

Route 66: The Book of Daniel

I. Introduction

A. The fall of Jerusalem puts into question God's promises to His people and His ability to accomplish all His holy will.

II. Proposition

A. A word about understanding Daniel (Big picture vs. minute details – i.e., eschatology)

1. We must be careful not to lose the main thing by focusing on the peripheral issues!

B. The main thing: The Lord God is the sovereign Lord and He will bring about all His holy will in His own time, no matter how bleak the present circumstances appear to be.

III. Exposition

A. **The sovereign Lord providentially cares for His saints as He directs history toward His appointed goal.**

1. Daniel and friends – 1:19-21

- a. God gave them favor with the officials – 1:9.
- b. God gave them learning and skill in understanding – 1:17.
- c. God protected them in the face of opposition – 3.

2. Knowing this, then, we can have confidence in God and His grace and accomplish great things for God.

a. See Packer, Knowing God

1). First place this confidence is evident – prayer (2:17-18).

2). Second place this confidence is evident – action.

a). Fiery furnace – “But if not . . .”

B. **The kingdoms of men stand in temporary opposition to God and His kingdom agenda.**

1. Opposition to God's saints on an individual scale:

a. Daniel 6 – Daniel's enemies come against him because of his faith, but God delivered him.

2. Opposition to God's saints on a collective scale:

- a. Daniel 7:19-22 – we see hostility against God's people
- b. Daniel 8:21-27 – even greater persecution

3. We can endure suffering and persecution because the Lord is sovereign and the reign of men is temporary (Daniel 7:19-22).

C. **The sovereign Lord rules history and directs the kingdoms of men toward His appointed goal.**

1. God guided kings through dreams, then He had His chosen one interpret them (2).

- a. Nebuchadnezzar's dreams – 2, 4
- b. Belshazzar's dream – 5 (the handwriting on the wall)

2. God brought them down in the height of their pride:

- a. Nebuchadnezzar – 4:28-33
 - 1). This fulfilled Nebuchadnezzar's second dream – 4:4-27.
 - 2). Note how a pagan king exalts God – 4:34-37

b. Belshazzar – 5:24-31

3. Human kingdoms will come and go.

- a. Babylon – Daniel 4, 5
- b. Medo-Persia – 8
- c. Greek – 8, 11

4. Keeping the main thing the main thing!

5. Knowing this, then, we can have confidence in God and His timing until His will is accomplished.
 - a. The people of God were looking for God's kingdom to be established quickly.
 - 1). Note: seventy years . . .
 - 2). Daniel 9 – Israel was being thoroughly punished for her rebellion.
 - b. There may be periods that look like then but in actual fact are not – Daniel 10-12.
 - c. What should our perspective be regarding God's timing and the coming kingdom?
 - 1). Acts 1:6-8
 - d. We can have confidence because no matter what, God will accomplish all His holy will!
 - 1). His plan is never in jeopardy!

D. The sovereign Lord will put an end to the kingdoms of men and ultimately establish His eternal kingdom by the hand of the Son of man.

1. The sovereign Lord will put an end to human kingdoms and establish His kingdom forever:
 - a. Kingdoms come and go until the Lord puts an end to them – 7:19-22.
 - b. The Lord will establish His eternal kingdom - 2:44; 7:16-18, 27.
2. Dominion is give to the son of man - 7:9-14

IV. Conclusion

- A. Knowledge and trust in God's sovereignty provides the basis for perseverance and living confidently in the midst of a hostile world.
- B. Until the end comes, we persevere and live confidently knowing that God is in control!
 1. We endure suffering and persecution at the hands of God's enemies – Daniel 7:19-22
 2. We endure pain and refuse to fear death knowing it is temporary - 2 Corinthians 4:16-20.
 3. We endure all hostility in this world because we are looking for a better country – 2 Peter 3:8-18
- C. Read Matthew 24:15-44

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