

There Is a God in Heaven

Sometimes we come across especially bright children. They have the light of genius within them. Here are a number of them. The first one is Stephanie who was asked by her teacher, “How old were you on your last birthday?” Stephanie answered, “Seven”. “How old will you be on your next birthday?” “Nine”. “That’s impossible” stated the teacher. “No, it isn’t, Teacher. I’m eight today”.’ And then there was George. The teacher asked, “George, go to the map and find North America”. “Here it is!” “Correct. Now, class, who discovered America?” The whole class answered, “George!” Willy was another wise child. His teacher asked, “Willy, name one important thing we have today that we didn’t have ten years ago”.’ Willy quickly replies, “Me!”

Yes, pretty smart. If they’d lived a few thousand years ago, smart enough perhaps to be in the rising class of those destined to become the next wise men, magi, magicians, astrologers, and enchanters in the ancient Babylonian Empire. Like the Hebrew teenager Daniel, and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Unfortunately, we know them better by their Babylonian names, Shadrach, Meshek, and Abed-nego. Daniel’s Babylonian name was Belteshazzar. Admittedly, we living now are biased and think we are so much more advanced and intelligent than

those people who lived eons ago. Technologically, perhaps we are, but in other areas, one could well argue that we've "devolved"! Take for instance the Babylonian mathematical system. Even predating the Greeks' sophistication, the Babylonians used a far more precise arithmetic that utilized a base 60 system, which reveals how puny our base 10 system is in comparison! So when we think of these "wise men", the "magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers", they were no slouches. Their knowledge, abilities and understanding of a vast array of subjects would undoubtedly put any of us in this room to shame. Daniel and his three friends though were also exceedingly smart, but they had a "secret weapon"—an ace up their sleeves named God.

We can recall how in an even earlier era, Jannes and Jambres were able to go toe to toe with Moses and Aaron, duplicating nearly all but the most astounding miracles that God wrought through Moses and Aaron in the Egyptian pharaoh's court. But God is always in control. Even centuries before Moses, we recall a similar circumstance in Egypt as here in Babylonia. Remember the perplexing dream that the pharaoh had of the fat cows and the skinny cows? And how God gave the interpretation of that dream to the Jewish slave Joseph? And how Joseph then rose through the ranks to become vizier of all Egypt, the prime minister of the empire? We considered Moses and his siblings last week. Moses didn't interpret dreams, but God miraculously not only kept this baby safe from being killed, God also caused him to be raised

as one of the very princes of the empire.

Here in Babylonia, a similar destiny awaits Daniel. Here he is along with his three friends enlisted in the “wise men” corp, the eminent scholars called “astrologers”. King Nebuchadnezzar has a most disturbing dream. And this was no ordinary dream. Almost qualifying as a nightmare, the king could hardly get this dream out of his mind. Dreams that come from God are like that. They’re difficult to forget. This is among the most definitive characteristics of divine dreams, compared to the fantastical, illogical meandering flights and fits of fancy composed of a mashup of bits and pieces of the previous few days’ memories and thoughts—which we almost completely forget the moment we wake up. The king was so troubled by this dream that he had to get relief. He had to know what it meant. But when the highest ranked of his royal wise men balked at the command to tell him what his dream was before interpreting it, he began to think that they’d been hoodwinking him, and lying to him, about all sorts of things before this. Enraged, and as despots tend to do, he issued orders for the whole lot of them to be killed. Their families included.

When the commander of the king’s secret service, Arioch, began rounding them up to be taken away to be executed, among them were Daniel and his three friends. Being lower ranked, they hadn’t had an audience with the king when the king had first ordered that his dream be revealed. Daniel pleaded to be given leave to briefly speak with the king himself. Apparently diplomati-

cally skilled as well, Daniel was able to talk his way, and all the other wise men's way, out of immediate deaths, giving them all a temporary reprieve. And did Daniel put this time to very good use. He called a prayer meeting! He and Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah prayed to God for heavenly wisdom, to reveal the secret of the king's dream to them, if for no other reason than to save their necks! In short order, God revealed the dream to Daniel during the night. And Daniel and the others raised their voices in praise to God. Their praises were actually sprinkled liberally with prophecies as well, as has always been the case when believers are filled with the power of Holy Spirit. It's medicine for our souls just to hear those words again: "Praise the name of God forever and ever, for He has all wisdom and power. He controls the course of world events; He removes kings and sets up other kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars. He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness, though He is surrounded by light."

Armed with the revelation, Daniel informs Arioch that he knows the answers to the king's questions. Arioch immediately informs the king, and in the process tries to put a feather in his own cap by claiming that he had "found" this wunderkind who could please the king. Bringing Daniel before the king again, Daniel makes another blessedly anointed, supernaturally-empowered statement, recorded in Daniel 2:28: "there is a God in heaven Who reveals secrets". And in the next phrase, "He has shown

King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the future”. If anyone didn’t already know, and the Babylonians definitely weren’t aware, but the only “wise” God, the one and only Living God, Adonai, the only king of the universe, He exists, and He speaks, and He acts, and He works in the affairs of men. A couple of weeks from now, we will begin to see how God had a master plan unfolding that involved King Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel, and events and people that wouldn’t be born until thousands of years in the future.

“There is a God in heaven Who reveals secrets”. And we who are so immensely privileged to have become believers, to have been given faith, can see how God is revealing secrets even now, laying bare the gross, abominable sins and iniquities of so many people and leaders of our country. God in Christ Jesus has warned us, in Mark 4:22 and elsewhere, “there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed”. We are being shown, as Lord Jesus in Matthew 23:27-28 spoke directly then of the Pharisees, but also of today’s corrupt, global politicians: “You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness”. And when all the filth of our governing class, and our middle class, and our lower class is exposed, no one, that’s absolutely not one single person, has any speck of an excuse. People will then either acknowledge their gross guilt, repent, turning back to the Lord God

Who will save them. Or, they will insist they've been unjustly accused, misunderstood, made honest mistakes, and just need to be given a break, all so that they can get out to do it all over again. Still others will throw away all the pretense and willingly acknowledge their sinfulness, reveling in it, flaunting it, and parading in it, pridefully displaying all their shame and mortification, calling all the evil good and liberating and the source of the salvation of their souls, whatever that is in their demented minds.

Those who are righteous, who've taken upon themselves the freely offered blood of Christ Jesus, look upon them with tears, as we see through all their gaudy costumes of pretense, deception and beguilement. We see their wounded, bleeding souls, tortured and abused and abased by the devil and his minions, whose claws remain hooked into their beings, further shredding their flesh, while their plaintive pangs of pain are disguised as self-fulfillment, self-expression and self-advancement. Truly, people, "we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places". And the Nancy Pelosis and Chuck Schumers and Joe Bidens of the world so need our prayers and compassions. For unless they can see what they've become, their end is sure. And why, in heaven's name, would we want to see anyone go to destruction?

For there is a God in heaven, and we can ask Him for wisdom for the chaos of our day. And we receive powerful peace.

