

Lecture #3

Daniel 2:1 – 2:49

DANIEL 2:1-18

How do you cope with crisis times? What do you do when you find yourself in a threatening situation? For Daniel and his three friends the answer was - you pray.

The situation which Daniel and his friends find themselves in here in chapter two is:

1) Life threatening; 2) Not their fault; 3) Very satanic; 4) Humanly impossible.

This is a crisis that is as bad as it can be. The thing we find Daniel doing is praying. The lesson to learn here is this:

IN CRISIS TIMES OF LIFE WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE FIND THEMSELVES THREATENED BY CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND THEIR CONTROL, GOD'S FAITHFUL PEOPLE CAN PRAY AND TRUST GOD FOR HIS SOVEREIGN HELP.

This is a remarkable story. There are ten parts to it: All begin with a word which begins with the letter "D."

Daniel 2:1 – The dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar had dreams which troubled his spirit and took away his sleep. We may notice that the noun "dreams" is plural in this verse, but if we look carefully at verse 3, the noun "dream" is singular. As I understand it - Nebuchadnezzar had one troubling dream many times. Now it will turn out that this dream is actually a revelation from God.

Now dreams today are not revelations from God.

Dr. John Walvoord made an interesting observation about this verse when he said that Nebuchadnezzar did one thing that no believer should ever do - take his problems to bed with him. The believer should pray and turn them over to God.

Daniel 2:2-3 – The desire of Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar's anxious desire was to understand the dream. So he called in all kinds of supposed "wise men" who could perhaps interpret dreams.

- 1) He called in the magicians - word refers to textual scribes who probably wrote about mysterious things.
- 2) He called in the conjurers - those who supposedly could contact the dead.
- 3) He called in the sorcerers - those who used incantations and potions and practiced witchcraft.
- 4) He called in the Chaldeans - supposed philosophical religious intellectuals and priests.

He called all of these types of people who, as one writer said, were nothing more than "miserable charlatans" to try to give him an understanding of his dream.

Daniel 2:4 – The desire of the Chaldeans.

The Chaldeans took charge and they addressed the king very honorably - “O King Live Forever.” They were confident that if the king told them the dream, they could figure out some interpretation.

Daniel 2:5-6 – The decree of the king.

Nebuchadnezzar decided not to tell them the dream but he commanded that they tell him both the dream and the interpretation of it. There is some debate whether or not he could remember the dream. But the point is they needed to be able to tell him the dream and the interpretation:

1) If they did not do this they would be executed and their houses would be made into restrooms. **2:5**

2) If they did do this they would receive gifts, reward and honor. **2:6**

Daniel 2:7 – The desperation of the Chaldeans.

The Chaldeans were desperate and again asked the king to tell them the dream. The king knew what it was and they wanted him to repeat it to them.

Daniel 2:8-9 – The doubt of the king.

The king was a shrewd man. He really didn't trust this group and rightly so. He knew they were buying time. He knew that if he told them the dream they would just invent some collective interpretation, which was not true, so he stuck to his position. He stuck to his decree - either tell me the dream and the interpretation or you will be killed.

Daniel 2:10-11 – The deduction of the Chaldeans.

The Chaldeans concluded there was not a man on earth who could do what he was asking; only some deity could do this. The implication of their own testimony is that any who claim to be able to reveal the future is a liar. Actually, they are correct here - there was no man on earth who could do this, but they were mistaken in that there was a man on earth who could contact the God of heaven and do it.

Daniel 2:12-13 – The determination of the king.

The king was angry and determined to carry out his decree - destroy all the wise men in Babylon. Now we may recall that Daniel and his associates were selected because they were considered to be wise men (1:4). So this edict would certainly affect them.

Daniel 2:14-16 – The discernment of Daniel.

Daniel was wise in the way he approached Arioch, the captain of the king's bodyguard. He was not emotional or irrational. He is calm in the face of deadly danger and this calm was due to his relationship to God that was clean and pure. He approached this deliberately, with discretion and discernment. When he discovered an edict had been given to destroy him and his friends, he immediately went before the king and requested that he be given time to do what the king asked.

Now there is a real sovereign moving of God right here that we want to see. Keep in mind that Nebuchadnezzar was angry with the false phonies for "bargaining for time" (**2:8**), but Daniel is asking for time and Nebuchadnezzar grants it.

Daniel 2:17-18 – The decision of Daniel.

Daniel decided to go to his home and tell his three friends - notice their Hebrew names are used here, not their Babylonian names (1:7). He also decided that what they needed to do was to pray. These are young men in their late teens. Yet they see the need to pray. These four were young men of prayer. Where did they get the idea that God could reveal dreams? From studying the O.T. - There are ten revelatory dreams recorded in the book of Genesis.

Now what is interesting is what Daniel says they need to ask God for - "compassion," not information. Really what they need is information about the dream, but there is something they need more of if one is going to approach God - they need God's compassion and mercy to permit them to enter into His presence through prayer.

What did Daniel and his friends do in crisis times - they prayed. What did they do when surrounded by a satanic world - they prayed. What did they do when in Babylon away from the godly places and people - they prayed. The effectual prayer of righteous people can accomplish much. It can move God. There are times when godly people need to get together for emergency prayer meetings and this was one of those times. One of the key ingredients to Daniel's power and prosperity was his prayer life.

DANIEL 2:19-23

God's people need to learn an important lesson from Daniel - when faced with insurmountable problems and seemingly impossible situations, they need to learn to pray. Go to God in prayer, but when God answers the prayer, go back to God and praise Him.

There is no question that one of the things that made Daniel and his friends so special was the fact that he was a man of prayer. He was a disciplined, godly man who prayed. This theme shows up various times in Daniel. In fact, it is this reality that will eventually get him thrown into a lion's den (Daniel 6:10). One of the things that Daniel does in his prayers is praise God. He would give thanks and praise to God. Daniel did not just receive things from God, but he gave back worship and praise to God. If ever there is a passage that makes that point clear, it is this one. That is why some call this passage "Daniel's Psalm."

DANIEL PRAYS TO GOD AND PRAISES GOD FOR THE GREAT ANSWER TO PRAYER IN REVEALING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM TO HIM.

I want to take the time to carefully understand this section because this is so critical to the rest of the book of Daniel. The fact that Daniel prayed and then, when he got answers, he went back and gave praise and thanks to God, which was a key to God continuing to answer his prayers.

Now **verse 19** begins with the word “then” which connects us to verses **17-18**. Daniel had gone to his friends and requested that they all pray and God answered the prayer. It is not known for sure how long a time gap existed before the answer; it is possible that God answered the prayer that very night. In other words, it is possible that God revealed the dream to Daniel and the interpretation of the dream to Daniel that very night. Now during Daniel’s day, God would reveal things through visions and dreams; sometimes at night and sometimes during the day (Daniel 8:1-3). This was revealed to Daniel in a “night vision” - not a dream but a revelation of God.

Notice verse 19 says “the mystery was revealed.” The word “mystery” is used many times in this chapter (2:18,19, 27, 28, 29, 30, 47). A mystery is not something completely unknown, but something not completely understood. A biblical mystery needs God’s revelatory work to make it clearly and completely understood. Nebuchadnezzar knew the dream, but he did not know what the dream meant.

The first thing Daniel did when God answered his prayer was to take the time to offer praise to God. He did not take off running to find the king; he took time to thank and praise God.

Now the end of **verse 19** says that Daniel “blessed the God of heaven.” The Hebrew word “bless” (“barak”) is one that actually means to kneel down before God in order to offer reverent praise to Him (*BDB*, p. 138).

Furthermore, He is identified as the “God of heavens” to show that this is the true, high and holy God. There are three books in the O.T. where this phrase is used pertaining to God - Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel. The one N.T. book is Revelation. All three books have specific connection to the same prophecies about Israel, her sin and her being scattered among Gentile nations for her sin. This title means God controls all earthly power, even that which dominates His people. There are gods invented by men, and then there is the one true God of heaven. Daniel is on his knees before God praising the true God of the Bible. This is a masterpiece of praise. **Verse 20** restates that the name of God is to be blessed forever and ever.

Daniel 2:20-22 – Because of what God is capable of doing.

(Capability #1) - God is the One who has wisdom and power. **2:20c**

In the Bible, God is identified as the only wise God (Romans 16:27). The word “wisdom” means having knowledge to be able to think through decisions. The word “power” speaks of an ability to effect a decision. As Dr. Walvoord said - God not only has wisdom and knowledge but the power to do what He wills to do (p. 57). Daniel’s God is in control, not some mystical fatalist from Babylon.

(Capability #2) - God is the One who changes the times and epochs. **2:21a**

God controls times and seasons. This does not refer to seasons of the year, but to events in history. This lends itself to a dispensational approach to the Bible. God controls historical events either directly in what He does or indirectly in what He permits.

As Dr. Wiersbe said - "The God of heaven is also the God of history" (p. 28). Notice how Daniel's prayer of praise completely emphasizes the sovereignty of God.

(Capability #3) - God is the One who removes and establishes kings. **2:21b**

The truth is this is actually what Nebuchadnezzar's dream is all about. God is revealing that He controls the leaders of nations. He controls the destiny of a nation and He controls who is permitted to lead a nation. This is one of the many ways God controls history; He controls leaders in history.

(Capability #4) - God is the One who gives wisdom to wise men. **2:21c**

We know from careful study that a key to being wise is a fear of the LORD. So if one does not fear the LORD, he will not ever tap into the wisdom of God. Make no mistake about this – God does things for some people that He does not do for others. God permits certain people to gain knowledge, but not every person will be granted His wisdom and knowledge.

(Capability #5) - God is the One who gives knowledge to men of understanding. **2:21d**

Any ability that man has to know things is from God. God gives knowledge to men who understand things about Him.

(Capability #6) - God is the One who reveals profound and hidden things. **2:22a**

These words describe things inaccessible or unsearchable. God has the ability to "disclose" deep information to those to whom He chooses.

(Capability #7) - God is the One who knows what is in darkness. **2:22b**

Darkness does not hide anything from God. There are things that surround us that leave us in the dark. This is not true with God. He sees all and He knows all. God can, will and does expose dark things.

(Capability #8) - God is the One who has light and can give light. **2:22c**

All things are clear to God. He is the God who sees all things clearly and can reveal all things clearly.

Daniel 2:23 – Because of what God personally did for Daniel.

After Daniel praised God for His greatness and power, he takes the time to thank God for what He had personally done for Daniel. Now notice Daniel changes the name of God from "the God of heavens" to "God of my fathers." This title for Daniel had an historical connotation and connection to Israel. God would spare Israel through the revealing of this dream to Daniel. Daniel links all of this to Israel.

(Personal Action #1) - God gave Daniel wisdom. **2:23a**

These are the same words used in **verse 20** in the "wisdom and power" combination. What this means is that God gave Daniel a very special wisdom, the kind that only He has.

(Personal Action #2) - God gave Daniel power. **2:23b**

God imparted a portion of both His wisdom and His power to a human being.

(Personal Action #3) - God answered the prayer of Daniel and his friends. **2:23c**

Carefully notice the pronouns “we” and “us.” Daniel believes that it wasn’t just his own prayers that moved God to answer, but the prayers of both he and his friends. There is great power to be experienced when faithful people of God unite together to pray. When we get people praying for us, God is able to do great things. Time and time again, Paul asked people to pray for him and it is no wonder he was so powerful for God.

(Personal Action #4) - God revealed to Daniel the king’s dream and interpretation of the dream. **2:23d**

Notice the chronology of Daniel’s praise - first there was great prayer to God offering Him praise for who He is and how great He is, and second there is praise to God for the information He gave concerning the king’s dream.

In Psalm 50:15, Asaph says, “And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.” That is the story of Daniel and may it also be the story of our lives.

DANIEL 2:24-49

Research has also concluded that dreams may be caused for a variety of reasons:

- 1) You may dream because of poor blood circulation.
- 2) You may dream because of improper ventilation.
- 3) You may dream because you are in an uncomfortable sleeping position.
- 4) You may dream because of what you did or did not eat or drink. Sigmund Freud claimed that people only dream disagreeable dreams because one’s stomach is upset. The Bible seems to support the point that food and drink affect dreaming (Isaiah 29:8).
- 5) You may dream because of what you were thinking about, reading or watching before you went to bed.

Dreams today are not revelatory dreams from God. God speaks to us today through His Word (II Timothy 3:16-17) and He has given His Holy Spirit to every believer; that makes revelatory dreams unnecessary (John 16:13; I Corinthians 6:19-20). Through prayer and meditation on God’s Word, in the power of the Holy Spirit, one will be guided to God’s perfect will, not through a dream. In fact, there are several warnings to be on the lookout for false dreamers (Jeremiah 29:8; Zechariah 10:2; Jude 8). This warning was given at a time when God did speak through a dream every now and then.

Before the inspired Scriptures were written, certain dreams were revelatory, in that God inspired them to reveal His truth. Now in the O.T. there are sixteen dreams which are recorded - 1) Abimelech (Gen. 20:3, 6); 2) Jacob (Gen. 28:12); 3) Jacob (Gen. 31:10-11); 4) Laban (Gen. 31:24); 5) Joseph (Gen. 37:5); 6) Joseph (Gen. 37:9); 7) Cupbearer (Gen. 40:5); 8) Baker (Gen. 40:5); 9) Pharaoh (Gen. 41:1); 10) Pharaoh (Gen. 41:5); 11) Man connected to Gideon (Judges 7:13); 12) Solomon (I Kings 3:5); 13) Job (Job 7:14); 14) Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2:1); 15) Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:5); 16) Daniel (Daniel 7:1).

The purpose of these dreams was to reveal God's program and will (Numbers 12:6; Job 33:14-15). Very often, it is to reveal the prophetic plan and program of God as it relates to the coming of Jesus Christ (Joel 2:28-29).

Furthermore, when we look to the N.T., we discover there are only six dreams recorded and four of them pertain to Joseph:

1) Joseph (Matthew 1:20); 2) Wise men from the east (Matthew 2:12); 3) Joseph (Matthew 2:13); 4) Joseph (Matthew 2:19); 5) Joseph (Matthew 2:22); 6) Pilate's wife (Matthew 27:19). **The purpose of these N.T. dreams was to reveal God's will** (i.e. Joseph should take Mary as his wife; he should flee to Egypt to save Jesus (Matthew 2:13); he should return to Israel (Matthew 2:19) and he should live in Galilee (Matthew 2:22). Remember these dreams occur at a time when there is no written word. According to Revelation 22:18, no one is to add anything to God's written Word, and one who says they got some vision or dream from God is one who is either ignorant of the Bible or one who is false.

Now Nebuchadnezzar's dream was a true, revelatory dream from God. There is something to be gleaned from this text - our value is never any higher or holier than when we can reveal God's Word accurately for both believer and unbeliever.

WE ARE NEVER MORE HONORABLE OR MORE USEABLE THAN WHEN WE ARE ABLE TO UNRAVEL THE MYSTERIES OF GOD'S WORD.

When we can give an accurate interpretation of God's Word, we are at our highest level of honor and usability.

Daniel 2:24-30 – Daniel reports to Nebuchadnezzar to reveal his dream.

(Step #1) - Daniel reports to Arioch. **2:24**

Arioch was the man who was appointed to kill the wise men of Babylon. Daniel first went to him and told him to take him before the king and he would interpret his dream. No one just walked in before the king without following proper channels of authority. If we keep in mind that Daniel has been given special revelation from God, we may conclude that one who is right with God does not usurp authority, but submits to authority.

(Step #2) - Arioch reports to Nebuchadnezzar. **2:25**

Now Arioch quickly brought Daniel in to Nebuchadnezzar and he distorted the facts - he said "he found" the man from prisoners of Judah, who could give a proper interpretation to the king. He didn't find him, Daniel found him. Arioch is trying to gain favor of the king, however, it is interesting that the king does not promote Arioch; he ends up promoting Daniel and his three friends.

(Step #3) - Nebuchadnezzar asks Daniel if he could interpret his dream. **2:26-30**

Daniel answers in a way that truly gives glory to God. Daniel gives four answers to the king's question:

Answer #1 - No man by his wisdom may interpret the dream. **2:27a**

Daniel immediately defuses that man can do this on his own.

Answer #2 - No man by his magical or demonic power may interpret the dream. **2:27b**

This was a polite way of saying - no branch of Babylonian religion or power or education could do this.

Answer #3 - Only God in heaven may interpret the dream. **2:28-29**

Daniel informs Nebuchadnezzar that God had revealed His future plan to him as to what would happen in "latter days." This phrase occurs about thirteen times in the O.T. and it refers to the days of the Messiah and His second advent. All of the visions that he had received include the world powers that will exist from 600 B.C. until Christ returns at His second coming. God revealed this to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream and through many visions that He put in his mind. God had revealed predictive prophecy to Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar could see the Word of God in a dream, but could not make any sense of the Word of God.

Answer #4 - God revealed this to Daniel not because he was more wise than others, but because He wanted you to understand what you saw. **2:30**

Daniel was a spiritual man and a humble man and he is giving God all the glory. Notice that Daniel diverts attention from himself to God. The fact is, at this moment, he is the wisest man on the earth, but he does not see himself as such.

Daniel 2:31-45 – Daniel reveals the dream and the interpretation to the dream.

There are two things necessary for the fulfillment of this dream: 1) National survival of Israel; 2) Reemergence of a major dominating Gentile power.

Observation #1 - The dream revealed. **2:31-35**

In this text and in Daniel 7:2-14, we have the entire course of Gentile world power given from Israel's captivity until the second coming of Jesus Christ. Nebuchadnezzar is given the ability to see God's program with Gentile powers from the world's perspective - a colossal man. Daniel is given the ability to see God's program with Gentile powers from God's perspective - as a beast.

Verse 31 informs us that the dream the king saw was one of a large statue which shined brightly. The statue was standing right in front of Nebuchadnezzar and it had a human form.

Part #1 - The image described. **2:32-33**

Why does Daniel first describe the dream and then give an interpretation? Why not just give an interpretation as he goes along? Because of what the king wanted. He wanted the dream made known and the interpretation of it (Daniel 2:5, 9) and that is precisely what Daniel does.

The image is described in terms of a human body which contained five key features. We will notice that as the description unfolds, the metal deteriorates from the top (head of gold) to the bottom (feet of clay): 1) Quality from gold to iron/clay; 2) Gravity from top to bottom; 3) Honor from head to feet; 4) Authority from sovereign king to divided power; 5) Biblically from superiority to inferiority (**v. 39**). The reason for the deterioration is the powers deteriorate in regard to God and God's people, making them less valuable in God's estimation, but not less usable.

(Feature #1) - It had a head made of fine gold. **2:32a**

Later in Daniel, this power will be symbolized as a lion. (7:4)

(Feature #2) - It had a breast and arms made of silver. **2:32b**

Later in Daniel, this same political power will be symbolized as a bear (7:5) and as a ram (8:3). He will identify this power by name- the Medes and Persians (5:28; 8:20).

(Feature #3) - It had a belly and thighs made of bronze. **2:32c**

Later in Daniel, this same political power will be symbolized as a leopard (7:6) and as a male goat (8:5). He will identify this power by name - Greece (Dan. 8:21).

(Feature #4) - It had legs made of iron. **2:33a**

Later in Daniel, this same political power will be seen as the most ferocious of all (7:7).

(Feature #5) - It had feet made partly of iron and partly of clay. **2:33b**

The last power will be a ferocious power and a mixed power, not pure.

Part #2 - The image destroyed. **2:34-35**

Dr. C.I. Scofield said that after Christ's death the western part of the Roman Empire fell in A.D. 476 and the Eastern part fell in A.D. 1453. However, no power succeeds it because only four empires preceded Christ's return.

Verses 34-35 prove that God's kingdom on earth will not come through Christianization, but through a destruction of world powers. This perfectly coincides with Revelation which tells us that Jesus Christ will return and smite the nations (Revelation 19:15). He will crush them.

Daniel continued to explain that Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone cut out without hands and it crushed the image until there was not a trace left and it blew away like chaff in the wind and the stone became a mountain that covered the whole earth.

Notice carefully how **verse 35** ends; the image is completely removed and replaced by a great power that fills the whole earth - which is the glory of God.

Observation #2 - The dream interpreted. **2:36-45**

In these verses Daniel gives his interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar: Notice carefully, Daniel says, "now we shall tell its interpretation" (**v. 36**) - Daniel, in accordance with the prayers of his friends and in accordance to God's answer to prayer, would give an interpretation. There are five political powers described in Daniel's interpretation:

(Political Power #1) - Babylon was the head of gold to whom God had given great controlling power. **2:37-38**

This power would reign from 606 B.C. - 538 B.C. It would be a great conquering power. The dream reveals to Nebuchadnezzar that he owes all of his political power to the God of heaven.

(Political Power #2) - After Babylon a second inferior power will arise, which is the silver power. **2:39a**

This power is not named here; however, it is identified in Daniel 8:20 as Media and Persia. This explains the breast and the two arms of the silver power. By virtue of the fact there are two arms in this power - it must refer to Medo-Persia, which joined two powers and came after Babylon and reigned from 538 B.C. - 333 B.C. Daniel will specifically mention this later - Daniel 5:28; 8:20; 11:2. Medo-Persia and Greece were larger in size than Babylon, but they were inferior in central authority and organization.

(Political Power #3) - After the second power a third power will arise which is the bronze power. **2:39b**

This is the strong legs power which is Greece, which conquered the world swiftly (8:21) and controlled the world from 333 B.C. – 63 B.C. Much more will be specifically said about this power in Daniel 7:6 and Daniel 8:5-8, 21-22.

(Political Power #4) - After the third power a fourth power will arise which is the iron/clay power. **2:40-43**

The fourth power is comprised of the legs and feet. Daniel gives much more attention to this political power than all the others put together. This power is Rome and it will be as strong as iron and will crush and shatter all things, which means there is nothing constructive about this power. Its feet and toes are made partly of iron and partly of clay. It has the ability to crush and to be crushed. It will be a divided kingdom. We may conclude this by the emphasis of the two legs and feet and by the ten toes. This kingdom will not rule all at once. This power is comprised of ten toes which are ten kings controlling ten kingdoms (**2:44**; 7:24). The mixture will be ten mixed nations uniting to stand side by side. This prophecy has not yet been fulfilled.

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson said that in the final days there will be a major movement to unite the main nations of the world. We cannot deny that this does appear to be the goal of even our own political leaders.

(Political Power #5) - After this power God will set up His kingdom on earth that will never be destroyed. **2:44-45**

This is a reference to the millennial Kingdom that Jesus Christ will establish on earth. There are three ways that Jesus Christ is a stone: 1) To Israel He is a stumbling stone; 2) To the Church He is the foundation stone; 3) To the nations He is the crushing stone.

Daniel 2:46-49 – Nebuchadnezzar responds to Daniel's interpretation.

(Response #1) - Nebuchadnezzar falls prostrate before Daniel. **2:46a**

Typically kings do not bow before anyone; all bow before him. This is amazing, for a Babylonian king is bowing before a non-Babylonian Jew.

(Response #2) - Nebuchadnezzar gives a praise offering to Daniel. **2:46b**

Some critics of Daniel say he should not have accepted this offering, but Daniel has already given all the glory to God.

(Response #3) - Nebuchadnezzar praises the greatness of God. **2:47**

This idolater is acknowledging the true God of the Bible. In fact, he does not even mention his own “gods.”

(Response #4) - Nebuchadnezzar gives Daniel a promotion. **2:48a**

Daniel is given an exalted position. Why? Because he can unravel God’s truth.

(Response #5) - Nebuchadnezzar gives Daniel several presents. **2:48b**

The word “great” means the gifts were many and expensive.

(Response #6) - Nebuchadnezzar gives Daniel great power. **2:48c**

Daniel became ruler of Babylon, including over all the men Nebuchadnezzar deemed wise.

(Response #7) - Nebuchadnezzar gives three Jewish friends a promotion. **2:49**

What you have are four faithful Jewish young men controlling the Babylonian government, which is controlling the world. How did this happen? What caused this? Who caused this? The God of heaven. God enabled His faithful servants to understand His revelatory Word. That is what made them so powerful and so valuable.

STUDY QUESTIONS – LECTURE #3
(Daniel 2:1 – 2:49)

1. What is the meaning of the plural and singular noun “dreams” and “dream” (Daniel 2:1, 3)?

Nebuchadnezzar had one dream many times.

2. Why does Daniel, in his prayer, initially ask God for “compassion” when what he really needs is information (Daniel 2:18)?

Israel had been so sinful that she needed God’s mercy to even approach God.

3. What was the significance of Daniel always praising God and giving thanks to God for answered prayer?

It was a major key to him receiving future answers to prayer.

4. What is the purpose of dreams in the Bible?

To reveal God’s program and God’s will.

5. What does Daniel mean that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is a “latter days” dream (Daniel 2:28)?

The dream shows future world powers from 600 B.C. until Christ returns.