

DANIEL (DARE TO BE GOD'S MESSENGER)
PROGRAM 12 (#911192)
WEEK 3 (911339)
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SERIES: Daniel (Dare To Be God's Messenger)

TITLE: Program 12 – Just Ask Him!

TUESDAY

OPEN

Deep in your mind, in your heart, do you have a problem with God, a problem because you think, God, if You are God, why do you allow such horrible men to rule on the face of this earth? Why do You allow all this bloodshed? Why do You allow all this war? After all, if You're God couldn't You stop it? Those are legitimate questions. You can voice them. We're going to find the answers today.

PART ONE

Do you sometimes feel guilty? I mean guilty because you even think why should I think things like that about God? And, you've kept them in your heart and sometimes maybe you've voiced them to another Christian and they've gone, ohhh, how can you think that? How can you question God? God does not mind your questions. He really doesn't. In fact, you'll find Jesus asking a lot of questions as He goes through His ministry. Who do

men say that I am? And he'll just challenge them with questions to help them find the answers, to help them find truth. And you and I are free to ask God any question that we want to ask Him. You know why? Because He has an answer for every single question that you'll ask Him. That question, the answer to that question is found in, in the precepts of God's life, in God's Word. So when you go into the precepts of God's Word you find precepts for life so that you know how to live, how to answer these questions, how to keep from having your faith be shaken. Well as we go to Daniel, chapter 4, as we look at, Daniel's interpretation of this dream that Nebuchadnezzar had, we're going to learn some incredible precepts that are going to help us understand where God is and why He doesn't do something about these main rulers of these nations that are just destroying other nations. We're going to get a big view of the picture. Now remember, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. And in that dream he saw a tree. And that tree was cut down. And a stump was left and there were bands of iron and bronze around that stump. And then that stump was drenched with the dew of heaven, but it's all of a sudden the stump becomes a he. It becomes a human being. A human mind is taken away from him and he is given the mind of a beast. And he eats the grass of the field with the beast of the field. All right now, Daniel has just heard this dream for the first time. Daniel is a man in tune with God. He knows God. God has given him wisdom. God has given him the ability to interpret dreams, the gift to do this. And in verse 18, Nebuchadnezzar says: This was the dream, which I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar; remember Belteshazzar is one of the names of Nebuchadnezzar's god and he gave that to Daniel. He says tell me its interpretation. You want to underline interpretation. In as much, as none of the wise men of Babylon, of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you. Now the other way that this can be translated is: but the Spirit of the holy God is within you. And I think that in all probability because of the context of this chapter it should be translated because the Spirit of the holy God is in you,

because Nebuchadnezzar from the beginning tells us now he recognizes who God is and now he recognizes that God is the one, whose dominion is from generation to generation. Verse 19: Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, Belteshazzar, do not let the dream, mark dream, or the interpretation, mark that, alarm you. Now he says Belteshazzar answered and said, my lord, if only the dream applied to those who hate you, and its interpretation to your adversaries. Catch the scene. Daniel has heard the dream. He's heard the dream and he's just standing there. He understands the interpretation of that dream; it's been revealed to him. So as he stands there, the interpretation is so awful that he's pale. I mean he can't open his mouth. He doesn't want to tell the king what the interpretation of this dream is. And Nebuchadnezzar is urging him, tell me. He says don't be afraid. Don't be afraid. And he said my lord, if only the interpretation applied to those who hate you and the interpretation to your adversaries. It's bad Nebuchadnezzar; it's really bad and it's so bad that this is something you would wish on your enemy. This is something that you would wish on your adversaries. And this is what he says. The tree which you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth and whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt and in whose branches the kings, the birds of the sky lodged--- and there's a dash in the writing which implies a pause. It is you. It is you, O king, for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth. This tree is you. You know what's going to happen to the tree. You know the angelic watcher came. You know the angelic watcher says chop down the tree. Leave its stump. And you know that the beasts fled from underneath the branches of that tree as it was cut down and the birds flew away. And what he's saying is: Nebuchadnezzar, you're the tree. This is why it would be better off if this were for your enemy or for your adversary. But that's not all

the bad news. Listen to the rest. He says and in that the king saw an angelic watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave its stump, leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze around it in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven: now you know why the tree took on the personal pronoun, the masculine pronoun he. And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven and let him share with the beasts of the field until seven periods of time pass over him. This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, the sovereign ruler of the universe, whose dominion is everlasting and is from generation to generation, which has come upon the lord, my king. Now I added what Nebuchadnezzar said to the text just to remind you. This is the interpretation, that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field and you be given grass to eat like the cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven and seven periods of time pass over you until you, until you king Nebuchadnezzar recognize that the Most High rules over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes. It's your pride. You think you've done it; you've forgotten that it's God. You don't realize something king, that you were able to conquer all those kingdoms simply because God let you. It wasn't your prowess. It wasn't your skill as a war machine. It was God. Yes, you had those abilities, but it was God that gave you the victory, he says. And in that I was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that is Heaven that rules. There is some relief because there's bad news, but there's good news. You get the bad news first, but you get the good news. And the good news is I'm going to take away your kingdom. I'm going to take away your sovereignty. I'm going to do it for seven periods of time, but you're going to get it back, but this is what it's going to take to make you understand that God is the ruler over the realm of mankind. Beloved, do you understand that God rules? Do you understand that He's sovereign? Have you bowed the knee? Have you

recognized that God is God and you're not, that He's the only Savior and you're not? Have you recognized that everything that you have, and everything that you are has been gifted to you by God? Have you recognized that? Have you thanked Him? Have you fallen on your knees? If you haven't beloved He may have to do something to you out of love in order to get your attention.

PART TWO

Daniel was not finished speaking. After he told the king the interpretation of the dream, the verdict was that you're guilty of pride. The sentence was for seven periods of time you're going to be out of your mind. You're going to eat the grass of the field. You're going to be drenched with dew from heaven. You're going to have the mind of an animal. For seven periods of time you're sovereignty is going to be renewed from you; you the great king, are going to be brought down to the dirt. That was the sentence, but then there was the promise. And the promise was I'll not take your kingdom away from you. I will restore it to you. And then comes the advice, the counsel, so to speak, from the judge. Listen to what he says, because if you are in the position of Nebuchadnezzar, if somehow you have exalted yourself and you have become this ruler of your own life and master of your own fate, and commander of your own troops, God has a word of advice for you that could save you a lot of grief. This was God's word through Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins; the way you're living is sin: break away now from your sins by doing righteousness. What you have done is you have done evil. Your life has been evil and you need to recognize that. Break away from your sins by doing righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. You haven't been merciful to the poor. You're sitting here in this marvelous, beautiful Babylon. There's no city in the whole world like Babylon. Its magnificence is renowned. Its Hanging

Gardens is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. But what about the poor? How did you get there? On the backs of the poor. You have not been merciful to the poor. You have all this luxury and you keep heaping luxury upon luxury upon luxury. Nebuchadnezzar couldn't even see them. He didn't show mercy to them. And Daniel's saying you know you could follow my advice and God wouldn't have to do this to you. God wouldn't have to humble you until you recognized that He was the ruler of all mankind, that He was the Most High God and that everything that you had, really was a gift from Him. He wouldn't have to do this if you recognize this. And he says by showing mercy to the poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity. In other words, it's not that God wants to take it away from you; it's just that God wants you to use it properly. Now listen, this is going to be such a shock for this man. This man was likened to a tree. And what I want us to do is I want to look at some passages that deal with trees and show you how this relates. In the margin of your notes of your study guide that you got by downloading it, I want you to write next to verse 20, where you write the interpretation; this is the interpretation of the dream, write tree. And then put Isaiah, chapter 2, verse 12 and 13. Now it's going to take us longer than this program to look at these references. But we're not just looking at trees. I'm going to show you some valuable things about Nebuchadnezzar; about Babylon and about how God deals with nations and why God allows certain nations to continue even when they're awful. So we're going to keep on going on, but let's get started. Isaiah, chapter 2, verse 12 and 13. The Lord of hosts will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty, against everyone who is lifted up that he may be abased. Listen carefully: pride never goes unjudged. So all these nations that are in their pride, that are exulting themselves and trampling over other nations, they will be judged. God is just. God is fair and He will judge them. All right, it's the same for individuals. Everyone who is lofty, everyone who is proud will be abased. Verse 13, it doesn't happen right away. If you've read ahead in Daniel, chapter 4, you know that judgment never came on

Nebuchadnezzar until a whole year had passed. God has His timing. All right, He was giving Nebuchadnezzar time to repent. Verse 13: And it will be, God's day of reckoning will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and lifted up, and all the oaks of Bashan, against all the lofty mountains and all the hills that are lifted up, against every high tower, every fortified wall. In other words he's saying okay, everything that is a symbol of pride is going to come down. Every nation that has grown like the cedar of Lebanon, like the oak of Bashan; the oak of Bashan is a reference to Israel, to the northern part of Israel and God already chopped those down because God took the Northern Kingdom into captivity against, under the Assyrians, a great nation that just preceded Babylon. And so under the Assyrians He brought the oaks of Bashan low. He's going to bring low the cedars of Lebanon. He wants us to understand that. Now go to Isaiah, chapter 10, verse 34, Isaiah, chapter 10, verse 34. And I would suggest that if you want to you can just write sovereignty, or trees. Write down trees and then go to the next verse. And this is Isaiah, chapter 10 and it's verse 34. Let me go back and read verse 33. Behold the Lord, the God of hosts, Jehovah Shaboath, will lop off the boughs with a terrible crash and those also who are tall in stature will be cut down and those who are lofty will be abased and He will cut down the thickets of the forests with an iron ax and Lebanon will fall by the mighty One. What is God saying? God's saying, listen, you can ask Me those questions. You're right; I do not like and will not tolerate nations that do evil. Listen carefully; I will use them. I'll explain this to you in the next program. I will use them. I will accomplish My purposes through them and yet they will not go unjudged. Wait on Me. Wait on My timing and know this: that everyone who is proud, be it a nation or be it an individual, I will bring low. So beloved, get rid of pride while you can before God acts.