

Daniel 2:17 & 18

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 July 2016

Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0 : 0 0] Daniel chapter 2 we read in verses 17 and 18 Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah Mishael and Azariah his companions that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon here we have a life threatening situation in which Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as they tend to be better known are threatened with along with all the other false wise men the astrologers, the soothsayers, the Chaldeans all those who pretended to knowledge of the supernatural but Daniel for his great wisdom and his companions as well for their great wisdom are numbered with the wise men of Babylon and so the king in his petulant wrath deciding to kill all the wise men of Babylon Daniel and the others are also standing to lose their lives but there is as Daniel says to the king elsewhere there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days now although the wise men of Babylon did not have the power to know what the king had dreamed and he's obviously even by their terms he's completely unreasonable and saying well I can't remember my dream but I expect you all to be able to tell me what it is and then interpret it for me now of course this is humanly speaking completely unreasonable and Daniel would stand to die with all the others were it not for the fact that he and his companions in plead the lord to make the thing known to them so that their lives would be spared and of course all the lives of the wise men as well because as soon as the king's got what he needs and got what he wants he doesn't want to kill all the wise men anymore so they are spared and all of them are spared because the lord answers and to the king's got a way for those go click on his ownunity to just say they could not bring a secret and community to artists but it is a way of trying to help it to assume it's a good way of having children she Kalau's not about that is cbo the lauders Ray and Matthew says that said that that that was put on a■■■ on their behalf but hacer Olimpon this is an idea that picked up and that opened a continuous paper so they couldn't help people keep up with various names of their■■■ they think that they would have to take up with all theirso ■■■ you okay yes so they're good but this looks like it's not that like it's it for astrologers, the magicians, the soothseers, show unto the king. And he's not saying, but I can, because I'm clever, because I'm a Hebrew. No, but there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets.

Now, there's almost an implication there that if all these wise men and astrologers and soothseers, if they had actually approached the living God and asked him for his help and for his revealing of his truth, then there's at least a possibility, he might have answered them, God, here's prayer that is directed genuinely, sincerely to him. Maybe they would have prayed in a wrong way for their own aggrandizement or for selfish ends. You could say that Daniel and his companions are praying for selfish ends because they just want their lives to be spared, but there's more to it than that. Daniel and his companions want the Lord to be glorified in revealing this secret which nobody else could do. God is glorified in the doing of the impossible.

And this is, to all intents and purposes, an impossibility which God is being asked to overcome. And therefore, in the doing of it, he is glorified. Because when Daniel tells the dream to the king, the king doesn't say, no, no, no, that's not how I remember it at all.

That's not it. Rather, when he begins to unpack the dream to the king, you know, verse 31, which we didn't read, of course. But if we were to go on to it, a well-known instance of the image with a head of gold and a chest of silver and so on, down to the toes and the feet and so on.

Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible, and so on. And when he makes it all clear to the king, when he interprets it, we read, if we were to go on, verse 46, Then the king, Nebuchadnezzar, fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him. The king answered unto Daniel and said, Oh, what truth it is,

that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret. Even Nebuchadnezzar, although perhaps he expresses it wrongly by wanting Daniel to be worshipped, he says, your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, because of what God has done. Yes, Daniel gets promoted, and his friends get promoted. Daniel requested with the king, and he said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, all the affairs of the province of Babylon. And Daniel signed the gift of the king.

[5 : 07] He gets promoted, he gets benefit, but that's not what he was asking for. He was just asking that their lives would be saved, and that the secret would be revealed. And in the process, of course, God would be glorified. And God is glorified, because a petulant tyrant like Nebuchadnezzar, a complete and total pagan, acknowledges the glorious nature of the God of Daniel. Your God is a God of gods, a Lord of kings. And Daniel, of course, as we said, does not have this knowledge in and of himself. He could very easily have said, oh, it's terrible, we're all going to die, and wring his hand and say, what do we do? Oh, Lord, how do you let this happen? Oh, you can't possibly love us at all, otherwise you wouldn't let us die.

Oh, God, you can't be a God of love at all, you can't be a God of love after all. We've served you all these years, we've been faithful to you all these years. Why are you letting this happen? But instead of just moaning and groaning about how terrible it was, and how terrible God was for letting it happen, Daniel takes the problem to the Lord. He goes to the captain of the God, he says, look, tell the king, if he gives us just time, and by that presumably in the original it would imply a set period of time, not just unended time, why is the decree so hasty? And he went in and desired the king would give him time, verse 16, and that he would show the king the interpretation. And of course, if the king thinks there's going to be a chance, then he might get his dream, explain, he's not going to say, no, no, too late, no, you're going to get killed tomorrow, that's it, forget it. If you haven't got the answer now, no, if he's saying, look, give me time, give me a day or a night, whatever it may be, and I'll tell your interpretation tomorrow. Apart from anything else, curiosity alone is going to make the king want to hold off. You know, he's not going to slaughter all of the wise men and say, you know, if I'd only just waited. If I had just hung on and listened to Daniel, I'd have to explain to him, you know, curiosity alone is going to make him want to hang on.

And say, okay, fine, we won't kill him yet, let's just see what he has to say. And having obtained the time, it would be the easiest thing in the world for Daniel to say, oh, what on earth are we going to do now? Oh, it's terrifying, we're all going to die in the morning. No, he went to his house, he made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, who are probably amongst the very few in the kingdom of Babylon who actively worship the living God. They won't be the only ones. There will be other exiles, of course, in Babylon and its empire who've been carried captive out of Judah and Jerusalem and so on, but Daniel is certainly, with his companions, the highest placed in the entire kingdom of Babylon, the most near the throne who worships the living God, Jehovah. So these four men, they gather and he asks his companions that they, together, would desire mercy of the God of heaven. Notice what it is, mercy. They're not saying, Lord, you've got to do this for us. You have to do it for us, because after all, we are your servants and you don't want us to be killed, do you? I mean, they're all going to die eventually. Daniel dies eventually. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, but they all die eventually. Nebuchadnezzar dies eventually. So whether they die tomorrow or whether they die in 50 years' time, eventually they'll all perish, physically speaking, one way or the other, so it's only a question of time. So Daniel says, oh, don't let this happen. It's the worst thing that could happen. But rather he recognises that he and his companions will have been placed at the very heart of what was at that time the mightiest empire on the face of the earth. And there they were positioned to be able to glorify the God of heaven, to be able to serve the living God right in the heart of the devil's dead, we might say. This kingdom of paganism and cruelty and bloodshed, there they were, right at the hub of the wheel. Now, of course, God could easily, he being the potter, he being the clay, he could say, well, actually, I don't need you there. I'm going to let you die with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. He could have done that. That would be his prerogative. We are just the dust of the earth. He is the living God. And what they ask is they desire mercies of the God of heaven. Not rights. Not, oh, Lord, this is justice if you let us live. It would be injustice if we didn't live. No, there's lots of things in the world that are unjust. But what they desire is not mere justice. What they desire is not some false sense of rights. It is mercy. They desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. And you see what the Lord does.

He answers the prayer of his servants. And in answering their prayer, he not only brings glory to his own name as the king gives glory at the end of the dream being interpreted, but their lives are saved in accordance with what they pray. And the lives of the wise men and astrologers and all the other heathen superstitious men in Babylon are also saved. God's mercy extends way beyond what he has originally asked for. But he has to be asked. Jesus, you see, when he teaches his disciples about prayer, he does say, yes, your heavenly Father know that you have need of these things. But he doesn't say, oh, because God knows that you have need of these things. You don't have to ask at all. You know, you just sit back and relax and God will push all the buttons and he'll make everything drop into your lap. There's an awful lot that he does make drop into our lap. There's an awful lot that he does give us without being asked.

[11:03] But of course, it tends not to make us more grateful. It tends to make us rather less grateful. It tends to make us regard these things as our right, as our due. And if something interrupts the supply of these blessings, we tend to just think, oh, God doesn't love us anymore.

Oh, how dreadful. Oh, how terrible. And we forget that God's mercies are bountiful day by day. When Jesus says, oh, your heavenly Father know that you have need of these things. He's not meaning, so just forget about asking. It's rather an incentive to ask. Yes, ask for the things that you need day by day. But remember that God is ready and willing to provide them. And that when he does provide them, we should return thankfulness to him in prayer so that in that relationship of receiving and thanksgiving and continuing to build the communication and strengthen our relationship with the Lord, we can then approach and ask for the things that yes, we need on our ordinary everyday lives or, as in this case, in times of extraordinary emergency. Now, if you had somebody, whether it was a child or grandchild or relative or friend or whatever, who only ever came to you when they wanted something, only ever spoke to you when they were asking for something, saying, look, I need this. Can you lend me a five-hour or can you help me with this? Can you give me a lift to this place? But they didn't want to know you the rest of the time. They would never pick up the phone. They'd never visit. They'd never exchange a word from you in the street. They would only come to you when they want something.

[12:47] How would you regard such a relationship? Now, they might justify it and say, oh, but I didn't like to bother you all these other times. You know, I didn't like to waste your time chatting to you in the street or picking up the phone.

I didn't like to bother you. And so unless it was really important, so I only come to you when it's really important. If I need a loan or if I need a lift or if I need this or I need that, you know, then I go to you.

And I think, well, that's all very well. And I appreciate the sense of, you know, concern for my time and everything. You don't like to interrupt it. But the fact that that roots, I only ever hear from you when you want something.

How are we going to regard such a relationship? How are we going to regard it? We've got a distaste. You know, we're just sort of a push-button machine. We're just a vending machine for such a person.

And, you know, we couldn't blame God if he felt the same way about us. If we only go to him in times of extremity, in times of need, and okay, maybe he answers our prayers.

[13:46] But if that is the case, then the likelihood is that when he does, we don't say, oh, thank you, Lord, for answering my prayers. Oh, that was lucky. And we just move on and forget. If we only come to him in times of extremity, how is that relationship going to develop?

You see, we must understand from Scripture that when Daniel, as a young boy, refused to defile himself with the king's meat because it had been offered to idols, refused to take the wine that had been poured out, part of it was an oblation to heathen gods.

He would just eat vegetables and pulse and water that they hadn't offered to their heathen gods because it was considered beneath them. He would feed himself on that and his companions likewise. And God blessed that.

And we shouldn't take that as being, well, that's a one-off in chapter one. In chapter two, he's all grown up. He hasn't been back to see God. He hasn't prayed to God since he was a wee boy. And that special event happened.

No, rather what we should understand is what we read in chapter six, when they're seeking to catch Daniel out and have him thrown into the lion's den. Verse 10 is key there.

[14 : 53] When Daniel knew that the writing was signed, that is to throw people into the den of lions, who asked a petition of any other god, so-called, other than the king of Persia, he went into his house, he went into his house, and his windows being opened in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

As he did aforetime. This was his regular practice.

And he said, And then he would have been, and then he wouldn't catch him out.

And he would still be praying to the Lord, but the witness would have been altered, wouldn't it? He would have been changing the nature of his witness in order to avoid persecution.

Now, I'm not saying that lightly, and persecution is a fearful thing. Most of us don't really know what it is like. And the church has fallen into times of trouble, not only because of persecution, but also in the aftermath of persecution.

[16 : 59] And one of the earliest schisms in the church is one that occurred in the early 4th century, 300s AD. And it happened in North Africa when a Roman emperor called Diocletian started persecuting the church in a big way.

But the beginnings of that persecution were that he demanded that all copies of the Christian scriptures should be handed in to the Roman authorities, presumably to be destroyed.

Now, remember, it's not like books and books and books and factories churning out book bindings and the National Bible Society churning out so many million books a year and so on.

Every copy had to be hand transcribed. Every copy of every copy of every book of the Bible that people possessed represented months, perhaps years, of painstaking work.

And all these just to be handed in. Now, the church being made up of fallible human beings, it responded in different ways. And some people said, well, we've got to obey Caesar in the things that are Caesar's, but God in the things that are God's.

[18 : 07] And if they're asking for the Bible or scriptures to be handed in, is that transgressing or not which is God? And some people said, yes, it is. We shouldn't do it. And others said, well, we're not actually being asked to deny the faith, are we?

You know, we're not asking us to deny that Jesus is Lord or to worship the emperor or anything like that. You know, all they want is our copies of the scripture. You know, most of them we might know off by heart anyway.

So, you know, we just, you know, close the book and give them the Bible, you know, give them the scriptures. And then we can avoid persecution. Perhaps if we just give them what they want. And, of course, the persecution stepped up after that.

And that was just the beginning of it rather than the ending of it. But then after the persecution had ended and the emperor had died, then there was a kind of kickback. And when new bishops came to be ordained, some people said, no, no, we don't own this guy.

Not because he himself had sold out to the Roman authorities, but because he was being consecrated by somebody that they said had sold out. You know, where do you draw the line?

[19 : 10] If the guy himself is pure enough, but the person who's ordaining him isn't, does that cast a slur or cast some kind of dysfunctional suggestion on them?

And what about people who had handed in their scriptures, but they hadn't actually denied the faith? They hadn't denied that Jesus was Lord. They hadn't stopped being believers. But they had handed in their scriptures.

Had they betrayed the Lord? How were they to be treated discipline-wise? You know, what was the right line to take with them? And how should they just be welcomed back into the fellowship along with those who had stood firm and who had paid the price?

And then there was another strand in between. Because when you handed in your scriptures, you got a certificate saying that you had handed them in. So you were free. If the officers came to your door and said, no, here's my certificate.

I'm putting my scriptures. I'm okay. They would go away again. But some people, of course, had friends in the civil service or in the emperor's service. And they could get their friend to give them a certificate even though they hadn't actually handed in their scriptures.

[20 : 14] So was that denying the faith? You know, because you had your certificate so you were free of the persecution. Saying that you put in your scripture, but really you'd still got that. So were you as guilty as the guy that had handed them in?

Now, you know, where do you draw the lines? At some point or other, you know, some people have given way a little. Some people have given way a lot. Some people have stood absolutely rock solid firm.

There's always going to be difficulties and divisions, not just by the persecution itself, but by the aftermath. How does the church respond to it? It would have been so easy for Daniel to have compromised in some small way.

They'll say, well, I'll keep on praying, but I'll close my windows. I'll keep it quiet so they can't hear me. I'll still do it three times a day, but I won't do it at the same hours. I'll just do it twice in the morning, maybe once at night, so that in the middle of the day, I won't have to be seen to be praying.

I can do this. I can work around this. But he didn't change one eye. The nature of his relationship was such that it was consistent and it was firm and it was faithful.

[21 : 26] And we must take it from scripture that he had continued to be faithful all the way through from when he was a wee boy in the first year when he was carried away captive until, as we read in verse 21 of that chapter 21, Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus, by which time he was a very old man.

Well, well, in two cities and yet still at the center of the things of the world, courts and so on. So when he himself now, probably as a young man at this stage, comes to his friends at verses 17 and 18, he went to his house, he made the thing known to Hanani, Amishia, and Azariah, his companions, that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret, that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men at that time.

They are taking this impossibility to the one source where overcoming it is a possibility. As Jesus, you know, or rather as the angel says to me in the New Testament, you know, things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

With God, all things are possible. Nothing shall be impossible with God. So they go to him in the strength of a relationship which has been maintained.

In the little things, day by day, in the little times of prayer, when there wasn't an emergency. When they have maintained that relationship, that contact with heaven, with the Lord.

[23 : 05] When they weren't asking for extraordinary things, they were just giving thanks for their food and acknowledging his goodness and thanksgiving to the Lord and making their petitions day by day. And then, I can't even know what they got, what they asked for.

Or they had fed that relationship, nurtured it over the years. So now when they come to the Lord in this time of extremity, it is not to a stranger that they are coming.

They're not coming to somebody they don't know how to approach him. They don't know what they should say. They don't know whose name they should come in. They don't know how to go about it. They do know. The Lord is, if we can say it reverently, familiar to them.

And they are familiar to him. It is not the voice of strangers that he hears when they make their petitions to him. And because they have maintained that relationship through all the years that were ordinary, through all the times when they weren't asking for something special and life-saving and a great deliverance, just for the ordinary, ongoing relationship, they maintained it.

They kept up the contact. They maintained the worship. They fed their souls. They gave time and worship to the Lord that when they come now in this time of extremity, the Lord is ready and willing to hear.

[24 : 28] So much so that he gives them not only an answer, but he gives them peace in that answer. Why do I say he gives them peace? Because we read at verse 19, Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.

And Daniel blessed the God of heaven. I don't know what it's saying. He dreamed. When he was asleep in a night vision, it was revealed to Daniel. He went to bed.

He slept. And the Lord revealed it to him. Now, okay, you could take it that the night vision, as opposed to merely a dream, and you know, sometimes the Bible does make a distinction, that he was up all night with his friends on their knees, and the Lord opened heaven and revealed.

It might have been that way. Yeah, okay, let's acknowledge it could have been that way. But I would suggest to you that the more normal way to understand this verse 19 is that Daniel and his companions took it to the Lord and fairly prayed, that they could pray no more, and they laid down to sleep, and the Lord granted them sleep.

Now, if I knew that unless I got an answer by the morning, I was going to be executed along with everybody else in Babylon, who was supposedly a wise man or an astrologer or a soothsayer or a prophet of some kind, I don't think I would be able to sleep silently that night.

[25 : 47] I would be absolutely tossing and turning and frantic and biting my nails and sweating blood and anxiously keeping on and on and on nagging at the Lord. But they make their petition.

They ask the Lord for mercies. And I would suggest to you, although we can't say definitively, because it might have been a vision when he was awake. But I would suggest the context implies. He was granted sleep. And in the course of that sleep, the Lord revealed it to him in that vision, in a dream that was as clear as anything to him.

And the Lord gave him peace. But at any rate, the Lord gave him an answer. We may perhaps be stretching the verse to say, oh, he was definitely a Steve.

It doesn't say he was definitely a Steve. Night vision would imply it. He might have been up. He might have been awake. He might have been on his knees all night waiting for the vision, perhaps. But the suggestion would be the Lord gave him peace.

[26 : 49] The Lord gave him his vision. And Daniel is able to sleep. Daniel is able to be at peace. Because he has made his petition. He has brought it to the Lord.

He was able to answer it. And then he has peace. Because he knows that whatever answer God gives will be the Lord's will. Now, ultimately, this is the only justification we can have, really, for asking anything.

That if it be the Lord's will. We ask for what we hope and trust will be according to his will. What will glorify his name. If we begin that we are asking in the name of Jesus.

Remember what 1 John tells us. 1 John chapter 5, verses 14 and 15. 1 John chapter 5, verses 14 and 15. And this is the confidence that we have in him. That if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.

And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him. Now, God doesn't say yes to every petition that we make.

[28 : 01] Sometimes God's answer will be no. And we might think, but we have perfectly good reasons why it should be yes. And Lord, we did ask yes. But we ask, hopefully, in Jesus' name.

We ask according to God's will. We ask, hopefully, not more presumptuously than our own Lord did in Gethsemane. Gethsemane, not my will but thine be done.

And if that be our state of mind and spirit, that we are content to rest in whatever the Lord should decide. We've made our petition. We've asked for what we need. We've brought it to him.

And we believe. As Matthew, remember, tells us, chapter 21, verse 22. All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, he shall receive.

Now, believing is not just wishing. It's not a case of, oh, what if I ask? It's like, really, really, really want it enough. And if I only want it enough, then God will grant me what I ask.

[28 : 57] Whatsoever we shall ask, believe. Oh, Lord, I believe you can do it. Please, please, please, please, please do it. No, it's not just about wanting it enough. Believing means putting our trust in the great God of our salvation.

Putting our trust in him and in his son, Jesus Christ. Christ, who alone offers up our petitions, our prayers at the throne of grace. When we ask in Jesus' name, that is the one who brings that prayer to the throne of his father.

Therefore, whatsoever will be the father, and thereby the son's will. That will be done. That is how it will unfold. And if you think about it, you know, as our advocate with the father, there can't be any discrepancy between the father's will and the will of the son.

Nevertheless, he takes whatever our petitions are, if they're genuine, if they're in his name, he will take that which he might notice. It's not in line with his will. But he will take it and he will present it genuinely and sincerely at his father's throne.

And it will be considerate on its merits and on its faith and all of us. And the Lord, Father, and Son, and Spirit, of course, will give them an answer. And if we have asked in Jesus' name, humbly and truly wanting his will to be done, we will get his will.

[30 : 17] Now, in Daniel's case, his will might have been, no, sorry, Daniel, your number's up, your time's finished, you're getting executed with all the other wise men tomorrow. Enough, we might say.

And if our lives and our times are in his hand, then we don't really have a reason to ask, oh, Lord, keep me going until this date. Keep me going until the middle of next week.

I'll keep me going until next year. We have no promise of tomorrow. And I know we say that very easily and it trips off our lips very easily. An awful lot of things would be very, very inconvenient if we didn't see tomorrow.

But the fact of the matter is, each day we get is a day of mercy's ground. It's a day of grace. The Lord wants us to bring our petitions to them day by day. And when there is a biggie, when there is a real crisis emergency, you're not then coming to a stranger.

And he is not receiving the lips of strangers and the petitions of those who simply come hammering his door when they want something but haven't got time to give him anything the rest of the time.

[31 : 25] Daniel is coming to a God whom he worships every day, three times a day, with his windows open toward Jerusalem and which he has done his whole life.

And in case you're sitting there thinking, oh, kings, well, I've left it awful late, haven't I? Because, well, I may have been praying lately, but, you know, my life hasn't been really that devoted at all. After all these years to make up, oh, no, I haven't got a chance now. Remember, your righteousness is not here. If you're in Christ, your righteousness is seated at the right hand of the Father's throne.

That is where your hope is. That is where your salvation is. That is where your righteousness is. And that is the means through which your petitions will be presented. Through the righteousness of Christ.

Not your hope. Not because your prayers are good. But because Christ is good. They will be heard, not for your sake, but for whose. They will be answered, even if it's not the way you want them answered.

[32 : 23] They will be answered for his sake. For Jesus' sake. So when Daniel comes to the Lord, he asks for something which it is impossible for man to do.

But the things which are impossible with men are possible with God. And we have need of his spirit that we might pray as we ought.

For remember, it's Paul writing to the Romans, it says in Romans 8, For we know not what we should pray for as we ought. For the spirit helpeth our infirmities.

The groans which cannot be uttered. Jesus says, remember Luke 11, verse 13, If ye then be evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children.

How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. You and I, you see, we are not required to change the world ourselves.

[33 : 24] We are not expected to do that which man cannot do. We are not expected to have the power of God at our fingertips. Only God has the power of God at our fingertips. Only he can move the mountains.

Only he can change the heart of the king. Only he can reveal that which has been kept secret. Only he has the power to do it. So you go to the one who has the power to do it.

If I had a huge chunk of, say, French script or Aramaic or Persian or something, there would be no use of my going to somebody to a neighbor and say, Look, you're an expert in Gaelic.

Can you read me what this Syrian page says here? Or what this page of French says? And they'll say, Well, you know, it's my native language, but I can't actually speak French or Syrian. You need to go to somebody who can.

So there's no use of my going to somebody who speaks German or Italian or whatever. If I've got a page full of French, I need somebody who can speak French to unpack it for me. I need somebody who's got that power, got that knowledge, which I don't have.

[34 : 26] It's no use going to all the wrong people. You have to go to the right person who's got the right language, the right source, the right power. If I've got a page of Persian, I need somebody who's a Persian speaker.

If I've got a page of French, I need somebody who's a French speaker. If I need somebody to be able to lift the heavy weight, then I need somebody who's got the power or the strength or the machinery to lift that heavy weight, because I can't do it.

But there's no point going to the wrong source. We have to go to the right source. The one who alone can help us. No point asking God for help and then seeking to struggle away and do it yourself.

Go to him and leave it with him. That's what Daniel and his companions are doing. John 14, we read, verse 13, Whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

No, so you can have everything you want, so I can shower you with gifts that might or might not do you some good, so I can spoil you well. No, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.

[35 : 36] See, this is the essence, the heart and the power of prayer. And that is what we see happening here with Daniel and his companions. They are saying to the king, first of all, give us time, we'll get this done, because we trust and believe in God.

And if not, fine. They will end up perishing. Remember what the Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego said to the king on another occasion. You know, chapter 3, verse 17. If it be so, our God who we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fire of furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king.

But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

People can always find ways in which to compromise, in which to sail as close to the wind as it's possible to go, without actually crossing a line, as they can go as near the fire as possible, without actually being burned.

Why bother? Continue on as Daniel did, feeding that relationship, publicly acknowledging whose we are and whom we serve.

[36 : 47] Don't be afraid of men. You don't want to fear anyone. Fear gods. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Daniel takes his problem to the only source where it can be answered.

He knows that if he doesn't get an answer, he's going to die. This is a matter of life and death. But so much greater than Daniel's life or death is God's holy honour.

Let that be our overriding concern and consideration in everything that we pray for. God's glory in the name of Jesus.

Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret, that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Now eventually, of course, they'll all die. When the wise men of Babylon die, they'll die eternally.

They'll go to a lost eternity. But when Daniel and his companions die eventually and fade from the sea of time, they will be with the Lord in glory for all time and for all eternity, that they should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

[38 : 08] That doesn't happen because they're good. That happens because God is merciful. They would desire mercies of the God of heaven. Go to the source. Go to the power.

And give God the glory. And keep on feeding that relationship in prayer day by day. Perfect.

Thanks. Thanks for everybody. Thanks for many. Thank you.

Thanks for having me■■■ With the cherish important things That's all right.

Let's have you covered things from heaven when you're in the sky together. and that you're in love where you're with the Savior and you're in love love for the things the next day, you're in love that you're in love