

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (603/602 BC)

Daniel 2

Circumstances of the Dream

1 In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar had many dreams. His mind was disturbed and he suffered from insomnia.

The Futility of Pagan Interpreters

2 The king issued an order to summon the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and wise men in order to explain his dreams to him. So they came and awaited the king's instructions.

3 The king told them, "I have had a dream, and I am anxious to understand the dream."

4 The wise men replied to the king: What follows is in Aramaic "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will disclose its interpretation."

5 The king replied to the wise men, "My decision is firm. If you do not inform me of both the dream and its interpretation, you will be dismembered and your homes reduced to rubble!

6 But if you can disclose the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts, a reward, and considerable honor. So disclose to me the dream and its interpretation!"

7 They again replied, "Let the king inform us of the dream; then we will disclose its interpretation."

8 The king replied, "I know for sure that you are attempting to gain time, because you see that my decision is firm.

9 If you don't inform me of the dream, there is only one thing that is going to happen to you. For you have agreed among yourselves to report to me something false and deceitful until such time as things might change. So tell me the dream, and I will have confidence that you can disclose its interpretation."

10 The wise men replied to the king, "There is no man on earth who is able to disclose the king's secret, for no king, regardless of his position and power, has ever requested such a thing from any magician, astrologer, or wise man.

11 What the king is asking is too difficult, and no one exists who can disclose it to the king, except for the gods—but they don't live among mortals!"

12 Because of this the king got furiously angry and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

13 So a decree went out, and the wise men were about to be executed. They also sought Daniel and his friends so that they could be executed.

Daniel's Intervention

14 Then Daniel spoke with prudent counsel to Arioch, who was in charge of the king's executioners and who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon.

15 He inquired of Arioch the king's deputy, "Why is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter.

16 So Daniel went in and requested the king to grant him time, that he might disclose the interpretation to the king.

17 Then Daniel went to his home and informed his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the matter.

18 He asked them to pray for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery so that he and his friends would not be destroyed along with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

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

20 saying,

"Let the name of God be praised forever and ever,
for wisdom and power belong to him.

21 He changes times and seasons,
deposing some kings
and establishing others.

He gives wisdom to the wise;
he imparts knowledge to those with understanding;

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

23 O God of my fathers, I acknowledge and glorify you,
for you have bestowed wisdom and power on me.
Now you have enabled me to understand what I requested from you.
For you have enabled me to understand the king's dilemma."

24 Then Daniel went in to see Arioch (whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon). He came and said to him, "Don't destroy the wise men of Babylon! Escort me to the king, and I will disclose the interpretation to him!"

25 So Arioch quickly ushered Daniel into the king's presence, saying to him, "I have found a man from the captives of Judah who can

make known the interpretation to the king.”

26 The king then asked Daniel (whose name was also Belteshazzar), “Are you able to make known to me the dream that I saw, as well as its interpretation?”

27 Daniel replied to the king, “The mystery that the king is asking about is such that no wise men, astrologers, magicians, or diviners can possibly disclose it to the king.

28 However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the times to come. The dream and the visions you had while lying on your bed are as follows.

29 “As for you, O king, while you were in your bed your thoughts turned to future things. The revealer of mysteries has made known to you what will take place.

30 As for me, this mystery was revealed to me not because I possess more wisdom than any other living person, but so that the king may understand the interpretation and comprehend the thoughts of your mind.

The Dream Revealed

31 “You, O king, were watching as a great statue—one of impressive size and extraordinary brightness—was standing before you. Its appearance caused alarm.

32 As for that statue, its head was of fine gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs were of bronze.

33 Its legs were of iron; its feet were partly of iron and partly of clay.

34 You were watching as a stone was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its iron and clay feet, breaking them in pieces.

35 Then the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were broken in pieces without distinction and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors that the wind carries away. Not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a large mountain that filled the entire earth.

The Interpretation of the Dream

36 This was the dream. Now we will set forth before the king its interpretation.

37 “You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has granted you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor.

38 Wherever human beings, wild animals, and birds of the sky live—he has given them into your power. He has given you authority over them all. You are the head of gold.

39 Now after you another kingdom will arise, one inferior to yours. Then a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule in all the earth.

40 Then there will be a fourth kingdom, one strong like iron. Just like iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything, and as iron breaks in pieces all of these metals, so it will break in pieces and crush the others.

41 In that you were seeing feet and toes partly of wet clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom. Some of the strength of iron will be in it, for you saw iron mixed with wet clay.

42 In that the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, the latter stages of this kingdom will be partly strong and partly fragile.

43 And in that you saw iron mixed with wet clay, so people will be mixed with one another without adhering to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

44 In the days of those kings the God of heaven will raise up an everlasting kingdom that will not be destroyed and a kingdom that will not be left to another people. It will break in pieces and bring about the demise of all these kingdoms. But it will stand forever.

45 You saw that a stone was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands; it smashed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold into pieces. The great God has made known to the king what will occur in the future. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is reliable.”

Nebuchadnezzar’s Response

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar bowed down with his face to the ground and paid homage to Daniel. He gave orders to offer sacrifice and incense to him.

47 The king replied to Daniel, “Certainly your God is a God of gods and Lord of kings and revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery!”

48 Then the king elevated Daniel to high position and bestowed on him many marvelous gifts. He granted him authority over the entire province of Babylon and made him the main prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.

49 And at Daniel’s request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the administration of the province of Babylon. Daniel himself served in the king’s court.

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

2 Kings 24:1b–4

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

2 The LORD sent against him Babylonian, Syrian, Moabite, and Ammonite raiding bands; he sent them to destroy Judah, as he had warned he would do through his servants the prophets.

3 Just as the LORD had announced, he rejected Judah because of all the sins which Manasseh had committed.

4 Because he killed innocent people and stained Jerusalem with their blood, the LORD was unwilling to forgive them.

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

Jeremiah 35

Jeremiah's Test of the Rechabites' Loyalty

1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah when Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

2 "Go to the Rechabite community. Invite them to come into one of the side rooms of the LORD's temple and offer them some wine to drink."

3 So I went and got Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah the grandson of Habazziniah, his brothers, all his sons, and all the rest of the Rechabite community.

4 I took them to the LORD's temple. I took them into the room where the disciples of the prophet Hanan son of Igdaliah stayed. That room was next to the one where the temple officers stayed and above the room where Maaseiah son of Shallum, one of the doorkeepers of the temple, stayed.

5 Then I set cups and pitchers full of wine in front of the members of the Rechabite community and said to them, "Have some wine."

Refusal to Break Jonadab's Vow

6 But they answered, "We do not drink wine because our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us not to. He told us, 'You and your children must never drink wine.'

7 Do not build houses. Do not plant crops. Do not plant a vineyard or own one. Live in tents all your lives. If you do these things you will live a long time in the land that you wander about on.'

8 We and our wives and our sons and daughters have obeyed everything our ancestor Jonadab commanded us. We have never drunk wine.

9 We have not built any houses to live in. We do not own any vineyards, fields, or crops.

10 We have lived in tents. We have obeyed our ancestor Jonadab and done exactly as he commanded us. [\[2 Kgs 10:15–28\]](#)

11 But when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded the land we said, 'Let's get up and go to Jerusalem to get away from the Babylonian and Aramean armies.' That is why we are staying here in Jerusalem."

The Lesson for Judah

12 Then the LORD spoke to Jeremiah.

13 The LORD God of Israel who rules over all told him, "Go and speak to the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem. Tell them, 'I, the LORD, say: "You must learn a lesson from this about obeying what I say!

14 Jonadab son of Rechab ordered his descendants not to drink wine. His orders have been carried out. To this day his descendants have drunk no wine because they have obeyed what their ancestor commanded them. But I have spoken to you over and over again, but you have not obeyed me!

15 I sent all my servants the prophets to warn you over and over again. They said, "Every one of you, stop doing the evil things you have been doing and do what is right. Do not pay allegiance to other gods and worship them. Then you can continue to live in this land that I gave to you and your ancestors." But you did not pay any attention or listen to me.

16 Yes, the descendants of Jonadab son of Rechab have carried out the orders that their ancestor gave them. But you people have not obeyed me!

17 So I, the LORD, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, say: "I will soon bring on Judah and all the citizens of Jerusalem all the disaster that I threatened to bring on them. I will do this because I spoke to them but they did not listen. I called out to them but they did not answer.""

God's Blessing on the Rechabites

18 Then Jeremiah spoke to the Rechabite community, "The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'You have obeyed the orders of your ancestor Jonadab. You have followed all his instructions. You have done exactly as he commanded you.'

19 So the LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Jonadab son of Rechab will never lack a male descendant to serve me.'"

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

2 Kings 24:5–7	2 Chronicles 36:8
<p>5 The rest of the events of Jehoiakim’s reign and all his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.</p> <p>6 He passed away and his son Jehoiachin replaced him as king.</p> <p>7 The king of Egypt did not march out from his land again, for the king of Babylon conquered all the territory that the king of Egypt had formerly controlled between the Brook of Egypt and the Euphrates River.</p>	<p>8 The rest of the events of Jehoiakim’s reign, including the horrible sins he committed and his shortcomings, are recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel and Judah.</p> <p>His son Jehoiachin replaced him as king.</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 became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan, from Jerusalem.</p> <p>9 He did evil in the sight of the LORD as his ancestors had done.</p>	<p>9 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem.</p> <p>He did evil in the sight of the LORD.</p>

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

Jeremiah 13:15–27

The Threat of Captivity

15 Then I said to the people of Judah,

“Listen and pay attention! Do not be arrogant!
For the LORD has spoken.

16 Show the LORD your God the respect that is due him.
Do it before he brings the darkness of disaster.
Do it before you stumble into distress
like a traveler on the mountains at twilight.
Do it before he turns the light of deliverance you hope for
into the darkness and gloom of exile.

17 But if you will not pay attention to this warning,
I will weep alone because of your arrogant pride.
I will weep bitterly and my eyes will overflow with tears
because you, the LORD’s flock, will be carried into exile.”

18 The LORD told me,

“Tell the king and the queen mother,
‘Surrender your thrones,
for your glorious crowns
will be removed from your heads.

19 The gates of the towns in southern Judah will be shut tight.
No one will be able to go in or out of them.
All Judah will be carried off into exile.
They will be completely carried off into exile.”

The Humiliation of an Unclean People

20 Then I said,

“Look up, Jerusalem, and see
the enemy that is coming from the north.

Where now is the flock of people that were entrusted to your care?
 Where now are the 'sheep' that you take such pride in?

21 What will you say when the LORD appoints as rulers over you those allies that you, yourself, had actually prepared as such?
 Then anguish and agony will grip you like that of a woman giving birth to a baby.

22 You will probably ask yourself,
 'Why have these things happened to me?
 Why have I been treated like a disgraced adulteress whose skirt has been torn off and her limbs exposed?'
 It is because you have sinned so much.

23 But there is little hope for you ever doing good, you who are so accustomed to doing evil.
 Can an Ethiopian change the color of his skin?
 Can a leopard remove its spots?

24 "The LORD says,
 'That is why I will scatter your people like chaff that is blown away by a desert wind.

25 This is your fate, the destiny to which I have appointed you, because you have forgotten me and have trusted in false gods.

26 So I will pull your skirt up over your face and expose you to shame like a disgraced adulteress!

27 People of Jerusalem, I have seen your adulterous worship, your shameless prostitution to, and your lustful pursuit of, other gods. I have seen your disgusting acts of worship on the hills throughout the countryside. You are doomed to destruction!
 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 generals of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marched to Jerusalem and besieged the city.</p> <p>11 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city while his generals were besieging it.</p> <p>12 King Jehoiachin of Judah, along with his mother, his servants, his officials, and his eunuchs surrendered to the king of Babylon.</p> <p>The king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign, took Jehoiachin prisoner.</p> <p>13 Nebuchadnezzar took from there all the riches in the treasuries of</p>	<p>10 At the beginning of the year</p> <p>King Nebuchadnezzar</p> <p>ordered him to be brought to Babylon,</p> <p>along with the valuable items in the</p>		<p>28 Here is the official record of the number of people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: In the seventh year,</p>

<p>the LORD's temple and of the royal palace. He removed all the gold items which King Solomon of Israel had made for the LORD's temple, just as the LORD had warned.</p> <p>14 He deported all the residents of Jerusalem, including all the officials and all the soldiers (10,000 people in all). This included all the craftsmen and those who worked with metal. No one was left except for the poorest among the people of the land.</p> <p>15 He deported Jehoiachin from Jerusalem to Babylon, along with the king's mother and wives, his eunuchs, and the high-ranking officials of the land.</p> <p>16 The king of Babylon deported to Babylon all the soldiers (there were 7,000), as well as 1,000 craftsmen and metal workers. This included all the best warriors.</p> <p>17 The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in Jehoiachin's place. He renamed him Zedekiah.</p>	<p>LORD's temple.</p> <p>In his place he made his relative Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.</p>	<p>1 Zedekiah son of Josiah succeeded Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim as king. He was elevated to the throne of the land of Judah by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.</p>	<p>3,023 Jews;</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 ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah.</p> <p>19 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, as Jehoiakim had done.</p>	<p>2 Neither he nor the officials who served him nor the people of Judah paid any attention to what the LORD said through the prophet Jeremiah.</p>	<p>1 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah.</p> <p>2 He did what displeased the LORD just as Jehoiakim had done.</p>	<p>11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem.</p> <p>12 He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, the LORD's spokesman.</p>