

DISCERNING DANIEL

From Anxiety to Tranquility

TEXT: Dan. 2:1-30

INTRODUCTION: When Nebuchadnezzar witnessed the fall of Jerusalem before his mighty army, he probably thought he proved the superiority of his _____ gods over the single God of Judah and Jerusalem called YHWH. He was unaware that he himself was but an instrument in the hand of the One True and Living God who was using Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon as an instrument of _____ upon YHWH's rebellious people.

When the king commanded Ashpenaz to bring members of the royal family and the best of the young people of _____ back to Babylon to be indoctrinated in the ways of the Chaldeans, he knew he was changing the lives of these teens forever. What he did not know is that The Lord God of Heaven had planted this thought in his mind because sovereign God would use these teens to _____ Nebuchadnezzar himself, all of the city and province of Babylon, and in fact the whole empire, and ultimately the world by the word and witness of these young people.

And when God began to send the king dreams, Nebuchadnezzar did not know that God was sending him a _____. All he knew is that his soul filled with anxiety, so much so, that he could no longer _____. When chapter 2 of Daniel opens, Nebuchadnezzar sits upon his throne. We would think the king was ruling over his people. But instead, worry and anxiety are ruling over the king.

I. ANXIETY RULING

Dan. 2:1 Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.

Note the similarity of king and _____. Anxiety, worry, stress can rule over all. Nebuchadnezzar is the most powerful human being in the world when the events of chapter 2 take place. He is filthy _____. He is surrounded by _____ who jump every time he says frog. Yet he is so troubled that he cannot sleep.

This should tell us something. When we are filled with anxiety, what solutions do we often seek? Can you hear yourself saying...

- Oh, if I just had more _____, this wouldn't be a problem.
- Oh, if I was higher up on the totem pole at _____, I would not be so worried.
- Oh, if I just had a better _____, I would not be so stressed.

Yes, we would. We might have a _____ problem, a _____ anxiety, a _____ worry, but we would still have anxiety.

- Power, money, position do not _____ nor _____ anxiety.
- Sometimes, those things _____ or _____ worry.

II. ANXIETY SPREADING

Anxiety is a very _____ disease. It is kin to insanity. It is said that “Insanity is contagious; you get it from your kids.” Anxiety is contagious also, only usually we parents spread it to our kids, or to our friends, or to our fellow workers or students. That is what Nebuchadnezzar did.

Dan. 2:2 Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

Nebuchadnezzar called in his _____ made up of magicians, astrologers, sorcerers (users of _____ and necromancy - communicating with the _____), Chaldeans (priests who led in _____ of the pagan gods), and soothsayers (the false _____ of the pagan religion, energized by _____.)

Dan. 2:3-9 3 And the king said to them, “I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream.” 4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation.” 5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, “My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. 6 However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.” 7 They answered again and said, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation.” 8 The king answered and said, “I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm: 9 if you do not make known the dream to me, *there is only one* decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.”

Those of us who have read Daniel, even casually before, must be careful to resist the _____ to rush through this portion of the account of a worried king to consider the dream itself and the significance of it. Indeed, we will discover that the dream is of astounding _____ for us all, probably even more for _____ than for Nebuchadnezzar himself. However, there is something important for us here that we will be worse off if we miss. Because God is giving us some very _____ counsel about dealing with anxiety. Next the Lord shows us...

What does not work to cure anxiety:

- The “_____” excuse Dan. 2:10a The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, “There is not a man on earth who can tell the king’s matter;
- The “no _____” excuse Dan. 2:10b therefore no king, lord, or _____ of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.

- The “that’s _____” excuse Dan. 2:11 **It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.**”

Have we not all uttered similar words? “_____ could do what they expect of me.” “They’ve _____ done that to anybody else.” “This is absolutely _____!” These do not work any better for us than they did for Nebuchadnezzar’s cabinet.

Dan. 2:12-13 12 For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. 13 So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise *men*; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill *them*.

III. ANXIETY REPLACED

Is there an answer offered on how to be rid of anxiety and instead be filled with _____? The answer comes by way of _____ through the man for whom the book is named: _____!

Dan. 2:14 Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise *men* of Babylon;

- Faith – already Daniel has proven himself a man who _____ God’s Word.
- Counsel – advice _____ on God’s Word
- Wisdom – the knowledge of God’s Word made _____ in experience

Daniel not doubt knew **Prov. 3:5-6 5 _____ in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your _____ understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.** God directed Daniel’s response

Dan. 2:15-16 15 he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel. 16 So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. Notice again how Daniel is willing to make an _____ for the king to give him time.

Dan. 2:17-18 17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 18 that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon.

What did Daniel do and ask his friends to do? Seek _____ from God – _____!

Dan. 2:19 Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

What did Daniel do after praying? _____!

Listen to Daniel's prayer of praise and you will see what Daniel knew about God that gave him the _____ to react in tranquility rather than being _____ by anxiety.

Dan. 2:20-23 20 Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. 21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. 22 He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what *is* in the darkness, And light dwells with Him. 23 "I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king's demand."

Take note that the problem is not yet _____, but still Daniel praises God. Arioch is still under orders to _____ the cabinet of which Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah are a part. But Daniel is not worried _____ he trusts in God, _____ His Word, and is confident that God _____ prayer.

And Daniel is not yet finished with that which keeps his soul tranquil when other souls fret with anxiety.

- Daniel gives _____ to God

Dan. 2:24-30 24 Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise *men* of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation." 25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation." 26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?" 27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. 28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: 29 As for you, O king, thoughts came *to your mind while* on your bed, *about* what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. 30 But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for *our* sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

CONCLUSION: Thus God shows us how to have victory over anxiety and worry:

- Be a person of _____, who takes his _____ from God's Word and _____ it.
- When trouble comes, _____ and ask others to pray.
- Even before the problem is solved, _____ God for Who He is and what He has done in times past.
- When the difficulty is diminished, give God the _____.