

Chapter 2 - Nebuchadnezzar's Vision of the Great Image

Daniel 2 is the key for understanding the truth of Bible prophecy.

Daniel 2 & 7 accurately predict details of world history from 600 BC to the Second Coming.

God made a covenant with the leaders of Israel, to establish a never-ending kingdom:

- Abraham (Gen.12:1-3); Isaac (Gen.26:1-5); Jacob (Gen.28:1-22)
- David (2 Sam.7:8-16); prophets (Deut.30:1-10; Jer.31:31-40)

Daniel shows that the kingdoms of earth die, but the kingdom of Christ will succeed forever.

Today, Satan appears to be winning and writing our history; soon he will *be* history.

God often spoke to believers in Bible times through dreams and visions (Num.12:6):

- Solomon (1 Kings 3:5); Jacob, Joseph & Pharaoh in Gen.31:10, 37:5, 41:1
- Joseph, father of Jesus (Matt.1:20, 2:13); John in the book of Revelation.
- Pontius Pilate's wife (Matt.27:19); Peter (Acts 10:10); Paul (Acts 22:17)

God used a donkey to rebuke Balaam, ravens to feed Elisha, a rooster to rebuke Peter.

God also spoke to pagans; the most amazing dream came to King Neb - the most wicked ruler.

Why did God reveal such a great prophecy at such a sad time for Judah, using a dream?

God founded a nation by Abraham; God gave him the deed to the Promised Land. Gen.15:9-21

God promised King David that his descendant would sit on Israel's throne forever.

God made unbreakable covenants with the nation of Israel. But in Babylon they felt abandoned.

The Jews were in captivity, but through a king's dream, God said, "I have not forsaken you".

Dreams were thought to be messages from Babylonian gods; the dream got the king's attention.

2:1 – Nebuchadnezzar's Dream - Dan.2:1 In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him.

The captivity began just after the Babylonian victory over Egypt in May-June 605 BC.

Nebuchadnezzar was made king on Sept. 7, 605 BC upon the death of his father.

Daniel and friends probably began their 3-year training program soon after.

2:2-3 – All the Wise Men Summoned

Dan.2:2-3 Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So, they came in and stood before the king. And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream."

The wise men included magicians, astrologers, sorcerers and Chaldean philosophers.

Rulers today still use astrology (it was in the White House of Presidents Reagan & Clinton).

People spend \$200 million *per month* on psychic services – thousands of calls per day.

This ancient pagan practice has always been an abomination to God. Deut.4:19, 17:2-5

God wants us to see that *He* controls our future, and to pray for *His* guidance before decisions.

Instead of reading horoscopes, read the Bible – don't ignore the will of God.

Nebuchadnezzar had recently conquered Egypt and seen the gigantic statues of the Pharaohs.

He must have imagined that a similar statue in Babylon would preserve his own memory.

Yet he tossed and turned, feeling anxious, troubled, exhausted (sleepless), desperate.

He called *not* on God, but on the *world's* most highly educated men for relief & comfort.

Their books listed dream symbols / meanings. The problem: they had to know the dream!

2:4-9 – The King Demands Interpretation of the Dream

Dan.2:4-9 Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.” The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, “The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore, show me the dream and its interpretation.” They answered a second time and said, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation.”

The king answered and said, “I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm— if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation.”

The phrase “in Aramaic” introduces a change of language from Hebrew, through Chapter 7. The prophecy in Dan.2:4-7:28 deals with the Gentiles, using the official language of Babylon.

In 2:5, the king *threatened* a respected group that was accustomed to honor and prestige. The king *demand*ed interpretation *without describing the dream*, under threat of death. KJV suggests the king forgot the dream. He wanted answers; he would have shared any clues. But more likely, he made his extraordinary demand to test the ability of the wise men. If the king said that he forgot the dream, the wise men could have invented one.

He may have doubted their powers, honesty, or loyalty. He accused them of delaying. He may have been using this as an excuse to “clean house” and appoint his own men. By not revealing the dream, he could have detected any story they might invent. If the dream *was* forgotten, he could not have known in Dan.2:9 whether they were lying.

2:10-13 – The King Denies the Final Plea of the Wise Men

Dan.2:10-13 The Chaldeans answered the king: “There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand; no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician, enchanter or Chaldean. The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.” Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. So, the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.

Wise men confidently claimed they could interpret any dream - who could disprove it? But they knew that *no one* could *read the mind* of the king, especially *past* dreams. His dream had become their nightmare. The king suspected them of treason.

Baffled (unfamiliar territory for them) and fearing for their lives, they tried flattery: “Such a wise king is too great a man to expect such knowledge from mere servants.” No one else could do it either; *only God* could reveal such a secret and its true meaning.

They even *confessed* in 2:11, admitting their inability and their past deceptions of the king. The king and all his wisest men (best that earth could offer) were *desperate* and *hopeless*. The king ordered his soldiers to execute all the wise men in Babylon, including Daniel. Ironically the king was an unwitting pawn, as God set the stage to show His sovereignty.