

Living in a Pagan World

Part 2

“Truth and Wisdom”

Review:

We live in a pagan world, but it's not a surprise to God.

Matthew 24:10-13 (NASB95)

“At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. “Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. “Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. “But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

Luke 18:6-8 (NIV)

And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

Daniel 2:1-6 (NIV)

In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. ²So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came in and stood before the king, ³he said to them, “I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means.” ⁴Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it.” ⁵The king replied to the astrologers, “This is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me what my dream was and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble. ⁶But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. So tell me the dream and interpret it for me.”

The Dream - Daniel 2:31-45

- Nebuchadnezzar Babylon - head of gold - 586 BC
- Medes and Persians - chest and arms of silver - 539 BC
- Belly and thighs Bronze Greeks - 334 BC
- Legs of steel Romans - 63 BC
- Feet and toes of clay - faltering Roman Empire and other future countries - to present day
- Rock - the Messiah Jesus' second coming

What does this reveal about God?

#1 For unbelievers: Our God is God.

- **He distinguishes Himself from all of the false gods.**

Daniel 2:47 (NIV)

The king said to Daniel, “Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.”

Isaiah 45:5 (NIV)

I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me,

- **Our God wants to save unbelievers.**

Daniel 2:27-28 (NIV)

Daniel replied, “No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you lay on your bed are these:

#2 For Believers: He is in control, He has a plan, and we have hope.

Daniel 2:19-23 (NIV)

During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven

²⁰and said: “Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. ²¹He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. ²²He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him. ²³I thank and praise you, O God of my fathers: You have given me wisdom and power, you have made known to me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the dream of the king.”

Isaiah 48:3-5 (NIV)

I foretold the former things long ago, my mouth announced them and I made them known; then suddenly I acted, and they came to pass. For I knew how stubborn you were; the sinews of your neck were iron, your forehead was bronze. Therefore I told you these things long ago; before they happened I announced them to you so that you could not say, 'My idols did them; my wooden image and metal god ordained them.'

What does this reveal about Godly wisdom?

#1 Wise people respond to authority with respect.

Daniel 2:14 (NIV)

When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact.

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. **But do this with gentleness and respect,**

#2 Wise people take time to pray, think, and get council. (Daniel went to his small group)

Daniel 2:16-18 (NIV)

At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him. Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

#3 Wise people give glory to God. He did not take credit for what God did.

Daniel 2:26-28 (NIV)

The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?" Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you lay on your bed are these:

#4 Wise people have a heart to save the lost.

Daniel 2:24 (NIV)

Then Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to execute the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not execute the wise men of Babylon. Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream for him."

2 Corinthians 5:14 (NIV)

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died....

2 Corinthians 5:20 (NIV)

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

What can we take from this into our pagan culture?

- We can have confidence. God is working and in control.
- Trouble is an opportunity to be used by God.
- God wants to save the lost. He glorifies Himself by using us to do it.
- Godly wisdom opens doors.

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