

The Message of Daniel 2

By [Don McGee](#)

Any serious student of the Bible will agree that some doctrines are not always so readily apparent. That does not mean they are impossible to grasp; it just means they are understood only with prayer and honest study.

Daniel is not a difficult book to understand if it is taken at face value. That is, if the student does not go into it with a bias against miracles and against the plain-sense meaning of scripture. Modern critics say the book was written long after Daniel was alive because it is simply too accurate regarding historical events that were future to his day. This attitude totally incapacitates the Spirit's work as Teacher and the result is a thoroughly skewed, unbiblical conclusion. So, you might want to refresh your memory by rereading at least this chapter before considering the conclusions presented.

The message of chapter two was given by way of a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (modern Iraq), and it was actually very simple and to the point: though Nebuchadnezzar, the powerful pagan king, had put an end to what might be called the semi-theocracy of the Jews, yet his own kingdom, and all those which will follow him, will eventually be destroyed and replaced by God's pure and perfect theocracy on this very earth. It might be amusing that this heathen monarch so steeped in idolatry had no problem believing this while most Christians today just can't seem to get it.

After having the dream King Nebuchadnezzar did not understand it. He intuitively knew it was of great importance, and thus the interpretation was of equal importance. Now, the king had a caste of religious advisors he had always used in previous situations, but it seems quite clear he knew in his heart they were frauds. Perhaps he knew the role they played in Babylon was most often for show, and when it came to something as important as this dream he also knew they just could not be counted on. Because of such seriousness, and in order to validate what might be their interpretation, he required them to repeat the dream to him. Of course, this could not be done and they were all consigned to death.

Daniel and his friends were also to die, but the difference between those four young Jewish boys and the others was the fact that they understood they had the sole, living and only real God to talk to about this matter. God revealed the dream to Daniel and, as you know, he recounted the dream to the king and also gave him the interpretation. What a wonderful faith-building story, and most everyone comes away with a sense of awe and amazement each time they read it.

Sadly, however, that is about the end of the story for most Christians. Though they know the details of the dream intimately, yet they somehow fail to grasp the interpretation. Unfortunately, most readers think the bulk of the interpretation is found as it relates to the details of the image itself. Though that is very important,

yet to miss the star of the show is to miss the entire message. And, the star of the show is the stone cut out without hands that smashes and puts an end to all the preceding kingdoms. Further, it grows and fills the whole earth (not heaven!), and will endure forever.

If the student fails to grasp this fact the entire chapter is left unfinished; it is like looking at a panoramic masterpiece and only seeing part of the scene. We must never miss the fact that in chapter 2:4 through chapter 7:28 God is talking with a specific view of the Gentile world in mind. And this is the door through which the entire world — Jew and Gentile — must enter in order to understand the plan of the ages — that is, God is going to totally destroy every iota of secular human statesmanship and will install His king on His throne in His land and rule with a rod of iron over His earth. Some of the details of how this will be done are discovered as one studies through the Bible, as well as the fact that other details have been kept concealed. But, in its pure essence this is the termination point of the interpretation according to God.

Nothing could be more simple, yet nothing could be of more importance to our own generation. At least one reason so many people are disillusioned by the guarantees of so-called enlightened and educated society, and are so hesitant about a collapsing financial system and are just plain scared by the entire world having gone crazy with certain communists and Moslems rattling sabers while standing next to nuclear triggers, is because they flat-out do not know what is happening to their world around them, and they don't even know where to go for the answers.

What causes even more sadness is the fact many of those same people are Christians. And that is because they have bought into the horribly distorted idea that Israel no longer plays a role in God's plan and that the church has now been given the promises God made to the nation of Israel.

To be quite honest, if I believed that stuff I would be on the verge of despondency myself, and for several reasons. First, I would be unable to trust God because I would fear He might, on a whim, void the unconditional promises He made to the church like He did those He made to Israel. Second, I would fear heaven might not be all God said it would be. After all, if He cannot, or will not, bring about ...the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time (Acts 3:21) then why should I believe He will bring about anything else His holy prophets predicted including what the New Testament says about heaven? Can we trust Paul to have been correct about the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15? And what about the promises in Isaiah 2,11, etc.? That kind of thinking is totally void of hope, peace and joy, and frankly, I see no blessing at all in living like that.

That is why it is so important to understand the message of Daniel two. So, we might ask, exactly what should we remember about this message?

The first thing about the message is it belongs to you and me as Gentiles. Daniel 2:4 to 7:28 was written in Aramaic (not Arabic!). Aramaic was the language of the Gentile world in those days. The entire book is important, but this emphasizes the importance of those six chapters to non-Jews. It must be understood that all four kingdoms in the vision are Gentile, and that Israel eventually came under the control of all four: the Babylonians, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks and the Romans. And, since 605BC when Daniel was taken captive the land of Israel has not been under a genuine Davidic Jewish monarchy. The fact of the matter is God was showing to Nebuchadnezzar, and to us, that this ongoing anti-Semitic Gentile world will one day be destroyed to be replaced by the reign of David's greatest Son, Jesus the Christ. In fact, the dream was in answer to the king's prayer (2:29) regarding just such a matter.

Second, the message firmly emphasizes that God alone is Master of both time and world events. Nothing in the realm of Jewish and Gentile world politics happens by random accident. Though God does not orchestrate death and tragedy, yet He most certainly corrals humanity's evil and uses it to bring about the fruition of His plan (2:21). And that includes who becomes a prime minister, president or monarch.

Third, the message declares in no uncertain terms that the world's greatest Jew will become the world's greatest King. Have another look at Zechariah 14 and Revelation 19. During the millennium Jesus will rule with a rod of iron and will summarily smash into subjection anyone, commoner or aristocrat, who might bow up to Him during His reign. His kingdom will fill the entire earth, and the saved of the ages will reign with Him. There will be no place on this planet where anyone might live separated from the powerful and authoritative theocratic reign of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Satan will be bound and peace will abound. Such peace, prosperity, restoration and blessing will never happen during the Times of the Gentiles, no matter who leads and no matter what they do. Bank on that.

Funny, but it seems this is the part of the message most Christians just cannot accept. A careful study might reveal they do not understand "redemption". To redeem something is to buy it back; to own it by act of creation and then to own it by paying a price for it after it had been taken away. That principle applies to humanity and to the earth. Isaiah and other Hebrew prophets spoke of such aspects of creation's redemption, but those texts are most often rejected out of hand by multitudes who claim the title of Christian. Jesus died for the sins of humanity, and though the earth did not sin against God, it has been subjected to the curse of man's sin since the Garden. The ancient Hebrew prophets spoke clearly of the time when the curse will be lifted (e.g. Isaiah 2,11,65, Ezekiel 47, Joel 3, etc.), and that time is coming. Just as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow morning, that time is coming.

We see from this that death and hell get nothing from God. Saved humans will have their spirits, souls and immortal glorified bodies for all eternity. Further, the earth will be “restored” (God’s precise word, not mine) for 1000 years, and just prior to the eternal state it will be burned by an inconceivable fire (2 Peter 3:10) which will destroy every evidence of human rebellion and deprivation. There will not be even one cursed molecule left over from the old earth. Lucifer and his minions will only get hell, and not even one square inch of this planet. Though Satan is currently the “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4), that will all change soon.

Fourth, the message is clear about Jesus’ kingdom being on this earth. The four great empires were all on this earth as secular history bears out. The stone cut out without hands will destroy every vestige of them and will grow in their place. In fact, Daniel says very clearly it will fill the entire earth, not heaven. See again Isaiah 2:1-4 for a snapshot as to how all this will look.

And, what should this message do for us? It should make us aware of the fact that the taking out of the church is imminent. That should always be our prevailing thought. But, there is more.

We can rest at peace. If there is one commodity about which the world knows nothing it is peace. Of course, since we are presently living on this cursed planet we have natural concerns about any number of matters that affect our livelihoods and families. Yet, we do not fear as the world fears. We do not fear Ahmadinejad because he is a pawn in God’s hand. We do not fear Kim Jong Il for he, too, is an impotent despot on a leash. We do not fear a falling stock market and a devalued dollar for our citizenship is not of this world. We do not fear that some sleazy politicians in Washington wish to remove our liberty for we understand real liberty is at hand.

And, if the Lord’s coming is further delayed we see how Christians can face death without fear. Though death is the enemy of all mankind, yet even now we can speak directly to the Grim Reaper instead of talking about him (1 Corinthians 15:55). No fame, no amount of money and no credentials awarded by any human institution can offer that!

Further, we can see the future — a blessing given to all who are believers if they would simply accept it. We are not stunned by any turn of world events, for we know what is in store. In fact, about the only thing that surprises us is that Jesus has not come for His church before now! Perhaps the only question we might ask in closing takes us back to the beginning. If Nebuchadnezzar the pagan king could characterize this terminal generation that has so much more knowledge and information than he had, how do you think he might describe it in light of its vile and sordid unbelief?