

You can't make a difference unless you are different.

²⁰As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* conjurers who *were* in all his realm.

2Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him.

²⁷Daniel answered before the king and said, "As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king.

²⁸**However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries,** and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days.

⁴⁴In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all the kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

⁴⁵Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

A stone cut out of the mountain without hands -- Jesus. Matthew 21:42-44 (IMAGE)

⁴⁶The King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and did homage to Daniel, and gave orders to present him an offering and fragrant incense. ⁴⁷The king answered Daniel and said, "**Surely your God is a God of gods and Lord of kings and revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery.**" ⁴⁸Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Daniel: Shining in Babylon
Daniel 1 & 2 Pastor Lance Ainsworth
October 5th & 8th , 2023
Built Different

Prayer Requests:

Group Discussion: What is your definition of integrity?

Read aloud: Read Daniel 1:1-21, 2:44-48

1. Daniel 1:1-2 “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. **2The Lord gave** Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God” Why did the Lord allow Judah to be conquered? How would you feel if you were Daniel, a young teenager, and because of others you have now been taken captive? What does this tell us about God’s sovereignty?

2. Daniel 1:8 “But Daniel **made up his mind** that he would not defile himself with the king’s choice food or with the wine which he drank;” Daniel was not on a strict diet; he chose not to indulge in pagan rituals. V17 “**God gave** them knowledge and intelligence in every *branch* of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all *kinds of* visions and dreams.” God blesses Daniel’s integrity, is that always the case? Does God give knowledge and intelligence to His faithful servant or is this an exception?

3. Daniel 2:44 “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.” The kingdom of Babylon cannot stand against the Kingdom of God. Where do you see a resemblance between Babylon of 600 B.C. and Babylon of 2023? Why has mankind struggled with wanting to make our name great, where else do we see that in culture/scripture? How does Babylon attempt to indoctrinate and change our identity?

4. Jeremiah 29:7: “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.” We have a few choices when it comes to living in Babylon:

Separation: We disengage from society and fortress up or become indifferent.

Assimilation: We gradually start to look, speak, and act like Babylon.

Transformation: We infiltrate and influence Babylon.

What are the effects of separation and assimilation? What does transforming Babylon look like in your context? Will you pray for GateWay to continue to be used as a transformative influence in Visalia?