

## **BIBLE STUDY – LESSON 9**

### **SUBJECT: NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S DREAM**

### **MARCH 5 & 19, 2010**

#### **1. Daniel Chapter 2**

##### **1.1. Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream (Verses 1-13)**

###### 1.1.1. Verse 1 Notes

- The king was unable to sleep due to a recurrence of troubling dreams.
- This chapter describes events/dreams during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of King Nebuchadnezzar’s reign.

###### 1.1.2. Verse 2-3 Notes

- The king called on his advisory board to find out the meaning of a dream. These four groups were likely representatives of each pagan bloc.
- Note that Daniel and the Jews were not called to this meeting even though they had been found to be ten times wiser than the rest (**Daniel 1:20**).

###### 1.1.3. Verse 4 Notes

- The Chaldeans (astrologers) stepped forward to interpret the dream.
- They spoke in Aramaic since those present were of different racial backgrounds. Aramaic was sort of a universal language that all could understand...similar to English being the universal language of today.

###### 1.1.4. Verse 5-6 Notes

- The king makes a deal with them. If they cannot correctly state the dream and the interpretation, they will be brutally killed, if they correctly do so, they will receive rewards.

###### 1.1.5. Verse 7 Notes

- The Chaldeans again request that the king tell the dream so they can interpret it.

###### 1.1.6. Verse 8-9 Notes

- The king reiterates that they must tell the dream and interpret it.
- This indicates that the king may have been suspicious about their claims to divine ability to interpret dreams. If they truly had divine power, they should be able to give account of the dream.
- Due to the stalling, the king accuses them of having lying and corrupt words.

###### 1.1.7. Verse 10-11 Notes

- The Chaldeans respond that this is an impossible task for man and that no king would make such a request.
- They state only the gods could fulfill this request.

###### 1.1.8. Verse 12-13 Notes

- In his fury, the king issues an order that all the “wise” men of the land be killed.
- Even though they were not present, this order included Daniel along with the other Jewish wise men.

##### **1.2. God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream (Verses 14-23)**

###### 1.2.1. Verse 14-15 Notes

- Daniel used wisdom in speaking to Arioch, the captain of the guard.
- Arioch, which means Uncertain, explains the king’s decree to Daniel.

###### 1.2.2. Verse 16-18 Notes

- Notice that the king did not become furious with Daniel as he did with the Chaldeans when they asked for time. This indicates that the Lord was with Daniel and had a “covering” over him so that the king would not harm him.

- Daniel is granted his wish by the king and goes to tell his friends to seek God on the matter. This contrast how the Chaldeans did not seek God but asked for time to devise their own scheme.

#### 1.2.3. Verse 19-23 Notes

- God reveals the dream to Daniel in a night vision, possibly a dream.
- Upon receiving the revelation, Daniel praises God for His wisdom and power and determining the rise and fall of kings and nations.

### 1.3. Daniel Explains the Dream (Verses 24-45)

#### 1.3.1. Verse 24-26 Notes

- Daniel makes a request to see the king through Arioch.
- Arioch takes Daniel to the king and points out that he is a captive from Judah.
- Belteshazzar was the Babylonian name given to Daniel upon captivity (**Daniel 1:7**).

#### 1.3.2. Verse 27 Notes

- Daniel points out that the advisory board does not have the power to recite the dream.
- Only God has the power to do so.

#### 1.3.3. Verse 28-29 Notes

- God revealed prophecy of nations to Nebuchadnezzar in the dream.

#### 1.3.4. Verse 30-35 Notes

- Daniel displays humbleness by stating that he does not have more wisdom than anyone else.
- Daniel describes the dream as: a great image (statue) with a head of fine gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, feet as a mixture of iron and clay.
- Daniel continues with the description stating that a stone cut out without hands struck the image at its feet destroying it. All of the metals blew away and the stone became a great mountain that filled the whole earth.

#### 1.3.5. Verse 36-43 Notes

- Daniel then interprets the dreams as follows:
  - Head of gold = Nebuchadnezzar; he represented the Babylonian empire. The gold represented power, strength, and glory.
  - Chest and arms of silver = a kingdom that would rise but that would be inferior to the Babylonian, signified by silver being less valuable than gold.
  - Belly and thighs of bronze = a third kingdom that would rise to power. The bronze indicates it will be inferior to the previous.
  - Legs of iron = a fourth kingdom that would rise to power. Iron is less valuable than bronze but stronger than all previously mentioned metals. This kingdom will crush all the others. The legs symbolize a divided kingdom. The feet of iron and clay represents division as clay does not bond totally with iron, similar to how oil and water does not mix.

#### 1.3.6. Verse 44-45 Notes

- At the End of the Age when Christ returns, God will set up a kingdom that will consume all the others, never to be destroyed.
- The kingdoms in are represented as an image. God ordered no creation or worship of images in the Ten Commandments (**Exodus 20:4-6**). This indicates that these worldly man-made kingdoms are opposite of God's plan.
- The image's body parts are made of metals that descend in value while increasing in hardness – a sign that as spiritual and moral quality declines, military and political power increases from one kingdom to the next. It also shows the decreasing power and grandeur of the rulers of successive empires along with signifying that each successive empire would last longer than the preceding one.

- This dream revealed all kingdoms that would persecute the Jews from that time period forward. An example of recent persecution is the Holocaust when 6 million Jews were killed.
- Jews had been ruled by Egyptians and Assyrians in the past but this prophecy involved nations from Daniel's day forward.
- King Nebuchadnezzar overtook Israel in 586 BC. God had warned the Jews He would allow nations to overtake them if they continued rebellion against Him, failing to repent (**Deuteronomy 28:62-65; Leviticus 26:14-43**).
- History has shown that the four empires of Nebuchadnezzar's dream were:
  - Babylonian Empire (head of gold) ruled by Nebuchadnezzar (625 – 538 BC)
  - Medo-Persian Empire (chest and arms of silver) ruled by Cyrus (538 – 330 BC)
  - Greek Empire (belly and thighs of brass) ruled by Alexander the Great (333 to 31 BC)
  - Roman Empire (legs and feet of iron) (31 BC to present)
- Medo-Persian Empire was combination of Medes and Persians. Two arms represented the two nations merged as one kingdom.
- Legs of the image represented East & West branches of the Roman Empire.
- Feet are the continuation of the Roman Empire into present day & future European Union (i.e. Germany, France, Spain, UK, etc.)
- Ten toes of the image may correlate with **Revelation 17:12**.
- The rock is the kingdom of God. It targets the feet of the image because Jesus will destroy the last earthly man-made kingdom when He returns to earth.
- Jesus will establish His earthly kingdom where He will rule from Jerusalem for 1000 years (**Revelation 20:1-6**).
- Satan will be released after 1000 years in the pit to make one last attempt to defeat God but he will be defeated and cast into the lake of fire (**Revelation 20:7-10**).
- The New Earth and New Jerusalem will then be established and the perfect kingdom will go on for eternity just as prophesied by Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (**Revelation 21:1-2; Revelation 21:27; Revelation 22:5**).
- The dream is certain and its interpretation is true.

#### 1.4. Daniel and His Friends Promoted (Verses 46-49)

##### 1.4.1. Verse 46-49 Notes

- The king falls down on his face before Daniel and orders gifts be given to him.
- The king acknowledges that the God of the Jews is the true God and appoints Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego as officers in his kingdom.
- The appointment of Daniel parallels Joseph's ascension in a foreign nation (**Genesis 41:41-43**).