

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church

107 East Austin

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

C1227 – August 15, 2012 – Daniel 2:1-23
The Dream Revealed

We come to Daniel again. In Daniel 1 we have a narrative section depicting how Daniel and his friends came to Babylon. They were taken into Exile by the king of Babylon for disciplinary reasons as stated in Lev 26 and Deut 28. Daniel and others were selected according to the most stringent requirements to enter into the University of Babylon for three years of intense re-indoctrination. During the training he would be given all the finest amenities; room and board, food and wine in order to enhance his education. But Daniel and his friends had the word of God hidden in their heart so they might not sin against God and therefore they requested abstention from the king's choice food and wine as these would defile them according to the Mosaic Law. And because of their obedience to the Mosaic Law God blessed them, He raised them to prominence and placed them in the highest governmental positions in the Babylonian Kingdom, the king's own court. So I take it that chapter 1 is given in order to teach the Jews how to live in Gentile kingdoms; namely by trusting the Lord and obeying His voice.

Now we come now to Daniel 2 and if you have chart 2 please pull that out so it's handy. Chapter 2 shifts from how Daniel and his friends came to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar and his dream of the metal statue that outlines the times of the Gentiles. Sometimes this dream is called the forgotten dream, but Nebuchadnezzar didn't forget the dream, he was just fed up with the dubious interpretations of dreams he had been given by the wise men of Babylon and so he was looking for someone who could prove a legitimate ability to interpret dreams. And that's what we'll be getting into.

And in verse 1 notice, **Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.** On chart 2 you notice that chapter 2 Daniel was just how old? 17 years old. And if you're careful with the text you realize this chapter

occurs during Daniel's schooling. Daniel hasn't even graduated from the university yet; Daniel is still within the three year training period, near the end of his third year but still in training. And we can tell this from three different angles. First of all, verse 1 says this occurred in **the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign** which would have been the third year of Daniel's training. The way the Babylonians reckoned regal years was to consider the first year the accession year and Nebuchadnezzar's accession year back in 1:1 was 605BC, so that year would not be counted a regal year. His first regal year would be 604BC and the **second** regal year would be 603BC. Since Daniel was on a three year course of study which began in 605BC then his third year would also be 603BC. Now that doesn't solve everything but secondly, it's interesting that in verse 2 Daniel and his friends were not summoned by the king to hear the king's challenge. Yet if they had already graduated and were found to be wiser than any of the wise men of Babylon as chapter 1 stated, then why would the wisest men not be brought in before the king? Thirdly, we'd also say these events occurred before Daniel graduated because in v 25 it doesn't seem the king knew Daniel. And yet if this had been after his final examination then Daniel would have been well-known to the king. So for these and other reasons we'd say these events are occurring before Daniel's graduation from the three year course but near the end, at the time Daniel was just 17 years old. We might as well add the observation from 1:17, that it was during Daniel's schooling that it was discovered that he could understand all kinds of visions and dreams. So for those reasons I take it chapter 2 occurred within the three years training but right near the end and the promotion at the end of chapter 2 may indeed be tied together with the final examination.

So verse 1, **Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams**; notice **dreams** plural not singular, we know he had a single dream because of the metal image we see later so the point of the plural is to emphasize that Nebuchadnezzar was having a recurrent dream, he was seeing the same dream over and over, the same metal statue. And you see that it agitated him, **his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him**. Nebuchadnezzar became an insomniac.

So verse 2, **Then the king gave orders to call in the magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams**. The emphasis is on the **then**, at that time, whatever time it was,

sometime in the middle of the night. It was such a bothersome dream and he couldn't sleep that he called in all the wise men of Babylon. Now we'll go through these four professions in verse 2, there are actually six in all used of this class of men in the Book of Daniel, only four are listed here, so the point is not to give details about each of the professions but to say that all the wise men of Babylon were summoned by the king. All the greatest minds, I call them all the wise men because the text does that often, and if you're thinking of the wise men that came to find baby Jesus in Matt 2 I'd say you're thinking along the right lines. This was a class of scholars or advisors to the king of Babylon.

Now if you want to know the details of these professions, **the magicians** technically means "those with the stylus," they were sacred writers, they would copy Babylonian texts and so they would be very knowledgeable in every area of Babylonian thought. The **conjurers** refers to priests of the Babylonian texts. They presided over the Babylonian libraries and were obviously knowledgeable of these texts. The **sorcerers** were into witchcraft, they used herbs and charms and various potions to communicate with demons. And the **Chaldeans** are a class of priests; they may have been the elite of the four because they are going to take the lead in responding to the king. But the main idea of the list is to say all the wise men of Babylon were brought before the king, everybody who had something to offer, and notice, **to tell the king his dreams**. Observe, the king's not asking for the interpretation of the **dream**, he's asking for the dream itself. If he'd asked for the interpretation of the dream then that was something these wise men claimed to be able to do. They believed that the interpretation of dreams was an art. Over the years these various professions had developed various techniques for interpreting dreams. So they had vast books that stated what symbols in a dream might signify and these were laid down as rules. So all they had to know was the dream and then they could apply the rules and give an interpretation that satisfied people ignorant of the rules.

Now you have to understand, Nebuchadnezzar had only been the leader of Babylon for three years and so these men came over from his father's administration. And it seems he didn't like them so much, he's obviously had dreams before and summoned them to give him the interpretation. And he wasn't buying it. So these wise men have underestimated the new king and he's about to undo them, they are in for a real rude awakening at this

summons because he's not going to have these shenanigans going on in his kingdom.

So verse 3, **The king said to them, "I had a dream and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."** Actually it doesn't say **understand the dream** it says **know the dream**, I want to **know the dream**, tell me **the dream**. It's obviously a very troubling dream, he can't sleep, he's had all the wise men in the city of Babylon woken up and brought before him, **tell me the dream**.

Verse 4, **Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic:** so this group steps forward, they're a subset of all the wise men of Babylon, they take the lead and they **spoke in Aramaic**. Now this is where the book shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic. Remember I told you Daniel is a strange book because it's unlike any other book in the OT except Ezra, it's written in two languages; Hebrew and Aramaic. From 1:1-2:4a it's written in Hebrew, but from 2:4b-7:28 it's written in Aramaic, and then in 8:1 it's going to switch back to Hebrew all the way to the end of the book in 12:13. So there are two languages in the book and why did we say there are two languages in the book? The Aramaic section is to address Gentiles, it's their language, it's to explain the times of the Gentiles, when they are given sovereignty over Israel. Why the Hebrew sections? The Hebrew portions are obviously written in the language of the Jews to teach them how to live during the times of the Gentiles and that's what chapter 1 was all about, Daniel and his friends teaching later generations of Jews how to live among Gentiles under discipline and yet be blessed which is the same thing going on in this text tonight, how to live among Gentiles and be blessed.

So here come the **Chaldeans**, they speak **to the king in Aramaic: O king, live forever!** That's a nice customary greeting at 4am. They say, **Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation!** It was real easy, just put the dream through their rules of interpretation and bingo, out pops the interpretation and they can get back to bed.

But they've got a problem in verse 5, **The king replied to the Chaldeans, "The command from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb and your houses will be made a rubbish heap.** Now you'd say the king is a

little radical but this is and always will be typical of Middle East tyrants. They're going to get their way or else. And you can tell how agitating the dream was from this response, **you'll be torn limb from limb**, and that's literal, he's going to dismember them, a terrible way to die. And not only that, but also, **your houses will be made a rubbish heap**; **house** referring to family, their entire families will be destroyed. So it's obvious the king is agitated, it's obvious the king is skeptical of their abilities and it's obvious the king really wants to know the meaning of the dream, he senses its importance.

But verse 6, if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor; so on the other side of it, if you can do this, tremendous material wealth, tremendous public recognition; **therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation.** Now it's apparent that Nebuchadnezzar knows what these wise men claim to be able to do. Their claim was that they had techniques to contact the gods and through the gods they could make the interpretation known. So Nebuchadnezzar was a smart man, he reasoned that if they had contact with the gods to get the interpretation then they could just as easily contact the gods and get the dream itself, and if they could do that it would prove the legitimacy of the interpretation. So the king was quite brilliant. And he was a very unusual king in the ancient world because kings usually accepted the interpretations *carte blanche* for fear of displeasing the gods. But he obviously thinks these guys are pulling the wool over his eyes so he says, **declare to me the dream and its interpretation.**

Verse 7, **They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation."** So they have nothing to add. There's nothing new here to their response. They can't do what the king is asking so if they can't get the dream out of the king they know they're done for.

Verse 8, **The king replied, "I know for certain that you are bargaining for time, inasmuch as you have seen that the command from me is firm, 9that if you do not make the dream known to me, there is only one decree for you. For you have agreed together to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the situation is changed; therefore tell me the dream, that I may know that you can declare to me its**

interpretation.” So the king starts to charge them, and there are several accusations made here. One in verse 8, you’re **bargaining for time**. Why do they need time? To come up with a solution to their problem, a way to get out of the situation. **Inasmuch as you have seen that the command from me is firm**. They could tell by Nebuchadnezzar’s demeanor they were in a jam. His face wasn’t too friendly. Then secondly in verse 9 he charges them with agreeing **together to speak lying and corrupting words before him until the situation is changed**, so now he’s saying they’re all in it together, they’ve all made a secret pact and this was to protect their hides. But he’s found a way to trap them and that’s the logic at the end of verse 9, if you can tell me the dream then I know you can tell me the interpretation. So again, these men highly underestimated Nebuchadnezzar, and probably Nebuchadnezzar’s daddy was not this smart, but Nebuchadnezzar was this smart and so in verse 10 they come out with it.

The Chaldeans answered the king and said, “There is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king,” and they’re right about that, they are dead on, nobody can read anybody else’s mind, you can’t read mine and I can’t read yours. So this is quite an admission. Then they add, **inasmuch as no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer or Chaldean**. See all the pagan kingdoms had these professions, except Israel. Israel had a God who was sovereign over all history and could reveal the future because He planned the future and Israel was therefore listen to God through Moses and the prophets. But all the pagans had an infatuation with knowing the future by divination, by magical potions, by witchcraft, all kinds of special techniques, conjuring up the dead. And I think these **Chaldeans** overstepped their bounds here because you can hear it in their tone. They’re saying King Nebuchadnezzar, you’re being unreasonable, no great king or ruler ever asked anything like this, you’re wrong to demand this of us.

Moreover, verse 11, **the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with mortal flesh**. This is another huge admission since they claimed to have contact with the gods. It was the central claim of their profession that they could contact the gods and reveal to the king that knowledge. And yet here they admit they don’t have contact with the gods.

So verse 12, the king's suspicions were right, and **Because of this the king became indignant and very furious and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.** Now you can see the king wasn't kidding back in verse 4 about tearing them limb from limb. He's extremely angry and there are several reasons he's angry. One is he simply can't find out the meaning of the dream and that's what he wants to know. He's extremely agitated about it, he knows it's important but he can't find anyone that can tell him. Second, his suspicions about these wise men have been confirmed, they don't know anything, they're a joke. And third, they've been feeding him a line, all the previous interpretations of dreams they made were dubious. So he's angry.

But he still has his logic machine, he already worked this all through in advance, now there's nothing left to do except kill them all. Why kill them all? Because it's a worthless profession. And if you can't do the profession you claim to do then destroy the profession. Now that explains verse 13 because Daniel and his friends were in training for that profession, so they have to be killed too. **So the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they looked for Daniel and his friends to kill them.** They may not be done with the training yet but hey, Nebuchadnezzar reasoned, I don't need anymore of these creeps around. Besides, if I can outsmart all of them why do I need them around? If I can outmaneuver them then why do I need them? That's Nebuchadnezzar's thought. And he's right. These guys are just adding intrigue to the kingdom and making a living off of it. So there's no use for them. **The decree went forth that the wise men should be slain.** Now it may be limited to the **wise men of the city of Babylon** at this time because verse 12 just says **Babylon** but in 2:49 and 5:1 it says "province of Babylon" referring to the entire country. So while it's hard to tell, probably it's just the city of Babylon, but still, even then, most of the wise men would be in the city of Babylon. So this is going to be a lot of men and their families being killed, their families because these professions usually stayed in the families.

So here are **Daniel and his friends** under a death sentence. In verse 14 you see **Arioch**, he's the king's chief executioner, so he's not a very nice guy. He's a loyal guy but not very nice. He's commissioned by the king to carry out this decree. He goes out and he runs across Daniel and apparently it's just him and Daniel and he told Daniel he was under a death sentence and arrested him. But in verse 14, **Daniel replied with discretion and discernment**

to Arioch. And here we come to the heart of the section, with those two words we are given insight into Daniel's character. The first one, translated **discretion** actually means "according to counsel," referring back to the counsel Daniel's parents had given him before the Exile. However he replied to **Arioch** he did it according to the training his parents had given him. He had listened to his parent's wisdom as a young boy because they used to have this thing called respect and so he listened and here he is out in captivity and he applies his parents wisdom in a very distressing situation. It had just been announced to him he was going to be executed, but very calmly and collectedly he went back to his parents training and replied according to their counsel. A tremendous example of courage under fire! Now the second word **discernment** means "with good taste," meaning in a suitable manner given the situation, he didn't smart off, he didn't fight the authority, he responded in a suitable manner and this is evident by Arioch's response. Arioch is actually going to inform Daniel of what is going on. He didn't have to do that. He's under orders to execute all the wise men of Babylon. There's no discussion, just execute. So the fact in verse 15 that he **informed Daniel about the matter** shows that Daniel's reply to him softened him and so the question in verse 15 got a response. **"For what reason is the decree from the king so urgent?"** Well, said Arioch, you've got my attention because nobody else I've arrested was able to respond the way you did when I announced "You're under the death penalty!" Everybody else went into a conniption and started falling to pieces. But Daniel's response got his attention and so he informed him. He told him the king has discovered that your profession is a fraud. Daniel already knew that. Daniel may have been in training to be a wise man but he knew all this baloney about interpreting dreams was a sham. He told Daniel that the king's solution to the profession was to eliminate it and therefore since Daniel was training for the profession he was to be eliminated.

So Daniel, verse 16, we don't have the whole story, but Daniel requested an audience with the king and this is amazing. Obviously we can see that God is sovereign over the situation. Obviously God is sovereign over all the nations, over all the Gentiles rulers, over all. And **So Daniel went in and requested of the king.** Now to just to walk into the king's throne room could get you killed! But he survives. And I wonder as I read the text if Esther and Mordecai didn't talk about this incident when Mordecai told her to go in before King Ahaseurus, a capital offense. I don't know if they did but

it's worth considering. So he goes in before the king and requests what?

Time. We can infer it was a limited time, not open ended but limited. Yet that's the same thing the wise men requested in verse 8, when Nebuchadnezzar charged them with bargaining for time! So this request for time must be different than the one before or else Nebuchadnezzar would have put him right on the chopping block. So while it simply says **time, in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king**, something is different and we gather, from what Nebuchadnezzar required earlier, that they declare to him the dream, that when it says Daniel requested time in order to declare the interpretation to the king, that Daniel told him that indeed he would declare the dream to the king as well, otherwise the king wouldn't have granted him the time.

So here is this student, this exile from Judah, who gets an audience with the king and the king is going to grant him the time. And it shows you that Daniel was able to convince the king that he could indeed tell him the dream and the interpretation of the dream and it tells you how much Nebuchadnezzar wanted to know what the dream meant. He wanted to know very badly and so here's this 17 year old who says he'll tell me the dream, alright, this is interesting, he's not going anywhere, if he fails he'll be executed anyway, so alright, I'll give him the time.

Now verse 17 and watch Daniel's immediate action., **Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter, 18so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery**, so he calls his prayer warriors. Now that right there is another tremendous insight into the spiritual character of Daniel. He's got a crisis and he doesn't fall apart, he doesn't lose his bearings, he immediately resorts to prayer, he calls his prayer warriors, hey, we've got a crisis, we're scheduled for execution, let's take it to the Lord in prayer, He rules in heaven above over earth beneath, He will provide a solution.

Now is that how you solve your daily problems? Do you immediately resort to prayer? This response doesn't just occur out of the clear blue. This takes years of training. This response is due to a habitual problem solving device, daily turning to the Lord in prayer, Daniel has been doing this kind of problem solving for years in all the little details of life so when a big crisis

hits he just goes into the same problem solving device, he immediately turns to prayer.

Now we're not told what the prayers were like, all we know is they were targeted in v 18 toward God revealing the mystery, O Lord, you are the God of heaven, you rule over all , you know all things, reveal to us the dream that Nebuchadnezzar had in his head that no man on earth can know. So here we have the top four believers in Babylon joining in prayer, wherever two or three are gathered in my name, I am with them said the Lord Jesus Christ, so they're gathered, the four prayer warriors, I'd suggest they're all facing Jerusalem like the Mosaic Law says, all facing the Temple and they're going to appeal to the God of heaven because otherwise the next thing for them is the chopping block.

And the purpose of the prayer meeting is at the end of verse 18, **so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.** So the main reason is that God would distinguish them from the rest of the **wise men of Babylon**; the sacred writers of Babylonian texts, the priests who presided over the Babylonian texts, the sorcerers who utilized various potions and chants and the Chaldeans, the elite class of priests, all of them, along with all the other students in their school, don't forget them because they're in training for this profession. And since the profession is going to be wiped off the map of Babylon then they'll have to be wiped off too. Nebuchadnezzar considered them all a bunch of quacks. So Daniel and his friends pray to be distinguished from all the quacks.

Now this prayer is going to be answered in a way that is far beyond all that Daniel and his friends could ever ask or think because God is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think. So by the end of the chapter you'll see a different answer to the prayer than the one they were asking. And it's an exciting answer to the prayer because it illustrates this great principle that a lot of times our prayers are far too short sighted, God is able to do exceedingly abundantly more than we can ever ask or think. And if you read ahead you'll discover this great answer to prayer. This is going to work out in an amazing way.

But tonight, in verse 19, we're told Daniel got an answer. Now they may have prayed for hours, they may have been like you and I and fall asleep praying, but that they must have prayed and prayed we can gather because there was a limited time frame to get back to Nebuchadnezzar with the dream. So within the time frame it comes in verse 19, **Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision.** Now we're not told the answer, *yet*, that's the subject of the rest of the chapter, but we can gather some ideas from the following praise.

Notice we are told it came during the **night** and by way of **vision**. Now the vision was typically when you were awake, dreams were when you were asleep. So I envision that Daniel was still awake, still praying. I don't know about his three friends, they may have been conked out, but he was awake praying and the Lord broke in and gave Daniel a vision, revealing precisely what Nebuchadnezzar had seen in his dream over and over. See God was the one giving Nebuchadnezzar the dream and He was doing this on purpose, He wanted to communicate something to this Gentile king, but observe that Gentile kings can never interpret the dreams God gives them. It always takes a who? It always takes a Jew. When have we seen this before? With Pharaoh and Joseph in Egypt. Pharaoh had dreams too, recurring dreams, and yet Pharaoh didn't know what they meant, so they found Joseph and Joseph had this ability Daniel had, the ability to interpret dreams and he explained to Pharaoh the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine. And so Joseph was exalted to great status, second only to Pharaoh in all Egypt. Now what do we have here but a repeat scenario, a Gentile king has a dream, he doesn't have a clue what it means, but a Jew again in his kingdom is given the ability to interpret dreams and he's going to explain it to the king and once again, be exalted to great status in the kingdom. What is God saying by all this?

Well He's saying two things? One thing he's saying is that the link to God comes through the Jewish people. Gentiles get linked to God through the Jews, never independent from the Jews. Even you and I are linked to Christ through Jews because the Church began with all Jews on the day of Pentecost, all the NT writings are authored by apostles and prophets who are Jews, so the only way to understand and know things about God is through the Jews. As Paul says it in the NT, the oracles of God were committed to who? The Jews. Not Gentiles, Gentiles do not have a private line to God.

The second thing this is teaching is that if Jews living under Gentile rules will submit to Him and honor Him then God will elevate them, God will exalt them among the Gentiles. And that's what we will see here. When Daniel reveals the dream and the interpretation of the dream, Daniel will be promoted to the highest levels of administration in the entire kingdom of Babylon.

Alright, so we come to Daniel's response and we might expect Daniel to say, thanks God for saving my neck, but the response is much more theological, he turns to *berak*, to blessing or praise and the word includes the posture, he's kneeling in verse 19. **Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven; 20 Daniel said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever.** Now the name focuses on the character of God, the attributes of God, two of which are mentioned next. **For wisdom and power belong to Him. Wisdom** relating to what attribute of God? Omniscience, God knows all things and Daniel is reflecting on the fact that God has made known to him a portion of His knowledge. And **power**, relating to what attribute of God? Omnipotence, that God can do anything that is compatible with His character. So evidently God has made something known to Daniel that is in God's wisdom and God is going to bring it to pass in the future. God is going to be the one who does it! God is in charge.

What is he in charge of? Verse 21, **It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings;** now two expressions here, the first one is the bigger idea and the second one is the lesser idea, but they go together and can't be separated from one another. First of all, **It is He who changes the times and the epochs.** Now this is a powerful expression that refers to changes in kingdoms. It's saying God is in charge of kingdom changes. Now most people think that kingdom changes occur because of military defeat. But military defeat is only incidental to the real cause behind it, namely, God's sovereignty over all the kingdoms of the earth. So we can tell that the dream has something to do with kingdom changes in history. And that's what Nebuchadnezzar was concerned about because he was the king. So it agitated him. But it didn't agitate Daniel at all, it actually encouraged him and that's one of the purposes of this dream; to agitate Gentiles and encourage Jews. Now secondly, and this idea is included, **He removes kings and establishes kings.** Obviously with

kingdom changes you have the removal and establishment of kings in those kingdoms. So again, while most people think what governs changes in government is the voting booth, the real cause behind changes in government is God's sovereignty over all the kings of earth, He raises them up and He brings them down. So the dream also included revelation about changes in kings. And so the first half of verse 21 highlights God's power, God's omnipotence to bring about changes in kingdoms and kings.

The second half of the verse relates to God's wisdom, God's omniscience, in that He revealed this all to Daniel. **He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding.** Daniel recognized the principle that to him who is **wise** more wisdom is given and to him who has understanding more knowledge is given. Now this flies in the face of many in the post-modern church who deprecate knowledge. God says to he who is faithful with little I will give him much. So it is with he who seeks wisdom and knowledge, he who has a little and is faithful with it, God will give more. So then we can write the post-modern mantra off as idiocy, sheer idiocy, they have less than little and what they have they hate, so they are without knowledge. And God says of His people, they are destroyed for lack of what? Lack of knowledge. So the postmodern church is destroyed, theirs is nothing there but a cesspool of filth and I have no interest in gaining anything from them. That's why I read good books, starting with the Bible, like Daniel, studying and reading the only book God ever wrote. So Daniel was wise and to him more wisdom was given. Daniel had understanding and to him more knowledge was given. He was mature at 17 but maturing, there's always room left for more growth. So mature, yes, but maturing, that's the trend you want to be on.

Verse 22, **It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness And the light dwells with Him.** Two things I want to point out about verse 22. The first is this is the night Daniel formally became a prophet. God had never spoken to him before this day. So I take it Daniel was extremely excited when God spoke to him through the vision and revealed this to him. And this is why Jesus refers to Daniel as a prophet. He was a recipient of the secret things of God, the **profound, hidden** things, things no man could know God made known to Daniel. And the second thing is this bit about darkness and light. Light here, as in John 1 and in 1 John 1, is a symbol for knowledge of God. Darkness is ignorance of God. He who walks in the light knows God, but he who walks in the darkness

has neither known God nor seen God. And God can give light to men who are in darkness because God is light.

So now, after he has focused attention on who God is and what God does, in verse 23 he concludes with thanks and praise. Thanks and praise are always the proper response to revelation. And he states, **To you, O God of my fathers**, linking himself back to the God of his parents, his grandparents, his tribe and nation, **To you...I give thanks and praise; For you have given me wisdom and power; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You.** Notice the significance of the we. It wasn't Daniel alone who requested this, it was Daniel and his friends, so he makes mention of their prayers too, they were a team of prayer warriors, Daniel wasn't a lone ranger in all this. **You have made known to me what we requested of You. For You have made known to us the king's matter.** Now the matter was made known by God only to Daniel but Daniel apparently shared it with the others and in verse 24 he's off, we're not told if he waited till morning, we're not told if it was still during the night. Nebuchadnezzar couldn't sleep so it's acceptable to consider that he went right away, particularly when you see down in verse 25 that when Daniel told Arioch he hurriedly brought Daniel into the king's presence. There's an urgency to the matter, something that probably couldn't wait till morning but we'll wait to get further into the verses.

I want to conclude with an observation from the praise section there in vv 19-23. What observation? Observe that before Daniel even goes into the king to declare the dream he praises God for revealing it to Him. Yet he hasn't even checked with the king to make sure it was right. So Daniel had 100% confidence that the dream was right, that the dream he saw was identical to the dream Nebuchadnezzar saw. So he doesn't have to wait to praise God. He praises God right away because God never gets anything wrong. And I think this is another one of those principles we can apply when we hit a crisis in life. And that is as we pray for a solution to our problem, as we pray for wisdom to navigate the problem and God helps us put together the wisdom principles to apply to our situation, before we even implement them we can go ahead and give thanks to God that He solved our problem, before it is actually solved. Because in reality when we apply the wisdom principles our problem will be solved. So go ahead and give thanks, even while you're still in the crisis.

So in conclusion, what we learn once more are principles the Jews can apply living out under Gentile powers while disciplining them. Three in particular. First, Daniel was able to stay calm and collected in a crisis situation. He was able to address the authority according to godly parental counsel and in such a way that was suitable to the situation. Secondly, when his request for time was granted he went to the Lord in prayer. Is that the first thing we do when we face a crisis? Do we go to the Lord in prayer? Do we gather all our prayer warriors together and start taking our prayers and petitions to the Lord? That's one of the things we've got to do living out here among big Gentile powers, big Gentile governments that legislate against us and put our lives in jeopardy. Always, always, habitual problem solving device, go to the Lord in prayer, get you a team of prayer warriors and take it to them. God can do exceedingly, abundantly beyond all you can ask or think!ⁱ And thirdly, when God shows you the wisdom principles for solving your problem go ahead and praise Him, go ahead and give Him thanks, even before you've woken up the next morning to apply the principles, go ahead and praise Him for who He is and what He does and for solving your problem because God never fails!

Alright, next week we'll get into the dream itself, so go ahead and read through the chapter to get familiar with the metal image.

ⁱ I can't help but again think of Esther and Mordecai. When Mordecai told Esther to go in before King Ahaseurus and intercede for her people how did Esther respond? You get all the people together and you pray and fast for three days! I'll be doing the same on the inside. Then I'll go in before the king. And pray they did. Did God answer the prayer? Above all they could ask or think!

[Back To The Top](#)

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2012