

Readings

Scripture

¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸ and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. ²⁰ Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. ²¹ He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; ²² he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. ²³ To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter." ²⁴ Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show the king the interpretation."

²⁵ Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste and said thus to him: "I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who will make known to the king the interpretation." ²⁶ The king declared to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?" ²⁷ Daniel answered the king and said, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked, ²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: ²⁹ To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be after this, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. ³⁰ But as for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind."

- Daniel 2:17-30 (English Standard Version)

Reflection

No wonder Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel when his dream was revealed and interpreted. In his insecurity and instability it was all he could do as he confessed the greatness of Daniel's God. No wonder he made Daniel and his companions rulers of his people. Yet it is significant, as the rest of his biography confirms, that, unlike Daniel, he did not "seek mercies from the God of Heaven." He was awed, but he was not converted. Nonetheless, God transformed the king's wrath into His praise, and the chapter that began with Daniel under sentence of death ends with him sitting in the king's court.

- Sinclair Ferguson, *Daniel* (p. 67)

Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

- Psalm 2:8-9 (English Standard Version)

Sermon Outline

A Troubling Dream

Daniel 2

Life in a Foreign Land: A Field Guide

Brad Anderson

It can be challenging to find peace in a troubled world...

How do the ways we go about finding peace reveal the ultimate foundation of our life?

What does the response of Nebuchadnezzar reveal about his foundation?

(Daniel 2:1-11)

What does the response of Daniel reveal about his foundation?

(Daniel 2:12-24)

What does God's vision of a foundational kingdom offer to a troubled world? (Daniel 2:25-45)

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- What is one of the most memorable or unusual dreams you have ever had?
- What does the king ask of the astrologers in verses 1-3? Why is he testing their competence in verses 4-13? How does Daniel respond to this edict?
- Read Daniel's psalm in verses 20-23. What elements of praise and truths about God are revealed in his words? How are the generations reflected in the psalm? What gifts does Daniel praise God for? Why? What can you learn about intercession from the psalm?
- Compare Daniel and this king to Joseph and Pharaoh in Genesis 41. What similarities exist? What seems different?
- What Messiah-like action by Daniel "saves the day" in verse 24?
- The word "interpret" appears 30 times in this section of Daniel (which is written in Aramaic). Why is it so decisive to interpret God's mysteries?
- In the face of seemingly weak church influence and strong secular and military forces, how does the promised kingdom rule encourage you?