

Daniel Perrin – L5: The Nations—Part 2 – Monday, April 28: Daniel 2

1. Daniel 2 is an amazing chapter of the Bible
 - a. The prophecy is so streamlined, using a few brief images to reveal the future in layers of prophetic complexity.
 - b. It's a divine prophecy — BUT then consider who it was given to:
 - God didn't even give the dream to one of His own prophets first
 - God communicated the future to a pagan monarch
 - God is so amazing in HOW He communicates —
 - Here we are 2,500 years later studying the nighttime dream that a king had one night while he was wondering about the future
 - God uses this prophetic dream to reach OUT!!
 - c. But it is more than just a timeline of future events.
 - The prophecy given in Nebuchadnezzar's dream showed "the relationship between His people and the kingdoms of the world."
 - Nor is this simply about learning to recognize and trust God's sovereignty
 - It's about learning HOW TO LIVE among the rising and falling of leaders, nations, philosophies, wars, rumors of wars, etc.
2. Let's hear the dream in **Daniel 2:29, 31–35** — *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. "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.*
3. What could a pagan monarch know about this vision without even consulting God's Word?
 - a. I think Nebuchadnezzar saw some of this significance of this dream BEFORE Daniel even gave the interpretation
 - He had been asking about the future
 - He had an "unforgettable dream" — that God had caused him to forget
 - Under the threat of death, Daniel respectfully asks for time to go to prayer meeting with his friends before they kill him.
 - Keep in mind that the vision and its interpretation were given to Daniel after he went to a prayer meeting.
 - This spiritual detail SHARPENS Nebuchadnezzar's attention
 - b. What we notice without even comparing this with other texts in the Bible
 - c. It's HUMAN — AND man-made — It LOOKS like something from human ingenuity and creativity
 - Nebuchadnezzar sees something that looks like himself,
 - From what we know of our own selves, we are FRAGILE and MORTAL
 - We can be taken down by tripping over a tree root, a snake bite, a bug bite,
 - If he's willing to look closely, he sees something perishable and temporary — and it's Himself
 - d. Declining values: gold down to clay —
 - Not just declining wealth — but declining WORTH — what kind of worth?
 - Human worth / Moral value / Strength of character

- e. It is static. There is no action, except destruction.
- f. It's topheavy — wide at the top, narrow at the bottom
 - Gold is the densest material, then silver, then bronze, then iron, then clay
 - This top-heavy structure is perched precariously on a wobbly base — crumbly clay mixed with iron
 - The iron doesn't strengthen the clay — in fact it weakens its adhesion to form a unified base
- g. In other words, this is FOOLISH CONSTRUCTION
 - Nebuchadnezzar would recognize it in a moment and shake his own head in disbelief
 - This thing is bound to topple —IMPOSSIBLE to continue
 - Yet we plan and carry on as if OUR future is guaranteed.
 - And the savings accounts we are slavishly protecting will be there undamaged somehow
 - This self-destroying statue gives us a clue as to how we should be involved in the politics of human government.
 - We can't prop up a toppling image with our own hands (or money or lobbyists)
 - BUT we CAN work to rescue anyone who needs some help disconnecting their eternal life from the fate of human power-grabbing
 - Jesus communicated the same message of this vision in the Sermon on the Mount —
 - **Matthew 6:19–21** – *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*