

# Cottonwood Creek Church

DANIEL

SESSION THREE: FAITHFULNESS THROUGH UNCERTAINTY

DANIEL 2:24-49

9.22.24

## MAIN POINT

Even in the midst of uncertainty, Daniel remained faithful to God at every step.

## INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**Can you think of a moment or season when you found yourself in uncertain times? What made those circumstances feel uncertain?**

**How did this affect your faith in the short term? Long term?**

**Looking back, would you have made the same or different decisions during that uncertain time? Why?**

What are we to do in times of uncertainty? First, stay confident. In our text Daniel displayed an unwavering confidence in God. Second, stay humble. Daniel was brought before the king, yet Daniel put his humility on full display. He didn't care who received credit; what mattered to him was obedience to God. He pointed everything back to God and was not concerned with receiving the credit for himself. Third, stay focused. God's kingdom is where we should be focused. Daniel concerned himself with God's kingdom, realizing that His is the only kingdom that will last. Finally, stay faithful. We must not give up in seasons of uncertainty. We must place our faith in the one true king.

## UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

READ DANIEL 2:24-30.

**What stands out about how Daniel approached the king?**

**How did Daniel use the opportunity to testify to the one true God?**

**How did Daniel point to God's character?**

**How can we help others understand God's sovereignty in their own lives, particularly in times of uncertainty?**

Even though God had revealed everything Daniel needed to know, he was likely still unsure entering into the king's court. Would King Nebuchadnezzar accept his interpretation? Would he throw him out if he didn't like what Daniel had to say? Would he have him killed? Certainly, all of those were in the realm of possibility. Everything

about Daniel's situation was uncertain, except his word from God. Daniel knew who was really in control, so he could make bold moves in faith.

READ DANIEL 2:31-45.

**What did King Nebuchadnezzar see in his dream? What did it mean?**

**How did Daniel seek to give the king a right perspective of the future?**

**What parallels can be drawn between the statue in the dream and the values of our contemporary culture?**

Daniel continued by telling the king what he saw in the dream and then what it meant. Before giving the king the details of what his dream meant, Daniel made sure he knew that regardless of the king's status and power, he was only on his throne because God allowed it. Daniel described the great statue the king had seen and described a succession of four kingdoms. Nebuchadnezzar represented the golden head, the kingdom of Babylon. While Babylon would remain powerful under his rule, other kingdoms would eventually dominate in the future. The gold would eventually be replaced with silver and then bronze.

READ DANIEL 2:46-49.

**How did the king respond to Daniel's interpretation?**

**Why do you think he responded this way?**

King Nebuchadnezzar's response was one of complete relief. He had lost sleep over the future of his kingdom, and Daniel told him what the future held. He likely took great solace in the fact that his kingdom was represented by the head of gold. His power and authority were solidified in his mind. Regardless of the king's motivations, his promotion of Daniel (and Daniel's advocating for his friends) would put Daniel in increasingly prominent positions in the court. This would mean more opportunities to have the king's ear and to speak the truth of God in the midst of darkness.

## APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**What feels uncertain in your own life right now? Where are you struggling to be faithful in the process?**

**How does this chapter illustrate the importance of having faith in God's timing and purposes?**

**How does this account of Daniel help to encourage your faith, even if your circumstances look very different? How does his story point you to the gospel and the unwavering nature of our God?**

**How might you share the truth about Jesus with someone based on this account in the life of Daniel?**

## PRAYER

Take some time to thank God for being constant and unwavering, even when circumstances are uncertain. Ask Him for the courage and humility to be faithful in the midst of anything.

## COMMENTARY

### DANIEL 2:24-49

2:24-26. The king was likely surprised to hear further word regarding this matter.

2:27. Daniel asserted that no pagan soothsayer could solve the mystery. Rather, he attributed revelation to God alone. The word translated diviner expresses the idea of cutting or determining, referring to a person who is able to determine another's fate.

2:28. In the last days indicates that the king's dream would find its complete fulfillment only in the end times.

2:29-30. Daniel tactfully stressed that Nebuchadnezzar rather than himself was the recipient of the revelation.

2:31-45. Daniel interpreted the parts of the colossal statue to represent four empires in historical succession. The head represented the kingdom of Babylon (605-539 BC). The chest and arms symbolized the Medo-Persian Empire (539-331 BC). The stomach and thighs stood for the Greek Empire (331-146 BC). The legs referred to the Roman Empire (146 BC - AD 1476 in the West and AD 1453 in the East). The feet were mixed of iron and clay and represented a future continuation or revival of Rome. The material of each section of the statue decreased in value but increased in strength (except for the feet; see vv. 42-43). The decreased value may symbolize the moral decline of each succeeding kingdom. The increased strength refers to the harsher domination each successive kingdom would impose on its subjects. Daniel also described a stone that would shatter the final kingdom and grow into a mountain that filled the whole earth. This stone is the kingdom of God.

Primarily because they disbelieve in the possibility of predictive prophecy, critical scholars assume that Daniel was written in 165 BC and therefore is looking backward rather than forward at the rise of earthly kingdoms such as the Roman Empire. They divide the four kingdoms into Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. On the other hand, most interpreters who accept the reality of predictive prophecy in Scripture believe Daniel was written in the late sixth century and view the fourth kingdom as Rome. They hold different opinions about the meaning of the stone, however. Some view it as a

spiritual kingdom, embodied in the church, which gradually conquered the Roman Empire. Others more accurately view it as a future kingdom, when Messiah Jesus will return and establish his physical rule that will govern the whole earth and never be destroyed.

2:37. In Ezk 26:7 God himself calls Nebuchadnezzar king of kings. But Daniel makes clear that his position is a gift of God. King Artaxerxes claims the title for himself in Ezr 7:12. But the title belongs truly only to Jesus Christ (1 Tm 6:15; Rv 17:14; 19:16).

2:46-47. King Nebuchadnezzar responded to Daniel's remarkable revelation by recognizing the God of Israel as part of the pantheon of gods, though he did not recognize the God of Israel as the one and only true God.