

Daniel – An Overview

Daniel 1

- What do you do when you land up in Babylon?
- Where is your Babylon?

Spiritually resilient people:

1. Recognize the importance of living in community.
2. Their life and even their suffering has meaning in the eyes of God.
3. Resolve to honour their deepest values – resolve to honour God.

“but Daniel determined not to defile himself with the royal food and wine.”
(Dan. 1 vs. 8)

Daniel 2

Three world views: the Sovereign, the Subjects, the Saints

“There is no one on earth who can do what the king asks! No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans.” Dan 2:10

Two implications:

1. When I am clear that I’m not God, that I am lost without Him, I will devote myself to Him, I will do everything I can to help others know who this God is.
2. If God is God and you’re not God, then you don’t have to worry. He is in control.

Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream: four—part statue made up of different metals representing different empires.

Daniel 3

“King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.” Dan. 3:16-18

“Weren’t there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?” They replied, “Certainly, Your Majesty.” He said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.” Dan. 3:24

They had hoped to be delivered from the furnace, but God delivered them in the furnace.

Daniel 4

"I was in my palace, prosperous and contented..." Dan 4.4

"How do you handle being interrupted?"

Plan A versus Plan B

Jeremiah 18 – Potter and the Clay

Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. ³²You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes." Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like the ox. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird. Dan 4:31-33

At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honoured and glorified him who lives forever. Vs. 34

Daniel 5

King Belshazzar

"But you, Belshazzar, his son, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. (Vs. 22)

Three words:

Mene – numbered - the illusion is it's my life and I'll do as I want. Yet God says our days are numbered.

Tekel – weighed - the illusion is that we can get away it, nobody will find out.

Peres – broken. The illusion that my life will go on for as long as I want it to go on

Daniel 6

Three goals:

(1) They must discredit Daniel in relationship to his God and religion.

(2) They must discredit Daniel by passing a new law, which was purposely designed to lead to his death.

(3) They must do away with Daniel in a way that made the king responsible, a way in which he could not escape.

Four options:

(1) Obey the new law, bringing his petitions to the king.

(2) Appeal to the king to change or repeal the law.

(3) Stop praying altogether, making no petitions for 30 days.

(4) Simply continue to pray, but privately.

Daniel chooses to pray publicly! Why?

Two reasons:

1. Private disobedience would have been hypocritical and being such a man of integrity, it would have discredited his witness.
2. To make a stand of conscience, he had to publicly violate that law.

Lessons:

1. When you dare to be devoted to God, you will be persecuted.
2. No matter what lions you face, if you dare to be devoted you will be delivered.
3. The way to deal with the crises of life is to establish godly disciplines in the routine times of life, and then to refuse to depart from them in times of crisis.
4. We are called to obey those in authority over us, but only if that obedience does not conflict directly with the Word of God.

Daniel 7

1. God's Unfolding Plan
2. Man's Unfolding Persecution
3. God's Kingdom Will Prevail

"Kingdoms may rise and fall, but the Kingdom of God will endure forever!"