

SHARING SCRIPTURE

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From Mystery to Revelation

For use: Jan 12 - 18

Texts: Daniel 2:1-16, Acts 17:28, Daniel 2:17-49, Psalm 138, John 15:5, Deuteronomy 32:4, 1 Peter 2:4

Scientists are searching for a “fifth force” in the universe that will help to explain mysteries that surround “dark matter” and “dark energy.” Four forces in physics are already well-documented: gravity, electromagnetism, and strong and weak nuclear forces. Yet, many believe 95 percent of our universe’s mass is actually made of this shadowy, hard-to-pin-down stuff. Though searching for this fifth force for decades, recent studies indicate that they might be getting closer.

“If such a fifth force were to be discovered, it would be a historic milestone that would expand our understanding of this odd reality we’ve found ourselves in. It might even explain why dark matter and dark energy are so much more abundant in the universe than the stuff that makes up stars, galaxies, and our own bodies,” says Becky Ferreira in an online article. [1]

Recent efforts by the Institute of Nuclear Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (ATOMKI) have grabbed international headlines over possible evidence for a “hypothetical subatomic object known as the X17 particle.” Their experiment of shooting protons at isotopes created some unexpected reactions that led them to theorize that there could be an unknown force at play.

We are reminded, in this week’s Sabbath school lesson, titled, “From Mystery to Revelation,” that there are unseen forces at play in the spiritual realms of our universe, including the interplay of kingdoms and nations on our planet. Daniel 2 shows how the God of heaven is at work in the affairs of our world, carrying forward purposes that

appear unseen to human eyes. Through the Scriptures, The Unseen has chosen to give us glimpses of a force beyond our comprehension.

Through a dream to a pagan king, God comes close to humanity to reveal the future of world empires for ages to come. But when Nebuchadnezzar could not recall the dream of a multi-metal statue that seems to indicate trouble for his kingdom, he calls all his wise men to tell him the dream. When they are unable to do so, he then commands that they all be executed.

Among the new recruits to this group of wise men are Daniel and his three friends. After requesting time to pray and seek insight from the God of heaven, the Lord revealed to Daniel the meaning of the king's perplexing dream. It is interesting that after God answered Daniel's request, the prophet's prayer of thanks is recorded. Daniel did not seek glory for himself, but made it absolutely clear that "God changes times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding" (Daniel 2:21).

Daniel's next words almost sound like they are spoken to the scientists of today who are searching for the "fifth force." Of God, he said, "He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him" (v. 22).

~Curtis Rittenour

[1] https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/m7qqw3/scientists-are-searching-for-a-mysterious-force-to-explain-the-universes-anomalies

For Reflection

Connecting: Name one scientific mystery that you would like to more fully understand.

Sharing: Read through Daniel 2. Next, search for key phrases that indicate the working of God in this amazing chapter.

1. The fact that God revealed the future to a pagan king (v. 1).
2. The dilemma presented to magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers uncovered the inadequacies of their gods (vv. 2-13).
3. Daniel's successful request for time to pray to God for an answer to the king's dream (vv. 14-19).
4. Daniel's unequivocal praise to God for knowing all things (vv. 20-30).
5. Daniel's explanation of the king's dream (vv. 31-45).
6. Additional workings...

Applying: Daniel 2 teaches us about the sovereignty of God. How might this chapter encourage people who study world events and live with fear and confusion? Write a paragraph that explains what you might say to a person who sees nothing but darkness in the future.

Valuing: Have you ever been bewildered by forces and events that take place in our world or in your own life? Pray with one other person for God to bring you assurance about your future in this uncertain world.

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