

The chapter tells how Daniel and his friends prayed that God would deliver them, and how God answered their prayer by revealing Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel and using it as a means of informing the Lord's people about the divine plan for the future.

In ordinary life dreaming is a common phenomenon. Modern researches have shown that dreams are universal and in fact are necessary to psychical well-being. The naturalness of dreaming is recognized in the Old Testament in such references as Isaiah 29:8, Job 20:8, Psalm 73:20 and Ecclesiastes 5:7.

Warnings against being misled by dreams are contained in Deuteronomy 13:1-3, Jeremiah 27:9; 29:8 and Zechariah 10:2. Even aside from the possibility that a dream might be produced by a demonic spirit there is always a grave danger that God's people may be confused by attaching a wrong importance to them. God has placed in the Scripture all the guidance that His people need for conducting their lives. In the years before He had given the full revelation that He intended to have preserved in the Bible as the guide for His people He occasionally used a dream as a means of expressing His will. Sometimes He chose to give His people direct messages through dreams, as in Genesis 20:3, 6-7; 31:24; 1 Kings 3:5ff; Matthew 1:20; 2:12. Occasionally the Lord chose to give a dream in which truths were presented in symbolic form. Sometimes such dreams were given to men who did not know Him, as in the case of Pharaoh's baker and butler (Gen. 40:5-22), of Pharaoh himself (Gen. 41:1-32), of the Midianites (Jud. 7:13-15) and of Nebuchadnezzar as described in this chapter.

After the wise men had failed, God revealed the content of the dream to Daniel and also its interpretation. Daniel described to Nebuchadnezzar the statue of which the king had dreamed and pointed out that it represented a progression from the head downward.

The Dream and Its Interpretation

(31) "You looked, O king, and there before you