



Carstairs-Bancroft United Church
June 1, 2022
DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC
By Rev. Maria Szabone Berces



Photo: Our Daily Bread

Beloved Ones,

Today's Inspiration in one sentence

"... there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries."

(Daniel 2:28)

Did You Know?

AUTHOR

Likely **Daniel**, though some question this. Chapters 7-12 are written in the first person ("I Daniel," 7:15), but the first six chapters are in the third person ("Then Daniel answered," 2:14)

DATE

The book was probably completed c. 530 BC, shortly after Cyrus the Great, king of Persia captured the city of Babylon in 539.

IN TEN WORDS OR LESS

Faithful to God in a challenging setting, Daniel is blessed.

DETAILS, PLEASE

As a young man, Daniel – along with three others to be known as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – are taken from their home in Jerusalem to serve the king of Babylon. Daniel's God-given ability to interpret dreams endears him to King Nebuchadnezzar, whose vision of a huge statue, Daniel says, represents existing and future kingdoms. The next Babylonian king, Belshazzar, throws a drinking party using cups stolen from the temple in Jerusalem; he literally sees "the writing on the wall", which Daniel interprets as the soon-to-come takeover of Babylon by the Medes.

The Median king, Darius, keeps Daniel as an adviser but is tricked into passing a law designed by other jealous officials to hurt Daniel, who ends up in a den of lions. Once again, God protects His people. The final six chapters contain Daniel's prophetic visions, including that of "seventy weeks" of the end times.

SO WHAT?

The Most High God is sovereign over all human kingdoms. God will always take care of the people who are faithful to Him.

(The NIV Study Bible; Daniel & Know Your Bible; Barbour Publishing)

Personal Insight

In my experience it is always a leap of faith to trust God with our difficult circumstances or challenges. It requires courage, as the meditation below lays it out. But if we consider ourselves the followers of Jesus the Christ, we have an encouragement from Him, as well: **"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me."** (John 14:1) In dire situations and also as we live our everyday lives we can experience: **"Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever."** (Psalm 125:1)

Grace and peace to you all,
Rev. Maria



UNCOMMON COURAGE

Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream for him.

Daniel 2:24

READ Daniel 2:24–30

In 1478, Lorenzo de Medici, the ruler of Florence, Italy, escaped an attack on his life. His countrymen sparked a war when they tried to retaliate against the attack on their leader. As the situation worsened, the cruel King Ferrante I of Naples became Lorenzo's enemy, but a courageous act by Lorenzo changed everything. He visited the king unarmed and alone. This bravery, paired with his charm and brilliance, won Ferrante's admiration and ended the war.

Daniel also helped a king experience a change of heart. No one in Babylon could describe or interpret King Nebuchadnezzar's troubling dream. This made him so angry that he decided to execute all his advisors—including Daniel and his friends. But Daniel asked to visit the king who wanted him dead (Daniel 2:24).

Standing before Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel gave God all the credit for revealing the mystery of the dream (v. 28). When the prophet described and deciphered it, Nebuchadnezzar honored the "God of gods and the Lord of kings" (v. 47). Daniel's uncommon courage, which was born of his faith in God, helped him, his friends, and the other advisors avoid death that day.

In our lives, there are times when bravery and boldness are needed to communicate important messages. May God guide our words and give us the wisdom to know what to say and the ability to say it well.

By **Jennifer Benson Schuldt**

REFLECT & PRAY

Dear Jesus, thank You for the courage You showed during Your life on earth. Fill me with Your wisdom and power when I face tense situations. Amen.

How has someone's bravery made a difference in your life? How can you rest in God's power to act courageously for Him?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The book of Daniel spans seventy years (605–535 bc) of the Babylonian exile, Judah's punishment for her covenantal unfaithfulness (Deuteronomy 28:36, 64; Jeremiah 25:11; 29:10–11). Daniel, given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar (Daniel 1:7), was one of the many teenagers of royal and noble descent deported to Babylon and educated in the ways of the Babylonians to serve the victorious Babylonian king (vv. 3–7). Daniel 2 tells of how Daniel rose to become Nebuchadnezzar's chief adviser and right-hand man. He became adviser and confidante to the kings of Babylon (chs. 1–5) and Medo-Persia (ch. 6)—the superpowers of the ancient world. In chapters 7–12, God gave Daniel four apocalyptic visions of the course of human history, reminding His people that He's the sovereign God of all creation. - By: **K. T. Sim**

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