

Bible Stories

DANIEL - STATUE in the NIGHT

Daniel 2:1

May 20, 2023

Our next story from the book of Daniel occurs in the 2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

In the night Nebuchadnezzar had a dream – a dream so vivid that he couldn't go back to sleep. He was so troubled by this dream that he called his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to help him sort it out.

King: *I have had a troubling dream and I want to know what it means.*

Astrologers: *O king, live forever! Tell us the dream, and we will tell you what it means.*

The king was a bit perturbed by their response...

King: *Here's what's going to happen ---- If you don't tell me what I dreamed and interpret it, you will be cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble. However, if you tell me the dream and interpret it, you will receive gifts and rewards and great honor. Now that we all understand the rules, tell me the dream and interpret it.*

Astrologers: *Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it.*

King: *You are just stalling for time because you realize my decision is final. If you do not tell me the dream, there is just one outcome. You're all in on it! Lying and telling me misleading things, hoping the situation will change. So then, tell me the dream, then I will know that you can also tell me what it means.*

Astrologers: *There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks! No great and mighty king has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among men.*

By this time the red mist had descended and Nebuchadnezzar was so angry that he ordered the immediate execution of **ALL** the wisemen in Babylon – including those who not been invited to the meeting. This included our 4 young men.

Arioch, commander of the king's guard knocked on their door and informed them that he was there to take them away to be executed.

Daniel, with wisdom and tact asked, ***"Why did the king issue such a severe decree?"***

Arioch explained.....

At this, Daniel went to the king and asked that he be given some time and he would interpret the dream.

When Daniel returned home, he called Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah together and told them that it was absolutely imperative that they spend some time in prayer concerning this situation.

In the night Daniel had the same dream. Awaking, he praised the God of Heaven:

"Let his name, the name of God, be blessed throughout the ages, for the wisdom and the power are his. And he changes the times and the seasons, and he deposes kings and he sets up kings; he gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men who know understanding. He reveals the deep and the hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and I give praises, for the wisdom and the power you gave to me, and now you have made known to me what we have asked from you, for you have made known to us the matter of the king."

Daniel hurried to find Arioch, ***"Don't execute the wisemen! Take me to the king and I will interpret his dream!"***

Arioch rushed Daniel into the king's audience chamber and announced that he had found a man from among the captive Jews who was able to explain the king's dream

King: *Daniel, are you able to tell me my dream and interpret it?*

Daniel: *No wiseman or magician can do what the king asks (the king begins to squirm) BUT there is a God in Heaven who can reveal mysteries and He has made known to the king what will happen at the end of days. As you were lying in bed, you were thinking about the future. The Revealer of Mysteries showed you what is going to happen in the future. This mystery has also been revealed to me, not because I am wiser than other men, but so that you will know and understand what you dreamed.*

Here is the dream: Before you stood a large statue -- an enormous and dazzling thing -- awesome in appearance. The head was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay. As you watched, a rock that was cut without human hands, struck the feet of the statue and smashed them. Then the iron, clay, bronze, silver and gold were broken to pieces and became like summer chaff. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace, but the rock became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth. This, oh king, is what you dreamt.

(by now the king was sitting on the edge of his throne – a glimmer of hope dancing in his eyes)

You, O king, are the greatest of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory and in your hands He has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air..... You are that head of gold. But your kingdom will not last.

After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours – like silver is inferior to gold.

After that, a 3rd kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.

After the 3rd, a 4th kingdom, one as strong as iron will appear. Just as iron breaks and smashes everything, so this kingdom will smash and break into pieces all other kingdoms.

The feet and toes you saw represent divided kingdoms – which will appear after the kingdom of iron. These people groups will not be united any more than iron can be mixed with clay. They will be partly strong and partly brittle.

In the time of the divided kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed nor passed to another. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, just like the rock that was cut without human hands, broke the iron, bronze, clay, silver and gold to pieces. This heavenly kingdom will last forever.

The God of the Universe has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy.

The king fell on his face and showed great respect to Daniel. He gave orders to present to Daniel an offering and fragrant incense.

King: *Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery.*

Daniel was given many gifts and promoted to ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were promoted to oversee the affairs of the province of Babylon while Daniel remained at court.

What do we do with this story?

From a purely human perspective the rise and fall of nations appears to rely on great men. Men who are fearless fighters or skilled negotiators or great leaders. Ambitious men. Powerful men. Passionate men. Greedy men. Moral men and Amoral men. Trustworthy men and men who would sell their own mothers in order to get what they want.

To live on planet earth is to always live with that uncertainty. Will our leaders be great? Will they care about us or their own advancement? Will they lead us into war or will they stand against aggression? Can they be trusted?

What this story shows us is that while events may appear to be shaped by the whim and fancy of such men, the truth is that our all-merciful God is *“silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.”*