

In a Strange Land (Daniel)

A Strange Dream

Foundation

Bible passage : Daniel 2

Powerpoint: For units 2-4 the same picture is used as all the action takes place in Babylon.

Background: Most people have dreams although we don't always remember them. Perhaps the children can remember some dreams they have had. A few times in the Bible God gave people dreams with a meaning but disclosed the meaning to someone else. It is interesting that this also happened to Joseph who lived about 1,100 years before Daniel but was in a very similar situation living as someone who had been taken captive to a foreign land. For both of the incidents show them that though they were serving foreign kings the Lord was still in charge.

**“He changes the times and the seasons;
He removes kings and raises up kings”**

The King had a dream and asked various people to tell him both the dream and the interpretation (v1-2). The interpretation of dreams was common in some ancient cultures and there were evidently people who were thought to be able to do it. But the King, wisely, wanted to make sure they weren't just making it up so he asked them to tell him the dream too (v3-11).

Nebuchadnezzar acted like a typical ancient king - he had great power and could behave just as if he was a spoilt child. We will see something similar with King Ahasuerus in the book of Esther. Since his wise men had failed him he decided to kill all the wise men in his kingdom (v12-15). By

*A long inscription
about King
Nebuchadnezzar
held at the
British Museum.*



this time Daniel, Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego had grown in importance and the king's edict would mean that they too would die. Therefore, was God still in charge?

When Daniel heard the decree he first went to the King and boldly told him that he, Daniel, would provide the interpretation. This was an act of faith. Then he and his friends prayed (v18) and God revealed the dream and its interpretation (v19) which led Daniel to praise the Lord (v20-23).

God is king: The interpretation of the dream is the first of several times in this book where God reveals part of the future to Daniel. (Like the Book of Revelation in the New Testament there are many varied, and sometimes bizarre ideas about what some of the things revealed mean and it is wise to tread carefully.) The people of Israel had been taken away captive, but here at this low point in their history God is showing that He is not only in control of what is happening, but directing the future. God is still King and if we trust Him we do not need to fear what the future holds.



Through the dream, and when He revealed it to Daniel, the Lord showed that He is in charge of the future.