

## Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (603/602 BC)

### Daniel 2

#### Circumstances of the Dream

1 Now in the second [*regnal*] year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him.

#### The Futility of Pagan Interpreters

2 So the king said to call the magicians and the conjurers and the sorcerers and the astrologers to tell to the king his dreams. And they came in and they stood before the king.

3 And the king said to them, "I have had a dream and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

4 And the astrologers said to the king *in* Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants and we will reveal the explanation."

5 The king answered and said to the astrologers, "The command from me is firm: if you *do* not make known to me the dream and its explanation, *then* you will be broken into pieces and your houses will be laid in ruins.

6 But if you tell me the dream and its explanation, you will receive gifts and rewards and great honor from me. Therefore, tell me the dream and its explanation."

7 They answered once more and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants and we will make the explanation known."

8 The king answered and said, "Certainly I know that you are trying to gain time because you have seen that this matter is firmly decreed by me,

9 for if you *do* not make the dream known to me, your verdict is fixed, and you have conspired to say *a* lying and deceitful word to me until the circumstances will change. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can tell me its explanation."

10 The astrologers answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth that is able to reveal the word of the king; in fact, no great and powerful king has *ever* asked a thing like this of any magician or conjurer or astrologer.

11 And the thing that the king is asking *is too* difficult and there is no one who can reveal it to the king except *the* gods whose dwelling is not with mortals."

12 Because of this the king became angry, and he became very much enraged, and he said *that* all the wise men of Babylon *are* to be destroyed.

13 And the decree was issued, and the wise men were on the verge of being executed, and they searched for Daniel and his companions to be executed.

#### Daniel's Intervention

14 Then Daniel responded prudently and discretely to Arioch, the commander of the imperial guard of the king, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon.

15 He asked and said to Arioch, the royal official of the king, "Why is the decree from the king so severe?" Then Arioch explained the matter to Daniel.

16 And Daniel went in and requested from the king that he would give him time, and he would tell the king the explanation.

17 Then Daniel went to his home, and he made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, his companions,

18 and *told them* to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions, along with the remainder of the wise men of Babylon, would not be killed.

19 Then in a vision of the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel; then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20 Daniel said:

"Let his name, *the name* of God, be blessed throughout the ages,  
for the wisdom and the power are his.

21 And he changes the times and the seasons,  
and he deposes kings and he sets up kings;  
he gives wisdom to wise men  
and knowledge to *men who* know understanding.

22 He reveals the deep and the hidden things;  
he knows what *is* in the darkness,  
and the light dwells with him.

23 To you, O God of my ancestors,  
I give thanks and I give praises,  
for the wisdom and the power you gave to me,  
and now you have made known to me  
what we have asked from you,  
for you have made known to us the matter of the king."

24 Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and thus he said to him: “You must not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me in before the king and I will give the explanation to the king.”

25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel in before the king and thus he said to him: “I have found a man among the exiles of Judah who can relate the explanation to the king.

26 The king then asked and said to Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its explanation?”

27 Daniel answered the king and said, “The mystery that the king asks, no wise men, conjurers, magicians, *or* diviners are able to make known to the king.

28 But there is a God in heaven *who* reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what *it is* that will be at the end of days. This *is* your dream and the visions of your head on your bed.

29 “*As for you*, king, your thoughts on your bed turned to what *it was* that would be in the future, and the revealer of mysteries has made known to you what that would be.

30 And as for me, *it is* not because of wisdom that is in me more than any other living person *that* this mystery is revealed to me, but in order that the explanation may be made known to the king and you will understand the thoughts of your mind.

### **The Dream Revealed**

31 “You, O king, were looking and, look, there was one great statue. This statue *was* huge and its brilliance extraordinary, standing *there* before you, and its appearance *was* frightening.

32 The head of this statue *was* of fine gold, its chest and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze,

33 its legs of iron, its feet, part of them of iron and part of them of clay.

34 You were looking on until a stone was chiseled out—that not by hands—and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and it broke them in pieces.

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold all at once broke into pieces and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away and any trace of them could not be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and it filled the whole earth.

### **The Interpretation of the Dream**

36 “This *was* the dream, and *now* we will tell its interpretation to the king.

37 You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power and the might and the glory,

38 and *also* human beings wherever they dwell, the animals of the field and the birds of heaven—he has given into your hand and made you ruler over all of them—you are the head of gold.

39 And after you another kingdom inferior to yours will arise, and another third *kingdom* of bronze that will rule over the whole earth.

40 And *a* fourth kingdom will be strong as iron, *and* just as iron crushes and smashes everything, and as iron shatters all of these *other metals*, so it will crush and it will shatter *these nations*.

41 And just as you saw the feet and the toes, partly potter’s clay and partly iron, it will be a divided kingdom; and some hardness of the iron will be *in it*, just as you have seen the iron mixed with the wet clay.

42 And *as* the toes of the feet *were* partly iron and partly clay, so part of the kingdom will be strong and partly brittle.

43 And *in* that you saw the iron was mixed with wet clay, so they will mix in marriage and they will not cling to one another, just as iron *does* not mix with clay.

44 And in the day of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, and the kingdom will not be left for another nation, and it will bring an end to all these kingdoms, but it will stand forever.

45 Inasmuch as you saw that a stone from the mountain was chiseled out *but* not by hands, and *that* it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, *thereby* the great God made known to the king what will be in the future, and the dream is certain and its explanation trustworthy.”

### **Nebuchadnezzar’s Response**

46 Then the king, Nebuchadnezzar, fell on his face and he paid homage to Daniel; and he commanded *them* to offer *a* grain offering and incense offering to him.

47 The king answered Daniel and said, “Truly your God *is* the God of gods and the Lord of kings, and he reveals mysteries, for you are able to reveal this mystery.”

48 Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and the chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.

49 And Daniel made a request from the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon, while Daniel *remained* in the court of the king.

## Jehoiakim Rebels Against Nebuchadnezzar (c. 601/600 BC)

2 Kings 24:1b–4

1b then he [Jehoiakim] turned and rebelled against him [Nebuchadnezzar].

2 So Yahweh sent against him raiding bands of Chaldeans, raiding bands of Aram, raiding bands of Moab, and raiding bands of the Ammonites. He had sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of Yahweh that he had spoken by the hand of his servants the prophets.

3 Surely, it was on the command of Yahweh against Judah to remove them from his sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done.

4 Also, *for* the blood of the innocent that he had shed—and he filled Jerusalem *with* innocent blood—Yahweh was not willing to forgive.

## Jeremiah and the Rechabites (c. 600/599 BC)

Jeremiah 35

### Jeremiah's Test of the Rechabites' Loyalty

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, saying,

2 "Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak with them, and bring them *to* the house of Yahweh into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink."

3 So I took Jaazaniah, the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, and his brothers, and all his sons, and the whole of the house of the Rechabites,

4 and I brought them *to* the house of Yahweh, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which *was* beside the chamber of the officials, which *was* above the chamber of Maaseiah, the son of Shallum, the keeper of the threshold.

5 Then I set before the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine and cups, and I said to them, "Drink wine."

### Refusal to Break Jonadab's Vow

6 But they answered, "We will not drink wine, for Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our ancestor, commanded us, saying, 'You shall not drink wine, you or your children, forever.

7 And you shall not build a house, and you shall not sow seed, and you shall not plant a vineyard, and it shall not be for you, but in tents you shall live all your days, so that you may live many days on the surface of the land where you *are* dwelling as aliens.'

8 And we obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our ancestor, in all that he commanded us, not to drink wine all our days, ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters,

9 and not to build houses *for* our living, and there is not vineyard, or field, or seed for us.

10 But we have lived in tents, and we have obeyed, and we have done all that Jehonadab, our ancestor, commanded us. [[2 Kgs 10:15–28](#)]

11 But then at the coming up against the land of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, then we said, 'Come and let us go *to* Jerusalem before the army of the Chaldeans, and before the army of the Arameans.' That is why we are living in Jerusalem."

### The Lesson for Judah

12 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

13 "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Go and say to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Can you not learn a lesson to listen to my words?" declares Yahweh.

14 "The words of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, that he commanded his descendants to not drink, have been carried out, and they have not drunk until this day, for they have obeyed the command of their ancestor. But I have spoken to you over and over again, and you have not listened to me.

15 And I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, I have sent them over and over again, saying, 'Turn back please each one from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and you must not go after other gods to serve them, so that you may live on the land that I gave to you and to your ancestors.' But you did not incline your ear and you did not listen to me.

16 For the descendants of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, have carried out the command of their ancestor that he commanded them, but this people did not listen to me."

17 Therefore thus says Yahweh, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, "Look, I *am* going to bring to Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem every disaster that I have spoken against them, because I have spoken to them and they have not listened, and I have called to them and they have not answered." "'

### God's Blessing on the Rechabites

18 But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Because you have listened to the command of Jonadab your ancestor, and you have kept all his commands, and you have done all that he commanded you,'

19 therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: 'A man will not be cut off for Jonadab, the son of Rechab, to stand before me always.'"

### The Death of Jehoiakim (c. December 7, 598 BC)

2 Kings 24:5–7	2 Chronicles 36:8
<p>5 The remainder of the acts of Jehoiakim and all that he did,</p> <p><i>are</i> they not written on the scroll of the events of the days of the kings of Judah?</p> <p>6 So Jehoiakim slept with his ancestors, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his place.</p> <p>7 The king of Egypt did not again come out from his land, for the king of Babylon had taken <i>territory</i> from the Wadi of Egypt to the Euphrates River.</p>	<p>8 Now the remainder of the words of Jehoiakim and the detestable things that he did and what was found against him, behold, they are written in the scroll of the kings of Israel and Judah.</p> <p>And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.</p>

### Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim's Son, Assumes the Throne of Judah (c. December 7, 598 BC)

2 Kings 24:8–9	2 Chronicles 36:9
<p>8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. The name of his mother <i>was</i> Nehushta daughter of Elnathan from Jerusalem.</p> <p>9 He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh according to all that his father had done.</p>	<p>9 Jehoiachin <i>was</i> eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem.</p> <p>And he did evil in the eyes of Yahweh.</p>

### Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—A Last Warning (c. January 597 BC)

Jeremiah 13:15–27

#### The Threat of Captivity

- 15 Listen, and pay attention, you must not be haughty, for Yahweh has spoken.
- 16 Give glory to Yahweh your God before he brings darkness, and before your feet stumble on the mountains at twilight. And you will hope for light, but he makes it as gloom, he makes *it* as thick darkness.
- 17 But if you will not listen to it, my inner self will weep in secret places, because of the presence of *your* pride. And my eyes will weep bitterly, and they will melt *in* tears, because the flock of Yahweh has been taken captive.
- 18 "Say to the king and to the queen mother, 'Take a lower seat, for your beautiful crown has come down from your head.'
- 19 The towns of the Negev are shut up, and there is no *one who* opens *them*. All of Judah is deported; it is deported *in* completeness.

#### The Humiliation of an Unclean People

- 20 Lift up your eyes and see those coming from *the* north. Where *is* the flock that was given to you, your magnificent flock?
- 21 What will you say when he sets over you—and you have taught them—allies as head over you? Will not labor pains take hold of you, like a woman giving birth?
- 22 And if you say in your heart, 'Why have these *things* happened to me?'

	Because of the greatness of your iniquity your skirts are uncovered; your heels have endured violence.
23	Can a Cushite change his skin, or a leopard his spots? <i>Then</i> you also will be able to do good, <i>who</i> are accustomed to doing evil.
24	And I will scatter them like stubble scattered by <i>the</i> wind of <i>the</i> desert.
25	This <i>is</i> your lot, the portion of your measure from me,” declares Yahweh, “because you have forgotten me, and you have trusted in the lie.
26	So in turn I will bare your skirts over your face, and your shame will become visible.
27	Your adulteries, and your neighings, the shameful behavior of your fornications on <i>the</i> hills in the countryside, I have seen your abominations. Woe to you, <i>O</i> Jerusalem! How long will you continue to be unclean?”

### Nebuchadnezzar's Second Siege of Jerusalem (March 16, 597 BC)

2 Kings 24:10–17	2 Chronicles 36:10	Jeremiah 37:1	Jeremiah 52:28
<p>10 At that time, the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came <i>to</i> Jerusalem, and the city came under the siege.</p> <p>11 Then Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city <i>while</i> his servants were besieging it.</p> <p>12 Jehoiachin king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, his mother, his servants, his commanders, and his court officials.</p> <p>The king of Babylon took him</p> <p>in the eighth year of his reign.</p> <p>13 Then he took from there all of the treasures of the temple of Yahweh and the treasures of the palace of the king. He cut up all of the vessels of gold which Solomon the king of Israel had made in the temple of Yahweh, as Yahweh had foretold.</p> <p>14 He deported all of Jerusalem: all of the commanders, ten thousand of the skilled warriors, and the artisans; no one was left over except the poorest of the</p>	<p>10 And at the turn of the year</p> <p>King Nebuchadnezzar</p> <p>sent and brought him to Babylon,</p> <p>with objects of the treasure of the house of Yahweh.</p>		<p>28 This <i>is the number of</i> the people whom Nebuchadnezzar deported:</p> <p>in <i>the</i> seventh year,</p> <p>three thousand twenty-three Judeans;</p>

<p>people of the land. 15 He deported Jehoiachin to Babylon; the mother of the king, the wives of the king, his court officials, and the citizenry of the land he caused to go into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 16 of all of the skilled men, seven thousand, and <i>of</i> the skilled craftsmen and the artisans, one thousand. All of the mighty warriors fit for war the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. 17 Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his uncle king in his place and changed his name <i>to</i> Zedekiah.</p>	<p>And he made Zedekiah his brother king</p> <p>in Judah and Jerusalem.</p>	<p>1 And king Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had made king, reigned as king in the land of Judah in place of Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim.</p>	
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### Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's Uncle, Appointed King of Judah (March 16, 597 BC)

2 Kings 24:18–19	Jeremiah 37:2	Jeremiah 52:1–2	2 Chronicles 36:11–12
<p>18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. The name of his mother <i>was</i> Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. 19 He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh <i>just</i> like all that Jehoiakim had done.</p>	<p>2 But he and his servants and the people of the land did not listen to the words of Yahweh that he spoke by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet.</p>	<p>1 Zedekiah <i>was</i> twenty-one years old at his beginning to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother <i>was</i> Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 2 And he did evil in the eyes of Yahweh like all that Jehoiakim had done.</p>	<p>11 Zedekiah <i>was</i> twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.  12 And he did evil in the eyes of Yahweh his God.  He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke for Yahweh.</p>

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