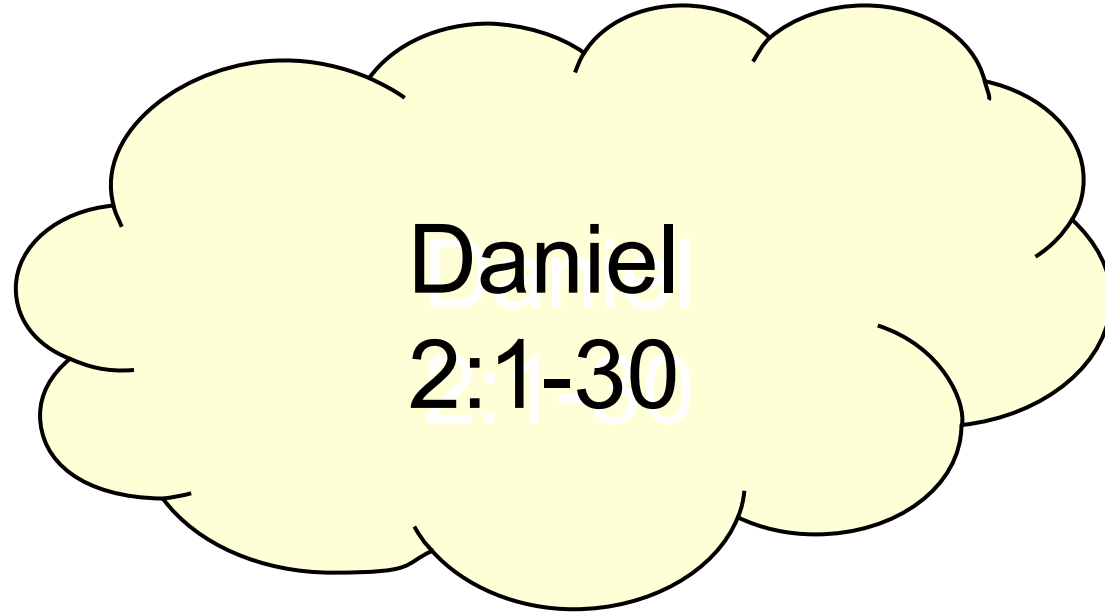


# A very significant dream



In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams;



Date: 603-2 BC

The Accession year (605 BC) +  
second year = 3 years into his reign

Daniel and his friends had just  
graduated after 3 years study.

He was now established as king  
Thinking about future – what now?  
Dreams were not unusual BUT this  
one was different.

his mind was troubled and he could not sleep.



This dream had him worried about a big statue being destroyed. Was that him?

Fear kept him awake worrying.

So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed.



He called in the “experts”  
An array of people who  
specialised in different areas  
of the ‘spiritual’ realm.

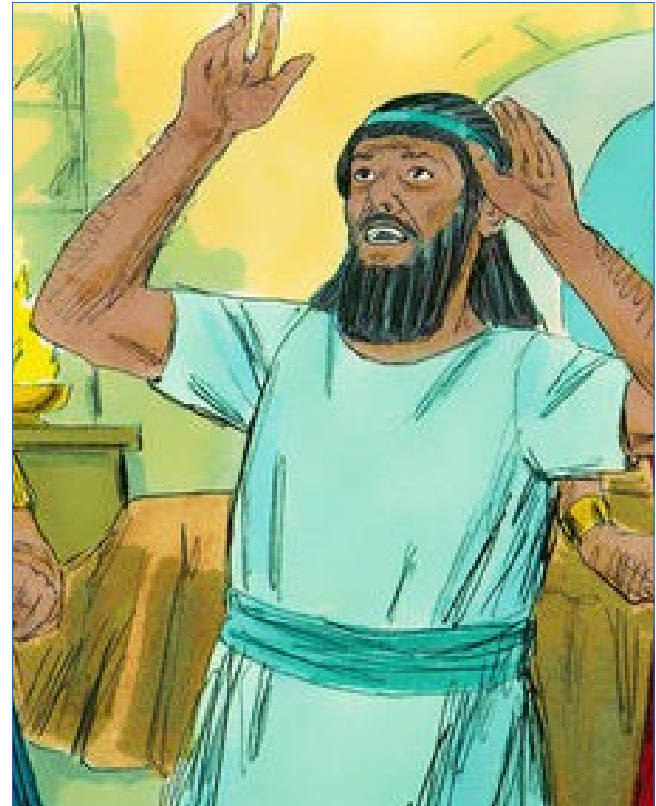
When they came in and stood before the king, he said to them, "I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means."

This is why I have called you here.

The dream troubled him.

You tell me what it means.

This was a 'reasonable' request considering their claims to such insights.



Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic,



The astrologers spoke for the group.

The book of Daniel is written in Hebrew up to this verse. They had been speaking in Aramaic all the time – it was their language, but this verse tells the reader that the text from here on is not in Hebrew but is in Aramaic (until the end of ch 7)

Aramaic looks the same as Hebrew since they used the same alphabet – but it is a different language.

Ancient Aramaic Alphabet										
כ/ך	י	ט	ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
kaph	yudh	ṭet	ḥet	zayin	waw	he	dalat	gammal	beth	'alaph
[k]	[j]	[tʰ]	[ħ/x]	[z]	[w]	[h]	[d]	[g]	[b]	[ʔ]
ת	ש	ר	ק	צ/ץ	פ/ף	ע	ס	נ/ן	מ/ם	ל
taw	shin	resh	qoph	ṣadhe	pe	'ayin	semkath	nun	mim	lammadh
[t]	[ʃ]	[r]	[q]	[sʰ]	[p]	[ʕ]	[s]	[n]	[m]	[l]



"O king, live forever!  
Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it."

This was the usual greeting even  
if it was a rather optimistic one.

Tell us the dream.  
Give us something to work on.

We will then interpret it for you.



The king replied to the astrologers, "This is what I have firmly decided.."



He decided to do things differently this time. The dream had so upset him that he wanted to be sure that he understood it properly. So ...



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. But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honour. So tell me the dream and interpret it for me."



No pressure!

If you claim to be in touch with the 'spirit realm' – then get the dream first and I'll believe you can get the true interpretation.  
**OR ELSE!**

The stick and carrot method.

He could be ruthless and cruel.

Once more they replied,  
"Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will interpret it."



What could they say?  
Repeat the request  
– it was the way it usually worked.

Then the king answered, "I am certain that you are trying to gain time, because you realize that this is what I have firmly decided.. If you do not tell me the dream, there is just one penalty for you. You have conspired to tell me misleading and wicked things, hoping the situation will change. So then, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can interpret it for me."



You are stalling for time hoping I'll change my mind. This will prove if they are genuine, otherwise they could just about make anything up.

He hadn't forgotten the dream (otherwise he wouldn't know if their version was the same.)

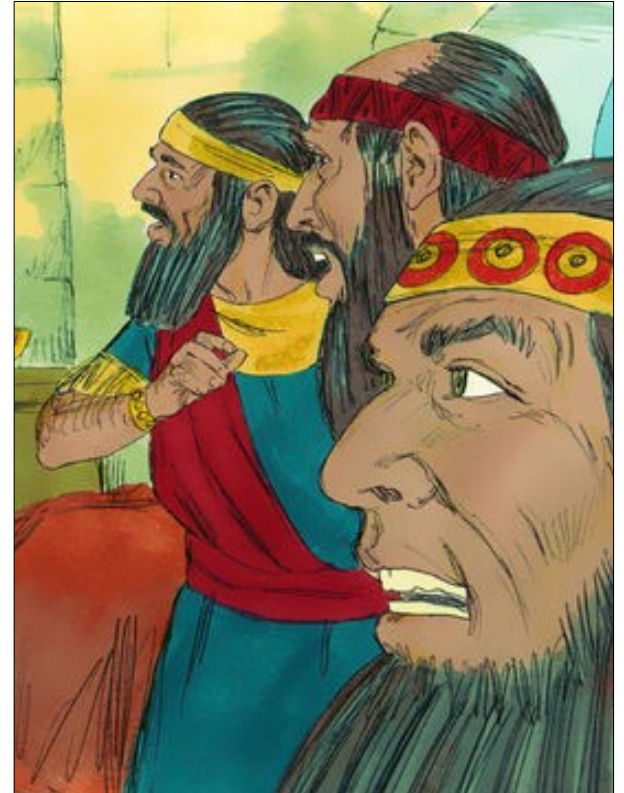
The astrologers answered the king,  
"There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks!"

An honest answer.

This case was far beyond just human abilities.

They admit their limits.

(This was God's intention in this account)



No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer.  
What the king asks is too difficult.

Bigger kings than you haven't done this before. It's impossible.

**THE  
IMPOSSIBLE**

"No one can reveal it to the king except the gods,  
and they do not live among men."



The Mesopotamian gods

This had to come from their gods –  
and they were not among them.

Again this shows the tremendous  
contrast between their false deities  
and the living God of Israel, who  
dwelt with his people and would one  
day come to earth as Emmanuel..



This made the king so angry and furious that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon.



The dictator's frustration turns to wild anger. He assumes (almost rightly) that his advisers are all useless. Perhaps as the newly installed king, he may have seen this was also an opportunity to clear out the 'old guard'.

But Nebuchadnezzar was not moved by their excuses. At this rate he would never know what the dream meant!

So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to death.

It became official policy.

And so the innocent get caught up in it too.

They were 'minor' players at this stage but they are included.

Stress was God's opportunity and call to reveal his power and raise his servants up.



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.



Arioch was the chief Executioner.

Daniel – a young man, treads very carefully – with God's help.

Daniel's name was on the list.

He asked the king's officer, "Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel.



It must have seemed a rather extreme reaction to most people.

Arioch seems to have been a reasonable man and answered Daniel's question.

At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him.

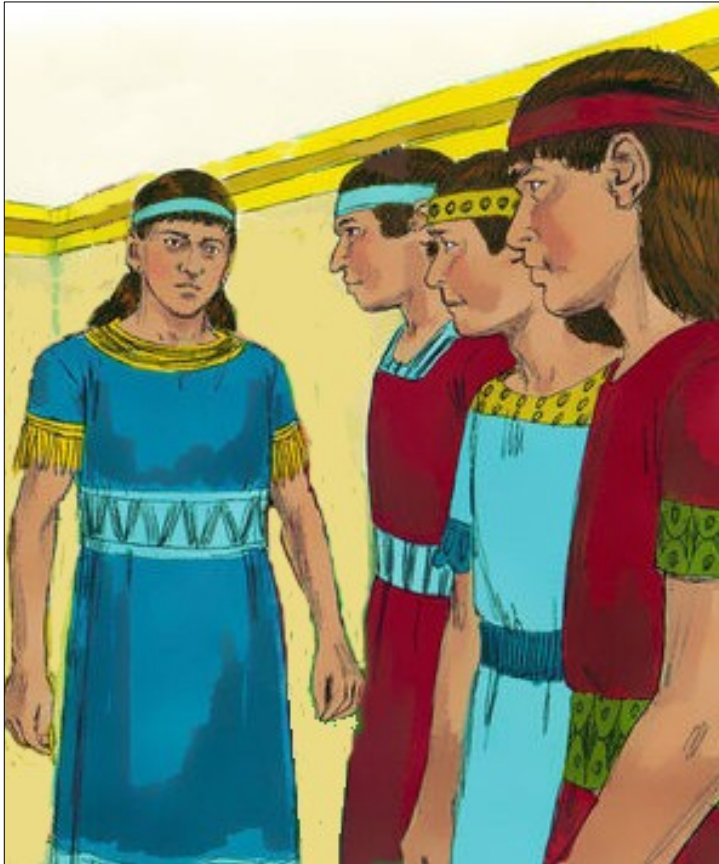


It seems unlikely that Daniel would have been able to go to the king on his own. Perhaps Arioch took him.

In faith, Daniel promised to do what the king wanted, but reasonably asked for some time (how long?) to do it. Nebuchadnezzar appeared to have calmed down by now.



Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.



He included his friends in the matter knowing that they would be willing to help.

Troubles shared!



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.



They went to the right person the right way, MERCY to spare their lives  
(and as a result, to save the lives of the others)

To pray was all they could do,  
and was all they needed to do.

During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision.

WE are told God revealed this,  
in a “vision of the night”.  
This may not have been a dream that  
Daniel had.  
Daniel SAW the details of the dream.

God will make a way.  
He is THE revealer of mysteries.  
And he answer’s prayer.



Then Daniel praised the God of heaven

This was Daniel's first response to his answered prayer. - Worship



God is called here the God of heaven.  
He is above all, supernatural,

and he said.. "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever;  
wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he sets  
up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and  
knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; he  
knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.

**Give thanks with a grateful heart.  
There is no one like the LORD  
He has all power and wisdom  
Ruler over the earth and its inhabitants  
(including the most powerful)  
He gives his gifts to those who humbly seek him  
He sees and knows everything!**

I 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."

Thank you again for all your help and the answer to our prayer.

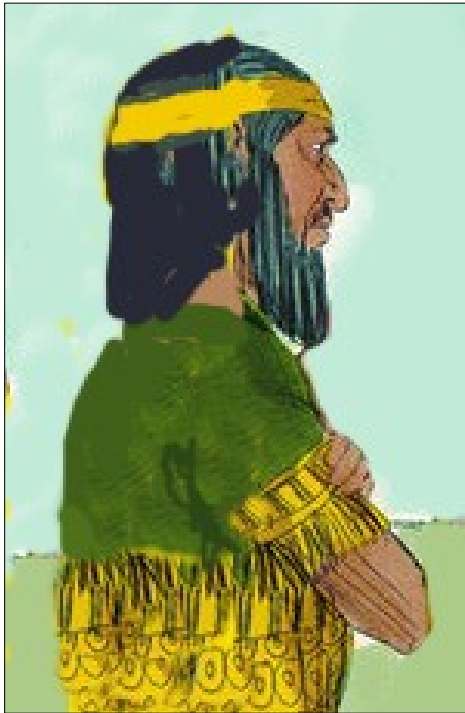
A specific prayer was given a specific answer.

To US - recognising that his friends played a part in the answer.

Did he tell them first?



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."



Stop! Take me. I've got the answer.





Arioch took Daniel to the king at once and said,  
"I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can tell the  
king what his dream means."



He went at once. This was  
going to make him look good.  
I HAVE FOUND – he wanted to  
take credit.  
A Jewish lad can do it!

The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar),  
"Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?"



It was a secondary matter,  
but I wonder if Nebuchadnezzar  
recognised 'Belteshazzar' from the  
'degree ceremony'?  
The important matter is the dream.

Can you do this?

Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about,



Daniel's answer was that none of yours can do it. (neither could Daniel on his own)

but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.



This was going to be Nebuchadnezzar's first encounter with the truth about the living God of Israel.

There is a God – in heaven – not limited to this earth, who is also active

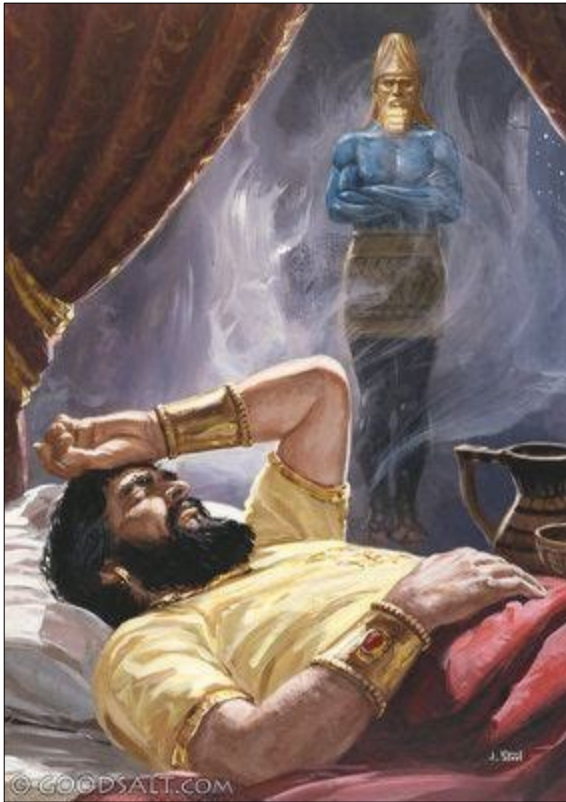
He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come.

He has shown you the future.





Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind  
as you lay on your bed are these..



These are the things that happened.



"As you were lying there, O king, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen.



Lying down (vulnerable)  
concerned about the future  
Cf Sermon on the mount...

God is the REVEALER  
– he knows the future

As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me,  
not because I have greater wisdom than other living men,



Just to make it clear – it's not  
because I'm smart

- he doesn't want to take credit  
(contrast Arioach
- the world's mindset)

but so that you, O king, may know the interpretation  
and that you may understand what went through your mind.



God had chosen to show this to  
Nebuchadnezzar – he had a purpose in  
doing that. To get him to know and  
understand something of the true God and  
his ways

## **A very significant dream**

The events that lead up to the telling of the dream show that:-

This was revelation from God concerning the future of the world.

Daniel and his friends were to be key players in the beginning of its fulfilment

God was going to work among the gentile nations – raising them to power and removing them in order to bring about His Kingdom.