***Daniel 2:14-25 Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon; 15he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel. 16So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. 17Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 18that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. 19Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven. 20Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. 21And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. 22He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.23“I thank You and praise You,O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king’s demand.” 24Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.” 25Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, “I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.”***

We’re back with Daniel tonight. Recall with me that Nebuchadnezzar has had a dream that has taken his sleep from him. The Chaldeans and the wise men have been called, asked to not only interpret the dream, but also to tell the details of the dream. They’ve admitted that they can’t do it, and the king is furious! He orders that all the wise men be killed, including Daniel, Mishael, Hananiah, and Azariah who apparently weren’t present when the order was given. The killing has started and we join Daniel in verse 14.

 Verse 14 & 15 *Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon; he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.* Daniel does not know what has transpired. Certainly, when Daniel approaches, this saves Arioch the trouble of finding him and he could have been instantly killed. But God is in this. Arioch was something like the chief executioner. He was in charge of executing the wise men per the order of Nebuchadnezzar. So we see the bravery of Daniel in this exchange. Daniel asks to have the decree and it’s urgency explained. The Hebrew here has the idea of wisdom and discernment that Daniel questioned Arioch with. But note too that there must have been a respect between Arioch and Daniel, as Arioch was under no directive to explain the order.

 Verse 16 *So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.* Daniel goes to the palace. There’s some disagreement among ancient texts as to what this means exactly. Some suggest that a high official was contacted and the king, through the official gave more time. Some suggest that Daniel went personally, but this seems to be in disagreement with verse 25. Regardless, Daniel was given some extension of time – essentially a stay of execution. God intervened and cooled the fury of the king. God is always working, long before we even know we have a need.

 Verses 17 & 18 *Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 18that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.* Having gotten the extension, Daniel goes to his house and seeks a prayer group of his friends. Communal prayer is a blessing in Christianity – having others praying and seeking God’s favor. Daniel seeks Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah – that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret – Deuteronomy 29:29 says - *The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.* Only God can reveal this secret – the dream of the king that he has told no one and quite probably doesn’t remember himself. Daniel turns to God for this knowledge. It seems that some of the wise men have perished and perhaps are still perishing at this moment. The “rest” of the wise men carries the idea of a remnant that remains.

 Verses 19-23 *Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.* The secret is revealed in a night vision. This may have been a dream or an actual night vision. The Hebrew has the idea of “that very night” so God answered immediately and thoroughly. And just as immediately, Daniel gives praise and glory where they belong! He praises God immediately. Too often, God does something for us and we rush off to something else. Our gratitude must be immediate. Listen to this prayer of Thanksgiving and Honor - *20Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. 21And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. 22He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.23“I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king’s demand.”* Wisdom and might belong to God. Control of the natural, known world belong to God world. Control of the supernatural and spiritual world belong to God. Any who are wise know that it is because God shared that wisdom out of His abundance and mercy.

Verse 24*Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.”* Daniel now goes to Arioch, the chief executioner, and says – do not destroy the wise men of Babylon. Notice Daniel’s focus on others – he doesn’t think only of himself and his friends. He thinks of others. Daniel asks to be taken before the king.

Verse 25*Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, “I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.”* Arioch quickly brings Daniel before the king to make know the interpretation. He says, “I have found a man of the captives of Judah.” This suggests that a high official had given the previous extension after requesting it of the king. Or, Arioch may not have known of the contact between Daniel and the king previously. Regardless, Arioch has a quick and direct access to the king, which indicates his closeness to the king. Access to audience with royalty was very restricted and those who entered the presence of the king without permission risked death – recall Esther 4:11 speaking about the Persian king and the golden scepter. Certainly, Nebuchadnezzar has proven himself a fiery and quick tempered king.

Next evening session, we will learn the detail that God gave Daniel of the dream. God revealed the meaning and it is one of the greatest prophecies ever given, spanning thousands of years and many kingdoms.

 Daniel continues to present for us a great example of remaining focused, faithful, and fearless. God is given all glory and honor at all times. As the interpreter of the king’s dream, Daniel had the opportunity to enrich himself, grab glory for him and his friends, elevate himself to lofty posts in the Babylonian kingdom. He did none of this. He humbly seeks God, humbly follows God, and humbly acknowledges God in all his ways. May we do likewise in our lives.