

Daniel 8:19-26

19 He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end.

20 The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.

21 The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king.

22 The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power.

23 "In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise.

24 He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people.

25 He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.

26 "The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future."

Good Morning, my Sisters and Brothers in Christ. I greet you this morning with the words of King David. "I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord."¹ I am glad to be in God's house. But even more important than being glad to be in the Lord's house, I am glad to know the Lord as my personal Savior. If you know the joy that comes from knowing and serving God then I invite you to make some noise.

This morning we continue with our study of Daniel. If you are finding it confusing to study Daniel I have a few of tips that might help.

- Daniel is not written in the order which events took place
- Daniel's prophecies are about future events in the life of the Jewish people
- Therefore, it is impossible for us to read into what Daniel saw and find a direct correlation for today
- In other words, some of the things Daniel saw have already come to past and some are still yet to come

These tips really apply to the scripture we are studying this morning. The scholars provide clear insight into some of the things that Daniel saw, but others are not as clear and may still be on their way. Once again I do not think that much will be gained by spending our time pondering the meaning of things to come, unless we can do that with an eye toward application. After all once Gabriel had explained the vision to Daniel he told Daniel:

26 "The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future."

Then consider what Daniel says:

27 I, Daniel, was worn out. I lay exhausted for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding.

Having said that by way of introduction I want to take an insight from the eight chapter of Daniel and use that as our lesson of application.

¹ PSA 122:1

I invite you to pray with me and for me as I ask a simple question:

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

SHALL WE PRAY! LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, we your people are here in your house this morning waiting to hear from you. We do not come asking you to come to us, for we know you are already here, but we come asking you to let us into your presence. Allow us to feel the moving of your spirit. Allow our hearts and minds to be changed by the understanding on your Word. Allow us to know you as Jehovah Jireh, the Lord who provides, all that we need. Abba, I ask that you use the meditations of my heart, the words of my mouth and the prayers I have prayed to speak to your people. In the name of Jesus the Christ we pray.

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

As I labored with this passage trying to find a message that would move us from this place to the next I read about 5 different sermons, several commentaries and two different versions of the lesson. I found comfort in the fact that several of the sermons began with *this is a very difficult passage*. You know, there is comfort in knowing that you are not alone in your struggles. Yet as I struggled I begin to ask God is the message right in front of me and I am unable to see it. It was then that the thread from all the research began to come together; research is a form of asking for help. Gabriel came to interpret the dream, a form of help. Daniel's work for the kings he served was a form of help and when it was over Daniel when back to work, back to helping. So I ask you:

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

We live in a time and place where it is difficult to ask for help. Although we declare it takes a village to raise a child, often we do not know the names of the members of our village (our neighbors) and so we are unable to ask for help.

- accept a package for me
- help with the shoveling
- put my garbage and recycle bins out/in

If we can't trust our neighbors with a UPS package, our snow shovel or our garbage bins how can we trust them to be the village that helps to raise our children.

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

Our children live in a time when it is difficult to ask for help. They don't want their friends to know they need help in Math, or English or Physics. They are concerned about appearances. Our children can't tell us they feel lost, confused, unsure of themselves. They don't want to disappoint us. Our children have not spent enough time being with themselves and listening to themselves and so often they really don't know they need help.

- concerned about appearances
- don't want to disappoint us
- don't know they need help

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

Our elders have always been there for us. Grandmother is the backbone of the family and she always has a little extra to share. Granddaddy has always been able to fix it, replace it, or remodel it. How can Grandmother and Granddaddy ask for help? As seniors we often don't think to ask for help. As seniors we don't expect anyone to come and help. As seniors we have always been the helpers it is hard to make the transition to *helpee*.

- don't think to ask for help
- don't expect anyone to come and help
- hard to make the transition to *helpee*

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

Look at the situations where we find ourselves. We need help, but we don't ask. We are unclear where to go or what to do next, but we don't ask. We worry about the future and things outside of our control and still we do not ask for help. We are experts in our fields yet when

posed with something we do not understand or simply cannot do, we don't ask for help.

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

There are three things we can learn from Daniel and the Angel Gabriel.

1. In order to know you need help, you need to be trying to understand something or do something.

15 While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man.

Help – **finding a job** – means you are actively looking and following up all leads

Help – **with school work** – means you are attending class, studying, asking teachers for help, letting parents know you need help, finding a tutor, talking and asking folks at the church to see who might be able to help

Help – **with the problems of living** – means you know yourself and you are beginning to wonder about yourself – that means you are spending some time being still and checking out just who you are and what you are doing

2. If you are in right relationship with God, God will help you understand

16 And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision".

Right relationship with God:

reading His Word – Daniel was a prophet – yet he read the Word – that is how he learned the captivity would end in 70 years

being faithful to who you say you are – Daniel was a Jew in a foreign land, yet he would not eat their food, pray to their God or do anything that he had been taught from childhood was a sin

being in the world but not of the world – sometimes the world can confuse us – with end of times talk – with bad advice – with promises of fame and fortune but as Christians, as children of the living God we are called just like Daniel to be faithful in all circumstances

3. When your call for help has been answered – when understanding has been granted – when clarity/solutions are presented – follow them.

26 “The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future.”

27 I, Daniel, was worn out. I lay exhausted for several days. Then I got up and went about the king’s business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding.

Often when we finally get around to asking for help we are unable or unwilling to use the help.

- Help comes packaged wrong
- Help requires us to do more than we want to do
- Help asks us to swallow our pride
- Help puts some of our business in the street

Help reminds us that we are not in this world alone and that we need each other!

WHEN DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?