

DANIEL 2

INTRODUCTION...

- The upcoming election is stirring up a very diverse reaction in our country...
 - There are some who worry their worst possible fears might been realized...
 - While others have newfound hope for a nation they deemed of the verge of collapse...
 - With almost constant news coverage with VERY diverse opinions...
 - It leaves the average person wondering what it all means – and what will happen next!
- The Good news is – no Government comes to power by accident...
 - We are told in **Romans 13:1** – the authorities that exist are appointed by God...
 - If you are like me – this can be a hard to embrace – all governments are appointed by God...
 - We look at the corruption – poor policies – the injustice around us in our nation...
 - Not to mention the evil governments – muslim / communist / Iran / North Korea...
 - Surely God cannot approve of these governments – much less be responsible!
 - Yet Paul wrote this during the time Caesar Nero was the emperor of Rome...
 - The ruler who clothed Christians in animal skins – then fed them alive to the dogs...
 - Who rode his chariot down roads lined with burning Christians for light...
 - This was Pauls Government – the one he was saying to obey and respect!
 - Because God is not after a just government – He desires the salvation of all men...
 - If governments were perfect – we would never learn to look to and trust in God...
 - It is in the imperfections of our governments we see our need for the Lord!
 - If God wanted all men to have a rich and easy life – all governments would be perfect...
 - But He wants people in heaven – so governments are flawed – led by flawed men!
 - And it turns out God is using all things to the good – **Romans 8:28**...
 - In the early 20th century – the nation of Mongolia was considered the graveyard of missions...
 - The Gospel seemed incapable of penetrating the formidable challenges found there...
 - An early 20th century missionary remarked on the 5 main barriers to sharing Jesus:
 - 1. The people were nomadic / 2. Most were illiterate / 3. There were no roads...
 - 4. Even if someone did receive Jesus – there were no doctors – many died of disease...
 - 5. The people were entrenched in Tibetan Buddhism – dominating every aspect of their life!
 - In 1921 the nation became a communist country – all Christian workers were expelled!
 - When the country opened back up in 1991 – there were only a handful of known believers!
 - But – Communism had put all the nomadic people into cities / educated them - 98% literacy...
 - Build roads and rails lines crisscrossing the country / and doctors were commonplace...
 - The atheism of communism had eradicated Tibetan Buddhism – leaving a spiritual vacuum...
 - So when missionaries came back in – people started getting saved by the thousands!
 - It is not that all the governments are good – God just uses them all for good!
- Our confidence and hope as believers should never be in a government...
 - It is in our God who is sovereign over the kingdoms of men – bends them to His will...
 - In light of that we are going to look at Daniel 2...
 - We see God is sovereign over all nations of this world – till the very end...
 - We see that nothing happens apart from His purposes / and His plans!
 - **Proverbs 21:1** – “The king’s heart *is* in the hand of the LORD... He turns it wherever He wishes.”
 - A VERY encouraging message – especially in light of the uncertain world we live in...
 - Because even when life seems uncertain – we can be confident ultimately God is in control!

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KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD... (3 THINGS)

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• 1st – AN IMPOSSIBLE REQUEST... vs. 1-13

o 1st – Importance of dreams... vs. 1

- In the second year of King Nebuchadnezzar he had dreams...
 - There is some difficulty with the timing of these dreams...
 - At least 3 years had passed since Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem – **Daniel 1:5**
 - So how could this be only the 2nd year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar...
 - It turns out he ruled for 3 years while his father Nabopolassar was still on the throne...
 - So this is the 5th year since he came to power – but only the 2nd year of his solo reign
- And in this second year of King Nebuchadnezzar he had dreams...
 - The dreams troubled the spirit of Nebuchadnezzar so he could not sleep...
 - He was convinced they were more than just random dreams – they were important...
 - Now God can speak through dreams - Joseph had 2 dreams he would rule – **Genesis 37...**
 - And it is not just limited to the men in the Bible – God says He will give us dreams...
 - **Joel 2:28** – “I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions.”
- But although God can speak through dreams – that does not mean all dreams are from God...
 - **Ecclesiastes 5:7** – “Much dreaming and many words are meaningless.”
 - Our dream from last night might be from the Lord – or from eating too much pizza...
 - Before we make any rash decision based on dreams – make sure they are from God!
 - The way to test the dream is to compare it to the Word – know our Bible!
 - If the dream contradicts the Word of God in any way - reject it - it is not from the Lord!

o 2nd – Looking for answers in the wrong places... vs. 2-3

- Nebuchadnezzar called for 4 kinds of wise men in Babylon to interpret the dream ...
 - Magicians – likely Egyptian priests – same word is in **Genesis 41:8** (*Pharaoh's dream*)...
 - Astrologers – meaning someone who speaks to the dead – necromancer / séance...
 - Sorcerer – one who practices witchcraft – communicates with demons...
 - Chaldeans – people from Babylon – perhaps local priests / or magicians...
- He asked for them because he was looking to the supernatural for answers!
 - There are a lot of people today who run to the supernatural...
 - They look to horoscopes / tarot cards / fortune tellers / séances / Ouija boards...
 - And it is possible to contact spirits - but what a person is contacting is a demon...
 - A demon can disguise itself – they have lived for ages – can pretend to be someone else...
 - So they can tell you facts about your life / your past that nobody else could know...
 - But it is just lying spirit disguised as an angel of light - **II Corinthians 11:14**
 - That is why all of these practices are forbidden in the Word of God - **Deuteronomy 18:10!**

o 3rd – Anger and confusion... vs. 4-13

- The ‘wise men’ asked for the dream – so they could interpret it...
 - They spoke to the king in Aramaic – this begins a change of language in the book of Daniel
 - From **Daniel 2:4–7:28** – the book of Daniel switches from Hebrew to Aramaic...
 - The reason is assumed to be because of whom God addresses in this section...
 - Beginning with the dream of Nebuchadnezzar – through the vision of Daniel in chapter 7...
 - He unveils the future destiny of the gentile nations – who at that point spoke Aramaic
- Nebuchadnezzar demanded the ‘wise men’ tell him what he dreamt – then interpret it...
 - Either because he had forgotten the content of his dream (*common occurrence*)...
 - Or perhaps as a test to these magicians and sorcerers to see if they could be trusted...
 - If they could give him the dream – then they would be given riches and honor...

- If not then they would be cut into pieces – and their house turned into an ash heap!
- They argued no one had ever given such a decree – no man could do what he asked!
- Nebuchadnezzar was irritated – they had no answers for his troubled spirit...
- So in anger he gave the order for ALL the wise men of Babylon to be executed!
- We often get upset because we go to the wrong people for help...
 - While it is true that there is wisdom in getting advice from others!
 - **Proverbs 15:22** – “Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many counselors bring success.”
 - Many people today run to the wrong counsel for help - psychology / medication...
 - We should not be surprised if we go to the world – and they have no / or bad answers!
 - I might be good to ask – before you try and solve my problem – how is your life...
 - Why would we think another struggling sinner – is going to have answers for our life!
 - We do not want someone who gives us their opinion – no guarantee they are right...
 - We want someone who is going to point us to Jesus – He is ALWAYS right!
 - **I John 4:1** - “Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God.”

● **2ND – THE GOD WHO CAN DO THE IMPOSSIBLE... vs. 14-30** **READ: DANIEL 2:14-30**

- o 1st – Pointing others to the answer... vs. 14-16
 - When the captain came to execute Daniel – because he happened to be a ‘wise man’...
 - He asked to go before the king – he was looking for answers in all the wrong places...
 - We live in a world that is angry BECAUSE they look for answers in the wrong places...
 - They are confused because it tuned out education / money do not solve all their problems...
 - They are angry because all their ‘wise men’ turn out to be fools – **Romans 1:22**...
 - When we teach students they come from animals – and are nothing more than an accident...
 - Why would we be surprised then when these kids grow up angry and out of control!
 - Yet our opportunity is to be the ones to go and tell the world where the TRUTH can be found!
- o 2nd – Taking the time to pray... vs. 17-23
 - Daniel – and his 3 companions – went to pray...
 - Then the secret of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar were revealed to Daniel in a night vision...
 - He blessed God – who alone reveals deep secrets - knows what is in the darkness...
 - God alone had the power to give Daniel the answer to an impossible question!
 - Because when we have an impossible question we need answered...
 - The only solution is to go to the one who has all the answers – knows all the secrets!
 - But I fear often when we pray – we give up before God answers us...
 - If Hallel wants me to give her something – she does not just ask once...
 - She asks - OVER and OVER and OVER - until we give her what she wants!
 - Like our kids - we need to be persistent in seeking the Lord – do not give up!
 - And when He answers – like Daniel we will bless the Lord who reveals the deep secrets!
 - **James 1:5** – “If you need wisdom - if you want to know what God wants you to do-ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.”
- o 3rd – The one who reveals secrets... vs. 24-30
 - Daniel was rushed to the King to give him the dream and interpretation...
 - Daniel told him – his astrologers / the magicians / and soothsayers had no answers...
 - But God had answered and could tell him: what his dream was – and what it meant!
 - Nebuchadnezzar had been thinking about what would happen in the future (*after this*)...
 - His dream and interpretation would reveal the plan of God to the End of the Age!
 - Daniel did not have the answer because he was wiser / smarter...
 - But because there is a God in heaven that can reveal the secrets no one else can!

- We live in a world that is blinded to the events unfolding all around them...
- They seem oblivious to the fulfillment of countless prophecies...
- They are ignorant of the coming judgment – careening haplessly towards destruction...
- And we are left to ask – why is something so clear to us – hidden from them...
- **I Corinthians 2:10** – “God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.”
- The word ‘revealed’ is the word – *apokalupto* – where we get the term apocalypse...
- We see what Daniel saw – because we go to the Lord / look to the Word...
- Opening our eyes to see the things that are hidden from the world around us...
- But we are not to keep it hidden – we are to proclaim it from the rooftops!
- **Matthew 10:27** - “Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.”

● **4TH – THE DREAM OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR... vs. 31-49** READ: DANIEL 2:31-49



- o The dream of the king – laid out the final kingdoms of this world... vs. 31
 - The king saw an image of a huge impressive idol made up of precious metals...
 - Because from the perspective of man – the kingdoms of men are amazing...
 - The idol contained 5 parts – corresponding to 5 kingdoms that would rule the world...
 - Each part was made up of a different metal – ranked from heaviest to lightest...
 - Because the kingdoms of men are unstable – heavy on top / supported by fragile feet!
 - Interesting when we get to the parallel passage in Daniel 7 – we see a different view...
 - God sees the kingdoms of men as wild beasts bent on destruction!
- o 1st - Head of Gold – Babylonian empire: 605-539 B.C (70 years)... vs. 32 / 37-38
 - Babylon – Nebuchadnezzar – was the head of Gold because it was the greatest empire...
 - Great because God Himself had given the king power / strength / and glory...
 - Nebuchadnezzar was the ultimate ruler – there were no restrictions to his authority!
 - Wherever men and animals lived – he had power and control over them all!
 - Because God chose Babylon to chastise His people – 70 years of captivity – **Jeremiah 25:12**
- o 2nd - Chest of Silver - Medo-Persian Empire: 539-331 B.C. (208 years)... vs. 32 / 39
 - The Medo-Persians conquered Babylon under the rule of King Cyrus – 539 B.C
 - The two arms may even be a reference to their 2 empires – the Medes / and the Persians
 - But their rulers did not have the absolute power given to Nebuchadnezzar...
 - The kings only had limited power shared with the central government / nobles...
 - King Darius could not even save Daniel from the lions den - **Daniel 6:14**
 - But God used the Medo-Persians to rebuild His Temple / Jerusalem – **Ezra 1:1**
- o 3rd - Belly / thighs of Bronze – Grecian Empire: 331-168 B.C. (163 years)... vs. 32 / 39
 - The Grecian Empire conquered Medo-Persia in Battle around 331 B.C.
 - The Greeks were famed for their bronze armor – and leadership of Alexander the Great...
 - Under his direction they became the first of the Kingdoms to rule the known world!
 - And God used the Grecian Empire to create one language / culture for the known world!
- o 4th - Legs of Iron – Romans Empire: 168-476 A.D (643 years)... vs. 33 / 40
 - The Romans ended the Grecian Empire through victory in the III Macedonian war – 168 B.C.
 - Like Iron it was a hardened military machine that crushed anyone who stood in its way...
 - But their rulers were weak – their power subject to the fickle whims of the people!
 - The two legs may possibly refer to the 2 division of the Roman Empire in later years...
 - The Western Empire ruled from Rome / and Eastern Empire ruled from Constantinople...
 - Yet God used the Roman Empire to build roads and a prolonged period of peace...
 - These would be crucial – along with the Greek language – to the spread of the Gospel!

- As we look at how God orchestrated the Empires of the world – molding them to His will...
- It gives great peace – because no matter how random things seem – God is in control...
- We see everything unfolds according to His plan – leading to one pre-determined end!
- **Daniel 4:35** - "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth..."
- o 5th - Feet of Iron and Clay – Revived Roman Empire (*Europe*): 476 A.D.-present... vs. 33 / 41-42
 - Rome slowly degraded in power until it fell to marauding Germanic tribes – 476 B.C.
 - This began the period known most commonly as the Middle Ages...
 - The former Empire fragmented into numerous nations – France / Spain / Germany...
 - Each an iron piece of the original Empire – but without the strength of the whole...
 - Many of the nations attempted to reunite the glory of the Romans Empire...
 - In the 19th century Napoleon attempted to rebuild Rome under French rule...
 - England was the Empire on which the sun never set – till it did...
 - In the 20th century Hitler attempted to create the 1000-year Reich under German rule...
 - But a day is coming when Rome will be reunited...
 - In the aftermath of the rapture – pre tribulation – **I Corinthians 15:51**
 - And after the Magog invasion when God destroys the armies of Russia / Arabs – **Ezekiel 38**
 - The world will be in chaos – one man will step up offering peace and safety...
 - He will make peace by rebuilding the 3rd Temple - received as the Jewish Messiah...
 - This event will start the 7 years of Tribulation – **Daniel 9:27**
 - Just as the feet of the idol had 10 toes – the new Empire will have 10 parts – **Daniel 7:7**
 - But his kingdom will be the weakest of all – iron mixed with clay...
 - A reference to the weak ties binding the fragmented European nations together!
 - 3 ½ years into the Tribulation the Abomination of Desolation – **Matthew 24:15!**
 - The Anti-Christ will enter the rebuilt 3rd temple – into the Holiest of All...
 - The footstool of God – where the Ark of the Covenant once stood (*1st Temple only*)...
 - There he will proclaim he is god – and should be worshiped by the world...
 - Unless the days following were shortened - no one would survive...
 - But for the sake of those who will accept Jesus – shortened – **Mark 13:20...**
 - The bad news - anyone who does not believe in Jesus has this to look forward to...
 - People can be saved during the Tribulation – but you will have to go through it...
 - And you will have to die – beheaded – for your faith in Jesus - **Revelation 20:4**
 - But if we believe in Jesus now - we will not see the rebirth of the Roman Empire...
 - Jesus will take us to heaven before in the rapture of the church – **I Thessalonians 4:16**
 - Really good motivation to receive Jesus today - **II Corinthians 6:2**
- o 6th - Stone cut without hands – Millennial Kingdom of God... vs. 34-36 / 44-45
 - The stone cut without hands – Jesus Christ – **I Peter 2:7 / I Corinthians 10:4**
 - Will strike the feet of Iron and Clay (*the revived Roman Empire*) – scatter the idol like chaff!
 - Immediately after the 7 years of Tribulation – Jesus will return - **Revelation 19:11-21**
 - He will come riding in on a white horse – ‘King of Kings – and Lord of Lords’!
 - All those who were raptured will return with Him from heaven...
 - He will face off against the armies of the Anti-Christ – Armageddon - destroy them all!
 - No trace of all the kingdoms of men will be left – they will be erased from history!
 - The stone will become a great mountain – fill the earth – the LAST / everlasting Kingdom!
 - The Millennium reign of Jesus – **Revelation 20:1-7** - and the New Heaven and New Earth...
 - When God created the world - gave the ‘Deed’ to Adam & Eve - **Genesis 1:28-30...**
 - When Adam and Eve choose to sin in the garden - rebel against God - **Genesis 3...**
 - They sold the ‘Title Deed’ of the world to satan - **II Corinthians 4:4 / John 14:30**

- Jesus came to redeem the 'Title Deed' that had been lost...
 - **Revelation 5:2-5** - we are told the no one could open the scroll - 'Title Deed'...
 - But the Angel said - behold the 'Lion of the Tribe of Judah' - Jesus!
 - Jesus will redeem the world – restore the world that was lost – that is how the story ends!
- o 8th – The praise of the King... vs. 46-49
- Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face before Daniel – truly your God is God of gods / Lord of lords!
 - The king promoted Daniel over all the other wise men of Babylon...
 - And Daniel had Shadrach / Meshach / and Abed-Nego set over the affairs of the province
 - God has established His plan for the world - and nothing will change it - **Matthew 5:18**
 - He is coming to judge the nations - and every knee will bow - **Philippians 2:10**
 - And there are only two kinds of people when it comes to God...
 - Sinner who have received the free gift of salvation in Jesus - and sinners who have not...
 - For those who reject Jesus - all that waits them is certain and terrifying judgment...
 - But for those who believe an everlasting Kingdom – ruling and reigning with Jesus forever!

