

## Uncompromising Week 2 A Kingdom with No Boundaries

### Daniel 2

<sup>1</sup> In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." <sup>4</sup> Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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." <sup>7</sup> They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation." <sup>8</sup> 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— <sup>9</sup> 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." <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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." <sup>12</sup> Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. <sup>13</sup> So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.

### God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

<sup>17</sup> Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. <sup>20</sup> Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. <sup>21</sup> 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; <sup>22</sup> he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. <sup>23</sup> To you, O God of my fathers, 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." <sup>24</sup> 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." <sup>25</sup> 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." <sup>26</sup> 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?" <sup>27</sup> 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, <sup>28</sup> 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: <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> 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.

### Daniel Interprets the Dream

<sup>31</sup> "You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. <sup>32</sup> The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, <sup>33</sup> its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. <sup>34</sup> As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. <sup>35</sup> Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. <sup>36</sup> "This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation. <sup>37</sup> You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, <sup>38</sup> and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold. <sup>39</sup> Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. <sup>40</sup> And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these. <sup>41</sup> And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. <sup>42</sup> And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. <sup>43</sup> As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. <sup>44</sup> And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, <sup>45</sup> just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

### Daniel Is Promoted

<sup>46</sup> Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. <sup>47</sup> 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." <sup>48</sup> 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. <sup>49</sup> 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.

**The Big Picture: God has all authority over all kingdoms, and God honors Daniel's faithfulness, not because Daniel is faithful but because God is faithful.**

**Truth:**

At the time, Babylon was one of the first world powers. No other kingdom compared with Babylon. However, the statue in the dream foretold of a kingdom that would defeat every other kingdom, including Babylon.

The king dreamed that a statue made of gold, silver and bronze was destroyed by a large stone, but not by any human. The stone destroyed the work of man, symbolizing God's power over any earthly kingdoms. God's Kingdom unifies us with people of other languages and cultures. It crosses economic boundaries and social barriers. It is bigger than any earthly kingdom, and being a citizen of God's Kingdom should make us different.

Belonging to God's Kingdom made Daniel and his friends different. It made them brave in the face of a sure death sentence. God's love towards them caused them to act in obedience, even when it was at odds with the king's command. Being a part of God's Kingdom united this small community and allowed them to lean on each other for strength in a foreign land.

Being a citizen of God's kingdom isn't always easy. It's easy to blend in and forget we are called to more. Being a part of God's Kingdom means our lives should be spent expanding God's Kingdom. Often times, in order for God's Kingdom to come, ours must be destroyed. However, sacrificing as a citizen of God's Kingdom isn't a burden. It's a privilege and a responsibility because Jesus is a good and faithful King.

**GOSPEL CONNECTION**

*(Daniel is a type of Christ – He clearly intercedes on behalf of those who don't deserve it – His action delivers the wise men just as Christ's intervention delivers us from God's wrath)*

- How do we see God's power and sovereignty in this story?
- When he first heard the death sentence, Daniel sprang to action. What did he do?
- God used Daniel to save the wise men from certain death. Did the wise men deserve Daniel's help?
- Do you think you deserve or could earn God's salvation?

**Equipping:**

- What do you think it means for God's Kingdom to come on earth?
- Do you believe there is a battle between the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God? In what ways do you observe this?
- In what ways are you building your own kingdom? Why do or why don't you trust God to build His Kingdom in and through your life?

**Accountability:**

- In what ways are you seeking man's approval more than God's?
- Does fear of how the world judges you influence how you follow (and how much you rely upon) God?
- Do you find it easier to be public or private about your faith in Christ? How might a public display of your faith be seen by those around you?
- If you are a Christian, then God is with you and in you all the time. How does that empower you to live more fully for him and not for the approval of man?

**Mission:**

- Daniel sought to save the so called wise men of Babylon. Beside preservation of his own life, what reasons did he have to save the other wise men? He had been abducted from his homeland and put together with a group of people unlike him and who did not worship the same God that he did. Instead he goes to his friends from chapter 1, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (aka Shadrach, Mescach, and Abednego) and they pray and act.
- As you think about your school, what might be some ways you can serve God (and his kingdom) this week? Is there a teacher or administrator that you know is undergoing a difficult season? Is there a friend or classmate that could benefit from your help (academically, spiritually, emotionally)?
- Ask a classmate in one (or each) of your classes if you could pray for them. Tell them, "You are my friend and I want to help support and encourage you. Is there anything that I can be praying about for you?"
- And think about how you can partner with Christian brothers and sisters at your school. You don't have to go this alone! Partner together to be a blessing where you spend so much of your time!

**Supplication:**

- Consider again the 6:10 Prayer Initiative. We know that everyone isn't a student at Northview HS but that shouldn't keep you from joining all of Watershed in prayer for that community.
- As you share prayer requests within your discipleship group, consider how you might also be able to encourage one another during the week. Pair up and agree to exchange a text message every time you pray for the other person.

**For Further Study:**

- 1 Samuel 16:7
  - This verse is a part of the passage where Samuel is looking to anoint God's chosen king of Israel. Saul and David were two very different types of people. Saul had the outward appearance of a king whereas David did not. However, this verse indicates that God looks beyond what is seen. How does this verse motivate and encourage you to live for God? And what might this say to how we see other people?
- 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
  - Verse 4 talks about being "approved by God." Why might this be a good thing to be reminded of time and time again? In your experience, how have you lived to gain the approval of others? What struggles do you have with living for the approval of others as opposed to God's approval?
- Matthew 6:5-15
  - Prayer is a vital part of the Christian life. It connects us to our Father in Heaven, it reminds us that we have open lines of communication with the Creator of the universe, it forces us to consider our dependence and need for God. In these few verses, what stands out to you most and why? In what ways is Daniel's prayer in Daniel 2:20-23 like the Lord's Prayer?