

I Want It All

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- [0 : 00] And we are looking for the book of Daniel and chapter 2. We are going to try to work through Daniel one chapter at a time.
- And so we'll move a little quicker or we'll cover more content maybe than we're used to covering in, for example, the book of Philippians. But that will also help us make great progress, I think, as we think about studying Scripture together.
- So we're looking for Daniel and we are in Daniel chapter 2. Let's pray. Father, thank you for the privilege that we have enjoyed thus far of worshiping together.
- Would you please help us as we continue to worship now by sitting under the preaching of your word? Our worship is not stopping. Our worship is continuing.
- But now we turn our attention to your word and we choose to worship by submitting ourselves to the preaching of your word. Father, would you please help me as I serve your people this morning?
- [1 : 17] And not just me, but those who are serving your people all over this world. Please keep us, keep me from error. Help me not to say anything that is foolish or distracting or unhelpful or disorienting.
- Oh, Father, please help us from in some way causing one of our little ones to stumble. Please help me as I continue to worship by preaching and help us as we continue to worship by sitting under the preaching of your word.
- We're grateful for your word. We're grateful that you inspired it. We're grateful that you have preserved it. We are so grateful that we can read it in our own language and that we have so many wonderful tools for reading and studying and memorizing and digging into your word.
- So please, good Father, help us now as we continue in our time of worship. We pray this in Jesus' name, giving thanks. Amen. Friedrich Nietzsche, the German philosopher who died in 1900, wrote, If there is a God, how can I bear not to be him?
- Think about the Garden of Eden. What did the serpent say? He said, you will not surely die.
- [2 : 58] You will be like God. That was the serpent's offer. You're not going to die, surely.
- You will be like God. The serpent plants this seed of pride in Adam and Eve.
- You could be so much more than you are. You might call this identity idolatry.
- I want to be more wealthy. I want to be more powerful. I want to be more respected. I want more to be more gifted. I want more pleasure.
- I want more comfort. I want more control. I want to know more. I want to do more. I want to see more. I want to experience more. Because if there is a God, how can I bear not to be him?
- [4 : 05] Adam and Eve's sin is identity idolatry. They want more. And so they rebel. They reject God's authority.

They refuse to submit to his rule over their lives. But instead of finding satisfaction in their sin, their guilt leads to insecurity.

They realize they're naked. And so they hide from God. And when God in his mercy finds them and confronts them concerning their sin, do you remember what they did?

They look outside of themselves for the problem and blame others. They turn against others.

The seed of pride becomes the root of insecurity, which produces the rotten fruit of hostility towards God and others.

[5 : 13] Nebuchadnezzar is the most powerful person on earth. But all of his wealth, all of his power, all of his success doesn't satisfy him.

Just like Adam and Eve. He gets what he thinks he wants, and it only makes him more insecure. Why? Identity idolatry.

He wants it all. So God gives Nebuchadnezzar a dream. And there, in his pajamas, the most powerful person on earth begins to recognize this truth.

Since there is a God. How can I dare not honor him? Look in your Bible. Daniel chapter 2.

We're going to start at verse number 1. In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams. His spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him.

[6 : 27] 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.

And the king said to them, I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled. I am insecure. I'm anxious. My spirit is troubled to know the dream.

Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, O king, live forever. Tell your servants the dream, and we will show you the interpretation.

These are undoubtedly well-trained men. But Nebuchadnezzar also seems to suspect that they are frauds.

He threatens them with torture and death. And then he promises them lavish rewards.

[7 : 27] Look at verse 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.

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. They answered a second time and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation.

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.

You're just trying to buy yourself some extra time. You don't know what to say. You don't know how to answer. You don't really know the future. You can't really tell me my dream.

[8 : 39] You're frauds. Verse 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.

Now, imagine waking up one morning and saying, I had a dream last night.

And your brother or your sister or your spouse or your friend at work replies, Tell me about it. And you say, No.

You tell me my dream. It is as ridiculous as it sounds, isn't it? Nebuchadnezzar's wise men are in a pickle.

[9 : 43] Kids, you know what that means to be in a pickle? It means you're stuck. You are between a rock and a hard place. You are in big trouble.

They are supposed to be his wise men, and they are unable to tell him his dream, which we can all agree is ridiculous. This is why they are in a pickle.

Verse 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. This is unprecedented.

This is ridiculous. No king has ever asked his wise men to tell them his dream. We're here to tell interpretations. You tell the dream. We give an interpretation. That's how it works.

[10 : 46] This is no good for us. The thing, verse 11, that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

I suspect these wise men have deceived and lied to and manipulated King Nebuchadnezzar in the past. They've gotten him to do some things that they wanted done around the kingdom by telling him certain things were going to happen or not happen when he tells them the dream, and they interpret it like what normally would happen.

But this time, Nebuchadnezzar says, No. I suspect you're all frauds. You tell me the dream first, and then I'll believe that your interpretation is actually accurate.

I suspect they have deceived and lied to him in the past, but right now, they are telling the truth. We can all agree. It's impossible to tell someone else their dream.

The ability to do so, hear it. Hear it in their words. It requires a different category of God, a different type of God than what they are familiar with.

[12 : 04] But despite being the most powerful person on earth, Nebuchadnezzar's identity idolatry makes him drunk on his own lust for more.

He has no peace with God, because like Nietzsche, he cannot bear to not be him. And his lack of peace with God causes him, much like Adam and Eve, to turn against others.

Verse 12, Because of this, the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed.

So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed, and they sought Daniel and his companions to kill them.

Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Ariok, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. He declared to Ariok, the king's captain, Why is the decree of the king so urgent?

[13 : 13] What's the rush? What is happening here? You're going to go and destroy all of the wise men? Then Ariok made the matter known to Daniel.

Look what Daniel does. And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time that he might show the interpretation to the king.

Then Daniel went to his house and made the manner known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 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 hope you notice the contrast between Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar's insecurity makes him hostile.

But Daniel's humility makes him trust in God's sovereignty. Nebuchadnezzar orders the execution of every wise man.

[14 : 23] Daniel schedules a meeting with the king. He doesn't know the dream yet. But he goes in and says, King, pick a date. Put it on your calendar.

I'll be there and I'll tell you the interpretation. What is the implication? I will also tell you the dream. He doesn't know the dream yet. Daniel's faith is in God's sovereignty.

Nebuchadnezzar restlessly and angrily paces in the palace. And meanwhile, Daniel and his friends fervently pray to the God of heaven.

Now, I don't know about you, but I am often still surprised when God answers prayer. But Daniel's faith causes him to humbly expect that God is going to deliver this mystery to him.

And when God answers, Daniel worships. Look at verse 19. Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night.

[15 : 45] Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever.

To whom belong wisdom and might. He, God, changes times and seasons. He, God, removes kingdoms and sets up kings. He, God, gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.

He, God, reveals deep and hidden things. He knows what is in the darkness and the light dwells with him. 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.

Therefore, Daniel went into Ariok, 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.

[16 : 51] Bring me in before the king, and I will show the king the interpretation. And then Ariok 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.

That isn't strictly true, is it? Who found him? Daniel went to Ariok. But it seems as though Ariok is trying to claim some credit here with the king.

Ariok brought in Daniel before the king in haste and said to him, I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who will make known to the king the interpretation. Verse 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?

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.

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.

[18 : 09] To you, O king, as you lay in bed, came thoughts of what would be after this. And he who reveals mysteries has made known to you what is to be.

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 says, God knows you better than you know yourself. You don't even know your own dream. God knows it. The most powerful person on earth, who also happens to be his boss, and a despotic, bloodthirsty, short-tempered king, asks Daniel, Can you do it?

Can you tell me my dream, and then tell me what my dream means? And Daniel, in verse 27, like this is the moment that we've all been waiting for, right?

He's going to say yes, right? But he doesn't. Verse 27, Daniel says, no. It's really not possible.

[19 : 18] The wise men, they're telling you the truth. No one can tell someone else their dream. But, verse 28, there is a God in heaven.

And verse 30, before you get any wrong ideas about me, that there's something special about me, I'm not the wisest person on earth.

Daniel's humble posture of personal insignificance directs attention away from himself to God.

Nebuchadnezzar is thinking, If there is a God, how can I bear not to be him? Daniel says, since there is a God, how can I dare not honor him?

Verse 31. You saw, O king, and behold a great image.

[20 : 32] This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

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.

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.

Kids, when you find yourself in trouble, something has happened, something has gone wrong in the household, perhaps something has been broken, maybe someone has disobeyed, maybe something has been spilled, and mom or dad comes in and wants to know what happened.

[22 : 06] What went down here? Why are the two of you fighting? You begin to explain the situation.

Do you know what I suspect you do? I suspect that you use lots of words, but you leave out important details. Proverbs chapter 10, this was a verse that we memorized with the kids when they were young.

In the multitude of words, sin is not lacking. You leave out the details. You don't give the specifics, especially if you're guilty.

Daniel doesn't do that. He gives the specifics. Here's this statue. And not only, that's what I would have said, I should have left it there, right?

Because what if you're wrong? What if you're wrong? What if you mixed up and the head was bronze and not the chest? What if you got that wrong?

[23 : 20] Not Daniel. Not Daniel. If I was Daniel doing the impossible, telling the king what he dreamed, I would leave out the details.

Every single detail is a chance to be wrong. And we already know, Nebuchadnezzar has no tolerance for error, and he has no patience for pretense. But Daniel speaks plainly and very specifically.

And after telling Nebuchadnezzar the dream, did you notice? I'm not even sure Daniel looks up to the king for confirmation. Daniel doesn't need to fact check this.

God revealed it to him. Daniel knows the dream. Verse 36. I love this.

This was the dream. This was the dream. Now, we will tell the king its interpretation.

[24 : 25] 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, and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of men, the beasts of the field, and the birds of heaven, making you rule over them all.

You are the head of gold. Nebuchadnezzar's identity idolatry makes him insecure and hostile towards others.

If there is a God, he cannot bear to not be him. So what does Daniel do? He wisely redirects the king's attention off of himself and onto the God of heaven.

King Nebuchadnezzar, you think that you've done all of this? You haven't. God did this. God gave you the kingdom.

God gave you the power. God gave you the authority. God made you ruler, the implication is, over all of the people and all of the animals and even over the birds.

[25 : 39] You think that you've done that. You have not. God gave you that. God gave you the power. All of this.

All of this. All of this splendor. All of this power. All of this victory. All of this authority. God did all of this. This is the work of the God of heaven.

You are the head of gold. But you also are under God's sovereign control. God did all of this.

And Nebuchadnezzar. And Nebuchadnezzar. Your worst fears will be realized. Your kingdom will not last forever.

Verse 39. Another kingdom, inferior to you, shall arise after you.

[26 : 43] And yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. 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. 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 soft clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle.

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. 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.

[28 : 00] 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. Nebuchadnezzar's dream became world history.

Babylon was conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire, which itself was conquered by the Greek Empire, which itself was conquered by the Roman Empire.

And it was, during the rule of the Romans, that the fullness of time came.

The Chaldeans tell the truth. No one can show the king his dream, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

[29 : 19] Narrator voice. And the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory.

Glory as of the only. From the Father. Full of grace and truth. Listen to the first words of Jesus that Mark records.

This is Mark chapter 1 and verse 15. The time is fulfilled. And the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe in the gospel. First words of Jesus recorded in the book of Mark. See, on this side of the cross, we can see clearly that Jesus is the stone cut from a mountain, but not with human hands.

Jesus' origin story is no more remarkable than a little pebble rolling down a massive mountain. His early life is obscure.

[30 : 30] His ministry largely insignificant. And even his death by Roman crucifixion seems almost irrelevant.

But on this side of the resurrection, on this side of the glorification of Jesus, we see clearly that his kingdom has come and that it will endure forever.

On this side of the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit filled God's people, we see clearly the beginning of God's fulfillment of the very last scene of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

After crushing the statue, the stone becomes a mountain that fills the whole earth. Jesus is building his church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

Nebuchadnezzar's insecurity leads to hostility. But Daniel's humility leads to a gospel opportunity.

[31 : 50] How will Nebuchadnezzar respond? Will he repent and believe this gospel that Daniel has laid in front of him?

The good news of the coming kingdom? Verse 46. Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him.

The king answered and said to Daniel, Truly notice this, your God, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery.

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.

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.

[33 : 10] Nebuchadnezzar promotes Daniel and his three friends who joined him in prayer. But more importantly, it seems as though the Holy Spirit deposits a seed of faith in Nebuchadnezzar.

I mean, just two years ago, he's plundering God's temple in Jerusalem and hauling back all of God's valuables to his own kingdom, putting them in the temple of his idols.

And now this despotic king is recognizing that God, that God, your God, Daniel, is above all of the other gods.

He has not yet repented. He has not trusted in God. And yet it does seem as though there is a seed of faith that the Holy Spirit has deposited in Nebuchadnezzar.

He is a lifelong idolater. And yet, he acknowledges Daniel's God. But we'll need to keep reading.

[34 : 35] There's more for us to come because this revealer of mysteries, as Nebuchadnezzar describes him, is still only Daniel's God. He is not yet his God.

So how can a Christian whose citizenship is in heaven be faithful right here, right now, in a foreign land?

Like Nebuchadnezzar, we also suffer from identity idolatry, don't we? If there is a God, how can I bear not to be him?

I want more wealth, more power, more respect, more gifts. I covet pleasure and comfort and control. I lust for everything that this world offers.

And time and time and time again, we learn that what we seek does not, cannot, and will satisfy us. And so Jesus graciously reminds us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

[35 : 51] And all these things will be added to you. Like Nebuchadnezzar, friend, you are meant to find your meaning in another kingdom.

And like Nebuchadnezzar, it is only when you repent of your identity idolatry that you will set your affection and your attention on Jesus and anchor your hope in his sovereign and sufficient grace.

Grace that is greater than all of your sin. Have you believed the gospel of Jesus?

Children, have you believed the gospel of Jesus? Are you born again? Are you a citizen of Jesus' unconquerable kingdom that will never end?

Come to Jesus. Repent and believe the gospel. Friends, we are surrounded by identity idolaters.

[36 : 58] We know this because we are of them. We are of the people who want it all. I wonder in which of your relationships could humility lead to a gospel opportunity?

Tell them, tell them, since there is a God, how can I dare not honor Him? Steadfast, when you are tempted to doubt God's sovereignty, when you are tempted to question whether the kingdom of Jesus has really come, then just remember this little stone that pulverizes the statue into dust that can be blown away by the wind.

Remember that little stone when you are tempted to doubt that the kingdom of Jesus has really come. And when the sins of people who claim to love the gospel cause you to despair, and you are tempted to believe that the church's best days are behind her, somewhere part of church history, then remember this little stone that grew into a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

and remember that the church's future is incredibly bright. Jesus will continue building His church until He returns to receive His bride.

Let's pray. Father, we are humbled as we consider Your greatness, the grandeur of Your plan.

[39 : 04] We are humbled as we realize right here in the book of Daniel You told Nebuchadnezzar what was going to happen, and though Nebuchadnezzar had to look forward, we are so humbled to recognize that we have the privilege of looking back at what You have done.

Give us faith to believe Your Word. Help us to trust that You really are in control. Give us courage and humility that leads to gospel opportunities.

Forgive us for our identity idolatry. Blessed Holy Spirit, would You please do work in our hearts as we spend a few moments examining our own hearts, preparing to celebrate communion.

Please convict us of our sin. Show us again our Savior Jesus. Remind us of our need of Him. Father, Your Word declares if You confess Your sin, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins.

If we confess our sins, You, our Father, are faithful and just to forgive us our sins. and we recognize that You have done this and are doing this now and will continue to do this because of the work of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, His work there at the cross and His ongoing work of intercession.

[41 : 01] Jesus promises to the uttermost and so we claim that promise today. Please help us as we continue in this time of worship.

It's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen.