

DANIEL: THRIVING IN A GODLESS CULTURE
II: Trusting God's Sovereignty Over A Godless Culture
(Daniel 2:1-23)

I. Introduction

- A. As believers living in a spiritually decaying, godless culture, we need to live affirmatively in victory over sin.
- B. Daniel as a young man was taken captive by the godless Babylonians, and he lived through Persia's conquest of Babylon, serving the Lord in righteousness and wisdom amid a godless culture as a great example for us.
- C. We thus view Daniel 2:1-23 on trusting God's sovereignty over a godless culture for our edification:

II. Trusting God's Sovereignty Over A Godless Culture, Daniel 2:1-23.

- A. After Daniel and his fellow Hebrew captives made their stand regarding their diet in the face of a godless culture (Daniel 1:1-21), God worked to encourage them by revealing His sovereignty over all that they faced:
 - 1. God gave Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar "dreams," plural, though Daniel later interpreted just one dream for him, indicating that it was a recurring dream, Daniel 2:1a; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1332.
 - 2. The Lord did not interpret the dream for the king, what left him troubled and sleepless, Daniel 2:1b.
 - 3. Desiring an interpretation of the dream, Nebuchadnezzar called for his "magicians" (textual scribes of religious ritual), "astrologers" (enchanters), "sorcerers" (those who dealt in magic potions; enchanters) and "Chaldeans" (a class of wise men, priests), Daniel 2:2; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Dan. 2:2.
 - 4. The king told them that he'd had a dream, that his spirit was troubled to understand it, expecting the wise men to know what it was, Dan. 2:3. Nebuchadnezzar was so upset by this recurring dream and his failure to understand it that he wanted to be sure he got the right interpretation rather than have his wise men give him a false interpretation just to make him feel good, so he required that they discern both the dream and its interpretation to insure that he had obtained supernatural insight, Ibid., B. K. C., O. T., p. 1333.
 - 5. The wise men asked that the king tell them the dream, assuring him that they together could come up with the right interpretation (Dan. 2:4), but Nebuchadnezzar said the dream had gone from him, and if they would not tell him what it was, they would be executed and their houses desecrated, Daniel 2:5. However, if they made known both the dream and its interpretation, they would be greatly rewarded, Daniel 2:6.
 - 6. When the wise men again asked the king to tell them the dream so they could interpret it, Nebuchadnezzar said they were just stalling, so he urged them to make known the dream and its interpretation, Dan. 2:7-9.
 - 7. The king's wise men replied that no human being could tell the king his dream, that only the gods could do so (Dan. 2:10-11), infuriating Nebuchadnezzar, so he decreed that all the wise men be slain, Daniel 2:12.
 - 8. Daniel and his three friends had not come with the other wise men to their meeting with the king likely because they were being separate from the ungodly practices of the pagan wise men (Ibid.), but since Daniel and his fellow Hebrew captives were classified as wise men, the decree included them, and the first Daniel heard of the decree was when Arioch, captain of the king's guard, told him about it, Dan. 2:13-14.
 - 9. Accordingly, Daniel asked Arioch why this severe decree had been so hastily made, and Arioch explained the events that had led to it, so Daniel immediately approached the king and obtained time from him to give the king the information he sought with the promise that Daniel would provide it, Daniel 2:15-16.
 - 10. Having obtained time to acquire the information, Daniel asked his Hebrew associates to seek God's mercy in prayer for the information the king desired that they not perish with Babylon's wise men, Dan. 2:17-18.
- B. God revealed to Daniel in a night vision the information that king Nebuchadnezzar had sought, and a relieved, grateful Daniel blessed the Lord, noting that wisdom and might belonged to Him, Daniel 2:19-20a.
- C. Hinting at the contents of the dream and its meaning, Daniel testified that God changed the times and seasons in history, He removed and set up kings, giving wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who understand, revealing deep and secret things, Daniel 2:20b-22. Daniel thanked and praised the God of his fathers for giving him the needed information, acknowledging that God was sovereign over all, Daniel 2:23.

Lesson: *God arranged events and gave Babylon's king a dream about future world kings and kingdoms to give only Daniel the insight Babylon's king desired to reveal God's sovereignty over not only Babylon and its king, but over all the kings and kingdoms of future history, to the encouragement of Daniel and his fellow Hebrew captives.*

Application: *(1) May we rejoice that our God is completely sovereign over all rulers and kingdoms of all history beyond Daniel's time that we trust in God and joyfully live for Him. (2) Since we now live within the timeline of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, may we rejoice in God's sovereignty over the rulers and kingdoms of OUR troubled era!*