

DAY 3 - JANUARY 10, 2026

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Daniel's Interpretation (Daniel 2)

- “Magicians” describes some variety of occultist in both Egypt and Babylon.
- “Enchanters” (NIV, NRSV, ESV), “astrologers” (KJV) is some variety of occultist.
- “Sorcerers,” those who “use witchcraft, practice sorcery.”
- “Astrologers” (NIV), Chaldeans (NRSV, ESV, KJV) either “Chaldean” by race, or as “learned,” of the class of Magi.

Most of these specialties would have been banned if this had taken place in Israel (Deut. 18:10-12)

The Babylonians believed that what the gods planned in heaven was knowable by direct observation on earth by a specialist known as the bārû or “observer.” To make a determination, the baru might resort to a variety of means: (1) sheep lungs and livers, (2) abnormal births, (3) astrology, and (4) dreams. The Babylonians kept extensive dream books that would help with interpretations (Isaiah 47:13-14).

Q1. (Daniel 2:17-18) Why does Daniel ask his friends to “plead for mercy”? According to Scripture, is intercessory prayer important? Is it effective? How can we implement intercessory prayer in our churches?

Q2. (Daniel 2:27-28) How does Daniel show humility in this situation? How does he use this situation as an opportunity to witness before the king to his faith in God? According to 1 Peter 5:5-6, should we try to exalt ourselves? If we do so, what will happen?

The identity of the various kingdoms or empires in chapters 2 and 7 is controversial, but this is likely:

Chapter 2	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Interpretation
Gold	Lion		Babylon (2:38)
Silver	Bear	Ram	Medo-Persia (8:20)
Bronze	Leopard	He-goat	Greece (8:21)
Iron/Clay	Indescribable Beast		(Rome)
Supernatural Stone	Heavenly Court		God's Kingdom

The coming Kingdom of God will be:

1. Temporal. The Kingdom of God will be set up or established in history (Mark 1:15)
2. Divine. God will set it up, not man.
3. Eternal. This kingdom will never be destroyed, but will endure forever.
4. Consuming. It will eventually crush all other kingdoms and bring them to an end.

See also Daniel 4:40, 44; 7:14; Luke 1:32-33; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25; Psalm 2:7-9; Matthew 21:42-44; Isaiah 8:14; Revelation 11:15; 12:10a.

Q3. (Daniel 2:44) What does verse 44 teach us about the kingdom that the God of heaven will set up? What kingdom is this? When does this kingdom come? How is this related to Mark 1:15? When will it destroy all other kingdoms?

Lessons for Disciples:

1. Revealing. God can reveal to his servants through the Holy Spirit things that are otherwise unknown (1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 12:4-10)
2. Asking for intercessory prayer is shown in 2:18. See Romans 15:30; 2 Corinthians 1:11; Ephesians 6:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:25; 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Colossians 2:1; 4:12
3. Seeking God under pressure. Daniel asks for prayer, and then seeks God.
4. Thanking. Daniel offers up a psalm of thanks to God for revealing (2:20-23).
5. Humbly witnessing. Daniel points to God's power (2:28).
6. Exalting the humble. Nebuchadnezzar promotes Daniel to a high position. 1 Peter 5:5b; James 4:6.