

11-27-22

Impossible without God!

Have you ever been in a position where if God was not in control, if God did not show up you would be done for? The world talks about situations like this all the time, some people call it luck, others coincidence. They think that when they make it through a tough or difficult time, they did it in their own. They think that it just worked itself out.... I wonder how they would explain the historical event we are reading today.

We all have been asked something outrageous in our lives, sometimes we (I) am just not smart enough to know the answer. Maybe we haven't experienced anything like this yet, maybe this is something that we didn't even know, we didn't know. I do not have an extensive vocabulary, but I know a few words, and yet somehow the youth and my boys use new words that I have never heard. Some I can understand like bruh. They are just too lazy to say the full word brother. Others I have no idea what it is supposed to mean. I didn't know that I would need to take a whole language class to talk to the younger generation. But I can ask them what it means and after they are finished laughing at me, they will usually explain it to me.

Sometimes when things that are asked of us are unanswerable it is because the other person is making it up, and there really is no right answer. To those folks everything is obscure and off the wall.

As Christians what should we do if we need understanding, or an explanation? Well, we can ask good counsel, we could ask a trusted friend, oh I know we can our pastor! And we may get a pretty good answer from some of them. But can I tell you the only reason we should really go to any of those folks, is to ask them to pray with us as we take it straight to God. We will be reading about Daniel today and how he did just that. He was in a spot that only the one true God could help him.

Read, pray

There are 3 points for today's message; The Appeal The Asking The Answer

The Appeal

VS 1-4 Nebuchadnezzar was a new king, the way that time was written depended on several variables. This could be the actual 2nd year of his rule, or it could be the 5th year. Making it the second year after Daniels 3-year training. This way makes more sense as Daniel and the others were not brought in until sometime during the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign and would have never been allowed to approach the king yet. So, for Daniel to even have been welcomed into the king's court, it just makes sense that they have completed their 3-year training.

Nebuchadnezzar's dreams haunted him, he couldn't rest. They confused him, but he couldn't remember what the dreams actually were. Have you ever had that happen to you? Wake up in the morning knowing you had a dream and its like you can remember it, but you can't make any of it out or explain it?

He calls all his father's wise men and magicians expecting them to be able to interpret his dream, but he can't really remember it, so he tests them by making them tell him what he dreamt. Nothing like trying to explain something when you have no idea what it is. This sounds like some of the trick questions you

women ask. Like does this make me look fat? If we say “YES” then we are insensitive and we are the bad guy, if we say “No” and someone says you are looking healthy then we lied to you and we are the bad guy. There is no way we can answer that! Like if a tomato is a fruit why is ketchup not called a smoothie? Or when does the future start? Or can God make a stone that even He can't lift? All unanswerable questions. Moving on!

VS 5-9 We have talked about how the kings all had their way of executing people who did not do ask they instructed, but this was a horrible punishment. The magicians continue to ask the king to tell them the dream he wants them to interpret but the kings knows that they could tell him and kind of interpretation and make it sound believable. He wants them to prove they have the power to talk to the gods. This is the point where they have to suit up and prove what they have said. I believe this happens to us as Christians too, we walk around saying we are Christians, we follow Jesus, and that we are saved, well eventually you will get the opportunity to prove it. Will you fold like the magicians, or do you know where it all comes from?

VS 10-11 They are admitting that true revelation comes from God, not man. They are being honest; they cannot do what he has asked. Does this sound like people of today, people who study all sorts of social science, psychology, philosophy and then try to make it out like they are better than everyone else. Bet it would take a threat like this to get them to admit they couldn't answer correctly.

To try and save their skin they attempted to make the king believe he was being unreasonable and not that they were incompetent. Once again sounds like the world we know today, its not my fault, you are asking too hard of questions.

These pagans had their gods who had no real power even if they did reside here with man. Clearly, they did not know our God, and that since the revelation of Jesus, He is Immanuel or God with us. He dwells not only with us but in us.

VS 12-13 Nebuchadnezzar was furious at these men, these were supposed to be the wisest men around. And here they are telling him that he was wrong for asking this. All this did was show him that they were all fakes. And what good is a wise man who can not get answers from the gods?

We mentioned earlier that Nebuchadnezzar was a new king, and they all had something to prove. He had to show the people that he was bigger, better, badder than the last. Some of this whole ordeal could have been him trying to test his father's old advisors, make sure they still had it or prove that they all had to be replaced.

VS 14-16 Although Daniel was not part of the magicians and wise men who failed at the king's task, the king ordered ALL wise men in the city.... this included Daniel and his friends. Daniel knew that his God could do what the king demanded, but also knew that it took time to listen to God. He wasn't just stalling until they could figure out a way to escape this. Daniel was willing to take the time to go to God and wait for an answer.

Do we take our issues to God? Do we wait for an answer, or do we just go on about it how every we think He is answering us?

Daniel's ability to remain calm in this crisis shows where his trust and faithfulness lie's. It is said that tough times make tough men, tough men make easy times, easy times make soft men, soft men make

tough times. But Crisis doesn't make a man, it reveals the man. Daniel was revealed when times got tough.

The Asking

VS 17-18 This is the main scripture of the lesson, this is moment when Daniel realizes that if God does not come through, he and all the others are done for. Daniel is not merely hoping God answers him the way he wants Him to, this is not like when we ask God if we should buy a new car, or if He really thinks we need that new boat, or if that big vacation is what His will is for us. This is literally life or death. Daniel is not hoping for the answer he wants, he is dependent on God to save his life.

Some battles are won on the battlefield but this like many of our spiritual battles are won when God reveals the answers to our most heart felt prayers.

I bet it was a little intimidating to follow the kings wisemen and magicians if they couldn't do it, but Daniel was confident that his God could work miracles. God had already done such amazing works through others; He interpreted the pharaoh's dream through Joseph. Although this was a little different, Daniel had to tell the king his dream and interpret it.

With all that was on the line, I am sure Daniels prayer was as earnest as it could be. And who should we tell when we are dealing with such matters? I know, I know Instagram, no no Facebook. I understand that those outlets are a great place to reach a lot of people quickly and I'm not bashing social media, but when matters like this arise, we should go directly to a few close friends who we know are willing to put in some real prayer time with us. Our church who wants to help, but ultimately, we are to go to God the one who has the ability to resolve all our concerns.

VS 19 So do we figure things out when we go to God for answers? Are we instantly able to think through our problem? No God reveals it to us, Daniel received a revelation from God. Have you ever been reading your bible and you read through a verse that you have read a hundred times and suddenly a light flips on and you understand something that you have never gotten from that scripture before? That is an example of what God did for Daniel, he reveals things to us. The things we know about God are what He has revealed to us. It isn't our job to figure out God, but to understand what He has revealed.

VS 20-23 What do we do when get our answer from God? Go on about our lives, move on, go eat? If we have the faith to go to God with our issues, then we need to remember to acknowledge where it came from. I know I could better at praising Him, in all situations not just when it works out in my favor.

The fact that we can go to God proves that He is like no other. Most of the time people of great power do not have time for us little folks. But God does not work that way, He is listening to you when you talk to him, and He will answer you directly. Isn't it amazing that the God of universe has time for little ole me, and you? We can admit that He has all the power, and all the might, and is able to do all things. But how helpful would that be if He didn't communicate with us? It would have done Daniel no good either if God would not have revealed the dream to him. I am thankful that God talks to us.

When God does reveal things to you, how certain are you that it is God? I understand that it may be difficult to be sure of an answer. It may look like all the right doors are being opened and then slammed shut at the last minute. We have to be faithful to believe that even in those situations God is directing us

exactly where He knows is best for us. Daniel went straight to praising God for the answer before it was ever confirmed by Nebuchadnezzar. For all Daniel knew this could have been a dream that he had and not what the king had dreamt.

Our level of faith is shown in how quickly we start praising God. If we have to wait until the answer is confirmed by someone else, then we don't have much faith.

The Answer

VS 24-30 Arioch was quick to tell the king that he had found someone to interpret his dream. He wanted a little credit for helping with this great mystery. He was willing to share the limelight with Daniel too, but Daniel wanted no part of taking credit for this.

Daniel was quick to say that no man could what the king asked. No one read the king's mind. But he knew that the God in heaven can do it. And God had revealed this to Daniel, he once again does not take credit. Saying that it was not revealed to him because he was better than anyone else.

VS 31-35 Daniel tells the king about his dream, about the spectacular statue and the different materials it was made of. Then talks about how it will be destroyed and blown away like it never even mattered. All the while the stone that destroyed will become a great mountain.

VS 36-45 This was the king's main concern with telling the magicians his dream, he didn't want them to tell him some pile of crap and make it look like they knew what was going on. So, since Daniel could tell him what dream he had it gave Daniel great creditability.

Daniel goes into explaining the dream and tells Nebuchadnezzar that he represented the head of gold, but that after him would come three other kingdoms, each descending in value like the materials the statue was made of.

History has proven for us that this came true. After Babylon came Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome and they corresponded to Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Babylon was the head of gold in the sense of their absolute power, Nebuchadnezzar was an absolute monarch. The following empires were larger and even lasted longer but none held as much centralized power as Nebuchadnezzar did.

Babylon stood for 66 years, Medo-Persia 208, Grecian empire 185 years and the Roman empire stood for more than 500 years.

Since the Roman empire there has not been a world dominating empire equal to Rome. Many have tried Huns, Islam, the Holy Roman empire, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin but none have succeeded. And while these kings did all they could to reign the world for as long as they could God was setting up a kingdom that will forever rule. His kingdom will decimate all the other kingdoms of this earth. This is not a gradual salvation of the world. The stone cut without human hands is the Messiah not the church. So, we will not be the reason these empires fall.

VS 46-49 Daniel's ability to explain the dream and interpret it clearly impressed the king, he was not in the habit of showing respect to anyone, especially a foreign slave who was set for execution. Daniel did not need the king's confirmation, but Nebuchadnezzar's response indicated that it was clearly correct.

Nebuchadnezzar realized that it was Daniel's God that revealed these things to Daniel, and Daniel was sure to give glory to God for it. Daniel wasn't out for any kind of special treatment for his faithfulness to God, but the king wanted to keep Daniel around.

So, when crisis hits our lives and things seem like they are not able to be resolved, remember that we have a God who has the ability to answer all questions, to communicate with us and place us right where He wants us to be.