

Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar: "God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure." (Daniel 2:45b)

Lord God, you alone reveal the truth. We thank you for speaking to us your Word. Help us bring to you all our questions and doubts, that we may be guided by your own Spirit. In all things, bring us to a deeper trust in you, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Introduction

Daniel was one of the young nobles that had been carried off into exile in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Though Daniel was trained and educated in the court of the king, he never gave up his faith in the one true God. Through Daniel, God revealed his power and his glory as King of kings.

Read: Daniel 2:26-47

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

The Biblical Context

The prophets spoke God's Word in many places and under many circumstances, even to leaders and kings among the unbelievers. God stood firm on his promise that he would never forsake his people and would one day send a Savior to deliver them from their enemies.

The first part of the Book of Daniel contains a number of stories about Daniel and his friends, and what it was like to be people of faith in a country that did not share their religion.

The second half of the Book of Daniel contains the prophecies that God revealed to Daniel. This section is similar in many ways to the kind of writing found in the Book of Revelation (the last book of the Bible). It is called "apocalyptic" literature because it "unveils" God's hidden plans for the past, present, and future.

Discussion Questions

1. King Nebuchadnezzar had many scholars to advise him. Why were none of them able to tell the king what his dreams meant? What condition did the king place on them to make sure they were telling the truth?
2. The Chaldeans were the wise men of Babylon. They were the ancient days' equivalent of modern-era scientists. What other words are used here to describe their job? What's the difference between science and magic? What do they both have in common?
3. How did Daniel get involved in this issue? Why were he and his friends under the sentence of death? How did God save them (Daniel 2:19)?
4. When the king asked if Daniel could tell him the meaning of his dream, how did Daniel respond? To whom did Daniel give the credit?
5. In the dream, the King saw a statue made of five materials, four of which were different metals. What were the metals? Taken in order, did the metals increase or decrease in **value**? In the same order, did they increase or decrease in **strength**?
6. God revealed to Daniel that the metals represented four different kingdoms. Can you name the four great empires that ruled the Middle East in the era prior to the birth of Christ?
7. Read what Jesus said in Luke 20:17-18. What did Jesus mean by these words? When was this stone "rejected"? Of what did it become the cornerstone? Who is this stone?
8. Daniel said that God would "set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed" (v. 44). How would this eternal kingdom be different from all the others? In what way will it bring all other kingdoms to an end?