

Daniel

Daniel 1 - 2

What is a kingdom?
What is the Kingdom of God?

Prayer

Dear Lord, bless our study of Your Word today. Send us Your Holy Spirit to help us hear Your Word. Cause us to know more fully our Savior from sin, Jesus Christ. Amen.



The Story - Daniel 1-2

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. {2} And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

{3} Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, {4} young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. {5} And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.

{6} Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and

Azariah. {7} To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Beltshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.

{8} But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. {9} Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. {10} And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."

{11} So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, {12} "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. {13} "Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who



eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants." {14} So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

{15} And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. {16} Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

{17} As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

{18} Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. {19} Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. {20} And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.

{21} Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

(Daniel 2) Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him. {2} Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. {3} And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

{4} Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."

{5} The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its

interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. {6} "However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."

{7} They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation."

{8} The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm: {9} "if you do not make known the dream to me, there is only one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation."

{10} The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. {11} "It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

{12} For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave a command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. {13} So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.

{14} Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon; {15} he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel. {16} So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.

{17} Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah,

Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, {18} that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. {19} Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven. {20} Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. {21} And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. {22} He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him. {23} "I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; 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 demand."

{24} Therefore Daniel went 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; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation."

{25} Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation."

{26} The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?"

{27} Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. {28} "But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:

{29} "As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. {30} "But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

{31} "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. {32} "This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, {33} "its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. {34} "You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. {35} "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

{36} "This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. {37} "You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; {38} "and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all; you are this head of gold.

{39} "But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. {40} "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and

crush all the others. {41} "Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. {42} "And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. {43} "As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

{44} "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. {45} "Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the

bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

{46} Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. {47} The king answered Daniel, and said, "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret."

{48} Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon. {49} Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

Outer aim – Earthly kingdoms rise and fall; the Kingdom of God destroys all earthly kingdoms and shall stand forever.

What the Story Tells Us - Recall details from the lesson and answer the following questions.

1. Why were young men of Israel brought to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar?
2. Who were four of the young Israelite men?
3. Why did Daniel ask to eat only vegetables and drink only water?
4. After the ten days, how had God blessed Daniel and the other three?
5. How did God additionally bless Daniel and the other three after their training was over?
6. When King Nebuchadnezzar had his troubling dream, what did he command his wise men to do?
7. When the wise men could not interpret the dream, what did Nebuchadnezzar do?
8. How did God give Daniel a way to spare his and his friends lives?

9. Before Daniel told the king the interpretation of his dream, how did Daniel give all glory to God?
10. In your own words, tell King Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
11. Match the items in the king's dream with the earthly kingdoms they represent.

Head of gold -	- Greek Empire
Chest and arms of silver -	- Babylonian Empire
Belly and thighs of bronze -	- Early Roman Empire
Legs of iron -	- Later Roman Empire
Feet of iron and clay -	- Medo-Persian Empire
12. What did the stone "cut without hands" represent?

What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss the following.

1. As King Nebuchadnezzar's dream represented, what will happen to all kingdoms of this world?
2. How did the fact that Daniel, rather than the other wise men, was allowed to interpret the king's dream show that God is in charge of the kingdoms of this world?
3. After the stone "cut without hands" (the kingdom of God) destroyed the statue, it grew larger and became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. How is this a picture of mission work?
4. Why can you be sure that you, a child of God, will live forever in heaven?

Inner Aim – Although our nation and all nations will one day be destroyed, we are believers and members of the Kingdom of God and so shall live forever.

Your Turn - How might you use Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednigo as role models in your life today?

Passages - Discuss how the following passages fit today's lesson.

Luke 17:20-21 "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; {21} "nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Psalms 2:4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the LORD shall hold them in derision.

Hymn - TLH 341 v. 1, 5

Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark how the heav'nly anthem drowns
All music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Thro' all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of Heaven,
Enthroned in worlds above,
Crown Him the King to whom is given
The wondrous name of Love.
Crown Him with many crowns
As thrones before Him fall;
Crown Him, ye kings, with many crowns,
For He is King of all.

Prayer

O Lord, you have taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom Come". With these words you have taught us to pray to the Holy Spirit for growth of our faith in Christ and love towards all. You have also taught us to pray for Your final victory over all the kingdoms of the world. Amen.