

## Monday Morning Rewind – March 9, 2009

Good morning! On Sabbath we began a new series about prayer in the end times. Why a series on prayer right now? Because nothing we can do, nothing we can study, nothing we can program, and nothing we can strategize has greater power with God than prayer. And the kind of prayer that moves God comes from the pray-er who is in hot pursuit of His will, His ways, and His heart. That describes the prophet Daniel. In the face of persecution and potential death in the lion's den, Daniel had something that we Christians living in the end times need to survive--unbroken connection with, and unwavering fidelity to God.

Rewind to Daniel chapter 6 and there you will read about the transition of power from the vanquished Babylonian empire, to the conquering Persian empire. Daniel, who served in the former Babylonian regime, was given a position of authority in the new government. So superior was Daniel in every way that the king was about to set him "over the whole kingdom" (Dan. 6:3).

Daniel's promotion ignited the jealousy of his fellow civil servants. Their failure to dig up any dirt on Daniel's character forced them to attack his religion. They hatched a plot that would require all citizens to pray only to the king for a period of 30 days under penalty of death in the lion's den. During more normal times, such a request would have been absurd. But as we've noted before, extreme times often result in absurd measures.

Don't overlook the striking similarities between Daniel 6 and Revelation 13 where a rival power to the God of Heaven launches an attack on the Daniels of the end times—those who have an unbroken connection with, and unwavering fidelity to "God's commandments and . . . to the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 12:17). This rival power takes advantage of the confused religious/social/and political landscape described by Jesus as a time of "great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again" (Matt. 24:21), and imposes a false system of worship on the whole world under threat of death (Rev. 13:15). During more normal times, such a religious decree in our pluralistic society would be absurd, but these won't be normal times, and extreme times often result in absurd measures.

But as God had His Daniel before, He will have those with the spirit of Daniel at the end. If we intend to be among those who stand like Daniel for God at the end, we had better learn to kneel like Daniel before God now.

### Lessons learned from Daniel's prayer life

**1. When faced with a crisis, don't fall apart, call on God.** "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me" (Psalm 50:15). Daniel's communion with God was as natural as breathing, so this situation, though extreme, *did nothing to altar his pattern*. He was the same Daniel after the decree that he was before the decree. If you're a praying man or woman before the crisis, you'll be a praying man or woman during the crisis.

Daniel's enemies counted on his integrity and faithfulness to his God. They knew he would not compromise his prayer life because of a mere human law. *Daniel had faith in his God, but his colleagues had faith in Daniel!* Do those you and I associate with have faith in us? Can they count on us to live what we profess?

**2. It's because of the prayers prayed continually in your home den that you're able to pray confidently in the "lion's den."** It's not about religion it's about relationship; and if you don't trust God when times are good, you're not likely to trust Him when times are bad. Don't wait until you're in the Lion's den to pray to God. Pray now so you can trust God to shut the lion's mouth.

**3. God sends angels to help us in response to prayer.** When you pray you have unseen supernatural forces at your disposal. "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone" (Psalm 91:11, 12). Don't underestimate the help from heaven you receive when you cry out to God. Those who are with you are more than those who are against you. (See 2 Kings 6:16.)

God did not desert Daniel in the lions' den any more than He had deserted Daniel's three friends in the furnace—and he won't desert us. God hears your prayer equally well from your car or office as He

does from the hospital or prison. "Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear" (Isa. 59:1).

What "lion's den" are you facing today? Have you been laid off from your job? Are you struggling to recover your health? Is your marriage or home life under attack? Are you spiritually discouraged and wondering if it's worth it to keep believing? Don't give up, kneel down. Be a Daniel. Call on God in your day of trouble, and He will deliver you and you will honor Him. And though we don't always escape unscathed from our troubles, God has promised to never leave us or forsake us. And remember, our success as Christians now and in the future depends on our unbroken connection with, and unwavering fidelity to God. –Pastor Randy

p.s. Bobbi Tucker's testimony about faith and finances is a powerful example to all of us of Daniel praying and trusting. Thank you for sharing, Bobbi! And to God be the glory!