

Daniel 2

A PROPHETIC AUTHORITY FOR THE LATTER DAYS

Now in Chapter 1 we have seen the marvelous provision of a pure prophet for a perilous time.

Chapter 2 introduces us to the next stage of the prophetic ministry of God through His prophet Daniel.

I refer to chapter 2 as

A Prophetic Authority For the Latter Days (2:28).

Before we explore the text in greater detail, I call your attention to two verses, which form something of a summary of the entire message of the Book of Daniel.

The first is 2:10. It reveals clearly the limitation of man.

The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said THERE IS NOT A MAN UPON THE EARTH that can show the king's matter.

Now the second verse is 2:28

But THERE IS A GOD IN HEAVEN that revealeth secrets....

And those verses put into perspective the issue of A PROPHETIC AUTHORITY FOR THE LATTER DAYS.

Now in order to see this message of chapter 2, I have divided it into four sections for our study:

- I. PAGANISM CONFRONTS ITS DILEMMA - v. 1-13
- II. GOD ENLIGHTENS HIS FAITHFUL - v. 14-28
- III. HISTORY REVEALS ITS DESIGNER - v. 29-35
- IV. PROPHECY AFFIRMS ITS AUTHORITY - v. 36-49

* * * * *

I. PAGANISM CONFRONTS ITS DILEMMA

1. THE EASE WITH WHICH ITS HEART IS TROUBLED.

- v.1 - *And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep broke from him.*
- In chapter 1 we meet the prophet with the **purposed heart**
- Now in chapter 2 we meet the king with the **troubled heart**.
 - It is no accident that we meet these two different hearts so early in the book.
 - Prophetic Authority is designed to bring PEACE TO THE PURPOSED HEART AND TROUBLE TO THE PAGAN HEART.
- The Bible says *The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* (Isa. 57:20-21, Isa 48:22)
- The Bible says of ungodly people who live ungodly lives - *The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.* (See Isa. 59:1-8)
- BUT WHILE PAGANISM CONFRONTS THE EASE WITH WHICH ITS HEART IS TROUBLED, The heart that is turned to God hears this:
 - *Let not your heart be troubled.*
 - And that declaration from Christ our Lord is followed by this:
You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (That is peace-giving prophecy) John 14

-- The heart that is turned to God hears this:

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed (leans upon, rests) on thee, because he trusteth in you. (Isa. 26:3)

-- And so Christianity confronts the troubled heart with such as this:

-- *Great peace have they which love thy law. (Psa. 119:165)*

-- *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (Jn. 14:27)*

-- Now before we leave this first issue of establishing prophetic authority, I need to remind you that the cause of the king's heart being troubled was simply a dream which came during his normal sleeping hours.

Later there would be another king who would rule over Daniel: Darius the Median. It was this Darius who sentenced Daniel to the den of lions. What is so significant about that evening is that the next morning Daniel's heart was still at peace and in one piece - and in one piece - and it was Daniel who had to comfort the troubled heart of Darius. (Dan. 6)

But not only does PAGANISM CONFRONT ITS DILEMMA OF

1. The ease with which its heart is troubled, it also must confront its dilemma of

2. THE MADNESS WITH WHICH ITS MIND IS CONSUMED.

-- READ v. 1-4

-- verses 5, 12, and 13 reveal something of this madness:

-- v. 5 - *...if you will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.*

-- v. 12 - *For this cause the king was angry, and very furious, and commended to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.*

-- v. 13 - *And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain...*

-- In chapter 1 we met the prophet with the **purposed heart**.

- In chapter 2 we have met the king with the **troubled heart**.
- In chapter 1 we meet the prophet whose **ways were pleasant**.
- In chapter 2 we now meet the king whose **ways were madness**.
- Paganism shall always have a problem with THE MADNESS OF ITS WAYS.
- There are at least six things that contribute to THE MADNESS OF PAGANISM

(1) **Divided Authority**

- v. 2 - Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to show the king his dreams.
 - MAGICIAN = HARTOM = describing some variety of occultist. (TWOT 738B)
 - Astrologers = ASHSHAP = Aenchanter, exorcist, necromancers (TWOT 181)
 - Sorcerers = KASHAP = witchcraft. (TWOT 1051)
 - The Chaldeans = is a reference to the general inhabitants, but probably to the wisest of them.(Strongs 3778)
- The MADNESS OF PAGANISM is that they have no sure word of prophecy (2 Pet. 1:19)
- Let this madness be a warning to the church which forfeits its **sure word**, for surely its only alternative is THE MADNESS OF DIVIDED AUTHORITY.

(2) **Improper Demands.**

- v. 5 - *The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, the thing is gone from me: if you will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.*

- These demands placed by the arrogant king with his troubled heart:
 - baffled the minds of his wise men.
 - exceeded the abilities of his wise men.
 - Threatened the lives of his wise men.
 - These wise men responded to the king.
 - *v. 10 - There is not a man upon earth that can show the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler that asked such things at any magician, or astrology, or Chaldean.*

Two Fundamental Issues Are Accented Here:

i. The Reality of Human Limitations.

- *v. 10 - There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter...*
- Not even astrologers, soothsayers, necromancers, and witches, can go beyond the barrier of human limitations. Science cannot cross the barrier, human religion cannot cross the barrier.
- At an earlier time in Israel's history, the Bible explains this -
 - *The secret (the hidden) belongs unto the Lord our God. (Deut. 29:29)*
- But not only did the madness of this king produce improper demands which accented **the reality of human limitations**, this madness opened the door for Daniel to expose -

ii. The Reliability of Divine Revelation.

- And that is where we are headed in the unfolding of this prophetic book.
- For after the authorities of magicians the soothsayers, etc. -

declare there is not a man upon earth that can show the king's matters Daniel says.

-- v. 28 - *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known what shall be in the latter days...*

-- And so the verse in Deut. continues, *But those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the law.* (Deut. 29:29)

-- Here is one of Christianity's many distinctives -

-- The God of Christianity reveals the unknowable.

-- The gods of paganism require the impossible.

-- Such frustration stimulates THE MADNESS OF THE PAGAN

-- But such revelation activates the OBEDIENCE OF THE BELIEVER.

-- But not only is THE MADNESS OF PAGANISM stimulated by

(1) Divided authority and

(2) Improper demands, it is also stimulated by

(3) **Ineffective means**

-- v. 6-7 - The king resorted to this offer:

...if you show the dream, and the interpretation thereof, you shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor: therefore show me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.

-- The king had the idea that money, and rewards, and position could get him anything he demanded.

-- Here again is a major distinction between the madness of paganism and the mercy of Christianity -

- Paganism uses its power to require the impossible.
- Christianity uses its power to provide the unknowable
- PAGANISM - the religion of the humanist, the witches, the horoscopers, the sorcerers, the occultist, - that paganism requires and requires and requires... until it drains and drains and drains... until it drives and drives and drives and drives to madness without reason.
- CHRISTIANITY PROVIDES -
 - X **Forgiveness** for the one whose confession is to be Christ.
 - X **Peace** for the one whose mind is on Christ.
 - X **Life** for the one whose faith is in Christ.
 - X **Adoption** for the one who belongs to Christ.

-- But not only is the MADNESS OF PAGANISM stimulated by

- (1) Divided authority, and
- (2) Improper demands, and
- (3) Ineffective means, it is also stimulated by

(4) Deceitful Counselors -

-- v. 8-9 - *The king answered and said I know of certainty that you would gain the time; because you see the thing is gone from me. But if you will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me...*

-- Here is one of the most amazing things in all of the Bible. Here is one of the most amazing things about paganism. Here is one of the saddest aspects of paganism. Here is one of the

pitiful things about paganism. It is this:

The king calls for the astrologers, the witches, the soothsayers, etc. and then within a matter of minutes is saying to them *you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me.*

-- The Bible described this madness of paganism when it says:

-- *The dog is turned to his own vomit again: and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. 2 Pet. 2:22*

-- The serpent lied to Adam and Eve.

-- Jesus referred to the devil as one who abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

-- Paganism (the religion of humanism, the astrologers, the witches, the horoscopers, and the occultist) is driven to its madness in part because its counselors are liars

-- When Christianity departs a culture the void is filled with the religion of the DECEIVERS.

-- The MADNESS OF PAGANISM is forever driven by the presence of **deceitful counselors** and the absence **of the wonderful counselor.**

-- But not only is the MADNESS OF PAGANISM stimulated by:

- (1) Divide Authority and
 - (2) Impossible Demands and
 - (3) Ineffective means and
 - (4) Deceitful Counselors,
- It is also stimulated by

(5) **Restricted Resources**

-- v. 11 - *It is a rare thing that the king requireth,*

and there is none other that can show it before the king, EXCEPT THE GOD'S WHOSE DWELLING IS NOT WITH FLESH.

-- And as Nebuchadnezzar came to the end of his **restricted resources**, Daniel prepares to make the classic announcement which will usher in PROPHETIC AUTHORITY FOR THE LATTER DAYS:

-- *v. 28 - But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king, Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days*

-- Paganism, because it will always REJECT THE GOD IN HEAVEN, will always operate on **restricted resources**.

Now our larger topic is PAGANISM CONFRONTING ITS DILEMMA. It is a three-part dilemma.

1. First, there is THE DILEMMA OF THE EASE WITH WHICH ITS HEART IS TROUBLED. v. 1
2. Then, there is the DILEMMA OF THE MADNESS WITH WHICH ITS MIND IS CONSUMED. - v. 2-11

Then there is

3. **THE EMPTINESS WITH WHICH ITS RELIGION RESPONDS.** - v. 12-13

-- In chapter 1 we met the Godly prophet with the **purposed** heart.

In chapter 2 we meet the pagan king with the **troubled** heart.

-- In chapter 1 we met the Godly prophet whose ways were **pleasant**.

In chapter 2 we meet the pagan king whose ways are **madness**.

-- In chapter 1 we met the Godly prophet who received **superior provision from the Lord**.

Now in chapter 2 we meet the pagan king whose provision in the hour of

need is so inferior that he is driven to furious anger and irrational destruction

-- Such is the dilemma of PAGANISM - and the emptiness with which its religion responds.

AND HERE THE EMPTINESS IS MARKED IN THREE MAJOR WAYS:

- (1) There is no satisfying **presence** of God.
- (2) There is no satisfying **peace** in the heart.
- (3) There is no satisfying **plan** for the future. (The gods of paganism fail - and Daniel said these things are designed that we may *know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.*

* * *

(1) THERE IS NO SATISFYING PRESENCE OF GOD.

-- v. 12 - For this cause...

-- What was the cause?

-- v. 11 - *there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.*

-- the gods you have cannot do the job of satisfying you.

-- That is the eternal dilemma of paganism.

-- But our God is present. He is here now. He is on duty. He does not ever sleep on the job.

THERE ARE THREE THINGS WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

Let me mention them here.

- i. The eternal promise of his presence.
- ii. The examining purpose of His presence.
- iii. The evasive problem of His presence.

* * *

i. The Eternal Promise Of His Presence

- The assurance of God's presence begins early in His relationship with His people.
- In Jacob's dream of the ladder which reached unto Heaven, God said to Jacob, *I am with you, and will keep you in all places wherever you go...I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken to you of.* (Gen. 28:15)

This comfort through a dream about the Presence of God is quite different from the result of Pharaoh's dream.

- Moses had to struggle with God's unwillingness to go with His people into the land of the Canaanites, Jebusites, the Hittites and Amorites.

After Moses' struggle, God said to him, *My presence shall go and I will give you rest.* (Ex. 33:14)

- Later our Lord said to His people - *When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and a people more than you, be not afraid of them: for the Lord you God is with you...* (Deut. 20:1)
- In one of God's greatest prophetic promises to Israel, He said, *Fear not: for I have redeemed you... I have called you by your name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you: when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; neither shall the lame kindle upon you. For I am the Lord your God...your Savior...fear not, I am with you.* (Isa. 43:1-5)

- David the king would lead the Jewish people in singing of the PRESENCE OF GOD

-- **(READ Psa. 139:7-12)**

- And there is that great prophecy in Isa. 7:4

-- *Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* (God is with us)

- The Jews understood these promises. The book to the Hebrews in the NT summarizes *I will never leave you,*

nor forsake you. (Heb. 13:5)

-- Now in the New Testament we follow the Eternal Promise of God's presence in describing the physical birth of our Lord -

-- Mt. 1:23 - *A virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

-- And Jesus follows through in that great commission He gave to us - *I am with you always, unto the end of the world.* (Mt. 28:18-20)

-- And finally there is that prophetic promise of the eternal presence of our Lord. -

-- *I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. (Rev. 21:3)*

-- But not only is there THE ETERNAL PROMISE OF GOD'S PRESENCE, there is also

end here 3.21.99

(To re-introduce this theme, read 2:10-13, and quickly review I. of the outline)

ii. **The Examining Purpose of God's Presence -**
(This is not always comfortable)

-- When Adam violated the will of God, he sought to avoid the Presence of God, and said to Him - *I heard your voice in the garden, and was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

-- God is PRESENT for the purpose of examining us - and for that we should be extremely thankful.

Had Nebuchadnezzar known and responded to the examining ability of God he could have prospered in God's great judgment ability.

- The child of God should always rejoice in the **examining purpose of god's presence.**
- That is a part of the brilliance of David the king - who after adultery and murder understood the power and protection of the examining purpose of God's presence. And here is what he said.

READ Psa. 139:1-10, 23-24

- The Dilemma of Paganism is that it has no GOD who is willing and able to search the hearts of its followers.
- God said to Solomon, *...know thou the God of thy Father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts...* (I Chron. 28:9)
- Such is a great provision for the child of God. It is this EXAMINING PURPOSE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.
- But as Paganism languishes in the Emptiness with which its religion responds because there is no satisfying presence of God, the child of God knows:
 - i. The Eternal Promise Of The Presence Of God and
 - ii. The Examining Purpose of the Presence of God.

But there is a third matter,

 - iii. **The Evasive Problem of the Presence of God.**

- There are times when God seems ABSENT, UNINTERESTED, or DISGUSTED WITH OUR WAYS.
 - 1. That may be due to **sin** which we have committed:

- At a given time in Israel's history God said to the Israelites: *I will not go up in the midst of you; for you are a stiff-necked people.* Ex. 33:3
- There was another time, when Israel had been humiliated in battle at Ai, that God said to them, *...neither will I be with you anymore, except you destroy the accused from among you.* (Josh. 7:12)
- The Bible describes a time in Israel's history when the word of the Lord was precious, or rare. And then the Bible says *there was no open vision.* (I Sam. 3:1)
- It was an awful time. Soon God would pronounce ICHABOD (I Sam. 4:21) over the house of Israel.

THE GLORY HAS DEPARTED.

- Sin, which we have committed, may often be the culprit behind **the evasive problem of God's presence.**
 - Psa. 66:18 puts it simply - *If I regard (regard = consider, see, look at) iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*
- But there is another part to THE EVASIVE PROBLEM OF GOD'S PRESENCE. For not only may it be due to:
 1. **Sin** which we have committed. It may also be due to
 2. **Trial** which God has permitted.
 - Such was the case with Job.
 - We know that God PERMITTED SATAN TO TEST JOB.

- When taunted by his "friend" Eliphaz, to "return to his Almighty" (Job 22:23) Job responded, *Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: On the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him: He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him:...*(Job 23:8-9)
- But Job passed the test through which he went. Even though he could not get a meeting with God during the trial, he was confident of God's ability and remained (23:10) obedient to God's law. (23:11-12)
- James 1:2-4
- This is the **fullness of Biblical Christian faith as compared to the emptiness of pagan religion.**

end here 4.18.99

But not only is THE EMPTINESS OF PAGANISM marked by the fact that THERE IS NO SATISFYING PRESENCE OF GOD, it is also marked by the fact that

(2) THERE IS NO SATISFYING PEACE IN THE HEART

- Dan. 2:12 - *For this cause the king was angry and very furious...*
- The one who rejects the God who is PRESENT also rejects THE HEART THAT IS PEACEFUL.

The options to the PEACEFUL HEART are

- The empty heart
- The angry heart
- The furious heart
- The troubled heart
- The wayward heart
- The divisive heart
- How opposite is all of this anger from "the fruit of the Spirit" given to those who walk in the spirit - For those who walk in the Spirit not only have HIS SATISFYING PRESENCE - BUT THEY HAVE HIS

SATISFYING PEACE.

- Here is the amazing OT illustration of the difference between the fruit of the spirit and the works of the flesh.
 - (Study God 5:19-F and 5:22 - F)
 - Evidence is mounting through Nebuchadnezzar's restless heart that there is a God who gives Peace to the heart of his people. Look at Daniel now. And look at him through all that he will experience.

- But the EMPTINESS OF PAGANISM is not only marked by the fact that:
 - (1) There is no satisfying Presence of God - and that
 - (2) There is no satisfying peace in the heart, it is also marked by the fact that

 - (3) THERE IS NO SATISFYING PLAN FOR THE FUTURE -**
 - v. 12-13 - *...the king...commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain...*
 - *This is so often how paganism the non-Christian, responds to disappointments. He sees no hope for the future.*

 - Nebuchadnezzar failed to ask a simple question - What will I do after I have killed all the wise men?*

 - When Paganism reaches desperation in the present tense - it generally resorts to the destruction of the future tense -
 - drunkenness
 - adultery
 - drug-addiction
 - murder
 - hedonism

 - Paganism never has a satisfying plan for the future.
 - In the 1960's one of America's leading destructionist said to one of America's better known Christians - as the two viewed the expansive skyline of one of America's largest cities - "Look at all of that, we are going to burn it all "

Responded the Christian servant -

"And with what will you replace it?"

What has been their replacement?

- A compromised church
 - An emaciated educational system
 - An economy based on greed
 - an overcrowded domestic - non-relative court
 - an overloaded prison system
 - immorality without shame.
 - an a????????????????/ of integrity.
 - a world of art with the inspiration of the basement level of the outhouse
 - a world of music with the melody of an earthquake
 - a sodomized society.
 - (current events - A Columbine High School)
- It is always Satan's plan to bring to death those he has deceived I Pet. 5:8
- Killing wise men does not provide wisdom anymore than adultery cures the problem of lust.
- In the marriage relationship paganism leads its followers to believe that divorce is an answer to the problem rather than a problem which defies the answer.
- The dilemma of Paganism, of the non-Christian life is that its answers lead to further problems.

But that is the way paganism confronts its dilemma.

We go now to the next major section of chapter 2.

We keep in mind that the theme of the Book of Daniel is that we may know that *the Most High Ruleth in the kingdom of men.*

The Bible is a special word to encourage us by: reminding us that

II. GOD ENLIGHTENS HIS FAITHFUL. v. 14-23

(Keep in mind now that chapter 2 is a part of THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROPHETIC

AUTHORITY FOR THE LATTER DAYS.)

-- As paganism suffered and languished in its dilemma, our Lord opens a beautiful lesson in the process of establishing His prophetic authority for the latter days.

There are five key lessons:

1. The wisdom of the prophet's counsel.

-- v. 14 *Then (after paganism had exposed its sad dilemma) Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to "mock the captain of the king's guard...*

-- Daniel answered with counsel.

-- Paganism had answered with consternation, defeat and ridicule.

-- Daniel answered with wisdom.

-- Paganism had neither knowledge nor wisdom with which to answer.

-- Daniel answered with caution.

-- v. 15 *Why is the decree so hasty from the king?*

-- Paganism had answered with cruelty.

-- v. 14 *The captain of the king's guard had gone forth to slay the wise of Babylon.*

-- NOW THE QUESTION: WHAT WAS THE WISDOM WITH WHICH DANIEL COUNSELED?

(1) It was a wisdom that challenged the folly of Pagan Presumption.

-- That presumption was that since the wise men of paganism did not have an answer for the king - then nobody had an answer for the king.

-- Paganism presumed that IT had all the answers. Daniel knew better. And here is what Daniel said: READ 2:20-21.

-- We are today in America afflicted with the same folly. God has been ruled out as an answer to our problems of disease, destruction, divorce, and societal

dissolution.

(2) It was a wisdom that claimed the faithfulness of Biblical promise.

READ 2:22

-- Daniel was aware of what the scripture said -

The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

(Deut. 29:29)

-- From the Biblical music of Daniel's childhood came the promise: *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.* (Psa. 25:14)

-- But not only was the wisdom of Daniel's counsel

(1) A wisdom that challenged the folly of Pagan Presumption, and

(2) A wisdom that claimed the faithfulness of Biblical Promise,

(3) It was a wisdom that conquered the threat of Pagan cruelty.

-- Face to face with the executioner, Daniel did not tremble. Instead he asked questions that caused the guard to notice his confidence and his absence of fear.

-- Daniel did not tremble in chapter 1 when he stood with purpose against the king's orders.

Nor did he tremble in chapter 2 before the tool of the executioner.

Nor did he tremble in chapter 6 when thrown into the den of lions.

-- Why? **READ** v. 23

-- God is establishing an authoritative prophecy for the latter days, and authoritative prophecy does not come from trembling prophets.

-- God's enlightening his faithful is not only seen in

1. The Wisdom of the prophet's counsel, it is also seen in

2. THE EXPECTATION OF THE PROPHET'S PROVISION.

-- the prophet said to the captain of the guard that *he would show the king the interpretation.* v. 16

-- God is a God of certainties. He intends for His people to be certain and confident.

Certain in the knowledge of truth.

Confident in faithful provision.

Certain in the Promises of Prayer.

Confident in Triumph.

Certain in the Superiority of God's provision.

-- In chapter 1 Daniel had tested and proven the superiority of God's provision.

Now, without fear, he boldly states that he will pass another test before the provision of God.

-- As God's people rely upon God's provision in such a way, God has proven Himself faithful with further enlightenment of His faithful ones.

-- Now lesson three of the enlightening process is

3. THE SIMPLICITY OF THE PROPHET'S PLAN

-- Read v. 16-18

-- v. 16 He requested TIME

-- When the Bible speaks about "the walk of Accuracy," we are old "to redeem the time." It takes TIME - to get with God.

-- v. 17 He went to his house.

-- v. 17 He gathered his friends.

-- v. 18 He prayed.

-- We need not complicate the issues of life- time and eternity.

We need not complicate the issue of victory and certainty.

Now God's enlightening His faithful is not only seen in

1. The Wisdom of the Prophet's counsel and
2. The expectation of the prophet's provision and
3. The simplicity of the Prophet's plan, it is also seen in

4. THE RESPONSE TO THE PROPHET'S PRAYER.

-- v. 19 *Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel...*

-- Then - After Daniel:

- had challenged the folly of pagan presumption
- had claimed the faithfulness of Biblical Promise
- had conquered the threat of pagan cruelty.

-- After Daniel had gone out on the limb of expectation.

-- After Daniel had gathered his friends - and prayed

THEN-- The unknowable was known. The unshowable was shown.

-- In the Simplicity of Daniel's plan and the response to Daniel's prayer, we need to take note that the real issues of life are neither complicated nor complex.

-- Revelation is a key to understanding victorious Christian life.

Our enlightenment always depends upon Revelation. Our Lord has not left us with the dilemma of fantasy, human based philosophy or created religion. He Has Spoken.

But there is one final thing we see in our Lord's enlightening His faithful.

5. THE PRAISE OF A THANKFUL HEART - v. 20-24

-- The Praise of a thankful heart will always be tied to at least three things:

(1) An Honoring of the Name of God

-- v. 20 *Blessed be the name of God forever and ever...*

-- THE NAME

-- *You shall not take it in vain.*

-- *Oh Lord, our Lord, How excellent is your name in all the earth. Psa. 8:1*

-- *Holy and revered is His name. Psa. 111:9*

-- *...Hallowed is your name. Mt. 6:8*

-- *His name is above every name. Phil. 2:9*

-- *There is a name I love to hear. I love to sing its worth...*

(2) A Dependence Upon the Resources of God.

-- v. 20 - *...for wisdom and might are His...*

(3) An Acknowledgment of the Work of God.

-- READ v. 21-23

-- This matter of God's enlightening His faithful stands in open conflict with the dilemma of Paganism.

-- It stands as bold witness to a wayward world *that the Most HIGH ruleth in the kingdom of men. (4:17)*

-- But there is more in the process of chapter 2 and the establishment of a prophetic authority for the latter days.

-- First we saw paganism confronting its dilemma (v. 1-13).

-- Then we have seen God enlightening His faithful.

-- We come next to see that

III. THE PROPHET EXALTS HIS LORD --- v. 24-30

- Key Verse – 28 *There is a God in heaven...*
- By this time in our study the gods of the pagan have been thoroughly discredited. They fall before their followers.

If there is any hope for these people it must be found through one who knows and has a better god –

- And so Daniel came with this simple word –

There is a God in Heaven. V. 28

- These verses are the final introduction to this first great prophecy of the Book of Daniel (v. 31-F)
- There are three particular ways that Daniel Exalts the Lord.

1. THROUGH PROTECTIVE COMPASSION

- v. 24 – *Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not...*
- It is the purpose of the God of Heaven to protect, and build and bless. But sin destroys. It always has. It destroyed Eden - Eve and Adam.

The Bible says the Devil, as a roaring lion, seeks whom he may devour. (I Pet. 5:8)

- The wages of sin is death – (ALWAYS HAS BEEN.) The gift of God is life – (always has been).
- Jesus put it this way, *The thief comes for no reason, but to steal and kill and destroy: (Jn 10:10)*
- Now when Daniel was faced with his own destruction he says:

Destroy not the wise men of Babylon.

- It should ever be a part of the Christian Crusade to save life – not to destroy it. That is the message of the manger, the cross and the empty tomb.

-- That is why Biblical Christianity opposes those things of culture and society which destroy: We oppose murder, suicide, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gambling, sexual promiscuity, and abortion... everything that destroys family, sanity, and the sacred.

-- But not only does Daniel exalt his Lord with PROTECTIVE COMPASSION, he also exalts his Lord

2. THROUGH PERSUASIVE CONFIDENCE -

-- v. 24 *Bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.*

-- Our Lord intends to equip His people with:

- The confidence of truth
- The knowledge of the Holy
- The understanding of revelation.

-- I Peter 3:15 - *...be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you...*

-- God people are to be equipped –
-- with a knowledge of God's Word.
-- With a holy life
-- with a servant's heart.
-- with moral courage.

-- II Tim. 2:15 *Study to show....*

-- We must stand with persuasive confidence before a pagan world.

-- That is how our Lord stood before His accusers.

-- Paul stood that way before the philosophers on Mars Hill, before the throne of Caesar's power before the fear of the Philippian jailer.

-- Daniel was there to establish Prophetic authority for the latter days. (v. 28)

-- And in establishing Prophetic Authority Daniel exalts his Lord

1. Through protective compassion.
2. Through persuasive confidence, and

3. THROUGH PRACTICAL CONFRONTATION.

-- V. 25-27 (read)

-- Key verse – v. 27 – *Daniel answered in the presence of the king...*

-- And Daniel's answer dealt with the two basic issues:

(1) The Insufficiency of Paganism.

-- V. 27 – *Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king...*

-- Daniel says to the king – Your system has failed. It has not worked. It cannot work.

(2) The All Sufficiency Of God – V. 28-30

-- v. 28 – *But there is a God in Heaven.*

-- God's all sufficiency is stated in three ways:

i. His Superior Position

-- v. 28 – *There is a God in heaven.*

-- He is not one among many. HE IS ONE ABOVE ALL.

ii. His Act of Revelation.

-- v. 28 – *There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and makes known to the king what shall be in the latter days...*

-- Here is a key element in understanding the difference between the gods of paganism and the God of Heaven.

iii. His Personal Interest

-- READ v. 30

-- The interpretation does not come because

the prophet is wise, but because God is interested, both in the ones who give the interpretation, and the one who needs it.

- We are well on the way of establishing PROPHETIC AUTHORITY and an understanding that *the Most High Ruleth in the Kingdom of Men*.

But that Authority is not only established through the process of

- I. PAGANISM CONFRONTING ITS DILEMMA,
- II. GOD ENLIGHTENING HIS FAITHFUL, and
- III. THE PROPHET EXALTING HIS LORD (vv. 24-30),

it is also established through the fact that

IV. PROPHECY UNVEILS THE FUTURE vv. 31---

(There are four major subjects in this study of Prophecy unveiling the future.)

- 1. By Revelation (31-35)
- 2. By Interpretation (36-45)
- 3. By Exaltation (46-49)
- 4. By Observation – Prophetic overview

* * * * *

1. BY REVELATION – vv. 31-35

2:28 – *there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets*

- “Revelation” – it is one of the distinguishing differences between Biblical Truth and human religion (paganism).

- In these few verse of Daniel 2, there are three fundamental lessons about REVELATION:

- (1) Man Cannot (2:10)
- (2) God Can (2:28)
- (3) God Does (**READ AND EXPLAIN 2:31-35**)

- Deut. 29:29 – *The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things, which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the*

law.

-- But not only does Prophecy Unveil the Future

1. By Revelation. It also unveils the future

2. **BY INTERPRETATION** v. 26-45

-- v. 36 – *This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.*

(1) The dream was about the rise and fall of kingdoms.

-- **READ** v. 37

-- The “great image” of vv. 31-33 is an image, which depicts the rise and fall of four kingdoms AND a stone, which smote the image upon his feet (2:34)

i. The First Kingdom v. 37-38

ii. The Second Kingdom

v. 39 – *After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you...*

iii. The Third Kingdom –

39 tells us of *...another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.*

iv. The Fourth Kingdom – v. 41-43 (READ)

v. The Fifth Kingdom – v. 44

But the Interpretation not only speaks about

(1) The Rise and Fall of Kingdoms, it also speaks about

(2) The Strength and Weakness of Kingdoms

i. The First Kingdom (v. 37-38)

(i) **The identity of the king**

-- To Nebuchadnezzar

in v. 38 *You are the head of gold.*

(ii) **The Preeminence of the king –**

You are a king of kings

-- That is He is the greatest of all present earthly kings.

-- He is the greatest of a series of kings through history.

(iii) **The origin of the kingdoms –**

-- v. 37 *...the God of heaven hath given to you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. ...If God gives the kingdom then there is a Divine Purpose in the existence of the Kingdom.*

-- (The fact that the god of Heaven would give kingdom power, kingdom strength and kingdom glory to pagan kings raises some very interesting questions. We will study those questions in our section on OBSERVATION.)

ii. The Second Kingdom – v. 29a – *And after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you...*

(This is the silver kingdom of v. 32)

iii. The Third Kingdom – *and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all of the earth.*

(This is the belly and thighs of brass in v. 32)

iv. The Fourth Kingdom

READ v. 40-43

-- It is a kingdom of iron mixed with clay

But not only does Daniel's Interpretation deal with

- (1) The Rise and Fall of Kingdoms, and
- (2) The Strength and Weakness of Kingdoms, it also deals with

(3) The Conflict and Conquest of Kingdoms

- This conflict and conquest is seen in v. 44-45
- And with that interpretation Nebuchadnezzar does something extremely unusual. He – a Pagan King, begins to Worship Daniel, the Jewish slave.
- Nebuchadnezzar AGREES with
 - The revelation, and
 - The interpretation and affirms that agreement. And with that the door of prophetic unveiling is further opened.

3. BY EXALTATION – v. 36-49

- v. 46 – *Then the king fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel.* (A prophetic authority is being established.)
- From this pagan king there are three key facts about the nature of worship.
 - The Pagan King worshipped
 - i. Through **adoration**
Read v. 46
 - ii. Through **acknowledgment**
Read v. 47
 - iii. Through **assignment**
Read v. 48-49

But not only is this prophetic authority for the latter days established

- (1) By revelation, and
- (2) By interpretation, and
- (3) By exaltation, it is also established

(4) By observation (read 2:36-45)

-- We observe:

i. That which has been.

-- Four kingdoms came just as Daniel prophesied:

-- The Babylonian (606-539 BC)

-- The Medes-Persian (539-331 BC)

-- The Greek (331-146 BC)

-- The Roman (146 BC – 4th or 5th Century AD)

-- Now there are some serious questions raised by the prophetic revelations

-- **Question One:**

Why would God give kingdom power, kingdom strength and kingdom glory to a king like Nebuchadnezzar?

This is what Daniel said God had done. (2:37)

Answer One:

To Rebuke and punish the Jews for national sin and rebellion. (Read and explain Habbakkuh 1:1-6)

Answer Two:

To extend His witness to gentile powers. (4:17)

Answer Three:

To establish an unusual time clock for the establishment of His Kingdom.

But our observation is not only

i. That which has been, it is also of

ii. That which is

-- Now in looking at the text we may ask,
WHAT IS IT THAT IS?

-- The Roman Empire seemed to have fallen.

Even the Holy Roman Empire closed its doors in the early 1800's. And verse 44 has not yet taken place.

-- So we ask, Did in fact Daniel's prophecy fail?

-- So we ask – Did in fact Daniel's prophesy fail?

-- **So – we ask – WHAT IS IT THAT IS?**

-- Examine carefully the characteristics of the Fourth Empire:

i. **It is the kingdom in prophecy that diversified into ten toes.** (v 42)

ii. **It is the kingdom that “mingled themselves with the seed of men.”** (v 43)

iii. **It became a kingdom that “could not cleave one to another,** even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

In short, it became a mingled BUT divided kingdom. It is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual kingdom and there is no ethics, value or faith to it.

-- If you want to see a microcosm of that, all you have to do is look at the Balkans.

-- Now here is the serious question:

HAVE WE REACHED THE END OF THE PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FOURTH KINGDOM?

ANSWER

-- The CLAY is gone. The Empire fell (v 42)

-- The IRON stays.

v 42 – “As the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken.”

- What happened is that the “partly strong” is now present, in part, in what we call Western Civilization.
- The Fourth Kingdom is still operative in the prophetic time schedule.
- Secular historians give these summaries of Roman weakness – “the clay” (the fall of the Empire) and Roman strength (the influence of Roman culture)
- The Columbia Encyclopedia of Columbia University (Col. Ency. Col. University Press, N.Y. © 1950, 2nd ed. P. 1698) puts it this way:

“The so-called dark ages that followed the fall of the Roman Empire in Western Europe could not eradicate the profound imprint left by the Roman civilization. Roman law is still alive; the Romance languages are but modifications of Roman speech. Roman Catholicism for fifteen centuries was the only religion and the main cultural force of Western Europe. The fall of Rome marked no abrupt ending of an era, for the barbarians that filled the gap left by the disappearance of the old order were quick in accepting and adapting what vital elements there remained of it. The survival of the East Roman Empire and the creation of the Holy Roman Empire showed what vitality there was left in the imperial ideal.” (Quoted in Daniel, John Whitcomb, Moody Press, Chicago, 1985, p. 50) (Whitcomb’s quote is from 3rd edition)

- Encarta, the relatively new electronic secular encyclopedia, says this about the result of the Roman/Gothic mingling and conflict – which is traditionally considered the conflict which brought down the Roman Empire:

“The German tribes wanted land and treasure, but they also wanted to live as Romans, and what is conventionally thought of as the

barbarianization of the Western Empire (Rome) should just as firmly be considered the Romanization of the barbarians.” (Encarta – Search: Western Civilization, Europe, The Roman-Germanic Conflict)

-- Historians go further to describe the fate of the Roman Empire:

“...some of Rome’s conquerors felt uneasy, measuring themselves against the civilization that had preceded them. In various ways the new peoples were influenced by the very society they had destroyed. The languages of Western Europe were shaped by Latin...In some regions Roman law was still used,...” (Encarta, “Dark Ages and Feudalism in Europe.”) (Microsoft Encarta ’98 Encyclopedia © 1993-1997 Microsoft Corp.)

-- But more significant than what secular historians say about the continuity of Gentile Powers is WHAT CHRIST SAID ABOUT “THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.”

-- Luke 21:24 “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT ABOUT THE CONTINUITY OF GENTILE POWERS?

1. Gentile Powers are Prophetically **Revealed**.

-- Daniel 2

2. Gentile Powers are Prophetically **Relevant**.

-- The end of Gentile Powers marks the clearest prophetic sign of the establishment of the FIFTH KINGDOM – the KINGDOM OF GOD WHICH SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED . (Daniel 2:44)

3. Gentile Powers are Prophetically **Reliable**.

-- The prophecy, revealed in the 6th century BC, has proven RELIABLE in every detail.

- From those Biblical and Historical facts it would seem quite clear that the days of the 4th Empire are not over.

WHAT IS OBVIOUS IS THAT WE ARE LIVING IN THE DAYS OF THE DIVERSITY OF THE TEN TOES.

And that leads us to our third OBSERVATION.

iii. **Of That Which Shall Be**

- READ vv 44-45

- This is THE RISE OF THE FIFTH AND FINAL KINGDOM

(i) **It appears, according to v 44 – “in the days of these kings”**

- That means that the four kings, or the four kingdoms, are being viewed as **one unit** – though they are distinct in time, identity and value.

(ii) v 44 – **“It is set up by God.”**

It is not a part of gentile kingdom sequence.

- We should not look for this kingdom the way we look for other kingdoms.

- We should not expect it to rise in a NATURAL way.

- Neither should we expect to access it in a NATURAL way.

(iii) v 44 – **It Shall Never Be Destroyed**

- One of the major things about the image of the kingdoms of men is that the kingdoms and the kings failed.

In chapter 3 we will see Nebuchadnezzar’s not so subtle rejection of the idea that his kingdom would fail.

- It is one of our basic human weaknesses, and one of our vilest sins, that humanity still

believes that humanity is the ultimate ruler.

-- The book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ has this clear message for us –

-- Rev 11:15 – “The kingdoms of this world are become (those) of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.”

(iv) v 44 – “...**the kingdom shall not be left to other people...**”

-- That was an EGO blow to Nebuchadnezzar.

-- But more significantly – it is the CROWNING HOPE for us.

-- CHRIST REIGNS – and “**THE KINGDOM SHALL NOT BE LEFT TO ANOTHER.**”

-- In Addition to the Prophetic Promise – There are at least two other Major Christian Life Promises which tie to the truth that his kingdom shall not be left to another.

A. **THE PROMISE OF SECURITY**

-- John 10:28 “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.”

-- Now the Promise that His kingdom shall not be left to another – NOT ONLY SUPPORTS

A. THE PROMISE OF OUR SECURITY, It also supports

B. **THE PROMISE OF ULTIMATE EXALTATION.**

-- Phil 2:9-10 of Christ – “God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every Name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”

-- It is not a wise thing to serve another king – NOW OR EVER

-- v 44 It shall replace all other kingdoms by breaking them in pieces and consuming them.

-- v 45 The authority of the fifth kingdom is the basis for the authority of the revelation of the dream and the interpretation of the dream.

-- READ EXPLICITLY v 45

-- “The Great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter.”

* * *

Prep. By RLA (over a period of time culminating in June 1999)

Daniel 2.doc/rf2.14.00