

AT PEACE UNDER PRESSURE

Poised Under Pressure Series – Part 5

By Brian Flewelling 7.29.18

Intro:

Last week we read through the amazing story of Daniel in the Den of Lions. We learned that God doesn't deliver us from every pain and inconvenience in life. But He does promise to deliver us from the power of evil. To give us victory over the lions we face. Lion of Lust. Pride. Fears. A tormented past. Deception. Our God is a champion and He is making you, More than a Conqueror through Jesus Christ.

There are 3 major themes in the book of Daniel

- Yahweh is Lord of all kingdoms
- To his faithful servants he gives the power to live in victory over darkness
- All peoples and rulers are accountable to Yahweh

Chapter six ends the narratives of Daniel's life. Chapter 7-12 are the compilation of visions and dreams that Daniel experienced late in his life and career. Remember earlier in his life Daniel interprets the king's dreams. And he gains a reputation for being a revealer of mysteries. But now Daniel has his own dream (the meaning of which) is very similar to chapter 2. Twice he says, "I was troubled."

Dreams

Have you ever had one of those dreams?

ie. Brian's Dream in Buffalo NY, "Bike Path Rapist!"

God finds all kinds of creative way to communicate to us. Dreams. And dreams are all throughout the scripture.

Let me plug for two Podcast Episodes #30 & #104. In which we talk about dreams and how to interpret our experiences through the Holy Spirit and through the Word of God. Use these as supplementary to the Sunday morning teaching.

Today we're going to look at Daniel 7. When we read this kind of a chapter it's really important not to get lost in unimportant details. You have to look at the big contour of what's being communicated. It's supposed to be an encouragement to God's people. Don't get sucked into details that are secondary. Big picture--God wins!

Daniel 7:1-18

Daniel 7:1 Daniel simply records what he saw from verses 2-14

Daniel 7:2-8 4 kingdoms; clarified by verse 17

When we reach verses 9-10 a new scene in his vision, at first seemingly disjointed. Two realities. Simultaneously. The beast down here. One up there, we see the God of Wisdom and Justice.

Daniel 7:9-10 God of Wisdom & Justice

- This is a vision of God. God is a Spirit. He doesn't look like this. But God reveals himself in a parable of pictures to help us understand His character.
- **Thrones were set** – courtroom,
- **Ancient of Days** – Only time this name is used of God. But reminds audience of Isaiah.

Isaiah 43:11-13

I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior.

I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—

I, and not some foreign god among you.

You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "that I am God.

Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand.

When I act, who can reverse it?"

- **Took his seat.** – He's dwelling, remaining. On throne and nobody's going to remove him.
- **Clothing was white as snow** – innocence and purity in nature – brilliantly beautiful.

Matthew 28:3

His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

- **Hair of his head was white like wool** – an elder in their culture, wisdom, stature, honor, position – celebrated person in the community. People respected them.
- **Throne was flaming with fire** – illustration of white hot coals
Its wheels were all ablaze – whirls, tornado of fire. Ezekiel had a similar encounter with God.

A river of fire was flowing out

Ill: bonfire – approaching 2,000 degrees. I could get within 10 yards of that.

If you think that you can toy with sin, and toy around with the Holy fire of God... I urge you to reconsider. The scripture says **he is a consuming fire**. I think our culture has lost the respect and mortal fear of God's holiness, and as a casualty we can't see the beauty of his innocence – the splendor of his holiness. **If you want to know God more deeply, embrace His corrections.**

- **Thousands upon thousands attended him** – servants were symbol of status.

(countless) signifying this is a very important person. Not just a food truck attendant. He's got employees and attendants. All he has to do is set his mind to it. The servants do all the work. His rank and status!

- **Court was seated** – the legal process has begun, this is a solemn occasion.
- **Books were opened**- to count, enumerate. The tally, score.

This is a picture of a judge. Beasts down here. And the judge is about ready to make a judgment.

Daniel 7:11-12; Daniel 7:25-26

- “I continued to watch...” – Daniel's got the popcorn out.
- The first two scenes begin to interlace, like the lattice top on Grandma's Apple pie.
- Kingdoms on earth. In light of the God's kingdom in heaven.
- Notice the fire. It's a picture of his judgments.

The meaning of the dream so far is very simple. (God trying to encourage his people.)

The powers of this world are accountable to God. Anyone who wields authority or influence.

- Teacher's Union
- Local employer or management in a multi-national
- Influence you have through art & story, blogging
- Political party
- Gossip gang in the neighborhood
- Parenting style

Governments & influencers, men & women hiding within government systems, will be held accountable to a higher law.

The purpose of human leadership is to release, bless, and protect, not to control and destroy.

- **Romans 13:1,4; Matthew 20:25-28**

What do we do when governments and groups of men destroy one another?

- Daniel concerned about the especially abusive 4th Beast in Daniel 7:19.
- 13.5 million Syrians have been displaced from their homes because one tyrant is fighting another tyrant. Do you think God is deaf to those cries of anguish?
- 20 million people are at risk of starving to death in Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia, Yemen because of manmade famines through war because fighters blocking humanitarian aid in an attempt to starve each other out. – and we ask, Where is God?
- 70,000 Christians are currently locked up in concentration camps under Kim Jong's communism. Does that mean God is not good? God is not faithful? God is not a deliverer?

- The first Christians in Rome were tortured by an inspired maniac. Does that mean God wasn't watching over them?
- When someone does something horrific to your family. Does that mean God doesn't care about your family?
- No—No—No
- It seems like an epidemic these days to complain about how God allows suffering.
- Let me get this straight...
We stick a knife in our neighbor and then complain that God hasn't stopped us?!?
- We abuse the freedoms we possess and then complain about the abuse of those freedoms.
- God is shockingly beautifully perfectly white hot holiness. Unlike the beasts that you and I have created and unleashed on this earth.
- God is true. Every man is a liar. We will be held accountable. He will not let this go on forever. Injustice ruins people. Sin ruins people.
- As hard as it is for the modern mind to understand, God's justice and His loving kindness are two sides of the side coin.

Daniel 7:13-14

We know the end of the story. We know Jesus fulfills this 400 years later. But to a 4th century Jew this is very confusing.

Son of Man – a divine figure who looks like a human, but he's separate from God, but he receives worship that only belongs to God.

In the gospel of Matthew Jesus refers to himself 28x as the Son of Man. 27 out of 28x he's not referring to his humanity, he's referring to his Lordship, his glory, and his kingdom.... He's referring to himself as the divine figure that Daniel saw in this vision.

One like a Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven

Matthew 24:30

Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the **Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven**, with power and great glory.

Approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His presence

- In a courtroom, the counselor has to have permission to approach the bench.
Son of Man is having an audience/hearing with the judge.
- God's throne is throwing fire. He is constantly destroying sin and filth and evil
- This One like the Son of Man walks right into the furnace of God's holy presence.
There's only one innocent enough to do this and not be destroyed. Spotless Lamb.

Reminds us of Daniel 3:25 “I see four men walking around in the fire...and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.”

When you are accustomed to being purified in the fire of God’s presence, there is no furnace or fire of man that can hurt you.

Matthew 10:28

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Daniel 7:14; Daniel 7:27; Daniel 7:17

gives a simple explanation of the dream in two sentences. Doesn’t get lost in details.

The importance of the vision is this: God is judge. He will judge. And His saints will walk in his judgments.

Matthew 13:40-43

As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

For the one who depends on the perfect life of Jesus, who’s guilt is hidden within his innocence, (Colossians 3:3 – your life is now hidden with Christ in God.) we don’t need to fear God’s judgments.

His judgments don’t end in our destruction. They end in our purification. They are an invitation to share more deeply in his divine nature.

Leviticus 19:2

Be holy because I the Lord your God am holy.

Closing Prayer: