In His Hands #2 “The Theological Center” Daniel 2: 1-23

**Intro**: Lot’s of ideas, confusion… simple question… Who Is God?

 Video – National Geographic channel with Morgan Freeman

 The Story of God --- 22 people from 22 nations asked,

 Who Is God? --- Rick C., “Saddest thing I’ve seen!”

**t/s** – Daniel survived, thrived in Exile… Strong Theological Foundation… His Theological Core… “Who Is God?”

* A Person of Deep Faith in Dark Situation is the one I want to hear answer the question, “Who Is God?”

***Review*** Last week – Chapter One Sets the Scene

 605; Defeat; Exile of the Best… Daniel & Friends

 Theological Theme refined in the Fire of Exile:

 ***Despite what seems, God is in Control. He knows what He is doing and He is doing it.*** (sovereign)

 He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands!

Daniel Two – Nebuchadnezzar has a Dream… Daniel declares Meaning

 Next week --- Daniel Tells the Dream and Its Meaning…

 ***What will take place at the End of Days*** (28)

 ***A Kingdom Set up by God… never be destroyed, crush all the kingdoms of the earth.***

**t/s** – Dream so impressive, so fascinating; it usually dominates our reading/study of Daniel 2. We neglect the Theological core.

**Tell the Story of 2: 1-9**

Nebuchadnezzar has a dream that troubles him. He calls together his counselors, the wise men, the experts of the day collected from all over the empire --- philosophy, religion, science ---

Magicians = Scribes; Conjurers (astrology); sorcerers (pharmacy)

Chaldeans = ancient wisdom… “Dream Books” (history)

* Belabored Point – The Experts of the Day
* Tell me my dream and its meaning! (three times)

***The world’s most powerful man is a nervous wreck;***

***The world’s wisest men are Stumped… silly shysters.***

**Read Daniel 2: 10 – 23** (with Comments)

Vs. 11 – Litany of Excuses, but notice….

No actual appeal or hope for God’s Help.

 Shockingly Honest admission about their Theology.

 (the gods exist, powerful… Away, Unconcerned.. No Help)

Vs. 16 – God’s Favor (cf. – VS. 8 --- trying to buy time)

Vs. 18 – God of Heaven and Prayer as humble faith… He Cares!

Vs. 19a – ***And Daniel Ran to Arioch and the King… NO…***

 He stopped to Give Thanks and Praise…. To consider How good God is… **ILL –** Ten Lepers

 **ILL –** Spurgeon sharing Gospel with women… “*If He does that*

 *For me, He’ll never hear the end of it*!”

Daniel’s Prayer expresses the Theological Core of this Chapter. It is actually more important than Nebuchadnezzer’s dream.

**Read Daniel’s Prayer of Thanksgiving in Vs. 19-23**

Note: Name = revealed character or nature

HE is repeated and in an Emphatic position (21)

**Thesis:** ***The God of the Heavens, the God of our fathers, is Present, Powerful and Personal.***

The Babylonian’s Idea of God --- fuzzy, far away, not much real help.

BUT, Daniel knows His Name…. The revealed character of God.

***The God of Heaven*** (18-19)

God is wholly Transcendent; lofty and Exalted; Creator & King.

***The God of my father’s*** (23)

Daniel is claiming that His God is not dead or defeated in Judah. He is not old-fashioned, outdated, irrelevant to the new way of life.

Deeper Still…. **Exodus 3: 13-17** – “my fathers === YHWH”

Daniel’s Theological Core set him apart from the experts of his day and sustained him in Exile. ***Let’s Daniel Testify today***:

**God Is Powerful**

**Exp** – Notice All the Verbs --- Changes, removes, gives, reveals…

 Daniel Praises the LORD for His Power!

 POWER over History, Kings, Kingdoms, even over the Experts

**App** – Too many Christians wringing their hands in Fear, Anxiety!

 Live, speak, act like we believe the Our Lord has Power.

**God is Present**

**Exp** – All of those great verbs are in Present Tense, not Past.

 God is not a God of the Past, not the God of another Place.

 He is LORD Here and Now… Present with Power & Wisdom.

The God of Heaven is Active on Earth.

**App** – In Truth, we prefer the separation… Man Upstairs.

**God is Personal** (23)

Exp – Read Vs. 23 Again… notice the shift out of third person.

 Daniel is no longer talking about God… To God.

 You/me; You/me; You/me; You/us….

 The God of Heaven, the God of my father’s is My God.

App – Do you want to understand Daniel? Do you want to know his

 Secret, what sustained him? Do you want to discover how He could stand so strong as an exile?

 Listen to his prayer!

 The God of Heaven, the God of my father’s is My God.

**Conclusion/Invitation**

The God of Heaven, the God of my father’s is My God. He is powerful, present and personal.

Can you say that this morning?

Is your faith more like the Babylonians --- god is up there somewhere but not much help with present realities.

How can you be so sure --- Powerful, Present, Personal??

**Jesus. Hear this Good News.**

**Charlottesville Remarks**

* New prayer rails today… time to use them.

White nationalist/supremacist marchers battled with counter protesters this weekend in Charlottesville Virginia --- hate, spit, rocks, violence and three killed by a car driven into crowd.

This should break your heart.

We are singing His Praise… These white supremacy groups Use His Name in Vain… they are a reproach and we cannot condemn them too frequently or to forcefully.

Every Cross you see… Turn your stomach and drive you to your knees. Force you to your neighbors of every race to tell them the Truth about Who Jesus Is --- Died on the Cross for All!

Let’s Pray ----

* Victims and Families
* Leaders need wisdom and courage
* Ugliness of Sin exposes; poverty of falsehood exposed… flock to the beautiful truth of the Gospel.