

Daniel in the Den

Introduction

Review Series and Purpose

God had foretold what would happen if the Israelites entered the promised land and then began to intermarry and worship other gods. The Lord would send an enemy...they will be hungry, thirsty, naked and lack everything.

Deuteronomy 28:47–50 (ESV) — 49 The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, 50 a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young.

Deuteronomy 28:51–52 (ESV) — 52 “They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land. And they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout all your land, which the LORD your God has given you.

He goes on to describe that they will be so hungry they will eat their children. Not only are you going to eat your children....but you are going to refuse to share any of their meat with even your remaining children. Women will have their children in private and guard them so that they don't have to share that meal with anyone else.

Deuteronomy 28:64–66 (ESV) — 64 “And the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. 65 And among these nations you shall find no respite, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot, but the LORD will give you there a trembling heart and failing eyes and a languishing soul. 66 Your life shall hang in doubt before you. Night and day you shall be in dread and have no assurance of your life.

Sounds horrible doesn't it?

God's most horrific punishments always relate to people rejecting Him and worshiping other gods. God does not tolerate his children worshiping other gods.....The very first commandment.....I am the Lord YOUR GOD....You shall have no other gods before me.

He only brought out this ordeal after they had rejected warning after warning and were begged to return to Him.....Much like the world we live in today. Prophet after prophet brought warnings.....until finally came Jeremiah.

Jeremiah's story is written in two books.....Jeremiah which tells us of the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 BC And Lamentations which tells us of the pain caused by those events.....as Jeremiah laments the suffering and the pain.

Jeremiah 25:8–9 (ESV) — Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.

Jeremiah 25:10–11 (ESV) — 11 This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste. 13 I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations.

Oh no...Not the Babylonians....they were ruthless, vile, wicked warriors with no heart and no conscience. Note that these evil people were sent by God and used by God as his instrument to strike the Jewish people. Also notice that when God is finished using them....He will punish them too....He is a just God.

Also notice that everything written in the book....all that we read last week and all that we have read today plus more will occur....When God makes a promise.....good or bad....it will happen. Whether it is to the Jewish people, the Babylonians or anyone else.

Yet God can't destroy the Jewish people....even though they deserve it.....because He has made a covenant with Abraham.... Almost every time God issues a punishment in the Bible He also follows it with a hope and a promise.....Note that He has limited this round of punishment to 70 years.

Jeremiah 31:31–32 (ESV) — 31 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 31:33–34 (ESV) — 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

In order to understand the misery that happened we need to understand a bit about Military actions during this time

Jeremiah 4:5–6 (ESV) — 5 Declare in Judah, and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say, “Blow the trumpet through the land; cry aloud and say, ‘Assemble, and let us go into the fortified cities!’ 6 Raise a

standard toward Zion, flee for safety, stay not, for I bring disaster from the north, and great destruction.

Certain cities....like Jerusalem....were fortified When invading armies came in....everyone fled to the city with the strongest walls. So once the Babylonians began ravaging the countryside.....everyone fled to Jerusalem

While this gave them immediate protection.....it made them susceptible to a siege....The Babylonians just surrounded the city....cut off all supplies and waited The only hope those in Jerusalem had was for that army to be called to another battle that was more pressing..... Otherwise they just starved them out....and began building a siege rampart.....that would allow them to get over the walls when the time came.

Look at these pictures of Masada....looks impenetrable.....Photo 1 But the Romans began building a siege ramp while they waited for the people to starve....Photo 2 and Photo 3 and Photo 4 Eventually the walls weren't so tall anymore....Photo 5

The same thing happened in Jerusalem with the Babylonians.

2 Kings 25:1–3 (ESV) — 1 And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem and laid siege to it. And they built siegeworks all around it. 2 So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 3 On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.

Think about what it was like for the Jewish people in Jerusalem....the city was packed.....people were everywhere....More crowded than during Passover and no one could enter or leave the city. Every room....every guest room...every place not just full but packed.

Cities had a water supply for emergencies but it quickly ran out. They depended upon the ability to cook to be able to use the flour and grain that their diet was based upon. Wood and fire materials ran out long before the food.....eventually human waste was used for fires. Rationing of water and food were almost immediate.

Ezekiel 4:16–17 (ESV) — 16 Moreover, he said to me, “Son of man, behold, I will break the supply of bread in Jerusalem. They shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and they shall drink water by measure and in dismay. 17 I will do this that they may lack bread and water, and look at one another in dismay, and rot away because of their punishment.

And so we see the people crammed into Jerusalem’s alleys eating rationed food, drinking rationed water, cooking over their own excrement. Add to this the anxiety that increases each day. Beyond the walls, the attacking enemy has fresh food, fresh water, and time. Your only hope is that some other event calls the enemy away before the siege engines are finally built.

But there is more and it gets worse Garbage: No one can really collect and take garbage outside the city for disposal. Much of this, of course, might lend itself to solving the fuel problem, and there will be no wasted food to throw out. Human waste, sanitation, and hygiene: There is no taking it outside the city. As indicated above, some of it can be used

for fuel. Beyond that, however, people will not be able to keep themselves clean, their utensils clean, their clothes clean, or anything clean.

At this point, it becomes easy to envision what Jeremiah meant when he told the people that famine, pestilence, and the sword were coming. Once you have a city crowded with makeshift shelters of unwashed malnourished people, you have a recipe for the rapid spread of disease. Smallpox, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, etc. could erupt with nothing to stop the spread. This brings us to the final logistical problem.

Corpses: People will begin to die – some of natural causes, but eventually disease will take its toll. What do you do about the dead? I have no information about what they really did, but I can imagine some options. I do not think that they would attempt storage. Perhaps they threw them over the city wall.

Jeremiah 9:22 (ESV) — 22 Speak: “Thus declares the LORD, ‘The dead bodies of men shall fall like dung upon the open field, like sheaves after the reaper, and none shall gather them.’ ”

Eventually the situation in the city becomes very desperate. Especially when the food finally runs out. I have gone to great length here to describe the dynamics of a besieged city, because the Book of Lamentations represents one person’s coming to terms with the terror and horror of being there. Here is what he says about the famine and its effects:

The Book of Jeremiah and the Book of Lamentations

Lamentations 1:11 (ESV) — 11 All her people groan as they search for bread; they trade their treasures for food to revive their strength. “Look, O LORD, and see, for I am despised.”

Lamentations 2:11–12 (ESV) — 11 My eyes are spent with weeping; my stomach churns; my bile is poured out to the ground because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, because infants and babies faint in the streets of the city. 12 They cry to their mothers, “Where is bread and wine?” as they faint like a wounded man in the streets of the city, as their life is poured out on their mothers’ bosom.

Lamentations 2:19–20 (ESV) — 20 Look, O LORD, and see! With whom have you dealt thus? Should women eat the fruit of their womb, the children of their tender care? Should priest and prophet be killed in the sanctuary of the Lord?

Lamentations 4:4 (ESV) — 4 The tongue of the nursing infant sticks to the roof of its mouth for thirst; the children beg for food, but no one gives to them.

Lamentations 4:8–10 (ESV) — 8 Now their face is blacker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets; their skin has shriveled on their bones; it has become as dry as wood. 9 Happier were the victims of the sword than the victims of hunger, who wasted away, pierced by lack of the fruits of the field. 10 The hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children; they became their food during the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Lamentations 5:7–11 (ESV) — 7 Our fathers sinned, and are no more; and we bear their iniquities. 8 Slaves rule over us; there is none to deliver us from their hand. 9 We get our bread at the peril of our lives, because of the sword in the wilderness. 10 Our skin is hot as an oven with the burning heat of famine. 11 Women are raped in Zion, young women in the towns of Judah.

The siege was horrible

2 Kings 25:4–6 (ESV) — 4 Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, and the Chaldeans were around the city.

2 Kings 25:7 (ESV) — 7 They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains and took him to Babylon.

Jeremiah 52:12–13 (ESV) — The captain of the bodyguard, who served the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem. 13 And he burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down.

Did this really happen? Did the city of Jerusalem get burned to the ground? Well the story is not only recorded in the Bible but also in King Nebuchadnezzar's Chronicles....and about 50 years ago....archaeologists confirmed the Biblical text.

Revealingly, the signs of localized fire destruction were broadly distributed throughout the remains of the building. "The widespread presence of charred remains suggests a deliberate destruction by fire, which was ignited at several locations in the top and bottom floors, with heat rising to burn the ceiling of the bottom floor," the researchers explained. "The spread of the fire and the rapid collapse of the building indicate that the destroyers invested great efforts to completely demolish the building and take it out of use."

This is a meaningful discovery, because it suggests this aristocratic residence was purposely targeted. This is what would be expected if invaders were attempting to punish ruling elites for their disobedience—which is exactly what the 30-month Siege of Jerusalem was all about. Following the Kingdom of Judah's revolt against Babylonian authority in the late seventh century BC, the king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, Nebuchadnezzar II, ordered the invasion and complete destruction of Jerusalem as a form of retribution for the Judean transgressions.

This study of one burned building doesn't reveal many details about what happened throughout the city as a whole. But it does strongly suggest the invaders wanted to make the destruction of Jerusalem as thorough as possible. This supports the Biblical story of how the siege unfolded, which was in a most brutal and merciless fashion.

Based on the prevalence of artifacts with magnetic distortions, it was determined that the fire was most intense on the top floor. On the bottom floor two of three rooms studied had not burned much at all, while another had been subject to a very intense but short-lived combustion-related event. This likely means that the destruction was so vast on the upper floor that it collapsed and smothered the fire on the first floor before it could spread from one end of the residence to another.

From the moment it was originally discovered, it was obvious how the structure had been destroyed.
“Evidence in the debris of the building left no doubt regarding the presence of fire,”

I will walk you through them 7 Slides

Imagine if the United States was completely destroyed.

Not a single thing remains of our country....everything has been destroyed....all you have is memories of places and people Now imagine that you know God allowed this tragedy and most everyone you know died a horrible death....pestilence, starvation, disease, and death have come to your family and children. And you know the reason is that God is punishing your nation for worshipping other gods.

You know because He warned you....over and over. You cried out for God to save your family....your children....your nation....and silence and punishment were the answers. Imagine the emotion of losing everything you know....

Lamentations 1:1 (ESV) — 1 How lonely sits the city that was full of people! How like a widow has she become, she who was great among the nations! She who was a princess among the provinces has become a slave.

Lamentations 1:4 (ESV) — 4 The roads to Zion mourn, for none come to the festival; all her gates are desolate; her priests groan; her virgins have been afflicted, and she herself suffers bitterly.

Lamentations 1:10 (ESV) — 10 The enemy has stretched out his hands over all her precious things; for she has seen the nations enter her sanctuary, those whom you forbade to enter your congregation.¹¹ All her people groan as they search for bread; they trade their treasures for food to revive their strength. “Look, O LORD, and see, for I am despised.”

Lamentations 1:17–18 (ESV) — 17 Zion stretches out her hands, but there is none to comfort her; the LORD has commanded against Jacob that his neighbors should be his foes; Jerusalem has become a filthy thing among them. 18 “The LORD is in the right, for I have rebelled against his word; but hear, all you peoples, and see my suffering; my young women and my young men have gone into captivity.

You are carried away to let's say....Iraq where you live as slaves.... no churches....no bible study...no bibles....no worship songs.....maybe no Christian fellowship at all.... God promises that this time will only last 70 years, but you will be gone by then. Let me ask you a question...

Would you still hold on to your faith?If so....how long? With all of this background...maybe we can begin to understand the incredible faith of Daniel.

Map of Babylonian Exile

The Jews Exiled to Babylonia

Daniel 1:3–4 (ESV) — 3 Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, 4 youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

This is what the Babylonians did...they intermixed and taught foreign gods and languages in order to use the enemy rather than destroy them So Daniel is in a foreign land.....they worship foreign gods....they are exiled....and now slaves to a people that they don't know....just as God promised would happen

Daniel 1:17 (ESV) — 17 As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Daniel 1:19–20 (ESV) — 19 And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. 20 And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.

But things became complicated very soon.

Daniel 3:1 (ESV) — 1 King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Daniel 3:4–6 (ESV) — 4 And the herald proclaimed aloud, “You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5 that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. 6 And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.”

Story of Shadrach, Mesach, and Abendego

Daniel 6:4–5 (ESV) — 4 Then the high officials and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. 5 Then these men said, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”

Daniel 6:7 (ESV) — 7 All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.

Daniel 6:8–9 (ESV) —8 Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked.” 9 Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.

Daniel 6:10 (ESV) — 10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

Daniel 6:11–13 (ESV) — 11 Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. 12 Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, “ 13 Then they answered and said before the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.”

Daniel 6:14–15 (ESV) — 14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. 15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.”

Daniel 6:16–18 (ESV) — 16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. (He could see Daniel waving goodbye) The king declared to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!” 17 And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. 18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

Daniel 6:19–21 (ESV) — 19 Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 As he came near to the den where Daniel was, (God it looks like Daniel must be the clouds in my eyes) he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, “O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” 21 Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever!

Daniel 6:22–23 (ESV) — 22 My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm.” 23 Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

Daniel 6:24 (ESV) — 24 And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

These were not fake or tame lions...they were hungry..

Daniel 6:25–27 (ESV) — 25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: “Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. 27

He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions."

I need to ask this question once again...."Does this story sound familiar to anyone?

The administrators and satraps conspired against Daniel. The Pharisees and Jewish leaders conspired against Jesus. They follow Daniel around, investigate him, and try to find something to charge him with. They follow Jesus around and try to find something to charge him with. They ask him trick questions such as, "Should we pay taxes?" or "Should we stone this woman?"

Daniel is found blameless. They can find nothing to bring against him. Jesus is found blameless. They can find nothing to bring against him.

Daniel's enemies come up with a plan to arrest him. Jesus' enemies come up with a plan to arrest him.

Daniel's enemies have to spy on him to catch him. Jesus' enemies have to use a spy to catch him. When the plan is put into motion Daniel goes into a time of prayer even though he knows that if he does he will be arrested. When the plan is put into motion Jesus goes into a time of prayer even though he knows that if he stays he will be arrested. Daniel prays three times a day. Jesus prays three times in the garden. Daniel is arrested after his time a prayer. Jesus is arrested after his time of prayer.

After being arrested, Daniel is immediately taken to judgment. After being arrested, Jesus is immediately taken to judgment. Daniel is found guilty of transgressing the law of the Medes and Persians. Jesus is found guilty of transgressing the law of the Jews.

Darius is deeply stressed that Daniel must be sentenced to the lion's den, even though Darius is the one who sentences him. Pontius Pilate is deeply stressed that Jesus has to be sentenced to the cross, even though Pilate is the one who sentences him.

Darius is unable to sleep. The wife of Pontius Pilate is troubled in her sleep. Darius pours over the law to try to find some way to save Daniel before the sentence has to be carried out. Pontius tries to find a way to save Jesus. He tries flogging him as a punishment, and then offers to release him, but the crowd chooses Barabbas.

The satraps have Darius cornered. The Pharisees have Pilate cornered. Daniel is placed into a den. Jesus is placed into a tomb. They are both likely caves A giant rock is placed in front of the den. A giant rock is placed in front of the tomb. The king's seal is placed over the rock so if anyone breaks the seal they will be killed. A Roman seal is placed over the rock so if anyone breaks the seal they will be killed.

While Daniel is in the den Darius cannot sleep. While Jesus is in the tomb his followers are lost and distraught. All possibility of escape is cut off. Daniel is presumed dead. All possibility of escape is cut off. Jesus is presumed dead.

A heavenly being appears in the lion's den. A heavenly being appears at the tomb. At first light, Darius rushes to the lion's den. At first light, the women rush to the tomb.

Darius is given the good news that Daniel is alive. The women are given the good news that Jesus is alive. Daniel lives to prosper in the Medo-Persian kingdom. Jesus lives to prosper in God's kingdom

Darius proclaims to the world that God's kingdom will never be destroyed. The followers of Jesus proclaim God's kingdom to the world.

So once again we see the story of Jesus foreshadowed in the life of a man of faith. We have seen this with Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Moses and now Daniel.

The thread of foreshadowing that runs throughout the Bible. All stories and events pointing to the Messiah. This is an incredible book....the more you study it....the more you understand that only God could have written it.

So how do we apply the lessons of Daniel's life to our lives today?

Enormous Faith.....Trust in God....Faith in the future.....generations to come. Well....we are beginning to live in exile.....We live in a land that has forgotten our God.....chased after other gods....rejected God and forgotten His warnings.

Just like everything in the lives of the early Israelites pointed to the promised Messiah....Everything in our lives clearly points to God's promises regarding end times and the return of Jesus.

We aren't in a lions den yet, but our land is feeling more foreign to us and the pressure to conform to those who mock and don't worship our God is increasing Our Nations wants to silence Christians....forbid any mention of Jesus....and reject God in the name of tolerance. Agenda's that dishonor God and promote sin are being forced upon us both socially and increasingly legally. We are going to have to decide if...like Daniel....we are going to obey and worship our God regardless of the consequences.

Now we may not be thrown into a Lion's Den.....but we are often in our neighbor's, friends, and coworkers den. We have an opportunity this election year to be Daniel in the Den. To engage a world that doesn't know our God....not by attacking them...not by accusing them...not by arguing with them....We can focus on worshiping our God....and spreading His love to them through our compassion, love and gentleness....We are called to be Daniel in the Den's of this world.

When the topic turns to issues that offend God....LGBTQ....or unmarried people living together....or all religions leading to God...or the lack of absolute truth.....are we standing up for God or denying Him with our silence? Are we speaking truth but doing it in a manner that denies Him? We can be absolutely right and horribly wrong at the same time. We must speak truth in love with gentleness and compassion or not at all.

We can't expect people who don't know Jesus to live as though they do.... We can't expect those who don't have the Holy Spirit to exhibit the insight, understanding and power of those who do We must engage our world with love and compassion but we cannot be silent about God's truth.

We can expect thought that those who know Jesus live like it. We can love everyone without approving of their actions or condoning their behavior.

We can exhibit love and tolerance of someone's actions or lifestyle without approving of it. Tolerance must never be equated with approval.

Jesus said it best...."Father forgive them for they don't know what they are doing" What they are doing is sinful....what they are doing is wrong....what they are doing must be forgiven.....but they are just ignorant of You.

Guys we are once again in an election year. You will never hear me preach from the pulpit about political issues. You will never see someone running for office in the pulpit at Remnant.

Many people try to pressure me into taking a political stance from this pulpit. I was ordained to preach the WORD in season and out of season. Not to give my political opinion. Truthfully, I can't help you because I don't know who to vote for. It is more important to me that we treat those we disagree with...with love...compassion...and gentleness..and let them see Jesus in us.

I don't see any of that in politics today. We can hold on to our truth....share our truth with others...and do so in a way that honors God....and leads people to our God. That is what Daniel did. He didn't attack those worshipping other Gods...He just made sure he worshipped and honored His God.

We are to share truth in love with gentleness and compassion...I don't see any of that these days of Facebook...Fox News...CNN... or anywhere else in the political realm. Thus, I have committed to focusing on the Spiritual Realm and let God carry out His plan for His world. Jesus focused on the eternal destination of every person that He encountered. He didn't have time for something as mundane as human politics. The entire gospel is all about people trying to get Jesus involved in the political issues of the day and to engage the Romans....How can we have missed that? And Jesus repetitively refused to engage. He didn't care about human politics...He made that abundantly clear.

Acts 1:6 (ESV) 6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

Let me go ahead and address the obvious....Jesus lived during the time of Caesar and Herod...The Jews were held against their will by an evil and oppressive government. That government suppressed their freedom of religion and dishonored God. Romans were harsh rulers of Jewish people....they impacted worship at the temple, hindered Jewish religious freedom and were evil leaders....Jesus knew all of that.

Turn with me for a second to the sermon where Jesus spoke on the politics of the day....Wait....it isn't in the Bible...Jesus never did that....Ok well what about where Jesus told people how to live in an oppressive world with ungodly leaders.....Wait that is not there either...However Paul would address it to those living in Rome just a few decades later...He gave them guidance on how to live godly lives in ungodly nations...

Romans 13:1–2 (ESV) 1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

Why will I never speak about politics from this pulpit....Because I am commanded to preach the word in season and out of season and political issues are not addressed in God's Word. Jesus didn't care about worldly politics because He came to reveal a spiritual Kingdom and move our focus to eternity. If Jesus had wanted us to get focused on politics He would have done so. Pray, vote however God leads you and focus on eternal things. But make sure you love those who disagree with you.

Let's remember that Daniel didn't attack those who worshiped other Gods.....He just made sure he worshiped his....And in the end....those around him.....came to acknowledge and worship his God too....When the disciples tried to get Jesus to set up a worldly kingdom...here is His response...

Acts 1:6–8 (ESV) 7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Hey Jesus are you going to set up our Kingdom now? And Jesus responds with...why don't you focus on telling people about mine? My kingdom will go way beyond Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria...I came to save the entire world...not to waste my time...politicking for yours.

I think that there is a lesson in this story for us.....Let's live like Daniel in Babylon....Let's trust God rather than political correctness....Let's live out loud in love....Let's show a new way.....loving others the way Jesus loved them.....tolerating their behavior without approving of it.....leading them to Jesus....and letting him transform them....like He did us. Daniel didn't try to bring down Babylon...He simply made sure He focused on the eternal kingdom of His God. The events of Daniel's life pointed to Jesus....let's make sure ours does too. Let's commit to being Daniel in the Den. Let's Pray