

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 01 June ..... Ezekiel 01-07 ..... When Your World Crumbles
- 2) 08 June ..... Ezekiel 08-14 ..... When Idols Tug at your Heart
- 3) 15 June ..... Ezekiel 15-19 ..... When You Want to Blame Others
- 4) 22 June ..... Ezekiel 20-24 ..... When Tragedy Hits Home
- 5) 29 June ..... Ezekiel 25-32 ..... When Pride Turns to Greed
- 6) 06 July ..... Ezekiel 33-35 ..... Hope of New Freedom
- 7) 13 July ..... Ezekiel 36-39 ..... Hope of New Life
- 8) 20 July ..... Ezekiel 40-48 ..... Hope of New Worship
- 9) 27 July ..... Daniel 01 ..... Draw the Line
- 10) 03 August ..... Daniel 02-03 ..... Risk Everything for God**
- 11) 10 August ..... Daniel 04-05 ..... Tell it Like it is
- 12) 17 August ..... Daniel 06 ..... Never Give Up on Prayer
- 13) 24 August ..... Daniel 07-08 ..... Live to Win in the End
- 14) 31 August ..... Daniel 09-12 ..... Be Ready for Tribulation

INTRODUCTION

- Daniel’s gift of dream interpretation saves his life and the lives of many others.
- Are God-given dreams and dream interpretation still occurring today?
- **Note:** Chapters 2 through 7 are in Aramaic, This actually enhances the credibility for this book being legit since it conveys the message of the book in the common main languages of the original audience

Passage	Comments
Daniel 02:1-16	<p><b>Confronting Impossible Demands</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v2. The Babylonian magicians, astrologers, sorcerers (or soothsayers), and the Chaldeans (aka, Magi) were trained in dream interpretations. Though Daniel was their “Master” (5:11), Daniel seemed to have distanced himself from them since he’s never around them</li> <li>• vv14-16. Even though the death penalty was pronounced against all the king’s wisemen, including Daniel, Daniel remained calm and relied on tact and discretion                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ How did Daniel’s faith in God play a part in his confidence and coolness under duress</li> <li>♦ Why did Daniel ask for more time from the king? Couldn’t God give to Daniel an instantaneous answer?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Daniel did not use his position and skills to advance himself or to destroy others</li> <li>• Although not stated, Daniel’s ultimate purpose was to familiarize Nebuchadnezzar with the One True God</li> </ul>
2:17-49	<p><b>Turning to God for Help</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v17. Daniel solicits the help of his 3 friends to petition God for compassion. Wouldn’t God have provided compassion even if only Daniel petitioned God?                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Mat 18:20 20 “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• v19. God waited till the middle of “a” night to reveal Nebuchadnezzar’s dream to Daniel – WHY the wait?                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Consider Isaiah 41:17-20, where God waited till the very last minute before bringing relief to His own people so that they cannot claim coincidence</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv21-22. The sovereignty of God proclaimed:                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He changes the times and seasons</li> <li>2. He sets up and removes kings</li> <li>3. He gives wisdom to the wise</li> <li>4. He gives knowledge to those with understanding</li> <li>5. He reveals deep and hidden things</li> <li>6. He sees the dark – Nothing takes God by surprise</li> </ol> </li> <li>• vv31-43. The vision of Babylon → Medo/Persia → Greece → Rome succession was more for the benefit of those in the future who would have hindsight vision and see the tapestry unfold and give credence to God’s word</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv44-45. The Divine Kingdom of God would arise from the ashes of these earthly kingdoms - IOW God was setting the stage</li> <li><b>NOTE.</b> God is still setting the stage today for the return of Christ and His Kingdom                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Consider the turmoil in the Middle East</li> <li>♦ Consider the worldwide increase and intensities of earthquakes</li> <li>♦ Consider the rise of the “kings from the east” → China</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3:1-23	<p><b>Refusing to Compromise Devotion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv1-15. Nebuchadnezzar still had not abandoned his idolatrous beliefs in other gods with his question of “Who is the god who can rescue you from my power?”</li> <li>• v17. “...if the God we serve exists” does not betray Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego’s belief in God, but acknowledges that they would be faithful to God whether they were delivered or martyred</li> </ul>
Are we guaranteed absolute protection in all situations?	<p>Scripture has several passages which seem to allude we are guaranteed protection from any kind of harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ps 91:10 <i>No evil will befall you, Nor will any plague come near your tent.</i></li> <li>• Ps 121:7 <i>The LORD will protect you from all evil;</i></li> <li>• Pr 1:33 <i>but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm."</i></li> <li>• Pr 12:21 <i>No harm befalls the righteous...</i></li> <li>• Pr 16:7 <i>When a man’s ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.</i></li> <li>• 1Peter 3:13 <i>Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?</i></li> </ul> <p>Other passages seem to say we have no guarantees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ps 116:15 <i>Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His godly ones.</i></li> <li>• Ps 94:3. <i>How long, O LORD, shall the wicked triumph?</i></li> <li>• Ecc 8:14. <i>...there are righteous who get what the wicked deserve, and wicked who get what the righteous deserve.</i></li> </ul> <p>Do we have exceptions, misinterpretations, or contradictions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John the Baptist was martyred</li> <li>• Jesus was crucified</li> <li>• 11 out of 12 Apostles died a martyr’s death</li> <li>• Stephen was martyred ..... Acts 7</li> <li>• James (brother of John) was martyred ..... Acts 12</li> <li>• Jesus says believers are guaranteed persecution</li> <li>• Believers suffered famine &amp; poverty Acts 11; 2 Cor 8; 1Tim 5</li> </ul> <p>We have to discern between what is written as a proverb, which conveys generalities, verses what is written from a heavenly perspective (the righteous will ultimately be preserved from all evil), versus, what can be expected as a result of living in a sin-cursed world</p>
3:24-30	<p><b>Demonstrating Extreme Faith</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v25. Possible Christophany</li> <li>• v27. No smell of fire on the 3 amigos – supernatural!</li> <li>• v28. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges God, but is it a saving knowledge</li> </ul>



More on Dreams	
Does God use dreams today to foretell events and bring new revelations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When someone says "God gave me a 'word' or a 'dream' or a 'revelation' – How do you prove it to be of God?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YOU CAN'T – AND THEY CAN'T. You have to go on blind faith and take their word for it – Which is unbiblical. We are commanded to prove all things</li> </ul> </li> <li>According to Heb 1:1-2 God spoke to special recipients in various ways. In all cases dreams were to be tested and not blindly accepted (Zech 10:2; 1John 4:1)</li> <li><b>The death penalty</b> was for those who performed divination, witchcraft, interprets omens, sorcery, casts spells, a medium, a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead (Deut 18:10-11); use enchantments or observe times (astrology), familiar spirits or wizards (Lev 19:26,31); and <b>false prophets and dreamers</b> who's prophecies and <b>dreams even came true</b> (Deut 13:1-5)</li> <li>God did give men and women dreams whereby they could foretell God's directives, even for some heathens                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gen 20:3,6 - But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man..."</li> <li>Judg 7:13 - When Gideon came, behold, a man was relating a dream to his friend...</li> <li>Mat 27:19 - While Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man..."</li> </ul> </li> <li>BUT revelatory dreams were never common place                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Num 12:6 "I reveal myself to My prophet in visions, I speak to him in <b>dreams</b>"</li> <li>Job 33:14-17 For God does speak ...in a <b>dream</b>, in a vision of the night...(that) he may speak in men's ears and terrify them with warnings (NIV)</li> <li>Zech 10:2 "... the diviners see lying visions and tell <b>false dreams</b>; they comfort in vain. Therefore the people wander like sheep"</li> <li>Jer 29:8 ...and God said to Israel "Do not listen to the dreams which [your prophets] dream"</li> <li>Jer 23:32 "Behold, I am against those who have prophesied <b>false dreams</b>," declares the LORD, "and related them and led My people astray"</li> </ul> </li> <li>What about Joel 2:28/Acts 2:17? "<i>It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, <b>Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions</b></i>"                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuationists (Pentecostals) see this as on going</li> <li>Cessationists see this fulfilled in Agabus, Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Paul, and the four daughters of Philip (Acts 11:28; 13:1-2; 16:9-10 21:9,10)</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Common Principle on Dreams</b> – Trust in God's objective word and not in subjective dreams                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People receive their dreams while not in full control of their faculties and possibly under the influence of spicy chicken wings</li> <li>Col 2:18 We are not to be fooled by those who take a stand on their visions and dreams</li> <li>Ecclesiastes 5:7 <i>For in many dreams and in many words there is emptiness.</i></li> <li><i>Rather, fear God.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

More on Dreams	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can dreams motivate or confirm for us any decisions we need to make?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dreams may be of God .....Joel 2:28</li> <li>Or may be "lying" dreams ..... Zech 10:2</li> <li>Or just from weariness ..... Ec 5:3</li> <li>Solomon says fear God &amp; don't trust dreams... Ec 5:7</li> <li>God holds His word above man's dreams... Jer 23:28</li> <li>Like Gideon, be sure to prove all things ... 1Thes 5:21</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>ALSO NOTE</b>, God-invoked dreams along with accurate dream interpretations are extremely rare, even in the Bible – so do not use dreams to help make decisions, especially after eating pizza and spicy buffalo wings</li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS**

- A lot has transpired in these 2 chapters. God supernaturally revealed Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel and God also supernaturally preserved his 3 friends through fire
- Nebuchadnezzar sort of saw the light that God was working with these 4 men on his behalf
- Wouldn't it be nice if God still performed such supernatural wonders on our behalf to help convince our family and friends of God's guiding hands upon our lives?
- BUT we have something more sure than any kind of supernatural wonder, such as dream interpretations or fiery rescues, and that is God's confirmed word from beginning to end.....2Peter 1:19

**NEXT WEEK: Daniel 4-5.** Daniel foretells Babylon's downfall.

Babylon has taken on the personification of all things against God – pride, idolatry, greed, oppression of the weak, self-gratification

**AFTER EDEN**

by Dan Lietha



After being kicked out of Eden, Adam woke up hoping the curse was all a bad dream, but then remembered there were no bad dreams before the curse.