

Daniel Chapter 2 – Stand Aside

“The book of Daniel’s central theme is God’s sovereignty over history, empires, and kings, how these kingdoms will come to an end and will be replaced by the Lord’s kingdom, which will never pass away and how those who are faithful will be raised to glory, honour, and everlasting life in this final kingdom. ”

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.” **Colossians 2:8**

“The story of Daniel and his friends is a clarion call to our generation to stand, to be courageous; not to lose our nerve and allow the expression of our faith to be diluted and squeezed out of the public space and thus rendered spineless and ineffective.”

John Lennox

Three marks of spiritual resilience: They

1. Understand the Importance of Living in Community.
2. Understand that their Suffering has Meaning in the Eyes of God.
3. Resolve to Honour their Deepest Values

1. Sovereign in Crisis.

In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. (Vs. 1)

In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.” Genesis 41:8

2. Subjects in Crisis.

So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came in and stood before the king, ³ he said to them, “I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means.” Then the astrologers answered the king, “May the king live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it.” ⁵The king replied to the astrologers, “This is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me what my dream was and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble. ⁶ But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. So tell me the

dream and interpret it for me.”⁷ Once more they replied, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will interpret it.”

Then the king answered, “I am certain that you are trying to gain time, because you realize that this is what I have firmly decided: ⁹ If you do not tell me the dream, there is only one penalty for you. You have conspired to tell me misleading and wicked things, hoping the situation will change. So then, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can interpret it for me.” (Vv. 8-9)

The astrologers answered the king, “There is no one on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. ¹¹ What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans.” (Vv. 10-11)

3. Saints in Crisis.

¹² This made the king so angry and furious that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon. ¹³ So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to death.”

How should saints respond?

1. With **composure**.

When Arioch, the commander of the king’s guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact. He asked the king’s officer, “Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?” Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel.

2. With **courage**

At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him. Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. (Vv.16-17)

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heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. (Vv. 17 – 18a)

During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. (vv. 18b)

'Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance, prayer is laying hold of God's willingness'.
Philip Brookes