

The purpose of this leader's guide is to be a tool for Sunday Classes and Life Group leaders to follow the sermon series with their group. Our hope is that this guide will give you a head start for your study and will allow your group to respond to what they've heard and apply it in life.*

Daniel Chapter 2

Introductory Questions:

Waking up to different. Have you recently been confronted with an impossible situation? What was your first thought/response of how to handle it? How did you handle it? What would you do the same? What would you change about your response?

Introduction and Context of Chapter 2:

Daniel has already been exiled, but he has found favor with the king (chapter 1). The king has a dream, and he demands that someone tell him both the dream and its interpretation. He commands "the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans" (verse 2) to do this, but it is quite obvious that he is asking something that is impossible. God reveals these things to Daniel, though, and he shares this dream and its meaning to the king. Daniel and his friends once again find favor with God and the king.

Observation vs. 1-13

The chapter begins with Nebuchadnezzar having nightmares that troubled his spirit and prevented him from sleeping (verse 1). In this context, dreams were crucially important, as they were seen as communication from the gods and could predict the future. Nebuchadnezzar sees something that could negatively impact his future, and it is beyond his control. As a result, he asks magicians and enchanters to tell him what it means. He doesn't want them to simply tell him what he wants to hear and lie (verse 9), so he demands that they tell him the dream *and* its interpretation. The magicians and enchanters realize that this is something that no human could accomplish- only a god could do that. The sorcerers were right on one point, this would have to come from something supernatural, beyond themselves. Nebuchadnezzar was furious at this, and so he decreed that all the wise men, including Daniel and his friends, should be killed.

Observation vs. 14-24

Daniel hears about the situation from the king's captain, Arioch, and requests a time to interpret the dream. His request is granted, which is no small matter, especially because the king had previously denied a similar request from the other wise men (verse 8). This displays that Daniel had already built up credibility with Nebuchadnezzar, and God was sovereignly working to allow Daniel to interpret the dream. Additionally, at the time that Daniel makes this request, he does not know the dream or the interpretation. He is counting on God to deliver Him and show him what he needs to know. After that, Daniel goes to his companions and prays to God for mercy (verse 18). God reveals the dream to Daniel, and he immediately answered God with praise and thanksgiving. Daniel sought God's wisdom from the beginning and was quick to recognize that this revelation was not from within himself, but from God.

Observation vs. 25-45

Daniel goes before the king, who asks him, "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?" (verse 26). Daniel's response is interesting. He notes that no, he can't do what the king is asking, *but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries* (verse 28). Daniel is

humble yet confident: humble because he sees that he cannot do this himself, but confident in the ability of his God to do it. He then describes the dream, which includes a great image of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and clay that is knocked away by a great stone that “was cut out by no human hand” (verse 34). This stone remains and becomes a great mountain. The image, with its different materials, represents Nebuchadnezzar and other kingdoms, and the stone is the God of heaven who will destroy all the other kingdoms and establish a reign that will stand forever. This also points to Jesus (the stone/chief cornerstone found in Eph. 2:20). The dream shows Nebuchadnezzar that as powerful as he is, he is nothing compared to the One True King. And the One True King will reign forever and will have a kingdom that will never end.

Observation vs. 46-49

Nebuchadnezzar begins to pay homage to Daniel, and he even offers incense up to him (verse 46). Even though this dream calls for Nebuchadnezzar’s eventual destruction, he praises Daniel and his God, saying that He is God of gods and Lord of kings who truly reveals mysteries. Daniel was then promoted, and at Daniel’s request, the king also appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. Daniel, though, remains in the king’s court.

General Reflection:

- 1) What does this passage teach us about God?
- 2) What does this passage teach us about mankind?
- 3) What is a command to obey in this passage? What has God revealed in your life that needs changing? What truth can be applied to your life about the gospel?

Personal Reflection/Application

- 4) After Daniel offers to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, he goes to his three friends and prays. How can you see pieces of the gospel in this response and prayer?
- 5) When Nebuchadnezzar asks Daniel if he can interpret the dream as he asked, Daniel responds by saying, “No, but there is a God in heaven who can” (verse 28). In your own life, in the midst of good and bad circumstances, what are the implications of knowing and proclaiming “but there is a God in heaven?”
- 6) A main point of the king’s dream is that God’s kingdom is sovereign over all other kingdoms. How does this affect your thoughts about the upcoming presidential election?
- 7) Daniel finishes his interpretation by telling the king, “The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure” (verse 45). What does this tell us about Daniel? How does Daniel’s example of both confidence in God and humility in pointing people to God not himself, teach us about how to deal with difficult circumstances? How has your confidence in God, and giving God glory, helped you in situations in the past?

Prayer

Father, may we look to you first when faced with any situation. Forgive us for looking to our own strength and understanding and not coming to you first. Just like Daniel, give us confidence in your power, wisdom and strength when faced with everyday decisions and troubles. Help us father to bring glory to your name and not our own.

*Resources and quotes used for this study guide: gotquestions.org and the ESV study bible.