

The Book of Daniel-Chapter Two (Part Three)

Dr. Luther Ray Smith Jr.

Review From Last Week: There are many small details within this section of Scripture that underscore the importance of this situation. While the “wise men” of Babylon found this request from Nebuchadnezzar impossible, Daniel knowing the weight of the situation appeals to the God of heaven as a witness to the Babylonians in their own native language that He is the only true and wise God.

Daniel 2:19 (NASB95): “...Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven...”

It is recorded here that the mystery concerning Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was disclosed and Daniel blessed “the God of heaven...”

The Importance of This Next Section: This next section is important for two reasons: First it is written in the most dominant language of the world at this time period (i.e., Aramaic), and second this is a direct testimony concerning the God of Abraham, and not these false deities found in the *Etemenaki*. (Recall Jeremiah 10:11)

Cross Reference: Jeremiah 10:11 (Remember this passage is written in Aramaic).

Daniel 2:20-22 (NASB95): Daniel said, “Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. “It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding. “It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him...”

Times ܐܝܢܐ/*idan*

- This Aramaic word occurs 13 times in the book of Daniel
- “Time,” “year.”
- The Greek word that is used in the Septuagint for this Aramaic word *idan* is *καιρός* (*kairos*). The first usage of this word was found in Genesis.
- This word may be used to underscore the fixed order of the heavenly bodies in the sky.

Cross Reference: Genesis 2:2-3, Psalm 104:19

Epochs ܙܡܢܐ/*zeman*

- This Aramaic word occurs 11 times in the Scriptures.
- This Aramaic word occurs 10 times in the book of Daniel.
- “A set time,” “seasons.”
- The Greek word that is used in the Septuagint for this Aramaic word *idan* is *χρόνος* (*chronos*). This word may refer to the events that occur under heaven as it pertains to life.

Cross Reference: Ecclesiastes 3:1

The Importance of This Statement: Daniel’s first statement has to do with the acknowledging God as being the Creator of the fixed order of the heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars) and the establishing of the events of things that occur under heaven.

Daniel 2:20-22 (NASB95): Daniel said, “Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. “It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings.”

Daniel gives praise and glory to God by recognizing that it is God who disposes and sets up kings (the Aramaic word is taken from the Hebrew word *קָוַם* (*qum*) which is translated “establishes.”). This word occurs throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

Remember this Historical Account

“Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the place of Josiah his father and changed his name to **Jehoiakim**. But he took Jehoahaz away and brought him to Egypt, and he died there (**2 Chron 23:34 NASB95**).

קָוַם *qûm/koom*

- This Aramaic word occurs 628 times in the Scriptures.
- This Hebrew occurs 2 times in the book of Daniel (chaps. 8 & 9).
- “Established,” “confirmed,” “stand.”
- Recall that both the Aramaic and Hebrew originate from the Phoenician alphabet, and some words that are used in Aramaic are found in Hebrew.

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Jehoiakim יהויקים/yehoyaqim

This Hebrew name occurs 37 times in the Hebrew Scriptures.

It comes from two Hebrew words: An abbreviated form of יהוה/YHWH or Yahweh and קים/qum, which can be translated, “to establish” or set.”

His name means “the LORD establishes/sets up.”

Daniel 2:20-22 (NASB95): “...Daniel said, ‘Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. ‘It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding. ‘It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him...””

Wisdom חכמה/chakma

- This Aramaic word occurs 8 times in the Scriptures.
- This Aramaic word occurs 7 times in the book of Daniel.
- “Wisdom.”
- This word when it is used is associated with the “God of Heaven” who gives information. In this context this is underscoring the explanation of the dream Nebuchadnezzar is asking for.

Knowledge מנדע/manda

- This Aramaic word occurs 4 times in the Scriptures.
- This Aramaic word only occurs in the book of Daniel.
- “Knowledge, reason”
- This word when it is used is associated with the “God of Heaven” who gives *intimate*, and *specific* information. In this context this is underscoring the details Nebuchadnezzar is asking for pertaining to his dream.

These are interesting phrases. Daniel suggests that God gives wisdom to “the wise” and knowledge to “understanding ones.” This information is given only to those (i.e., Daniel) who know no other God but the God of Heaven. This statement could be seen in contrast to those conjurers, sorcerers (i.e., “witches”) astrologers. In contrast they are not “wise” or do not have “understanding.”

Daniel 2:22a (NASB95): “...It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him...””

Reveals גלה/ghelaw

- This Aramaic word occurs 9 times in the Scriptures.
- This Aramaic word occurred 6 times in the book of Daniel.
- “Uncover, disclose.”
- This is the same word that Daniel used in Chapter 2:19 when Daniel prayed, and the details of the dream and its explanation were given to him.

Profound עמיק/amiq

- This Aramaic word occurs 1 time in the Scriptures.
- This Aramaic word only occurs in the book of Daniel.
- “Deep,” “deep things.”
- This word is used to speak of the information that cannot be uncovered with human reason, or things that cannot be searched out to find.

Hidden Things סתר/sethar

- This Aramaic word occurs 2 times in the Scriptures.
- This Aramaic word only occurs in the book of Daniel.
- “Destroy,” (Peal stem) “to hide.” (Pael stem)
- Once more this underscores that it is only “the God of heaven” reveals the things that cannot be found out by human reason or intuition.

Daniel 2:22b (NASB95): “...He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him...””

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This is the statement that highlights it is the “God of heaven,” and the “God of heaven” alone, that can reveal these things because He has knowledge of the things that are shrouded from men (i.e., darkness) and He is the only one who can disclose this information to men (i.e., light).

Daniel’s Prayer In Association w/ Babylon:

Sorcerers (astrologer) (קַשְׁפִּים/*kasap*): These “wise men” would cast spells and read omens based on astrological signs (c.f., Daniel 2:21).

Kings (מֶלֶךְ/*melek*): The one(s) who rules over an empire/kingdom (c.f., Daniel 2:21a).

Magicians (כַּוְנָנִים/*chartom*): They would often time write out omens and collect them and make predictions based upon the collections of omens they wrote (c.f., Daniel 2:21b).

Conjurers (i.e., “witch”) (קַשְׁפִּים/*assap*): They would practice magic and incantations for either beneficial or evil purposes.

It is the God of heaven who reveals wisdom and knowledge (c.f., Daniel 2:22)

The Importance of This Statement: Daniel’s praise is important for one main reason: Daniel acknowledged the true God of heaven, and his description of God is a disavowing the false deities and the practices of the “wise men” of Babylon.

Daniel 2:23 (NASB95): “...To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For You have given me **wisdom (*chakma*)** and **power (גְבוּרָה/*gebura*)**; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You, For You have made known to us the king’s matter...”

Daniel acknowledging God by the patriarchs by use of the word “fathers” (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) with his statement prayed that he was given wisdom, and strength due to what God revealed to him. Once more this is contrasted with these individuals of Babylon.

Daniel 2:24-25 (NASB95): “Therefore, Daniel went into Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and spoke to him as follows: ‘Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon! Take me into the king’s presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the king. Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king’s presence and spoke to him as follows: “I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can make the interpretation known to the king!”

“...Daniel approaches Arioch and told him not to kill the wise men of Babylon and that Daniel would go and tell the details of the dream and the explanation of the dream to the king. Arioch due to the urgency of the matter rushed to Nebuchadnezzar and told him that there was one from the “sons of the exiles from Judah.”

Daniel 2:26-27 (NASB95): “...The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation?” Daniel 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...”

Once more Daniel mentioned the “mystery (or secret)” רָז/*raz* that Nebuchadnezzar wanted to know that all the “wise men” cannot “show” (or declare) it to the king.

Daniel 2:28 (NASB95): “...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. This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed...”

There are three things to notice about this statement of Daniel:

1. Daniel mentioned the Source (i.e., the God in heaven).
2. Daniel mentioned the general information concerning his dream.
3. Daniel mentioned that the things Nebuchadnezzar observed while sleeping had to do with events that would take place in the future.

Daniel 2:20-21 (NASB95): “Moreover, the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with mortal flesh.”

Latter אַהֲרִית/*aharit*

- This Hebrew word occurred 1 time in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- This Aramaic word only occurs here in the book of Daniel.

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- This root Aramaic word comes from אָכַר/*akar* meaning “end,” or “hereafter.” This word occurs 3 times in the book of Daniel alone.
- The Septuagint used the Greek word *eschatos* meaning “end.”

The Importance of This Statement: Daniel gave some general information that the content that was revealed to him about this dream in that this has something to do with the “hereafter days” or the future that will occur.

Daniel 2:29 (NASB95): “...As for you, O king, while on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place...”

Daniel once more reiterates Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and what God of heaven (the Mystery Revealer) has shown him the things what will happen in the future.

Daniel 2:30 (NASB95): “...But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than in any other living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind...”

This is an interesting statement from Daniel. Daniel acknowledges that even though he received the disclosure from the God of heaven, he is quick to point out that this does not originate from him. This once more is a distinction between the other “wise men” who thought they had innate powers derived from themselves. Additionally, this disclosing was for a purpose: So, the explanation and information of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream would be made known to him.

To Sum up: This section of the historical account is important to those who read it because it demonstrates that the “wise men” of Babylon have the power of imagination and their own machinations, however the one who reveals is not Aku, Nebo, or Marduk, but is the God of Heaven who establishes the fixed order of creation, and discloses knowledge to the king..

To Be Continued...