

11 August 2019

Daniel 2:1-6, 16-23 and 46-49

The following was not really a sermon but more of an all age reflection based on this week's holiday club. Alistair and Janice

(Space Cadets Mars and Pluto) begin with a summary of what we learned at Space Academy this week:

Day 1 - Forbidden Fruit

Daniel and his friends live a life of vegetables and discover God's favour and become ten times wiser than the king's wise men. They realise God wants them to trust him to live God's way and that God would be with them even in difficult times and places.

Day 2 - The Difficult Dream

When Daniel hears of the plan to execute all the wise men for not being able to tell the king what his dream meant, he asks for more time then he asks his friends to get down on their knees together and to seek God's help. Because of that they discovered that God knows everything and God reveals mysteries to those who seek him. God loves it when we seek him and when we pray together. God protects and even promotes people in the kingdom that lasts forever.

Day 3 - The Stunning Statue

When the king orders that everyone must bow down to the statue of gold, Shadrach, Mishach and Abednego knew in their hearts that was not right. They kept on praying to the Living God. They stood alone even when everyone else was doing the wrong thing it seemed.

Although they were thrown into the blazing furnace, the Living God was with them and saved them so that not even their clothes smelled of smoke. Once again, we learned that God protects and promotes and that S, M and A's faith spread to others so that those who didn't know God or follow God, like Nebuchadnezzar, could discover God and begin to worship him.

Day 4 - The Heavenly Hand

When Neb's son, Belshazzar becomes king, he doesn't follow God but goes back to worshipping gold and silver, iron, stone and wood. He eats too much food and drinks too much wine. He mocks the Temple by drinking wine from the sacred goblets. Again, he too has a dream and none of the astrologers or wise men can understand it but the queen reminds the king that one of the slaves from Judah, Daniel, has the spirit of God in him. Daniel again makes it clear that only God can give people understanding and tells the king what the

dream means. And Belshazzar discovers that God is real and powerful and rules over all the nations and that it matters how people treat God.

Day 5 - In the Pit

And finally, we looked at the most famous story about Daniel - the one with the lions. Daniel had been promoted to be one of the three chief ministers and he was very good at his job. The other 2 chief ministers were jealous of Daniel and plotted to trap him. Daniel ended up in beside the lions because he refused to stop praying to God, thanking God and asking God for help.

Daniel's good conduct wins the day and God saves him from the lions. King Darius passed a law that everyone should worship the God of Daniel, the One True Living God.

So, what do you think God wants to tells us through all of these stories?

[SLIDE] Olga Milisk reminds Russia of the constitutional right to peaceful protest but was dragged away and beaten afterwards.

[SLIDE] Ethiopia plants 300 million trees in a single day in an effort to do something about Climate Change.

And of course there's Greta Thunburg daring to be a Daniel and standing firm for what she believes to be right and true.

I wonder what we might stand firm for? Or dare to do?

The Book of Daniel shows us that:

God gives us the wisdom we need to do good things for people and planet.

God invites us to trust him in every situation. God is able to influence all things which we are not able to do. And in all things God works for good and for justice.

In God's kingdom there is lots of room for promotion. Just as Daniel and his friends were given more and more responsibility, so we can discover more and more life in God's kingdom where love, joy and peace are the first fruits. And its by these fruits that we will be known.

Promotion in the KOG is evidenced in the way we love, the way we care, the way we conduct ourselves in business and in private, in the way we hold ourselves when everything around is crumbling, the way we trust in God's unfailing grace.