

(7-14-24) DANIEL 2- THE KING DISTURBED - DANIEL'S DELIVERY .

Intro: Last week we started Daniel 2. At this point in the story, after being taken captive with dozens of other teenagers, brainwashed by Babylon for 3 years, and graduating their training, Daniel and his 3 friends proved to be 10 times wiser than all the wise men of Babylon.

* Soon after in 2:1, as King Nebuchadnezzar went to bed one night, as a new and aggressive king, he was contemplating what the future of Babylon would look like, Probably thinking and plotting his next move to increase the size of his kingdom.

* At that time, God intervened and gave him visions and dreams that brought him great fear.

* **Then vs 2-13 describe THE CRISIS that developed.**

* The next day, he called in all the wise men of the land for them to interpret his dream

* For them to do so, they ask the king to tell them the dream, and they would interpret it.

* But Nebuchadnezzar didn't seem to trust these guys, maybe because he had watched over time as they mislead his father, king Nebo, and made faulty predictions about the future.

* So v5 says he "firmly decided" they must tell him the dream first, then interpret it, and if they do- he will pour blessing on them, but if they can't reveal the dream, he will destroy them.

* **In v7 the wise men tried to dodge the issue**, and again asked for the king to reveal the dream, and then Nebuchadnezzar revealed what he really thought of these guys.

* In v8 he accused them of stalling, and in v9 he accused them of conspiring to lie to him, and showed that he suspected that these wise men were nothing but phonies.

* In v10-11, when they realized they couldn't stall the king, they anxiously made 4 lame excuses to avoid being destroyed.

* They said- 'no man can do this', 'no ruler ever asked this', 'only the gods can do this', 'and they don't live among men'.

* So these prestigious arrogant men, who claimed to be in contact with the spirits and the gods, have now exposed themselves as the phonies they really are.

C. THE KING'S DECREE. (12-13- read)

- * So the wise men didn't live up to their claims, and they insulted the king by telling him his demands were unreasonable, and he was asking too much.
- * At this point we see a good example of what arrogance and anger can do when it's coupled with complete authority in a leader who is selfish and wicked.

- * **The king blew up**, kept his promise, and ordered the deaths of all the wise men. (Hitler, Stalin)
- * This might seem strange since recently, Daniel (friends) impressed him a great deal.
- * But anger and arrogance are not rational or sensible, so the king made no exceptions.
- * He wanted all of them dead and their homes destroyed. (fear, frustration, hate, selfish revenge).

@ And consider, that while God was in complete control of this situation, Satan was doing all he could to control this wicked man's heart, and God allowed it to a point.

- * And it's likely Satan's reason for inducing the wisemen to offend the king, and provoke the king to become wickedly furious, was so the king would ultimately destroy Daniel.
- * While Satan was trying to paganize these 4 teens, he saw God bless and elevate them, and he could perceive that God was about to use them to reveal truth and do great things.
- * Satan wanted to stop that, and being a "murderer from the beginning" (like Jesus said) killing all the other wise men in the process of killing Daniel, wouldn't bother him at all.

Now Notice in v13- Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah weren't present at this gathering.

- * They may have been nearby in the city on assignment (or returning from one).
- * But when the word went out, and the king's commander set out to find Daniel and the others, this gave Daniel opportunity to speak to the executioner, and gain audience with the king.
- * God no doubt orchestrated Daniel and his friends not being there, so the king had time to settle down a little, before Daniel came a few hours later to speak to him.

II. DANIEL'S RESPONSE TO THE KING'S DECREE. (14-23)

- * The king is furious, his edict is to be carried out immediately. This crisis will cost the lives of 100's of men and their families, men who have guided and taught the nation for decades.
- * This will bring tremendous heartache to thousands of people.
- * And as Arioch the commander set out to carry out the executions, he must have thought this was a foolish and destructive whim of this young and arrogant king.
- * So men were sent to retrieve those who were not at the meeting, and Daniel and his friends were sought and found. When Daniel came before Arioch the commander-----

Daniel responded in 4 ways---

A. DANIEL ANSWERED THE GUARD WISELY. (14-15 - read)

- * With "wisdom and tact", Daniel didn't make a demand, beg for his life, or show fear about his impending death. He simply asked why the king issued such a harsh decree.
- Q- "The Aramaic word for wisdom means- "to have Taste". Taste helps us determine the true nature of something, and also helps determine what's appropriate in a situation". (salt)
 - "Daniel displayed spiritual taste and discerned what needed to be said, and his asking a question, showed he wisely analyzed the situation and spoke appropriately"
- * This question got the commander's attention, and he listened to Daniel, explained what happened, and probably hoping the king had settled down over the last few hours, he allowed Daniel to go speak to the king.

App- Speaking to situations with wisdom and tact, and saying the tasteful thing, is helpful. The bible teaches us that our tongue can set the world on fire, or calm a situation.

- * Also notice Outwardly, the king had everything, but he had no peace, control, or compassion within.
- * Daniel had nothing and faced death, yet he acted with godly wisdom and restraint.
(Lesson-- In a crisis, do we act like the world or like the Lord?)

B. DANIEL APPEALED TO THE KING FOR PATIENCE. (16 - READ)

* Amazing. What was the 1 thing the wise men asked for, that the king would not give? **Time**.

* What did Daniel ask for and receive? **Time**. Why did the king do this?

1. Daniel displayed humility before the king, not the typical arrogant overconfidence of the wise men, who thought they could flatter their way through anything.

Prov. 11:2- when pride comes then comes shame, but with the humble is wisdom.

29:23- A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor.

2. Daniel proved himself extremely intelligent and wise at graduation, and since he was absent from the big meeting, the king apparently thought he should give Daniel a shot at this.

3. Daniel was honest, with no excuses. He didn't ignore the king's demand and then ask for the dream to be revealed.

- He showed faith that he might be able to do what the king wanted, given a little time.

4. God deemed that Daniel would be granted this time. (Ultimately, Who's in charge? God)

- In all this, God was working through Daniel to bring His truth to the world and to bring this pagan king to his knees.

C. DANIEL APPROACHED GOD SUCCESSFULLY. (17-19- read) (Note 3 details)

1. Daniel's faith was in God. (18- they "pleaded for mercy from the God of heaven")

- Daniel (friends) had learned all the pagan nonsense, and were 10 times smarter than Babylon's brainiacs. But they didn't trust their human education to solve the issue.
- He went to God and sought God's truth, which showed great humility because he did not trust his own ability, and he sought "mercy", knowing he deserved nothing.

Note- Here they are, facing a crisis of life or death, and they never wavered from their foundation in God and His Word. (These boy' **parents** counteracted Judah's wickedness)

2. Daniel's retrieved his friends to pray with him. (17-18)

- Ch. 2 focuses mainly on Daniel, and his 3 godly friends are only mentioned briefly, but they're mentioned in the most important way, they were called to prayer.
- They had 3 good reasons to pray- 1st- their lives were on the line as well as Daniels;
2nd- God gifted Daniel in visions and dreams (1:17), so they prayed for him,
3rd- Everything rests on what God will do, no matter what the situation is.

App- Don't ever underestimate the power of praying for each other, and don't forget that if a brother or sister fails spiritually, it reflects on all of us, which should concern us deeply.

Q- "The men of Babylon were marked by spiritual poverty and panic, while the men of God were marked by prudence and prayer."

3. Daniel was blessed to understand the dream. (19a)

- Notice that the dream was revealed to Daniel-- "during the night ... in a vision"
Visions are awake dreams- so this means- it was night and he was still awake praying.
- This is understandable, because again, their lives are at stake, so instead of praying a little and apathetically leaving the answer to God, they prayed long and hard.

App- Jesus told stories about a man knocking at his neighbor's door at midnight, and a widow seeking help from an unjust judge (both bothering them until they answered).

* Prayer is to be continual, fervent, and serious, and many times God will not answer until those things are true, because He's teaching us to be more serious about spiritual things, and learn that God needs to be the center of our life.

D. DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS PRAISED GOD FERVENTLY. (19b-23- READ)

* When God revealed the dream, they didn't stop praying to God, their next step was to praise God.

* This response reveals how well Daniel and his friends understood who God is.

* **Notice 3 details.**

1. Daniel described God as Holy. (18-19- he called God- "The God of heaven")

- This title is predominately used by Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, all of which were written at times when Israel was in captivity, being punished for their sin.
- Israel was to be God's light in the world, and early on- God proved He was with them by placing His shining glory in the most holy place in their tabernacle and temple, for all to see.
- The most holy place could only be entered once a year by the high priest, as the priests made atonement for the people's sin, by killing an innocent animal. (sin brings death)
- When Judah turned away from God, Ezekiel was given a vision (Ch. 10) (a captivity prophet) of God's shining glory moving from the most holy place, over to the temple entrance---, ---and then drifting across the Kidron valley, and then up the Mt. of Olives (east), and then departing back to heaven.
- This title describes God as being in heaven, His eternal, holy, righteous dwelling place.
- Calling God, "**the God of heaven**" pictured that He was no longer with his people. and God had departed Israel because they were no longer seeking to be holy.
- With this title Daniel confessed that Judah had sinned, which cost them their usefulness to their holy God, and cost God's presence, and the privilege to call on him for help.
- So addressing God this way, acknowledged that God is holy, and the lesson is--

Those who know Him are called to constantly recognize His holiness, and be serious about seeking to live a holy life before Him. (Ask Noah, ask Daniel and friends)

2. Daniel defined God accurately. (20-22) (He affirmed 4 things about God)

a. God is eternal. -- "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever..." (20a)

, God has always been, and will always be, and while this pagan king was looking to his temporary earthly future, Daniel affirmed that when all things earthly are finished, God's true people will praise His name for ever and ever.

b. God is all-powerful and Sovereign. (20b-21a)

"Power is His, He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them..."

, Daniel knew Jeremiah's prophecies and saw them fulfilled when Judah was taken, which affirmed Daniel's faith in God's complete control of all that had happened.

, And the answer to this dream will show the king, that he is not so great as he thinks, that he is in the position of king because God put him there for His own purposes.

c. God is all-wise. (21) 'wisdom and knowledge are His, to give to the wise and discerning'.

Pr- "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom". Daniel feared God so he received wisdom.

d. God has all-knowledge. In v22 "Light" refers to the truth, and here, Daniel confessed that what God revealed to him was the truth, and were things no one else could know.

Sum- Daniel's theology was spot-on. He knew God, and knew exactly what God was like, and understood exactly what God had said and was doing.

App- The hope of the lost in finding God, will only be as successful as their right view of Him. And Christian maturity will only go as far as a person's right understanding of God.

3. Daniel thanked God humbly. (23) He gave all the praise and glory to God for 2 things.

a. He praised God for wisdom to understand the dream.

b. Power (authority). Had God not given Daniel authority, the commander would not have given him an audience with the king, and the king would not have given him - time.

App- Daniel knew that the only reason anyone is anything, or that we can serve him at all, is because of what he makes us and gives us, by His mercy and grace.

Q- The test of our spirituality not only lies in the fervency of our prayers in times of crisis, but also in the expression of our worship when God acts in grace to answer.