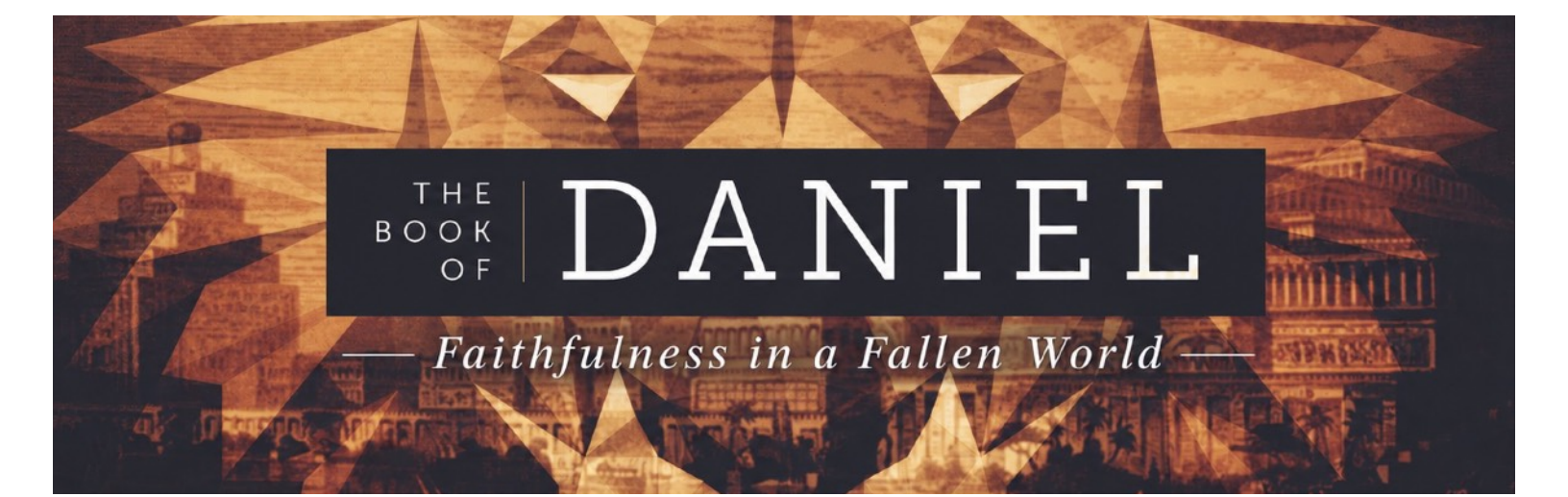




THE
BOOK
OF

DANIEL

— *Faithfulness in a Fallen World* —

DANIEL

8/23/2026

#2 - God Only Knows

Intro:

Have you ever been driving down the highway, totally in the zone. Completely alert, watching the road, checking the mirrors... you feel fully confident, then you start to change lanes...

HONK!! There was a car right there the whole time! You couldn't see because it was in your... Blind-Spot! You didn't know it was there because you couldn't see it. Ignorance is _____ (bliss) No...

Ignorance is dangerous. The problem is, to some degree we all live in ignorance. There's so much we don't know. Some of you are old enough that you have actually forgotten more than you currently know. LOL.

It's one thing to know you don't know something... but you don't even know what you don't know. You can be fully confident about something and still be completely wrong because you don't have all the information. Ignorance is dangerous. — and, that's where we find King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2.

He's the most powerful man in the world at the time. Surrounded by the smartest people in Babylon. Magicians, Enchanters,

Sorcerers, and wise men at his command. Even With all his resources, He doesn't know what his dream means. He knows it was a vision of significance, so he calls all his people to give him answers. But they can't help him.

What He will discover is that ***God Only Knows!***

Turn with me to Daniel chapter 2 and stand in honor of God's Word. We'll read the first 30 verses.

READ — DANIEL 2:1-30

In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore show me the dream and its interpretation." They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation." The king answered and said, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm— if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore tell

me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation.” The Chaldeans answered the king and said, “There is not a man on earth who can meet the king’s demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.”

Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. He declared to Arioch, the king’s captain, “Why is the decree of the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel. And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.

Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 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. Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said:

*“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
to whom belong wisdom and might.*

*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;
he reveals deep and hidden things;
he knows what is in the darkness,
and the light dwells with him.
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."*

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."

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." 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?" 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, 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: 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. 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.

PRAY

Heavenly Father... God of the heavens... there are no mysteries to you, no secrets are kept from you, no knowledge hidden, or depths of wisdom unexplored. All that we have discovered, you created. The vastness of human knowledge is but a drop in the ocean of the All-Knowing God. With all our data-centers and smart devices, we are just as clueless as ever. Lord, please give to us the peace that passes our understanding, because there is nothing that passes your understanding. You know us completely, and love us anyway. You know every problem we face, and every solution we could ever imagine. You know best. Help us trust you more today.

In Jesus name we pray, AMEN.

SERMON

When was the last time you thought, “I really don’t know”?

There’s a lot we don’t know. We don’t know answers to some of our hardest questions. We don’t know reasons for some of our deepest hurts. We don’t know where our path will lead, and sometimes we don’t even know the next step. So, when you don’t know what/where/ or when... WHO do you turn to?

God only knows. — that’s a catch phrase that we sometimes use as a shrug: Well... “God only knows!” "Why did she say that?" "God

only knows." "How are we going to pay for this?" "God only knows." — But, today I want you to see that phrase as more of a doctrine, a great comfort in confusion. God only knows.

When Babylon turned to its wise-men, sorcerers, and enchanters... they all came up empty. They couldn't fake it.

This is how God has designed it. He alone, is the answer you're looking for. ***The limit to your knowledge isn't a failure, its an invitation. You're invited to know God...*** the God of the heavens who came to this earth to be with His people. When you find yourself lost in your own lack of understanding. Hear Him calling you to come near.

We can hope in God, even through uncertainty.

King Nebuchadnezzar has asked for the impossible. He wants his men to tell him, not just the interpretation, but also the dream itself. I think he suspects they've faked it before. He told them a dream, and they made guesses that were good enough to pass, but no true insight. He's pinning them down here. Tell me my dream and the interpretation. He doesn't give any hints.

They say... that's impossible. The wise men ask the obvious question: "Tell us the dream, and we will show the interpretation" (v. 4). That's how this normally works — you give me the raw material, I'll give you my expert reading of it. Fortune-tellers and dream-interpreters throughout history have always needed *something* to work with.

And then they finally come to the end of themselves and admit their own limitations in verse 11 “*no one can show it to the king except the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh.*” — Plural. Distant. Whatever gods are out there, they don't come close, they

aren't accessible, you try to please them with rituals but who knows if they'll actually help?!

But, the king isn't satisfied... he issues a death penalty decree to all the worldly wisdom counsel - including Daniel and his friends. When they came to kill them, Daniel replied with respect and wisdom - why is this so urgent? He asked for a time to meet with the king and he would tell him the dream and its interpretation.

Wow! Now, that's a bold move of faith! Daniel believed God would reveal it to him, so he could reveal it to the king.

God is always working the system to reveal His glory to all people. Daniel didn't know the king's dream, but believed God would reveal it to him, and spare the lives of all those people.

What are we discovering about our God here?

1. All Wisdom belongs to God (vs 20)

Daniel worships an all-wise God. He takes comfort and is at peace, even when his life is on the line... not because He knows all the answers, but because He knows the One who does.

The first 6 chapters of Daniel are one wisdom battle after another. What is the wisest thing to do? In chapter 1, it was over food. Daniel bargained that obedience to God would be wisest, and after 10 days of a strictly faithful diet, Daniel and the boys were 10 times healthier than those who ate from the king's table. In this chapter its a battle over knowing the un-knowable. And, God will win that one. In chapter 3, isn't it wisest to just bow to the idol and live to see another day? Not for the 3 Hebrew boys. In the fiery furnace, the wisdom and power of God would be on display. And on it goes.

To live faithfully in a fallen world... we can't use the wisdom of the world. We must trust in the wisdom from above.

Prov 2:6 - for the Lord gives wisdom, from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Prov. 1:7 - the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.

James 1 - if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously. — God gives wisdom because wisdom belongs to Him. God is the source of all true wisdom.

Now, surely there are some brilliant people in this world who do not know God nor do they want to. Some incredibly educated people. My brother in law is one of them. He knows so much about almost everything. You know anyone like that? Just a bank of useless information. Like spent their childhood reading the encyclopedia.

But, with all that knowledge... if in their heart they say “there is no God.” The Bible says they're just educated fools. To know so much about this world, but not acknowledge the very source of it all is absolutely foolish!

All wisdom belongs to God.

2. God is sovereign over all men (vs 21)

Daniel worships the God who reigns over times and seasons, who removes and sets up kings. God has setup this whole scenario. He setup Nebuchadnezzar as king in Babylon. He gave Jehoiakim into his hands. He allowed Daniel and the boys to be exiled there. He gave them favor in the contest of food. God gave the dream to the king, and He revealed the dream and interpretation to Daniel, and

to no one else, so Daniel could tell it to the king... and why? To show His own Greatness.

A Sovereign God is the greatest comfort to the children of God. God is in control of all things. He is working all things according to the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11). When Daniel finds himself in danger for his life, in the midst of an evil empire, and everything has been taken away — his anxieties come to rest in the arms of the only God in control of all things. The God who raises up kings and removes them. If God is in control of such great things, he is not absent for your problems either.

And, if we fast forward... King Nebuchadnezzar doesn't get it, yet. Daniel's interpretation will tell him that His part of the statue is the golden head, but that head will be crushed along with all other kingdoms by the coming eternal kingdom. That was a moment God revealed the future. But, King Neb tried to build a statue, the whole thing made of gold, and he wanted everyone to bow down to him. Neb was rebelling against God. I'll show you! My kingdom will not fail, everyone will bow to me!

But, that didn't go well. God wasn't revealing what was possible, but what He had purposed.

God's Sovereignty is the intersection of His authority, wisdom, and power.

The Sovereign reign of God is the refrain of the whole OT...

2 Chron. 20:6 - *“O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you.”*

*Job 23:13 - But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back?
What he desires, that he does.*

*Job 42:2 - I know you can do all things, and no purpose of yours
can be thwarted*

Psalm 135:6 - whatever the Lord pleases, He does...

*Isaiah 46:8-10 - “Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind,
you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am
God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me,
declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things
not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will
accomplish all my purpose,’*

*Daniel 4:34-35 - At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted
my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the
Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his
dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures
from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are
accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the
host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none
can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”*

God is Sovereign, and that is great news!

3. No man or god can do what the God in Heaven does.

The king wanted them to tell him not just their interpretation, he wanted them to tell him what he dreamed. Eventually they all admitted: that's impossible! There's not a man on earth who can do that (2:10). And, finally we see that the wisdom of this world over promises and under delivers. — the Chaldeans were known for astrology and crystals and spiritual séance... as a pastoral side

note - I want to caution you to stay away from horoscopes, fortune tellers, spiritual crystals, or any kind of dark magic. All of it is evil and you should see from this text that it is a powerless fraud. — The Babylonian idols and dark magic were powerless. Their gods can not see, cannot speak, cannot reveal truth... God only Knows!

We live in a culture that worships human wisdom. We have more information at our fingertips than any generation in history. We have search engines that answer in half a second and algorithms that can predict our next purchase before we make it. Our phones listen to our conversations and provide us with pertinent information and advertising. We have specialists for every ailment and podcasts for every problem. And still — still — there are questions none of it can answer. Why did my father get the diagnosis? What is God doing with my kid who's getting in trouble? Will this marriage survive? Why did I lose the job I prayed so hard to keep? Obsessing about all these things, studying web-MD or binge watching conspiracy videos, or political prophecies will not bring you peace, only more anxiety.

Daniel says “No man can know, but there is a God in heaven...” (27-28) and again in vs 30 - “not because of any wisdom that I have...” — Daniel didn't lay claim to some special knowledge, but that there is a God in heaven who has chosen to reveal it to him. We're invited to know and trust God Himself. He reveals what we need to know when we need it.

He's the pilot, we're just the passengers. He knows the route, the altitude, the weather, the instruments, and even the coming turbulence. But, the passenger doesn't need to know all the pilot knows. Our confidence isn't in knowing all the flight details. It's in trusting the pilot.

4. God in Heaven is revealed on earth.

This whole episode is revealing that the God of Daniel is the one true God. He is greater than all the Babylonian buffet of gods and dark magic. The God of Heaven is revealing Himself to gentile nations.

The God who revealed mysteries to Daniel is the same God who, in the fullness of time, didn't just send a dream — He sent His Son. Hebrews 1:1-2 says that after God spoke through the prophets, "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son."

Everything the gods of the Chaldeans could never do, the true God in heaven did. Their gods don't dwell with flesh. A pantheon of gods that stay at a distance and cannot answer your deepest questions. But our God didn't just answer us from a distance, John 1 says "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" He walked willingly into the deepest darkness a human being can face, the darkness of the cross and the grave, and walked out as the God who came near.

Whatever it is that feels un-knowable for you, don't just throw up your hands and say "God only knows" like you're giving up. Say it like Daniel said it: There is a God in heaven. He knows what we cannot. Trust Him.

When you don't know what tomorrow holds—God knows.

When you don't know what to do—God knows.

When you don't understand what God is doing—God knows.

When the things you've trusted fail you—God never will.