

From Babylon to Jerusalem - (Daniel)

ch.1:8-2:35

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being wholehearted for God and making a stand for Him, even in the face of opposition or temptation, as seen in the story of Daniel.

Duration: 1:00:25

Scripture: Exodus 20:13-14, Leviticus 17:10-14, Proverbs 23:31, Daniel 1:8-15

Topics: "From Babylon To Jerusalem"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of obeying God's commandments, even the seemingly minor ones. He references four passages of scripture that forbid certain actions, such as eating meat with blood, consuming certain types of meat, partaking in food sacrificed to idols, and drinking fermented alcoholic wine. The preacher emphasizes that these commands are not to be taken lightly, as they are all part of God's instructions for His people. He uses the example of Daniel, who refused to eat the food and wine offered to him by the king, as a demonstration of obedience to God's commands.

Transcript

In the book of Daniel chapter 1 and in our last study we looked at some of the background to the situation described in the first two verses of Daniel chapter 1. We saw that the children of Israel were led away into captivity for a number of reasons and we finally saw that it was covetousness and the power of mammon that ultimately brought God's judgment on them for 70 years. And this is what took the children of God, God's people, into Babylon. And this is what takes God's people into Babylon even today.

The power of mammon, of covetousness. And there God raised up one young man, Daniel, and as we look through the history of how God took his people out of Babylon and back to Jerusalem and that's described in the books of Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, and Nehemiah. In these books of the Old Testament you read how God took his people out of Babylon back into Jerusalem and you find it all begins, the root of it, the root of that movement that took God's people out of Babylon to Jerusalem is in the book of Daniel.

We'll see that as we go through and that's why the book of Daniel is so important for the times in which we live. It teaches us about a movement of God's people out of Babylon into Jerusalem and that's the movement we are involved in today. Out of the spiritual Babylon, the harlot, into Jerusalem, the body and

the bride of Christ.

And it is in this context that we want to study the book of Daniel and we see that it begins with one young man and that's significant. And we read that Daniel was a youth, perhaps his age was, his age is not exactly given. I would reckon he was around 17 years old in Daniel chapter 1 and it's significant that God's movements have always begun with young people.

On the day of Pentecost every single apostle was below 33 years of age. There were a group of young people there through whom the body of Christ was formed first. And so it is being in all generations, God has raised up young people.

Joseph was 30 when he came to rule next to Pharaoh. David was 30 when he came to the throne. Jesus was 30 and Daniel was much younger.

Ezekiel was 30 when he began his prophecy. That's a tremendous encouragement to young people to be wholehearted for God. Don't leave it just to older people.

We read here Daniel 1:8. First of all we see in verse 7 that the commander of the officials gave different names to these four men, four young men. And he changed their names to names that signified idolatrous devotion to heathen gods. But he couldn't change their hearts.

We read in verse 8 something very significant. I believe this is the key verse. The verse around which the whole book of Daniel moves.

Because of this verse everything else in the book of Daniel followed. And if Daniel had not taken the stand that he took here in verse 8, then nothing would have happened in the rest of the book. Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank.

Now here is a phrase. He made up his mind or he determined in his heart that he would not defile himself. He was determined at any cost to keep his conscience clean.

He was determined that he would not be a compromiser even though he saw all the other Jews around him. And there were hundreds and thousands of them in Babylon. Young people, old people, scholars, Bible scholars, priests and leaders.

Every one of them was a compromiser. But in the midst of these bunch of Bible scholar compromisers, one young man decided I'm not going to be a compromiser. God's movement from Babylon to Jerusalem began with one man.

It's amazing what God can do through one man if he takes a stand like that. And that's an encouragement to every one of us. And throughout the history of the church we have seen here and there again and again in different generations and different times God has raised up one man in different places and through him began a movement.

That's a challenge to every one of us if we are wholehearted what God can do. And so we see one man decided that he would not compromise. And all of God's movements in restoration back to New Testament truth in church history has always begun with one man who decided that he was not going to compromise.

And in the area in which he was not going to compromise was related to food and drink. Now Daniel knew God's laws given through Moses concerning food and drink. That teaches us he must have studied the

scriptures.

God can never use a man to lead people out of Babylon into Jerusalem unless he's a careful student of the Word of God. That's why he knew that this meat which is set on the king's table is meat which is forbidden by God. This wine which is set on the king's table is meat which God has forbidden me to take part.

Now I just want to tell you four passages of scripture in the Old Testament which must have come to Daniel's mind at that time. First of all in Leviticus 17 Leviticus chapter 17 verses 10 to 14. There was a law in the Old Testament given through Moses that any man from the house of Israel Leviticus 17 10 who eats blood I will set my face against that person who eats blood for the life of the flesh is in the blood therefore verse 12 I've said to the sons of Israel no person among you may eat blood and therefore verse 13 when you catch a beast in hunting or a bird you must pour out its blood.

Now among heathen people they did not do that. They kept the blood inside when they cooked the animal for taste or whatever it is and put it on the king's table and Daniel knew that is forbidden by God. It may be tasty but it's forbidden.

Another law was in Leviticus chapter 11. In Leviticus chapter 11 God had taught through Moses that certain animals were unclean for the children of Israel. He told them that they could eat beef but they couldn't eat pork.

They were not to eat rabbits or eagles or vultures or buzzards etc number of things listed there. Daniel knew that and Daniel knew that these heathen people felt some of these things were tasty and would put them on the table and Daniel said no that's forbidden by God in the law and I'm not going to take part in it. There's a whole chapter on that.

Another passage is Exodus 34 verse 15. Exodus 34 verse 15 where the Lord says that you're not to make any covenant with the inhabitants of Canaan because they play the harlot with their gods and idols and they sacrifice to their idols and someone will invite you to eat of this sacrifice this food which has been set before idols. Daniel knew that food which is sacrificed to idols was forbidden by God.

And a fourth verse is in Proverbs chapter 23 verse 31. Proverbs 23 verse 31 where we are told that there's a certain type of wine which we are not even to look at when it is fermented. Proverbs 23 31 God's Word says do not even look leave alone taste don't even look on the wine when it is red when it sparkles in the cup when it goes down smoothly at the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper your eyes will see strange things your mind will utter perverse things and you'll be like a man lying down in the middle of the sea and so on.

In other words fermented alcoholic wine which makes a person drunk. Now here are four passages of scripture. One which forbade eating meat which had blood in it.

Second which forbade certain types of meat. Third which forbade meat offered to idols and fourth which forbade this fermented alcoholic wine. Now this is the reason why we read in Daniel 1 8 that Daniel when he saw the type of meat and the type of wine that was being set before the king and it was a great honor and a privilege that the king allowed some of that to be given to Daniel and his friends he said no thank you.

Now these were not some of the big commands of the Old Testament the big commands of the Old Testament were found in things like thou shall not commit murder thou shall not commit adultery and someone who knew the Old Testament one of the Bible scholars could have come up to Daniel and said well brother Daniel the main thing is the important commandments these are all minor commandments. Now we see the same spirit in Babylon today that there are certain commandments which they call minor these are not so important. So what if there's a little blood in the meat after all that's not the major thing.

So what if we don't take this so seriously this little thing mentioned in the New Testament and there are various excuses people make for not obeying certain things written in the New Testament. I want to tell you brothers and sisters that's the spirit of Babylon. Compromise is discovered through our attitude to the small commandments that's what we see in Daniel 1 8. His devotion to keep even the small commandments of God's Word which are written here and there hidden as it were in the Old Testament law.

Daniel carefully studied it if he hadn't read Exodus 34 or Leviticus 11 or Leviticus 17 or Proverbs 23 he wouldn't have known these things but he knew it because he carefully read these verses and he knew these were forbidden by God and he decided in his heart I don't care which Bible scholars around me compromise in these things I don't care what explanations their human cleverness gives to them I know God has forbidden it and even if I am the only person among all these Jews who is not going to take part in it I'm going to stand alone for God. That is the type of man whom God picked up. No wonder God can't pick up many people today because the vast majority of believers are downright compromisers they just do what everybody else around them does they accept the explanations of human cleverness when it comes to disobedience to the little things in God's Word and therefore God leaves them on the shelf so you can never be a Daniel.

No that's the tragedy but what God requires today is Daniel's and the other thing we see here is that the test related to food it says here in verse 5 the king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and the wine which he drank that was a tremendous honor think if you were one of the poor captives and you were specially selected to get the best food and Daniel's taste buds in his tongue were just the same as ours and you know how much we relish good tasty food and through food he was tested and it's very significant the number of people who are tested through food in the Old Testament and in the New.

Eve the first test that God gave to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden related to food that made their mouth water.

Jesus in the wilderness was tested in relation to food and we read another verse in Ezekiel 16 it's a very interesting verse about the sin of Sodom Ezekiel and chapter 16 and verse 49 here we are told about the sins of Sodom now many people know about the sins of Sodom as sexual perversion particularly homosexuality and sodomy but what was it that led to this sexual perversion is given to us in Ezekiel 16 verse 49 behold this was the guilt of your sister Sodom she and her daughters had arrogance you know that sexual perversion began with pride and after pride the next thing was abundance of food the love of good food no self denial no fasting no ability to control one's passion and gluttony when it comes to food careless lazy living laziness and no compassion for the poor and needy that

finally ended up in sexual perversion it's interesting to see how it begins many people are defeated in sexual areas because they haven't learned to control their appetites for food if we learn to control our appetite in food we'd be able to control ourselves in many other areas remember that that's how Sodom

fell because they did not know how to control their gluttony and their appetite for food and so it's interesting to see how God tests people with food and this wholehearted overcomer in Babylon was tested first of all in food and I'll tell you this in these last days you're never going to be an overcomer if we haven't overcome our appetite for food the very simple thing but that's how God tested Eve, Daniel and Jesus and the people in Sodom it's not just a question of not committing

murder and adultery it's a question of self denial in areas where God told us to be master and not a slave it's as simple as that and because Daniel took a stand like this we read that the other three also joined him and I believe that's what is needed in many parts in our land today I have a feeling that these selected youths Daniel and these other three and many others were made to sit at a table and here was the King's choice meat and wine put before them and all the others were just delighted they were gobbling it all up and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego felt it was wrong but they didn't have the guts to stand up they were a little scared of their lives what will happen but when they saw one man at that table saying sorry I'm not going to take part of it then they got boldness they

say oh well we're not also going to take part and I believe there are many people like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego all over who don't have the guts to take a stand themselves but if they can see one person will take a wholehearted uncompromising stand for God they'll come and stand with him not many only be about two or three but they're waiting for a Daniel there's a difference between a Daniel and a Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego the Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are the followers but they're willing to follow if they can find one man who will take a stand and I believe that's the great lack in our country in many many places I believe that God desires a pure testimony for our land for himself in many parts of our land but it's difficult for him in many places to find one person who

will absolutely uncompromisingly take a stand for him at whatever cost remember they were slaves in the land of the greatest superpower that existed in that day Babylon and they could have easily lost their lives for the stand they took but Daniel was willing to take that stand and in the book of Revelation we read that the overcomers are those who do not love their own lives even unto death Revelation 12 11 those are the people who overcome who do not love their own lives who couldn't care less if the King takes their life and God tested them with food later on he could test them in a fiery furnace and later on in a den of lions you see God can prepare us for greater tests if we pass the small ones first he's not going to send us to sixth standard before we pass the first ten and so God

tests us to see whether we qualify to be in that overcoming remnant in the last days if by sorry by small things that come our way in our daily life little things in your office with your relatives in different situations God is testing to see how many people have the the caliber of a Daniel who determined in his heart even if everybody around me compromises I will not and we read here in Ezekiel I want to turn you to a verse in Ezekiel chapter 14 I want to tell you something about Ezekiel Ezekiel was older to Daniel and he was a prophet who came into Babylon a few years after Daniel came there and God spoke through Ezekiel Daniel was younger to Ezekiel and this is what God said through Ezekiel now picture this in your mind an older prophet speaking about one young man who is still living

Ezekiel 14 verse 13 if a country sins against me by committing unfaithfulness verse 14 even though these three men Noah Daniel and Joe were in their midst by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves now this was written by Ezekiel about 13 years after Daniel chapter 1 when Daniel was about 30 years old I want you to think of that brothers I wonder if we see the impact of this God picking out three men from history and one of them is a living man he picks out Noah he picks out Joe we think the third one

was Moses he picks out Daniel a living man just think of that if God were to pick out two men from the history of the church and the third person were you think of that think of the wholeheartedness of this young brother that God could pick him out and put him in the

category of Noah and Job who lived in Old Testament times in olden times and that Ezekiel an older prophet could recognize that here was one man who was righteous and God could write it down through Ezekiel and speak it through Ezekiel and know that it would not go to Daniel's head he wouldn't get puffed up when he heard about it and lose his salvation that's tremendous God cannot give such a commendation to many people because it would pop them up so much that they would lose their salvation but that teaches us something about Daniel's tremendous humility that God could speak about him while he was still alive and say that he's one of three men whom I call righteous Noah Daniel and Job that gives us an indication of what God's opinion was of Daniel now we move on to Daniel chapter 1 and

verse 9 now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials and that teaches us again about God's sovereignty God is able to give his servants favor in the eyes of government officials we read that in the history of Joseph we read that many times in the Old Testament and here in the book of Daniel the book of Daniel one of the great themes is the sovereignty of God we don't have to be compromisers in order to get favors we don't have to give bribes that Daniel didn't get a favor by a bribe he got a favor because he was wholehearted for God and God gave him favor in the eyes of government officials in his land and that's a lesson that overcomers in the last days need to learn the world says you want that official to help you money money is the power

by which you can move that official the overcomers say God is a greater power than money and it's a question of which we believe is the greater power is God a greater power or money a greater power compromising carnal believers will say money can do wonders overcomers say God can do greater wonders that's the difference and I'll tell you as we approach the end time and the reign of the Antichrist the overcomers are going to be tested in this area are we willing in the area of food when you can't buy food without the mark of the beast what are you going to do when you can't buy and sell without the mark of the beast are we going to be compromisers are we going to stand for the truth God is preparing us now for little things so that we can stand for big things in that day verse 9 God's

sovereignty and the commander of the official said to Daniel I'm afraid of my Lord the king who has appointed your food and your drink why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths of your own age then you would make me forfeit my head to the king but Daniel decided that he was going to obey God rather than men just like Peter said in Acts 5 29 we ought to obey God rather than men Nebuchadnezzar may be the ruler of the great superpower that makes no difference to me God is almighty and I'm going to listen to God's word and not Nebuchadnezzar's word that was his attitude but the commander of the officials didn't have that attitude but Daniel did Daniel said to this overseer and I want you to see here Daniel's faith in God in verse 12 Daniel said to the overseer whom the

commander of the officials that appointed over over them please test your servants for 10 days and let them give us some pulses to eat and water to drink ordinary we would say kanji let's you give me that for 10 days and let's see you eat all your fancy pork and rabbits and wine and all that cooked and grilled and all that just give us kanji for 10 days and you see what how it's going to be he had faith faith in what he had faith in the supernatural power of God to take care of his bodily needs and I tell you overcomers need to have faith in the last days for the supernatural power of God to take care of their bodily needs to take care of them physically to take care of their health to heal them to strengthen them in their body this is faith in

God and his supernatural power to take care

of their physical needs it's not dependent on eating good food so many people think it's good food it's not good food brother it's the blessing of God the blessing of God on kanji will bring much more than all that fancy food if it's going to be in disobedience to God's Word we think our children are going to be healthy with good food the blessing of God first of all that's what we learned from the last days for overcomers if the blessing of God is absent all that fancy foods not going to help us or our children no a lot of rich people who eat all the fancy food and their children are always sick that's not the answer it's the blessing of God that's why when we pray for food it's got to be meaningful we pray for the food we eat and Daniel had faith in that he says then you can see our

appearance and I want to tell you something faith always brings a confession from our mouth there is just no such thing as faith which is hidden in the heart people talk about a faith which is hidden in the heart that's not faith that's not biblical faith anyway a faith which is in the heart will always be confessed with our mouth where we can take a stand before the heathen and take a stand before others and say I believe in a God who works supernaturally and can work miracles then let our appearance be observed and you can compare us with the appearance of the youths these compromising Jews who are eating the king's food then you decide what to do so the man listened to them and tested them for 10 days and here it is God honored that confession of faith at the end of 10 days their

appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who'd be eating the king's choice food I mean I think that means they were more muscular not that they had a lot of fat on them they were healthier than all the other people who were eating the king's choice food there God honored them and so the overseer that was a testimony he'd never seen anything like this that overseer in his life brothers and sisters that's the calling of the overcomers in the last days to stand for truth in the midst of compromises around us and to show them that our God is a living God who can do miracles so the overseer continued to withhold their choice and kept giving them pulses and they kept getting healthier than all these other people who were disobeying God's word and then there's something

else God gave them he didn't only give them health in their bodies man is three parts man is a Trinity body soul and spirit and we see here God's blessing coming upon these overcomers in body soul and spirit we've seen how God bless their bodies with simple food God bless them and they were better than all these people eating fancy food and he can do that for you and me if you're poor and you can't afford rich food do you have to beg and borrow and steal in order to be healthy no you gotta pray for God's blessing here's an example for us for the poor who cannot afford rich food and then here is another encouragement for people who are not so clever in their mind it says here as for these four youths God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom is God

in the business of helping us in our intellect as well if I'm a dud do I have to remain a dud knowing nothing God can give us wisdom and intelligence where we need it here's something God can give we need to pray that God will give that to our children not so that they become great in the world so that they can honor him God's interested in our body God's interested in our mind and if God can give it to these wholehearted overcomers of those days he can give it to us today intelligence in the in literature in earthly things because we have to earn our living in this world that's why and thirdly spiritual in the spirit Daniel understood all kinds of visions and dreams that was not just spiritual wisdom that came through study it came through revelation of the Holy Spirit and so what do we

see in verse 15 and 17 God's supernatural provision for body soul and spirit and if you are to be overcomers in the last days we need to know God's supernatural provision for body mind and spirit understanding of the scriptures that comes by supernatural revelation of the Holy Spirit not by wasting time in a Bible school or taking tafty courses but by humbling seeking God's revelation through the Holy Spirit and so we see at the end of the days which the king had specified verse 18 for presenting them the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar and the king talked to them and out of all the people whom he talked to there was no one found like Daniel Hananiah Mishael and Azariah so they entered the king's personal services and as for every matter of wisdom and

understanding about which the king consulted them he found them ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm and Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king it's with great numbers that we're going to impress this country for Christ Oh only 2% of our country of Christians only more people would become Christians you think that's the answer certainly not four people impressed the world's greatest superpower not by their numbers but because God was on their side God plus four people can impress any world superpower sure then why can't he do it with all the 2% Christians in our country 2% is a pretty big number many many millions the answer must be they must be all compromisers that's why God can't do much he's looking for the Daniels and the

Shadrach, Meshach, Zebedee will stand with the Daniels so that he can have a testimony in the land people who are faithful in that which is least Jesus said if you keep the least commandments Matthew 5 19 and teach other people to keep the least you're the greatest in my eyes who are the greatest in God's eyes in the land of India I'll tell you read Matthew 5 19 those who keep the smallest commandments and teach others to keep the smallest commandments are the greatest men of God in this land all the others are compromisers those who keep a good conscience at any cost even if it means their life who keep a good conscience and therefore don't make shipwreck of their faith and to such people prophecy is revealed and you read in the book of Daniel about prophecy in chapter 2 and chapter 7

and chapter 8 it's no use studying prophecy if you are not compromisers if we are compromisers compromisers when they study prophecy all they're interested is in charts and diagrams and understanding what happens here and what happens there the explanation of this and the explanation of that that's not what God wants us to know he wants to have us to have a spiritual understanding of his purposes and that's revealed to the overcomers and there are very few I'll tell you that now let's turn to Daniel chapter 2 in chapter 1 we have just seen God's sovereignty in the matter of physical health God can sovereignly overrule in the matter of our physical health we must have faith in that in Daniel chapter 2 we find God's sovereignty over the governments and rulers of the world that's the theme

of Daniel chapter 2 and in chapter 2 verse 1 we read in the second year of the king reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar had dreams and his spirit was troubled and he could not sleep when a man cannot sleep God can be behind that a hundred years later we read in the book of Esther chapter 6 verse 1 that there was a king called Ahasuerus who could not sleep one night and if you read the story of Esther in that book you find the whole book revolves around one event that the king could not sleep and because the king could not sleep one night the whole story changed and the Jews were not slain because he couldn't sleep that night he read the history books and discovered that Mordecai had helped him and so on and the whole story changes on one small event a sovereign God who took away sleep

from a king this is the amazing thing we see in the book of Daniel the sovereignty of God this is what we need to know in the last days great rulers prime ministers presidents kings whatever they are generals

God is sovereign and he can fulfill his purposes even through a small thing like taking away their sleep and he had dreams and I want to show you a passage in the book of Job chapter 33 which tells us that dreams are one way by which God speaks to us Job chapter 33 it's not the only way God speaks to us through his word but he also speaks through dreams Job 33 verse 14 it says here God speaks once no he speaks twice yet no one notices it in other words this man Elihu who is speaking to Job is saying God speaks in two ways that I want to tell you about listen to it very carefully

first he speaks through dreams verse 15 in a dream a vision of the night when sound sleep falls on men they slumber in their beds he opens their ears and the reason is verse 17 so that he can keep man back from becoming proud and that was the reason why God gave a dream to Nebuchadnezzar and very often he gives dreams to others to keep man away from becoming proud because when you become proud God has to fight against you according to his law which says God resists the proud to keep us back from pride he gives us dreams to keep us from going into hell verse 18 and the second way God speaks is verse 19 through chastening sickness illness man is chastened with pain on his bed so that his life loathes food and his soul favored food his flesh wastes away from his sight and then if there is

only someone who can explain the meaning of this to him in verse 23 it says an interpreter who can explain the meaning of this this is why God is allowing this and so we see there are two ways which God speaks and we read in Daniel chapter 2 that God spoke to Nebuchadnezzar through dreams he did not listen and then you come later on in chapter 4 that God spoke to Nebuchadnezzar through chastening he made him mad actually mad he was insane he lost his senses he began to behave like an animal for about seven years he first broke through dreams then he spoke through chastening God speaks through his word when we don't listen he speaks through chastening so we see here God spoke through dreams to Nebuchadnezzar verse 2 of Daniel 2 then the king gave orders and he called all the conjurers and

sorcerers and Chaldeans to explain the meaning of his dreams the king said I had a dream my spirit is anxious to understand the dream then the Chaldean said tell us the dream and we'll declare the interpretation and the king said to the Chaldeans verse 5 the command from me is firm the word has gone from me clearly if you don't make known to me the dream and its interpretation you'll be torn limb from limb and your houses will be made a rubbish heap but if you declare the dream and its interpretation you will receive from the me gifts and a reward and great honor therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation they answered a second time and say tell us the dream we'll declare the interpretation but the king was a smart person he knew that if I give a dream these fellows can give

any interpretation to that and say that that is the meaning but let me find out if these fellows are really got something supernatural in them if they have got really something supernatural in them they'll be able to tell me the dream itself then I'll know that the interpretation is also correct you see that was the reason why he didn't tell them the dream now in the King James Version it says verse 5 the thing has gone from me it wasn't the dream that had gone from him it was the command the word that was firm which said if you don't make known to me the dream and the interpretation he wanted to test them he said I'll find out whether you fellows are genuine or not tell me the dream as well that they couldn't do these were these people who had no touch with God there's just human

cleverness trying to explain various things we find them in the Bible schools today human cleverness explaining a lot of things nothing supernatural no Holy Spirit revelation the king said no he said I know for certain you're just bargaining for time and if verse 9 if you don't make the dream known to me there's only one decree for you you're all going to be slain then the King Chaldean said there's not a man on earth who

can do such a thing no great king has ever asked any such thing that's because no king was as clever as Nebuchadnezzar to expose all these humbugs and then verse 11 he says the thing which the king commands is difficult it's rare there's no one else who can declare it except the gods and if they were honest they'd say well we are not in touch with him and the gods don't

dwell with mortal flesh no no no they're far away and the king was very angry you see that was the difference between all these humbugs and Daniel Daniel was in touch with the Living God and I want to tell you this brothers and sisters in the last days in which we live it's not enough to say we claim to be in touch with God we can explain the Bible the thing is is it human cleverness or is it supernatural revelation are we just like the magicians of Babylon saying yeah give me the word I'll explain it or is there something supernatural in our lives so many believers there's nothing supernatural in their lives it's just human cleverness they're just like the magicians of Babylon it's human cleverness that they are coming forth with from the Bible no they take up the Bible and say some very

clever thought the magicians of Babylon a multitudes of them but to find a Daniel who can have revelation of the Spirit on that same word and I tell you there's a world of difference between one who ministers with revelation and one who ministers just a lot of clever thoughts from the Bible world of difference and we need to distinguish in these days when a preacher gets up into the pulpit whether he's a Babylonian magician or a Daniel a prophet of God very important it's very easy to get deceived here the magicians of Babylon I've got nothing supernatural in them just human cleverness you can meditate on that and get profit from it I believe and so the king was very angry and he was going to kill all the wise men they look for Daniel then Daniel replied with discretion and discernment I

think the reason why Daniel was not called initially but he was a junior fellow they called all the senior men first and they kept the junior man outside there but it's the junior man who had the answer it was Abel who was accepted not King yeah it's the youngest boy David who is the king not the elder seven sons is that young brother who's got revelation not this old white haired man who thinks that because it was white hair he's got wisdom no is that young junior brother whom you despise over there who's got the revelation of the Spirit because he's wholehearted that's the thing finally they had to go to Daniel then they would they came to kill him but Daniel said hey wait a minute why the urgency why is the king so urgent verse 15 now I want you to see here in the Living Bible is a

beautiful paraphrase of his that Daniel handled the situation with great wisdom wonderful translation he handled the situation with great wisdom and these fellows came and said well Daniel come forth we're going to chop off your head he didn't get all panicky he handled the situation with great wisdom he said what's the matter he was calm he had faith in God he was calm he said what's the why is it so urgent and when he knew about the matter listen to this Daniel went in and requested the king verse 16 and he said just give me time and I'll give you the interpretation look at his confidence the same confidence that we find in chapter 1 you test us and see after 10 days if we are not better looking than these other fellows the same thing here just give me a little time King I'll give you

the answer his absolute confidence in a God who could supernaturally reveal a dream that somebody else had brothers and sisters it is such people God is looking for in these days people who have faith that a God was supernaturally intervene in their lives to deliver them from a delicate situation are you finding yourself in a tough situation are you sitting there in panic unrest are you going to be like the compromising Jews in Babylon are you going to be like Daniel and say well I have faith that there's an almighty God up there sovereign who's going to intervene supernaturally and deliver me from this situation in which I find

myself that's the mark of the overcomers of the last days they have faith and they confess their faith they're not ashamed their faith is not hidden away in a

corner it's not hidden in their hearts they stand up and boldly confess it God's going to help me just give me a little time I'll give you the answer that thing which all the magicians of Babylon said nobody can ever do this only someone who's in touch with God there was a young man who was in touch with God just 20 years old some 20 year old sitting here today I hope this would be a challenge to you and a challenge to us who are so much older 20 years old what a confidence in God and we read Daniel went he said I'll declare this thing there's a contrast here between Daniel and these magicians of Babylon it reminds me of Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings chapter 18 they thought they could bring fire down from heaven nothing happened but there was one man Elijah

who had absolute confidence in a supernatural God who would come down and bring down fire and vindicate his servant brothers and sisters that's the need of the last days men like Elijah men like Daniel who have faith that God will intervene supernaturally if necessary to fulfill his purpose through us verse 17 here you see Daniel's humility he went to his house and he did not pray alone learn that brothers and sisters I say to myself learn it learn it I say to each of you you think you can make it alone I'm sorry to say you can't you got to have a body he went he was the most wholehearted why does the wholehearted the most wholehearted the elder brother have to seek the fellowship of younger brothers in prayer that's how it is in the body of Christ he told Hananiah Mishael and Azariah so

that they might request compassion from the God of heaven not he he says brothers let's see God you and I will pray to God together he didn't have all these wonderful verses we have in the New Testament where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I the midst if two of you agree together he didn't have any of these things but he had that understanding in his spirit that there's a power when we pray together and he sought fellowship in prayer and when you can't get through alone in a matter remember God's trying to teach you seek the fellowship of your brothers some of your younger brothers in prayer that will help you to get the answer we really need that we really need that we need to wait on God in prayer if we want the answer verse 18 what were they going to ask God for

they are not going to stand up and say Lord we're the overcomers around here you know their collars lifted up and say now Lord you better give us the answer no it's not in that spirit they come that would have made them Pharisees not over overcomers there's a humility they didn't think of themselves more than other people they humbled themselves before Almighty God you know what they asked God for mercy mercy mercy Oh God I can imagine how they prayed that night Oh God mercy we pray concerning this mystery mercy means I don't deserve it Lord but give it to us even though we don't deserve it help us to stand for you so that we don't get destroyed and the rest of the wise men don't get destroyed either wasn't just praying for himself Lord we don't want anyone killed here look at that large

heart and then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision yeah God honors faith if you have faith nothing is impossible you come to God with that faith he cannot send you away empty impossible let God find anyone anywhere in the face of the earth even today who comes to him with such faith he'll get the answer sure and then now the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision now what many believers would have done at that point is they got all excited and run off to the king and say here it is but Daniel didn't do that if he had done that he'd have been like the nine lepers who got healed and ran off excited that they were healed Daniel was like the tenth leper what did he do first he came back and said thank you Lord that's what Daniel did there are many people who pray

aloud in the prayer meetings and God answers that their prayer they forget all about praising God and thanking him for their answered prayer and I believe that's very often the reason why we don't progress in our prayer life because we don't know how to give thanks when God has answered a prayer which we cried out to him for so desperately and he's answered we just take it for granted but Daniel he didn't do that he didn't rush off to Nebuchadnezzar that can wait first of all let me give thanks to God I'm in no hurry to give go to Nebuchadnezzar I have to go to God first and say Lord thank you for answering my prayer and Daniel answered and said let the name of God be blessed forever and ever for wisdom and power belong to him now he noted notice here seven things that he says about God

in verse 21 onwards 20 onwards first of all wisdom and power belong to him second he changes the times and the seasons it's all a declaration of God's sovereignty wisdom and power belong to God second he changes times and seasons third he removes Kings and establishes Kings he's not bothered about Nebuchadnezzar but he gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding that's what he does he is the one who gives wisdom and knowledge fifth he reveals the profound and hidden things sixth he knows what is in the darkness nothing hidden from him seventh light dwells with him he dwells in the light he just exalted God for his sovereignty he knew that before Nebuchadnezzar many years earlier there was another great king called Pharaoh God set him up God said I've raised you up to

display my great power through you so that the whole world may know what a wonderful thing I can do for the Israelites in your days and then he pushed Pharaoh down and the Egyptian regime collapsed and then little later God raised up another regime another kingdom called Assyria a hundred and twenty years or so before Nebuchadnezzar's time Daniel knew about that God raised it up sent them against the northern kingdom of Israel to capture them and when they got a bit puffed up he pushed them also down then God raised up Nebuchadnezzar and God knew Daniel knew he could push him also down the total sovereignty of God that's what we find Daniel praising God for and I believe brothers and sisters in the last days we need to see our God as this God raises up people pushes down people everything

is in his hands his total sovereignty over everything and we read here in verse 23 to thee O God of my fathers I give thanks and praise for thou has given me wisdom and power compare that with verse 20 where he said wisdom and power belong to God then how did Daniel get it God loaned it to Daniel he loaned it to Daniel and Daniel acknowledged Lord you have given it to me and you have made known to me what is requested now you have made known to us the king's matter and then Daniel went to Ariok whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon he went and spoke to him as follows don't destroy the wise men take me to the king's presence and I'll tell the interpretation and Ariok brought Daniel to the king and said there's a man here who can give the interpretation and the

dream king asked Daniel verse 26 are you able to make known to me the dream and the interpretation and Daniel could have said yes but he didn't say yes look at his answer and there you see his humility and that's why you could you can see that God can has such confidence in such a young 20 year old humble brother he says well I let me tell you King what you have inquired there's no wise man or magician or anybody who can declare it but there is a God in heaven he was not ashamed to acknowledge his ignorance but that there's a God in heaven who reveals secrets and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what's going to take place in the last days this was your dream visions in your mind when you were in bed I want you to notice here further down verse 29 King while you were in your bed

this your thoughts turn and what did take place in the future verse 30 listen see his humility now as for me this secret has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that is residing in me more than in any

other living man he says I'm just an ordinary human being but God has given it to me in today's language we would say Daniel was not ashamed to stand up for Jesus Christ and to say publicly in his office I belong to Jesus Christ the living God who's got all authority in heaven and earth and I'm not ashamed to acknowledge that I'm his disciple and he is the God I worship and he's the one who helps me in my problems he's the one who takes care of my needs and we see here he humbled himself and he said this has been given to me I want you to notice the last part of verse 30 God has

given me this wisdom only in order to make known the interpretation to you the king I want you to see a very important principle here God reveals wonderful things to his servants only for one reason so that they might serve others and give other people that revelation which God gives them if they remain in humility God can keep on giving revelations to them and the word of God teaches here in Daniel chapter 1 the last verse we saw Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus that was seventy years later Daniel started out he was over 90 by the time you come to the end of the book of Daniel from the age of 17 way on to the age of 90 this man remained in humility and he could get revelations when he was 90 like he was getting them when he was 20 very few people like that some little

revelation puffs up a person and God cannot use him anymore but not Daniel more of that when we come to that particular section of scripture later on but what I want to say is that God gives us something if God has given us anything it's only so that we can use it to serve others has God given you revelation it's not for you to show off it's not for you for yourself it's for others has God given you the gift of healing it's not for you it's not for you to make money or from it but to serve others has God given you money house lands it's not for yourself it's for you to serve others blessed are those who realize it it's a mark of the overcomers in the last days and then Daniel describes this statue verse 31 you okay we're looking and behold there was a single great statue this is the dream

that Nebuchadnezzar had Daniel explained it to him that statue which was large and an extraordinary splendor was standing in front of you and its appearance was awesome and then verse 32 I want you to notice here verse 32 a description of the statue which you can see here the head was made of fine gold its breast and its arms were made of silver and its belly and its thighs were made of bronze and its legs were made of iron and its feet were partly iron and partly clay now the only reason I put that picture of that statue up there is because it was a vision a dream that God himself gave to Nebuchadnezzar wasn't something that man thought up God gave a particular dream to Nebuchadnezzar which relates to the kingdoms of the world right up to the last days and he says this and then he says

you continued looking until a stone verse 34 was cut out without hands and it struck the statue on its feet didn't strike it on any other part of the body it struck it on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them and then the iron the clay the bronze the silver and the gold were all crushed at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors and the wind carried them away so that there was not a trace of them found anywhere but the stone that came and hit the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth I want you to notice something here the first metal was the most superior of all the metals at each stage it becomes something inferior silver then bronze then iron then iron and clay it's a picture of the deterioration of humanity through the ages from

Nebuchadnezzar's time right up to the last days how many toes are there in the two feet ten we studied about the ten kingdoms in the book of Revelation when we studied that and it's at that point that the stone the kingdom of Christ comes and hits the feet and fills the whole earth and each though inferior yet it is one man one spirit raining from head to foot and that is the spirit of the Antichrist the spirit of the Antichrist

is basically behind every world government because the devil is called the prince of this earth the ruler of the earth and his spirit the spirit of the Antichrist has infiltrated the different governments right from Nebuchadnezzar's time that's why it's pictured as one man and then the kingdom of Christ has got nothing to do with that it is from another stone that

comes from outside and hits this and smashes the whole thing to pieces which is the time that we are going to come into very soon now the interpretation of this dream and the detailed description of it we'll study in our next study but I want you to see this that God gave Nebuchadnezzar a picture of the future and God gave Daniel the understanding of it to interpret it and this book as we saw in our last study something that was concealed until the end time many people understood what these the first four kingdoms related to Babylon and Medo-Persia Greece and Rome but the feet people couldn't understand but we are living in the days when we can understand it now so we praise God for the privilege of living in the days in which we are living so that we can follow in the footsteps of Daniel

and his three friends and stand for God as a remnant trusting him believing that he has supernatural power to provide all our needs

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