet to be fulfilled – related to the final stage of the Roman empire and the subsequent setting up of Messiah’s kingdom.

**30 But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.**

Daniel underscores that this is really not about him and his wisdom. Rather it’s about God -showing that He ALONE is the revealer of secrets, showing that He ALONE is sovereign over history, showing that He ALONE is the one true God. To this end, God has revealed it so that the king might understand the meaning of his dream.

Daniel refused to take the credit! Daniel emphasizes that he is merely an instrument – and it has simply been REVEALED to him so that the king might know the meaning of his dream.

**Napoleon Bonaparte** was asked – “*Is God on the side of France?*” Arrogantly he said, “God is on the side that has the heaviest artillery!” He boasted, “*I make circumstances*”. But that was before his “Waterloo” (1815) where he lost his empire and was exiled to a barren island. At that point, he had a change of perspective and said: “***Man proposes, but God disposes.***”

Indeed, God sovereignly controls all that happens, and therefore, He knows all that will happen. Sovereignly knowing and controlling the future is God’s glory alone!

And the glory belongs to God ALONE!