**Calm in the Midst of Chaos**

**Daniel Chapter 2:1-30 (Lesson #2)**

*“****7*** *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!* ***8*** *Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.* ***9*** *For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.” (Ps 37:7-9 ESV)*

*“If the anger of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your place, for calmness will lay great offenses to rest.” (Ecc 10:4 ESV)*

*“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” (Joh 14:27 ESV)*

 ***1 In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. 2 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. 3 And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." (Here the book shifts to Aramaic)4 Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation." 5 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. 6 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." 7 They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation." 8 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 —  9 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." 10 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. 11 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."***

**Vs 1** – Again rooted in history! This would have been **604BC**

The most powerful man in the known world, has had **“dreams”** and now because of at least one of them he is **“troubled”** and unable to sleep.

His spirit is troubled, the one who has troubled so many nations, now it appears God is troubling him, God is disturbing him, God is creating in him a legitimate fear of some kind.

**Vs 2 – חרטם -** chartom **(*khar-tome’)*** *–* 11 times magician, it could mean a diviner or magician, but it could also mean a scholar, (occultic or academic) in this environment probably both.

**אשׁף** - ‘ashshaph **(*ash-shawf’)***- 2 times astrologer, those who chart the stars.

**כשׁף** - kashaph **(*kaw-shaf’*)** - 6 times, this seem to mean a witch or a sorcerer.

**כשׂד**י - kasdiy **(*kas-dee’)*** (Chaldeans – from lower Mesopotamia) apparently known for their wisdom. This was probably a term to refer to men who very wise.

You can picture this “dream team” coming in and standing before the king.

Imagine if you will, this is the **brain-trust of this day**. This list includes scholars, proto scientist, as well as various forms of charlatans, fakers, sorcerers, and witches. No doubt, there would be a demonic influence with some of these, but not all.

This is the everyone who claims to be someone in 604BC in Babylon.

**Daniel is among this larger group collectively known as “wise men” and we see this in 2:12.**

**Vs 3 –** Nebuchadnezzar has had a dream (bad dream) that is preventing him from sleeping.

**But notice too, he says his spirit is troubled to “know the dream.”**

The most powerful man in the world at the time is like a lost child and he is in a panic, he has had a disturbing dream, but it seems in waking he cannot remember it.

Scholars are divided:

1. Some say he cannot remember the dream.
2. Others say he can, but he is testing them.
3. I am of camp one, but in the end, it does not matter (as we will see momentarily).

**As this unfolds, I want you to see four traits of Nebuchadnezzar that are common of men and women who do not know God. Especially when (for whatever reason) they feel threatened:**

1. **Insecurity** – This is the most powerful man on the planet.
2. **Hostility –** A better word might be rage. An unreasonable, lashing out in complete anger.
3. **Fear –** At this moment it would seem he has nothing to fear, but he is clearly VERY afraid!
4. **Irrationality –** Cleary, killing all the wise men (Vs 5-6)

*“The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.” (Pr 28:1 ESV)*

Now it would appear that either Nebuchadnezzar did not trust his brain trust, or he simply could not remember the dream.

**I believe God is orchestrating this, with plans to reveal the dream, but first elevate his servant even further in the eyes of the King.**

God plans to reveal the dream, but he wants to ensure Nebuchadnezzar sees Daniel as the most valuable wise man in his kingdom.

**Vs 4 -** The Chaldeans speak king live forever, the way men addressed kings.

Reasonable request, you tell us the dream, we will tell you the interpretation.

**Vs 5-6** – Now the Aramaic word here is “dunghill” or “outhouse”.

The most powerful man in the known world, is completely freaked out about at least one of these dreams and is acting **extremely irrationally**.

If you do not tell me the dream and the interpretation, I will have you torn apart and your homes turned into dunghills.

**Nebuchadnezzar is in a full-blown panic!**

**Vs 7** – response #2 from the Chaldeans, you tell us the dream we will provide the interpretation.

**Vs 8 - 9 – The king the third time…**

You are trying to buy time.

I have already told you what is going to happen

In fact, you (have colluded and conspired together), you have formed a cabal with the plan to speak lying and corrupt words to me.

You are hoping that this will be forgotten about.

It will not. Tell me the dream and show me the interpretation!

You can sense the King is enraged; he does not trust his “brain trust.”

Maybe as MacArthur believes he is doubting this whole fake system that has been set up, he is doubting they have any true wisdom.

Of course, we cannot be sure of that. But we are sure he is demanding them to tell him the dream and the interpretation (or else) be torn limb from limb and their houses turned in dung hills!

**Vs 10 – 11** - You see they recognize that this request falls outside the domain of what is humanly possible.

Three back and forths, but the king seems pretty settled on what he desires!

**Now you are probably wondering why God would give this vision to a pagan king.** Four answers possibilities and quite possibly all are correct:

1. *“Whatever the LORD pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.” (Ps 135:6 NKJV)*
2. The nation of Israel is completely apostate and is almost as bad as Nebuchadnezzar. Keep in mind Israel had the word of God!
3. Establish Daniel as the eminent Wise Man in Babylon.
4. Throughout the Bible, God is always working, even with lost kings and lost pharaohs, to make himself known. That is the mercy of our God.

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***“12 Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. 13 So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. 14 ¶ 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. 15 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. 16 And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.”***

**Vs 12-** Because of this. The back and forth, Nebuchadnezzar getting the feeling they are conspiring together, they are delaying, etc. Because of this!

**Vs 12** – The king became angry and very furious, and gave a command to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon

**Vs 13 -** The command has gone out, in fact, they are looking for Daniel and his friends to kill them!

**Vs 14 –** **Prudence (**Aramaic word only used here)

 **Discretion** (Aramaic word used 13 times) **NKJV – wisdom.**

Now before I advance, as I gave you **four words** for Nebuchadnezzar, the Bible Gives us two words for Daniel **(prudence and discretion).**

Daniel answered Arioch (the captain of the king’s guard, “who had gone out to kill the wise *men* of Babylon” with **(prudence and discretion)**

So, picture this Daniel approaches the Captain of the Guard, who is in the act of rounding the wise men up to kill them.

**Vs 15** – First Daniel asks: ***“Why is the decree from the king so urgent?”***

**Vs 15b** Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel. Surely you must see how God has given Daniel and his friends favor with their captors!

This is the man, who is most likely in charge of executing people and he is having a discussion with Daniel about the King’s edict!

**Vs 16 –** Then Daniel goes into Nebuchadnezzar, we do not know exactly what led to this but the Bible records…. ***Daniel went in and asked the king to appoint him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.***

Four things to consider:

1. Time is the one thing no one has, yet time is exactly what the king gives Daniel. One would have thought the king would have said Daniel the appointed time is now.
2. *“The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.” (Pr 21:1 ESV)*
3. Daniel fully believed that God would reveal this mystery to him. Although he was asking for time with the King, he was trusting God to show up.

1. Daniel had to know that if God did not deliver, it would not go well with him. Yet in humility mingled with boldness, he goes in and asks for time before he is even sure God will deliver.

The King allows for more time, although he had told the Chaldeans in Verse 8 ***"I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm —***

Surely you see that God has given favor to Daniel and his friends!

**Nebuchadnezzar does the unthinkable, he sets a time, or he provides Daniel with more time.**

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

**Vs 17 –** Daniel made the matter known to ***Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.*** You cannot help but wonder how that went.

**Vs 18 –** Tells us why he went straight home 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.***

I had given you two words, now here is our third and very important to you and I to see that Daniel is **prudent, has discretion, and prayer, Daniel was a man of prayer.**

**Vs 19 -** ***Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision.***

**AMAZING!!!** Night vision gives the impression that had a season of prayer and went to bed and fell asleep!

Here is a man relying on God, and with his life hanging in the balance, he is able to sleep!

**Vs 19b** - And ***Daniel blessed the God of heaven***

Now before we look at what Daniel said in his blessing to God, we need to add another word…

Daniel is **prudent, discerning, and a man of prayer** and a man who is quick to give **praise to God. This forth word is worship.**

He did not jump up and run to the king, even though his life was hanging in the balance. Rather…

**Vs 20 - 22** - Blessed the name of God - To him and him alone belongs wisdom and might.

He sets up kingdoms and kings

He gives wisdom and knowledge

He reveals deep and hidden things

He is the one who dwells in the light.

**Conclusion of his prayer of thanksgiving…**

**Vs 23 -** I thank and praise you God!

You have made known to me what we had asked for

You are such a good, kind, and loving God!

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***“24 ¶ 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." 25 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." 26 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?" 27 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, 28 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:” 29 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. 30 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.”***

**Vs 24 –** After a season of prayer, after what appears to be a short nap, after a praise and worship session.

Daniel goes back to the chief executioner, the one the King had appointed to destroy the wise men and says: ***"Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show the king the interpretation."***

**Vs 25** – Notice two things here:

1. Arioch did it in haste, so even the captain of the guard, the head executioner, sensed the urgency here.

1. Notice what Arioch says: **"I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who will make known to the king the interpretation."**

Now I do not want to be guilty of reading in more than is here, but let’s be honest, technically Daniel is the one who came to him and said, please take me to the king.

**Vs 26 –** You can see this doubting, skeptical, king, who really suspects that his “wise men” are not that powerful.

He clarifies his request to make sure he and Daniel are on the same page:

Vs 27-28

**חכים -** chakkiym (***khak-keem’*** *–* used 14 times, wise or wise man.

**אשׁף** - ‘ashshaph (***ash-shawf’)*** *-****6***astrologers – This is a slightly different word than what was used in one verse 2.

**חרטם -** chartom (***khar-tome’)*** *–* 5 times magician, as we said could also mean scholar (occultic or academic)

**גזר** - gᵉzar (***ghez-ar’)****-* used 6 times – soothsayer, may be related to those who predict the future.

No one can tell you the dream, **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.**

There is a God in heaven and this God reveals mysteries and he has chosen to make known to the king what will be in the latter days.

Then Daniel begins to unfold Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, that he likely could not quite remember, that had brought him so much fear.

**V 29** - This dream, that came to you while you slept, is about what will come to pass later.

The one who reveals mysteries (God of heaven) is making known to you something that is to be!

**Vs 30** – Not because of wisdom I have.

**But in order that the king may learn what God wants the king to know.**

**This is God, once again, attempting to make Himself known and openly show His glory, majesty, and power to pagans!**

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**Points of Application:**

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**Jesus in the Text:**

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