

WHO IS IN CHARGE?

The Old Testament book of Daniel is a fascinating read. Although the latter chapters present some challenges, the first six chapters are interesting, insightful, and easily understood.

Chapter one reminds us that those who stand for truth and right will always be vindicated in the end. Daniel and his friends refused to be defiled by the king's food and wine. This was probably because the food served had some connection with sacrifices to pagan idols. Their diet of vegetables proved to be far superior to what came from the king's table, and in the end Daniel and his friends were said to be ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in the kingdom (1:20).

Chapter two illustrates how the hand of God works in the history of man. Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation pointed to a time when (in the days of the Romans) God would set up a kingdom that would be eternal and universal (2:44). The fulfillment of that promise came at Pentecost and was made possible by the offering of His Son as the Savior of mankind. Jesus is thus King of kings and Lord of lords, and now reigns from heaven over that kingdom (the church).

Chapter three teaches us that man's laws cannot overrule God's laws. When all the high officials of Babylon were summoned to the plain of Dura to bow before the king's ninety-foot-tall image of gold, Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego would not obey (3:17). "They wouldn't bend, they wouldn't bow, and they wouldn't burn." When we must choose between the laws of God and the laws of men, God's laws must always be followed (Acts 5:29).

Chapter four shows what happens when a man becomes full of himself and forgets who really is in charge. King Nebuchadnezzar was reduced to living like an animal until he came to the realization that God "rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will" (4:25). God's still in charge, and we must not forget it!

Chapter five reminds us of the brevity and uncertainty life. Even those in high places cannot escape death. The handwriting on the wall proclaimed to Belshazzar his impending doom. Daniel interpreted the message to the king to say, "God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end" (5:26). That night Belshazzar died.

Chapter six again reveals Daniel's steadfast commitment to God. When the decree was given that anyone who made a petition to any God or man for thirty days, except the king, would be cast in the lion's den, Daniel was undeterred. Three times a day he went to his window facing Jerusalem, got down on his knees, and prayed (6:10). A king's decree would not prevent him from praying. Into the lion's den he went, but God shut the mouths of the lions and Daniel was spared. His enemies did not fare as well (6:24).

These are all important lessons, and especially so, in these troubling times. May we never forget them.

- Roger Rush, (via Church of Christ, Sixth & Washington Streets, Marietta, OH) -

"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth to God."
Psalm 62:11)

News & Notes

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES: Sunday Worship, 10:30 a.m. only and Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. The Covid-19 restrictions apply (masks & distancing).

CONFESSION/RESTORATION: Shawn Beagle, 42 Lapoes Village, Core, WV 26541.

CONGRATULATIONS: To John & Tiffany McClung on the birth of a son, Lincoln Shader on Jan. 1, 2021. The proud grandparents are Keith & Elaine McClung.

PANTRY: Applesauce.

SICK & SHUT-IN: CITY HOSPITAL: Sandy Spencer. **WEIRTON MEDICAL:** Randy Waite. **WPMC, Pittsburgh:** Shirley Beagle, Mary Johnson (sister of Lois Hissom). **AT HOME:** Linda Parkes, Peggy Linger, Pat Allison, Randy Beagle, Charlie & Barb Delong, David McCoy, Jim Hadley, Marlene Evans, Russell Martin, Cam Adamson, Rick Beck, John McClung, Josh Morrison, Alex Harless. **FOX:** Doris Dunham. **CROSSROADS:** Sarah Miller. **VALLEY OAKS CARE CENTER:** Fred Larrimore, (Room 210). **IN TENNESSEE:** Steve Higginbotham. **IN FLORIDA:** Ilene Rayl.

God's Word Is Like

Honey — sweet (Psalm 119:103).

A lamp — enlightening (Psalm 119:105).

Rain and snow — refreshing (Isaiah 55:10-11).

Fire/hammer — powerful (Jeremiah 23:29).

Water — nourishing (Ephesians 5:26).

A sword — protecting (Ephesians 6:17).

Solid food — filling (Hebrews 5:12-14).

A mirror — revealing (James 1:23).

Milk — life-sustaining (1 Peter 2:2).

- adapted from Mark Posey - *Glad Tidings of Good Things (House to House)* -

Truth Will Prevail

Cecil May, Jr.

A truth undergirding the call for freedom of speech is that truth is shown to be truth when it is arrayed against error or untruth. When one idea feels it has to shout down another so that it cannot be heard, it is admitting its view cannot stand the light of truth.

Charles Krauthammer, a favorite writer of mine, now deceased, said, "I believe the pursuit of truth and right ideas through honest debate and rigorous argument is a noble undertaking." Long ago, a call went out to opposing ideas, saying, "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord" (Isaiah 1:18).

(via Gospel Gazette Online)

If American democracy is to remain the greatest hope of humanity, it must continue abundantly in the faith of the Bible.

- Calvin Coolidge, 30th President of the United States -