

## Daniel Chapter 2 — “Truly, your God is God of gods”

We ended Chapter 1 with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of God beginning to elevate Daniel and his companions. Through their faithfulness, the groundwork was prepared for God to be supernaturally glorified.

Chapter 2 picks up with Nebuchadnezzar summoning the Chaldeans in his administration after a troubling dream. This dream came during the second year of his reign, which was in the 603 to 602 B.C. time period. (Nebuchadnezzar was not yet king at the beginning of Chapter 1, but soon after became so when his father, Nabopolassar, died in 605 B.C..) God did not waste any time, since this dream apparently came right after the Judean youths had graduated from their three year enrollment in the Babylonian International Youth Academy (605 to 602 B.C.) and entered the royal service.

Concerning Daniel and his companions service in the royal court we are told at the end of Chapter 1 that “in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.” This analysis likely came during the very first year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign. The fact that he “found them ten times better” may have been something of a flippant remark that reveals to us that the king had already determined that the Chaldean administration he inherited from his father was worthless. This would help explain the speed at which he seemed to want to eliminate them in the beginning of Chapter 2. He told them he did not just want a dream interpretation, but for them to tell him the very dream he had. He probably thought that there was no way they could do this and was using it as an excuse to eliminate them.

The Chaldeans rightly told Nebuchadnezzar:

“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.” (2:10b–11)

We are then told in the very next verse that “Because of this [response] the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that *all* the wise men of Babylon be destroyed” (2:12;

emphasis mine). Nebuchadnezzar was looking for a spiritual solution, concerning which many of these men were supposed to be experts, but they had none. The problem for Daniel and his companions was that the decree was for “all the wise men of Babylon” to be destroyed, which included them. It seems as if Nebuchadnezzar lost his temper and decided to eliminate all the wise men, even those not present. When Daniel found out he “went in and requested the king to appoint him a time that he might show the interpretation” (2:16). The Bible does not tell us how the king responded to this, but the text implies that he granted his request. Daniel and his companions already had a good reputation with the king and, more importantly, the Spirit of God was with Daniel. God calmed the situation through the presence of his faithful servant. God’s obedient servants walk in favor with Him and man.

### **The Impossible Works of God**

Before we get to the conclusion of this dramatic scene, and ultimately the end of this two part message, I want to reflect on the critical lesson this Biblical account holds for us all.

If you expect to be used by God, expect to be brought to the place where you are totally dependent on Him. If you expect to be used as powerfully as Daniel—perhaps in business, government, or science—you might be brought to the place where you have to “risk” your entire career on a Spiritual insight. In other words, expect to be brought to the place where you cannot accomplish the work of God with strictly your own natural abilities.

On one occasion a crowd was following Jesus for what they could get out of Him. The Apostle John provided us with the following account in his gospel:

When they [the crowd] found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.”

So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, *that we may see and believe you?*” (6:25–30a; emphasis mine).

A prominent error of people who claim to follow Christ, like the “crowds” in the gospels, is that they only truly seek Him when they need something. This group cannot have faith, because they do not know His will. If they were truly following Him, then they would hear His voice and *at least know what path they are to trust Him on*. A prominent error of those who do seek Him is to model their following after someone else or some method, both of which can be *seen*, and neither which require faith. If it comes from man or if you can see it, it is not by faith.

The crowd asked Jesus what they needed to do to do the works of God. They asked this question because they were carnal. We *cannot* do the works of God, only He can. This is why Jesus responded by telling them that they needed to *believe* in Him. The [pathway](#) of trusting in Christ, will lead you to the life where He does the works of God through you.

Before I bring this side trail back to Daniel, allow me to illustrate this one other way.

Can you make a plant grow? Yes and no. You can plant it in good soil in a location with enough sun, and water it right, but you cannot actually make it grow. You have a role to play, but you have to *trust* the design of God to make it grow.

Can you do the works of God? Yes and no. You can avoid a sinful lifestyle, study the Word of God, pray in the Spirit, and do what God leads you to do, but you cannot actually do the works of God. You have a role to play, but you have to *trust* God to do His works in and through your life. It is impossible for you to do the works of God, but you can experience them in your life if you are willing and obedient.

On another occasion, Jesus’ disciples could not cast a demon out of a man. Jesus then gave them the following explanation as to why:

“... Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you. (Matthew 17:20)

Is it possible for man to literally speak to an entire mountain and have it change its geographic location? Absolutely not. It is clearly impossible for a man to do this. However,

it is possible if the man is in the faith realm of walking in the Spirit. In this case, the man would take an action, but he would not actually do it, God would. This is how the *normal* Christian life is supposed to function. God wants the results of our lives to be so impossible that it is clear that He is behind them.

Daniel was operating in the faith realm of the will of God. God had set things up to make the outcome perfectly clear that He was operating in the life of His servant. You might look at what Daniel did and say to yourself, “I could never do that.” You would be exactly right, because, again, you cannot do the works of God.

Never, ever ponder God using you in a situation according to your own natural abilities! If God puts a desire in your heart to accomplish something for His kingdom, you must realize that when you get to critical junctures He will be the one making things happen. He will fill you with His Spirit to play your part.

### **It All Points To The Glory Of God**

When Nebuchadnezzar asked Daniel if he was able to tell the dream and the interpretation, Daniel replied:

"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. ... 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. (2:27–28a, 30)

Daniel made it clear that the telling of the dream and its interpretation was entirely from God and not from him. Daniel's role in serving God was to be a vessel for His glory.

After Daniel recalled the dream and explained its interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar, the chapter ends with the following account:

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. The king answered and

said to Daniel, “*Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings*, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery.” Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king’s court. (2:47–49; emphasis mine)

God was continuing to reveal Himself to King Nebuchadnezzar. The pinnacle of Daniel’s faithfulness and perseverance was the final declaration of the king: “Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings.”

In whatever field God has placed you in, take note that His glory is the ultimate objective. In the case of Daniel, his path to God’s glory was accompanied with “high honors,” “many great gifts,” and a high political appointment. This is not always the case. Many have forsaken all to glorify God, even their lives. We should also not forget that Daniel was forced to become a eunuch to even get into position in the first place. He was not able to have a family.

There is no comparison between the wisdom and understanding that God gives a person with the mainstream understanding of this world. This reality has been blurred by so many Christians having been taken “captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits [or principles] of the world, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8). The consequence is God is not exalted and fewer people come to know Him.

Years ago, I knew a believer who was running for the office of State Representative where I lived at the time. One day at work, a fellow manager told me how he was put off by his negative ads against his opponent. I had previously told him that this person was part of my church (fellowship). I was not familiar with these ads and, needless to say, was disappointed to hear this. Shortly after the election, in which he *barely* lost (by a few hundred votes), he *happened* to attend the early morning prayer service I was leading. I think this was the only time he ever came when I was there. That particular morning I was teaching from the first few chapters of 1 Corinthians regarding the wisdom of God versus the wisdom of man. I talked to him afterwards and shared what my coworker had said. I then told him that if it was God’s will for him to be elected, then he would be elected and

there was no reason (indeed, never a reason) to resort to the tactics of this world. He needed to firmly put his trust in God. To his credit, he admitted that his “advisors” were behind this aspect of his campaign and he should have disallowed it. I hope he learned from this failure to glorify God.

God would have our conviction to do things His way overpower and convert those who are off course around us, instead of the other way around. If we are truly living for God’s glory, then we will be filled with boldness to accomplish this.

This account of the four Judean youths should inspire today’s faithful remnant. God’s chosen people (Judah) were a real mess at that time (read Jeremiah and Ezekiel), but God was still working. Daniel’s faithfulness lead to him receiving the special gift of understanding in all visions and dreams. This gift would ultimately lead to the king of the then most powerful empire in the world—the only king, outside of Jesus, that God ever referred to as a king of kings (Ezekiel 26:7)—writing a letter “to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth” extolling the greatness of God. No matter how far the mass of God’s people are off course, the faithfulness of one individual (or four friends) can result in God being glorified on a global scale. *With the internet communications we now have, how much faster and more powerfully can God be glorified today?*