

Daniel 2:24-49
December 8, 2024



CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

MAIN POINT

God is in charge. He establishes rulers and kingdoms and can take away power as easily as He grants it. God knows the future and works things out for His glory and purpose. When God gives us opportunities to play a part in His plan, we should humbly return the glory to Him.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What types of spiritual gifts or wisdom has God given you?

Share about a time when God gave you an opportunity to use the gifts He's given you.

Where do these gifts and wisdom ultimately come from? How can we recognize this in our daily lives?

Last week, we discussed the distressing turn of events after Daniel and his friends completed their training for service to the king: Nebuchadnezzar ordered that all wise



men be destroyed because a group of Chaldeans were unable to retell and interpret one of his dreams. Daniel, who knew all wisdom comes from the Lord, called out to God for help, and God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel.

This week, we'll see what happened when Daniel presented the dream and its interpretation to the king.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

🌿 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 2:24-30.

What do we see happening here?

What did Daniel do?

What do we notice about Daniel's posture before King Nebuchadnezzar?

After God revealed the mystery of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel (v.19), Daniel asked that the wise men be spared and requested to be taken before the king to give him the interpretation (v.24).

Note that Arioch, who was in charge of destroying the kingdom's wise men, attempted to claim some credit for himself before the king, saying, "I have found a man" (v. 25). While his statement wasn't quite true, we see in this passage that Daniel left his ego at home. This is a common theme throughout Daniel's story: He didn't want the credit. Daniel faithfully and consistently directed all credit and praise to God alone.

When Nebuchadnezzar asked Daniel if he could reveal the dream's mysteries (v.26), Daniel could have easily said yes, but instead, he immediately and boldly gave the glory and credit to God instead of claiming it for himself. Daniel said no man could do what the king had asked—only Yahweh could. If the gods of the Chaldeans had been true, they would have been able to reveal the dream's mysteries to the Chaldean diviners, but all authority and wisdom belong to the one true God.

Daniel revealed that Nebuchadnezzar's dream was given by God and is a glimpse into "the last days" (v.28). They did not know the details at the time, but this would ultimately begin with Jesus's death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven (Hebrews 1:2).

Daniel ended his introduction humbly, making it clear that he didn't "have more wisdom than anyone living" (v. 30), but God, the "revealer of mysteries" (v.29), had revealed the dream's interpretation to Daniel.



 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 2:31-45.

Let's look at the dream itself. What did Nebuchadnezzar see first (vv. 31-33)?

What did Nebuchadnezzar see happen to the colossal statue?

What was the dream's interpretation? (Start in verse 36.)

What can we learn about God and His sovereignty from Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation? What does this tell us about the strength of human kingdoms compared to God's power and purpose?

What stands out to you in this passage? What are your takeaways?

As Daniel recounted the dream in the passage, we can see why Nebuchadnezzar was so disturbed! The king saw a colossal statue made of mixed materials that began to shatter when struck by a rock. This rock later grew into a tall mountain.

Modern Bible scholars interpret the dream and its referenced kingdoms in this way:

-Head of pure gold: Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian kingdom (636–539 BC)

-Chest and arms of silver: Medo-Persian kingdom (539–330 BC). We will see this transition when Darius the Mede steps into power in chapter 5 of Daniel.

-Stomach and thighs of bronze: Grecian kingdom, established by Alexander the Great (330-63 BC)

-Legs of iron and feet of partly iron and partly fired clay: Roman empire (63 BC–ca. AD 475)

-Stone that grew into a mountain: Jesus (His coming and the establishment of His kingdom)

After Daniel described the dream, he explained the interpretation the Lord revealed to him. Note in verse 37 that Daniel pointed to the sovereignty of God when he told Nebuchadnezzar, "The God of the heavens has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and glory." Once again, we see God working behind the scenes when it feels like the Israelites had lost, and Daniel didn't miss an opportunity to bring glory to the Lord.

God's sovereignty is made abundantly clear through Nebuchadnezzar's dream. "The great God" (v.45) not only knows the future, but the future happens because He allows it for His glory and purpose. This remains true today. As in the book of Daniel, when leaders we perceive as ungodly come into power, God remains on the throne and in charge. He can take away power as easily as He grants it. Human kingdoms fall, but the Lord's kingdom is eternal. Scripture is very clear: Even when it seems like hope is lost, Jesus has already won, and He will return (Revelation 22:6-21).



Warren Wiersbe says it best in his commentary on the book of Daniel: “King Nebuchadnezzar ruled from 605 BC to 562 BC, but Jesus Christ will reign forever and ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.”

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 2:46-49.

What do we see happening in this passage?

What did Nebuchadnezzar acknowledge?

How do we see God working in this passage?

Chapter 2 ends with God receiving glory (v.47) and the Lord, through His servant Nebuchadnezzar, positioning Daniel and his friends in places of leadership (vv. 48-49). We will soon see that God was not done building a testimony through these men. There is more triumph and glory for the Lord still to come in the book of Daniel!

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Let's look again at Daniel's response in verses 27-30 when Daniel gave the credit for interpreting the dream to God. Walk through this passage verse by verse and breakdown his response: **What did Daniel say?**

What can we learn here? How can we adopt a similar attitude when using the gifts God has given us?

In this passage, we read about God's sovereignty over ancient societies. What does this imply about God's role in our society and the recent election?

What can we learn about God in this passage?

PRAYER

Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.

Praise God for His greatness and sovereignty. Ask God to help your group be more like Daniel, humbly pointing others to Him in all areas of your lives. Ask God to give you opportunities to use the unique gifts He has given you for His glory.



LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead to next week's scripture passage as we begin our study of Daniel: The Triumph of Our God.

December 15, 2024 --- Daniel 3:1-30

COMMENTARY

Daniel 2:24-49

2:24-26. The king was likely surprised to hear further word regarding this matter.

2:27. Daniel asserted that no pagan soothsayer could solve the mystery. Rather, he attributed revelation to God alone. The word translated diviner expresses the idea of cutting or determining, referring to a person who is able to determine another's fate.

2:28. In the last days indicates that the king's dream would find its complete fulfillment only in the end times.

2:29-30. Daniel tactfully stressed that Nebuchadnezzar—rather than himself—was the recipient of the revelation.

2:31-45. Daniel interpreted the parts of the colossal statue to represent four empires in historical succession. The head represented the kingdom of Babylon (605-539 BC). The chest and arms symbolized the Medo-Persian Empire (539-331 BC). The stomach and thighs stood for the Greek Empire (331-146 BC). The legs referred to the Roman Empire (146 BC–AD 1476 in the West and AD 1453 in the East). The feet were mixed of iron and clay and represented a future continuation or revival of Rome. The material of each section of the statue decreased in value but increased in strength (except for the feet; see vv. 42-43). The decreased value may symbolize the moral decline of each succeeding kingdom. The increased strength refers to the harsher domination each successive kingdom would impose on its subjects. Daniel also described a stone that would shatter the final kingdom and grow into a mountain that filled the whole earth. This "stone" is the kingdom of God.

Primarily because they disbelieve in the possibility of predictive prophecy, critical scholars assume that Daniel was written in 165 BC and therefore is looking backward rather than forward at the rise of earthly kingdoms such as the Roman Empire. They divide the four kingdoms into Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. On the other hand, most interpreters who accept the reality of predictive prophecy in Scripture believe Daniel was written in the late sixth century and view the fourth kingdom as Rome. They hold different opinions about the meaning of the stone, however. Some view it as a spiritual kingdom, embodied in the church, which gradually conquered the Roman Empire. Others more accurately view it as a future kingdom, when Messiah Jesus will



return and establish his physical rule that will govern the whole earth and never be destroyed.

2:37. In Ezk 26:7 God himself calls Nebuchadnezzar king of kings. But Daniel makes clear that his position is a gift of God. King Artaxerxes claims the title for himself in Ezr 7:12. But the title belongs truly only to Jesus Christ (1Tm 6:15; Rv 17:14; 19:16).

2:46-47. King Nebuchadnezzar responded to Daniel's remarkable revelation by recognizing the God of Israel as part of the pantheon of gods, though he did not recognize the God of Israel as the one and only true God

