

THE KING'S DREAM

Daniel 2:1-28

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

Introduction

The faith of Daniel and his three Hebrew friends was tested early in their lives. First, their faith in the Lord was severely tested when they were taken from home as early teenagers and brought to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Second, they were tested soon after they arrived in Babylon by the matter of the king's food. In both cases they knew how to trust in the Lord to overcome the problems that they faced. However, in today's lesson they faced a test that was so great that all the wise men of Nebuchadnezzar's court failed it. Yet these four men passed that almost impossible test by trusting in the Lord.

Aim of the Lesson

Learn to trust in the Lord to overcome all of your problems.

"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. . . . I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me" (Phil 4:6, 7, 13).

Outline of the Lesson (Use the Study Notes to add to this lesson plan as the Spirit leads you.)

I. Perplexity of Nebuchadnezzar (2:1-13)

A. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream – 2:1

When Nebuchadnezzar went to bed one night he began to ponder about the future (2:29). No doubt he was thinking about the future of his kingdom. His thoughts prepared him for a special dream that God gave him that night about the future of his kingdom and of several other kingdoms to the time when His Son would rule the world.

B. Nebuchadnezzar's Demand – 2:2-13

1. The Specialists Called – 2:2

Nebuchadnezzar knew he dream had a special message for him, but he was perplexed as to its meaning, so he called his wise men to interpret it for him. He had five different kinds of wise men (see 2:2, 27) that claimed to be specialists in understanding the operation of the supernatural world.

2.

The Demand Made – 2:3-6

He told them that he had a dream that greatly troubled him and he wanted them to interpret it. They asked him to tell them his dream and they would interpret it for him. But the king wanted to be sure that their interpretation was correct so he told them that they must tell what he dreamed before they could give their interpretation. He figured that their powers to interpret the dream accurately would also enable them to recall the dream. If they could not recall it, he would consider their interpretation a lie and they would lose their lives. If they could recall the dream, he would trust their interpretation and reward them.

3. The Demand Reiterated – 2:7-9

The wise men had no ability to know what the king had dreamed, so they once again asked him to tell them his dream. The king began to lose patience with them, calling them liars and once again demanded that they tell him what he dreamed and then give their interpretation of it or else he would have them executed. He would not change his demand.

4. The Demand Ridiculed – 2:10-11

The wise men were trapped. They had no way of knowing what the king had dreamed, so they ridiculed his demand. They told the king (1) no man on earth could show the king's dream; (2) no great ruler had ever asked his wise men to do such a thing; (3) the thing required was "rare" (i.e. "extremely difficult"); (4) only the gods, who do not dwell with man, could do what the king asked. All of their arguments were essentially correct, but the one true God does involve Himself in the affairs of man.

5. The Decree Enforced – 2:12-13

The wise men hoped that the king would change his demand. Instead it made him furious and he commanded that all of the wise men be executed, which included those that were being trained by them. If they could not give him the counsel that he needed, they were of no value to him.

We need to learn from Nebuchadnezzar's bad experience. The "wise men" of occult practices that use séances, horoscopes, palm reading, weegie boards, tarot card and such things cannot give us true answers to solve our problems. Neither can unregenerate counselors give us the help we need (Prov 14:5-7). Only God can do that (Prov 19:21). He knows everything. He knows what we think and what we do. He sees what we do in the dark and what we do in the light. He knows our thoughts and our dreams (see Ps 139:1-6). If any man lacks wisdom, we are told to go to the Lord God almighty and He will give us the answers that we need (James 1:5).

II. Perception of Daniel – 2:14-28

A. Daniel's Poise – 2:14-16

When Arioch came to execute Daniel, he tactfully and wisely asked why the king's command so hasty (urgent or harsh). Arioch told him what the king demanded of the wise men and they were unable to do it. Then Daniel went to the king and told him, if he were given a little time, he would meet his demands. This showed that Daniel believed God was in control of all events and He would give him the dream and its interpretation to show His wisdom and might to the king. Nebuchadnezzar gave Daniel his request.

We need to be confident in our God that we serve, so we can be poised in the presence of those who need our witness.

B. Daniel's Petition – 2:17-18

Daniel then went to his companions and immediately and petitioned God to reveal the dream to them and its interpretation. They believed He would reveal it to them and keep them alive.

We must believe God answers our prayers or He will not answer them (H 11:6).

C. Daniel's Praise – 2:19-23

God rewarded the faith of these godly young men that night by giving Daniel a vision that revealed the king's dream and its interpretation. However, before he went to the king with the news, he praised God for His wisdom and power and thanked Him for giving him wisdom regarding the dream and power to stand before the king as His witness.

We must remember to praise God and give thanks to Him for His blessings and answers to our prayers. Our praise and thanks will please Him and make us ready to be a good witness for Him

D. Daniel's Presentation – 2:24-28

After God gave Daniel the king's dream and its interpretation, he was ready to tell Nebuchadnezzar of God's wisdom and power. He hurried to the king's court and made two requests of Arioch: (1) do not destroy the wise men, and (2) bring me to the king. The king asked Daniel if he knew the dream and what it meant. Daniel said that no man can know this, but only God in Heaven knows what the king dreamed and He will make known to the king what the future holds by the dream that He gave him. Daniel gave all the credit to God for the message that he was going to give the king. Daniel used the very predicament, which threatened his life, to be an opportunity to testify to the king and bring glory to God.

When your life is suddenly threatened by a problem and everything around you seems to crumble, do not be afraid or even discouraged (James 1:2ff). No matter how great the problem or how dire the circumstances, God makes no mistakes. He has brought this circumstance into your life to bless you and to glorify Himself! Have faith in Him and He will help you overcome your problems. Be sensitive to His Spirit, share your burden with others and together go to God in prayer. You will find His help in time of need (Heb 4:16). You should use every occasion in your life to testify for God and bring glory to Him.

TRUST THE LORD WITH YOUR PROBLEMS AND HE WILL MAKE THEM A BLESSING

Note to the teacher: Ask your students questions from the Student's Lesson and appoint different ones to read the Scriptures where the answers can be found. After a right answer is found, share other truths you have gleaned from your study of the Bible, from the Study Notes and from the Teacher's Plan. Make applications to the students' lives where they fit (some are found in the Teacher's Plan). This approach will keep the interest of your students.