

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

This week we continue our Old Testament survey with a look at the book of Daniel and two key end time prophecies. This week we will examine the statue referenced in Chapter 2, and next week we will analyze the four beasts referenced in Chapter 7. As we study these prophecies, let's continue our use of the "let the Bible interpret the Bible" rule whenever possible.

So for this week put on your prophetic end time thinking caps, read Daniel 2:1-45, and consider the following:

1. King Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of Babylon, had a very dramatic dream, and he wanted it interpreted correctly. What did King Nebuchadnezzar do in order to discern who among his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers were genuine?
 - a. ANSWER: He decided to ask them to tell him what he had dreamed first. He was wise to their normal practice of hearing what he dreamed, and then interpreting it to please him, rather than actually understanding the dream.
2. What would happen to the wise men of Babylon if they could not describe the dream to the king?
 - a. ANSWER: They were to be cut into pieces, and their houses were to be turned into piles of rubble
3. How did Daniel react when the king's men came to hunt down Daniel and his friends in order to execute them?
 - a. ANSWER: The Bible says that Daniel acted with tact and diplomacy. By questioning the captain of the guard regarding the king's motive in ordering the executions, he was able to convince the captain to let him address the king. In the king's presence, Daniel was again persuasive and convinced the King to grant him a little time to seek the dream and its interpretation. As we observed last week, Daniel was a man of high esteem and great character. Here again we see that he acted with diplomacy and tact, and would eventually earn the king's confidence.
4. Daniel immediately went about praying to God and asking for His divine intervention and revelation. Who did Daniel ask to pray with him?
 - a. ANSWER: He asked his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, a.k.a., Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. (See Daniel 1:7)
5. Daniel prayed for the safety of him and his three friends. When God granted his prayer and Daniel went back to the court of the king, who did he ask the king to spare?
 - a. ANSWER: Daniel requested that the king spare all of the wise men of Babylon, not just his friends. He did not want anyone to be executed.
6. Describe the major pieces of the large statue that Daniel saw in the king's dream, and the rock as well.
 - a. ANSWER 1: The head of the statue was made of pure gold.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Its chest and arms were made of silver.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Its belly and thighs were made of bronze.
 - d. ANSWER 4: Its legs were made of iron, while its feet were made partly of iron and partly of baked clay.
 - e. ANSWER 5: In the dream, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. The rock then struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Dan. 2:35 further recounts the story: "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth."

7. The dream and Daniel's interpretation is provided in Daniel 2:36-45. Using your answers from the question above along with these verses and interpret what each piece of the statue means.
- a. ANSWER 1: The head of the statue was made of pure gold; refers to King Nebuchadnezzar.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Its chest and arms were made of silver; refers to the next kingdom after the Nebuchadnezzar's - the Medo-Persian empire.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Its belly and thighs were made of bronze; refers to the Greek Empire.
 - d. ANSWER 4: Its legs were made of iron, its feet were made partly of iron and partly of baked clay; refers to the Roman Empire that would be in place at the time of Christ's return and the establishment of His Millennial Reign.
 - e. ANSWER 5: A rock was cut out, but not by human hands; refers to Christ. The Mountain is God's Sovereign Rein over all His creation, i.e., "Who will ascend my Holy Mountain? He who has clean hands and a pure heart." (See for example Isaiah 30:29 and Isaiah 56:7). Then, the rock struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them; this refers to Christ destroying his enemies. "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth."
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To prepare for next week, read Chapter 7 of Daniel along with Chapter 12 of Revelation, and make notes that will help you with next week's interpretation.

God provided Daniel with these visions so that man would know that God is the God of the universe, and also so that man would know that when these events unfold, or will unfold, they are and will be exact evidences of God's existence and His sovereignty over His creation. Through these visions we can be assured of Christ's return and His victory over all His enemies.

End time prophecy can seem extremely difficult to understand, but with God's grace and via His Holy Word, He will reveal Himself and His plans to us if we are just willing to apply the time and discipline needed to study them.

Thanks again for studying with us; have a great week everyone.

In Christ,

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