



FAITH, FREEDOM, & FITNESS

DAILY BREAD

**Thursday, May 21
Daniel 4:4-8**

*I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace,
contented and prosperous.*

*I had a dream that made me afraid.
As I was lying in bed,
the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me.*



*So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon
be brought before me to interpret the dream for me.*

*When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came,
I told them the dream,
but they could not interpret it for me.*

*Finally, Daniel came into my presence, and I told him the dream.
(He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god,
and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.)*



Nebuchadnezzar begins his dramatic story in his palace where he was at ease and doing well. He was a mighty king with a broad reign and had built a comfortable palace and beautified the city of Babylon. Soon, however, he was extremely uneasy and impoverished.

The king then recalls a frightening dream. This is not the dream we've already discussed this month, but a second dream. The Bible presents several instances in which dreams transmitted divine revelations. God issued warnings to Joseph in the Old Testament, to Joseph, Mary's husband, and to Pilate's wife. It is important to base our understanding of any dream on the revealed truth of Scripture.

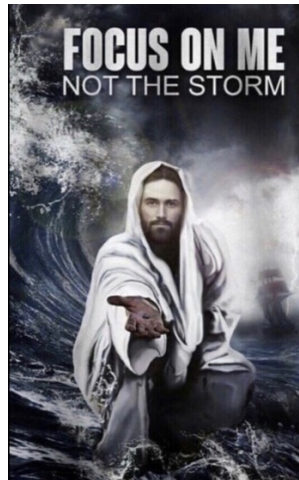
Just as Nebuchadnezzar had summoned court advisors to interpret his first frightening dream, so he gathers his wise men to address his second dream. The king is said to be calling "all" his wise men from the kingdom, not merely Daniel. The wisdom of the world seems incredibly attractive to unbelievers. Knowledge and ability, separated from an understanding of God, leads to false reassurance.

The Book of Ecclesiastes makes clear the folly of searching for the meaning of life anywhere but in God. Every search that excludes God is labeled "vanity." The conclusion of the writer of Ecclesiastes draws is that it is best to fear God and obey Him.



Because of Daniel's prior success, the king sees him as one in direct contact with divine beings. As a pagan, and worshipper of many false gods, Nebuchadnezzar consulted with idols before seeking an answer from someone who served the true God. Unbelievers often resort to unreliable sources for answers to their problems before turning to God as a last resort. Yet, the king remembered that Daniel had interpreted his previous frightening dream.

In Christ, Spero



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