

ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE 123.2

Lesson 46 (Study Notes): [“A Kingdom, Which Shall Never Be Destroyed”](#)

Class Member Reading: Daniel 2; D&C 65:2

Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

²In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed such dreams that his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. ²So the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. When they came in and stood before the king, ³he said to them, ‘I have had such a dream that my spirit is troubled by the desire to understand it.’ ⁴The Chaldeans said to the king (in Aramaic), ‘O king, live for ever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will reveal the interpretation.’ ⁵The king answered the Chaldeans, ‘This is a public decree: if you do not tell me both the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. ⁶But if you do tell me the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honour. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.’ ⁷They answered a second time, ‘Let the king first tell his servants the dream, then we can give its interpretation.’ ⁸The king answered, ‘I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see I have firmly decreed: ⁹if you do not tell me the dream, there is but one verdict for you. You have agreed to speak lying and misleading words to me until things take a turn. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.’ ¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, ‘There is no one on earth who can reveal what the king demands! In fact no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. ¹¹The thing that the king is asking is too difficult, and no one can reveal it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with mortals.’ (note the heightened rhetoric that builds up literary tension)

¹²Because of this the king flew into a violent rage and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. ¹³The decree was issued, and the wise men were about to be executed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, to execute them. ¹⁴Then Daniel responded with **prudence and discretion** to Arioch, the king’s chief executioner, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon; ¹⁵he asked Arioch, the royal official, ‘Why is the decree of the king so urgent?’ Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. ¹⁶So Daniel went in and requested that the king give him time and he would tell the king the interpretation.

God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

¹⁷Then Daniel went to his home and informed his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹⁸and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions with the rest of the wise men of Babylon might not perish. ¹⁹Then the **mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night**, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven. ²⁰Daniel said:

‘Blessed be the name of God from age to age,

for wisdom and power are his.
²¹ He changes times and seasons,
deposes kings and sets up kings;

he **gives wisdom to the wise**

and **knowledge to those who have understanding.** (Interesting wording. One would think “knowledge” and “understanding” might be synonyms. This could mean “God gives knowledge to those who understand how God/that process works”)

²² He **reveals deep and hidden things;** (“Apocalypse” means “unveiling”, like the drawing back of a curtain)

he knows what is in the darkness,
and light dwells with him.

²³ To you, O God of my ancestors,
I give thanks and praise,

for **you have given me wisdom and power,**

and **have now revealed to me what we asked of you,**
for you have revealed to us what the king ordered.’

Daniel Interprets the Dream

24 Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, ‘Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will give the king the interpretation.’

25 Then Arioch **quickly** ☺ brought Daniel before the king and said to him: ‘I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can tell the king the interpretation.’ ²⁶The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, ‘Are you able to tell me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?’ ²⁷Daniel answered the king, ‘No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or diviners can show to the king the mystery that the king is asking, ²⁸but **there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries**, and he has disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed were these: ²⁹To you, O king, as you lay in bed (Makes me think of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat “And the things you saw in your pajamas, were a long range forecast for your farmers...”), came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and the revealer of mysteries disclosed to you what is to be. ³⁰But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation may be known to the king and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

31 ‘You were looking, O king, and lo! there was a great statue. This statue was huge, its brilliance extraordinary; it was standing before you, and its appearance was frightening. ³²The head of that statue was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴As you looked on, **a stone was cut out, not by human hands**, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were all broken in pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. **But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.**

36 ‘This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷You, O king, the king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory, ³⁸into whose hand he has given human beings, wherever they live, the wild animals of the field, and the birds of the air, and whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold. (Note the extraordinarily positive description of one of the great enemies of the Jews [he is the one who destroyed Jerusalem/the temple]! Just flattery?) ³⁹After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. ⁴⁰And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these. ⁴¹As you saw the feet and toes partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the strength of iron shall be in it, as you saw the iron mixed with the clay. ⁴²As the toes of the feet were part iron and part clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴And **in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever;** ⁴⁵just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.’

Daniel and His Friends Promoted

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, worshipped Daniel, and commanded that a grain-offering and incense be offered to him. (Ironic and humorous given Daniel’s emphasis on God as the source of his interpretation) ⁴⁷The king said to Daniel, ‘Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery!’ ⁴⁸Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king’s court.

D&C 65:2

2 The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall **the gospel** roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth. I think this verse provides a vital key for interpretation. Note the stone is the *gospel* rather than the Church per se.

Additional Reading: D&C 65 (Additional reading is very important this time)
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Section 65

Revelation on prayer given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, October 30, 1831.

1–2, The keys of the kingdom of God are committed to man on earth, and the gospel cause will triumph; 3–6, The **millennial kingdom of heaven will come and join the kingdom of God on earth.**

1 Hearken, and lo, a voice as of one sent down from on high, who is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth, yea, whose voice is unto men—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

2 The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall **the gospel** roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, **until it has filled the whole earth.**

3 Yea, a voice crying—**Prepare ye the way of the Lord**, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom. [Crucial question: What do *we* need to do in order to prepare?](#)

4 Pray unto the Lord, call upon his holy name, make known his wonderful works among the people.

5 Call upon the Lord, that **his kingdom may go forth upon the earth**, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of Man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, **to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth.**

6 Wherefore, **may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come**, that thou, O God, mayest be glorified in heaven so on earth, that thine enemies may be subdued; for thine is the honor, power and glory, forever and ever. Amen. [I can't overemphasize how important this idea is. It is our responsibility to build up the Kingdom of God on the earth, *so that* the Kingdom of God *may* come. Powerful implications—it seems the Kingdom of God *cannot* come without our preparations.](#)

Other Reading: Moses 7:62-64

Moses 7: 62 And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall

prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

63 And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other;

64 And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.