

**DANIEL (DARE TO BE GOD'S MESSENGER)
PROGRAM 2 (#911182)
WEEK 1 (911337)
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SERIES: Daniel (Dare To Be God's Messenger)

TITLE: Program 2 – "I Have Spoken To You"

TUESDAY

OPEN

Has there ever been a time when you want to throw your hands over your ears and say, shut up, shut up: I don't know what to do; quit telling me what to do? I want to do what's right. I want to know what's right and I am so confused. Or are there times when you take your fingers and put your fingers in your ears and say I'm not going to listen? What are the consequences of that? We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

There are lots of voices aren't there? And they're all vying for our attention. And they're all trying to tell us what we ought to do, how we ought to live, how we ought to think, how we ought to behave, what is right and what is wrong, or there is no right and there is no wrong. And then there's another voice and that's the voice of God and it's found my friend, in the Word of God. And this is the one true voice that you need to listen to. When we go to

the book of Daniel and we open that first chapter and we begin to read those first verses, what we see is the consequences of listening to the voice of others, to listening to the voice of false prophets, rather than the true prophet, because the false prophets message was so much easier to take, in that it allowed us to live anyway we wanted to live, and get away with it. It allowed us to freely express ourselves and do whatever we wanted. And yet there was one lone voice in Israel at that time, in the land of Jerusalem and that was the voice of Jeremiah, speaking the word of the Lord. And what did the people do? They didn't put their hands over their ears and scream shut up to the false prophets. Rather, instead, they put their fingers in their ears, and they wouldn't listen to the true prophet. Let's go back to Daniel, chapter 1 and let me give you the introduction into this man by the name of Daniel and his three friends. You know them as Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Although those were their Babylonian names, rather than their Jewish names. Let's read it. In Daniel, chapter 1, verse 1. And if you have your study guide, I would suggest that you just use your study guide unless you're using a New American Standard, so you're reading along with me and we're reading from the same translation. It says in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god. Now the land of Shinar is present day Iraq. So you see the connection. It's a land that was still there. This was a real place. This was a real nation. And this is the nation of the future, because when you study the book of Revelation you see God talking about Babylon, that great city. So you've got to know that a lot of focus is going to be on that part of the world in the last days. And we're in the last of the last days. In these last days a lot of the focus is going to be on that part of the world because that's where the action is going to be, even as it was in the action of the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Jehoiakim and Daniel. And so it says verse 3: Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials to

bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles, youths in whom there was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding, and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered them to teach them the literature and the language of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank and appointed that they should be educated for three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service. And among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Daniel, Daniel whose name means my judge is God. So here is Daniel, being taken in to this Babylonian culture where he is going to be taught not only the wisdom of the Babylonians, but also the language of the Babylonians so that he might be indoctrinated, so that he might be carved and shaped and sculptured into a man who is fit to serve in the king's court. Here is a young man that is taken from his culture, which is entirely different, which is a monotheistic culture, into a polytheistic culture: monotheistic; one God, polytheistic; many gods. They are going to take this man and, and take him away, so to speak, from the wisdom that he has been taught as a Jewish lad, which is the Word of God and they're going to put him in a culture that does not even acknowledge that God is God, that Yahweh is God. And they're taking him into this culture and he is going as a captive. Just imagine; he's going in chains all the way up, so to speak, to Babylon as a conquered person to the country that has conquered him. Some of the vessels of the house of God are following him on that journey. They are going to be put into the house of Nebuchadnezzar's gods. Now what does that say? Well in that culture this is what it said. In that culture it said, hey, listen, our god is stronger than your God; na, na, na, na, na, na, na. My god's stronger than your God. You know, your God's nothing. We conquered you. We conquered you by our gods. Your God could not defend you. And this is why you are captive. This is why you are our slave. Now just imagine. Here

is a youth being taken in his prime, into Babylon and in all probability being castrated, because he's going to serve in the king's court. And usually it was eunuchs that served in the king's court. We're going to look at that a little bit later. How old is this youth? Well, in Jewish reckoning, a youth was anywhere between 15 and 20 years of age. So let's say he was 16. When you go through the book of Daniel, you're going to see that Daniel lives to be an old, old man, a wise, wise, old man. And you're going to see all of this as we study inductively. Remember we're looking at the Bible inductively, we're observing what it says. And then we're going to understand what does it mean? So we move from observation to interpretation and then application, okay, now how do I live in the light of this truth that I have just read. And believe me, the whole Bible is truth, but you see the personification of truth in the prophecies that are laid out years before they ever come to pass. And you see them in history come to pass in all of their accuracy. Well, now you've got the atmosphere. It's the third year, according to the book of Daniel, of king Jehoiakim. And it's Nebuchadnezzar coming to Jerusalem and besieging it. Now when we get to Daniel, chapter 2, what we see in verse 1 it says: Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams. So this has to be in the first year of his reign because we find him in the second year of his reign having these dreams. So it is in Daniel, chapter 1. It is the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim. And Nebuchadnezzar is the king of Babylon. Now what I want you to do is go to Jeremiah, chapter 25. All right, Jeremiah, chapter 25. And in Jeremiah, chapter 25, it says the word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying. You say, wait a minute; it was the first year of king Nebuchadnezzar, got that from Daniel. But this says it was the fourth year of Jehoiakim. See the Bible can't be trusted. Listen, the Bible can be trusted. The problem is, is we don't know everything that we ought to know, okay.

So when you go to Daniel and you look at the book of Daniel. He is writing from a Babylonian perspective, so to speak. So the Babylonians said that the first year that the king came to power was the year of his ascension and so he came to power and then the next year, when the calendar year turned and it didn't turn in January like it turns today, but when the calendar year turned, then that would be called the first year. So when you look at it from the Babylonian perspective, the third year of Jehoiakim compared to the Jewish perspective, would be the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Okay. Now what's the common denominator? The common denominator is this, that it's the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. And what's happening in this first year of Nebuchadnezzar? Well, the prophet comes and he's speaking to all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And he's saying from the thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Ammon, king of Judah, even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the Lord has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, and you have not listened. You jammed your fingers in your ears and you would not listen to me. You didn't want to hear what God had to say through me because I was calling you to righteousness. I want to ask you a question just before we take this break. Do you not want to listen to the Word of God because it puts you on a straight and narrow path that's so different from the rest of the world and it doesn't give you the liberty to live as you want to live? Oh, beloved, listen, that straight and narrow path is a path of great security and a great blessing. And you don't want to put your fingers in your ears; you want to listen. We'll talk about it when we come back.

PART TWO

If God were to send a prophet today, what would that prophet say to us? That prophet would say to us, turn from your evil ways. Look at this society. Look at how it has broken My commandments. Look at how it has disregarded Me. Look at how it has tried to push Me into a corner and not

acknowledge that I exist. Look at the things that it has tolerated that are direct contradictions to my Word when you take it literally. Look at this society and know this, that you are an evil and a wicked and an adulterous generation. And if you do not repent, if you don't have a change of mind, I'm going to have to judge you. Now listen, that message is in the Old Testament prophets. And you say, and why would God not send a prophet like He sent Jeremiah or like He sent Isaiah? Because in these last days God has spoken through His Son. He has said everything that He needs to say and it's all here. The revelation is complete. It's in the Word of God. We're to listen. In the days of Daniel the revelation was not complete. But the revelation was being given ahead of time so that they, if they would listen to the prophet, they would know what was going to come to pass. Let's go back to where we left off in Jeremiah, chapter 25, because when you read the Kings and the Chronicles you want to read the prophets. When you read Daniel you want to understand what Jeremiah says because we're going to see that Daniel read Jeremiah. If Daniel read Jeremiah, and that's in Daniel, chapter 9, you and I ought to read Jeremiah also. So this is what he says. The word came and you didn't listen. Verse 4: And the Lord has sent to you His servants the prophets, again and again, but you have not listened. You have not inclined your ear to hear. You've cupped your ears and you've said shut up, shut up, shut up. I don't want to hear that. Get rid of him. Or you've put your fingers in your ears and you have leered at them and you have said I don't believe that and I am not going to listen to you. He says the prophets came, you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear, saying, the prophets were saying: Turn now everyone from his evil way. And they would look and say who are you to judge me; who are you to say this is evil? Who are you to say that homosexuality or adultery or pedophilia or immorality, having sex outside of marriage, is wrong? Who are you to say that it's not all right for two people to live together, to cohabit together, to have sex before they're married? Who are you? I mean come on; get in this century, will you. Listen, they wouldn't listen. They didn't want to hear

what the prophets said. They didn't want to hear that their way was evil. And he says and from the evil of your deeds, what you are doing is wrong. Listen to me precious one, if you are having sex outside of marriage and marriage is a man and a woman, and you know that marriage is a man and a woman. If you'll stop and just think about it, because two men cannot produce a child. Two women cannot produce a child. God made us male and He made us female and He said marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled, but fornicators and adulterers God would judge. Israel was guilty of sexual immorality because listen, spiritual adultery leads to physical adultery. If you would read the first chapters of Jeremiah he would say you were like a horse, you know just naying after any other horse in heat. You were just running after them. You troop down to the harlot's house. Ezekiel says you just laid down under every green tree. God was trying to speak to them because listen to me very carefully, when there's spiritual adultery, when you start flirting with other gods, when you start flirting with the god of this world it leads to physical adultery. Physical adultery is just a sign of your relationship to God. It's a bad sign. And he says turn now, the prophets were saying everyone, from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds and dwell in the land which the Lord has given you and your forefathers forever and ever. If you will obey Me you will live in Israel forever and ever and ever and ever. They didn't have to be in captivity. There didn't have to be a holocaust. But it's because they did not obey God. And He says and do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will do you no harm. Yet you have not listened to Me. Every time I come to the word listened I draw a green ear over the word listened. If it's not listened, then I put a slash through that ear to show that they haven't listened. He says yet you have not listened, declares the Lord, in order that you might not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm. Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, because you have not obeyed My words. And I mark obey with a big red circle and I color it blue and if it's not obeyed I put a slash through it.

He says behold, because you have not obeyed, behold I will send and take all the families of the north, declares the Lord, and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them a horror, and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, and the voice of a bridegroom and the voice of a bride, and the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. And this whole land; now listen very, very carefully, shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years, seventy years. This is the prophecy that Jeremiah gave. He says you're going to serve for seventy years, you're going to be in captivity. You're going to serve Babylon. Now listen, seventy years. When did that seventy start? It started in the third year of Jehoiakim when Nebuchadnezzar came up and besieged Babylon. It started in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, according to Jewish reckoning, when Nebuchadnezzar came up and besieged Jerusalem. In other words, it happened and that's when the clock started ticking, 605 B.C. and they remain in captivity under the Babylonians until Cyrus the king of Persia sends a edict out saying you can return to your land. God wanted to get their attention. Let me ask you a question beloved: Are you in trouble because you didn't listen to God? I want to tell you something, God's not through with you. God has you listening, because God wants to turn you around and turn you inside out. And you know what? God can take you and use you even as He took Daniel and used him. God is God and He can be trusted, but you have to listen to Him. You've got to listen so that you don't have to suffer the judgment of God. Daniel was a man who was blessed greatly. Because even though his circumstances were adverse he was a man who continued to listen to God. He was a man who continued to obey God in the most adverse circumstances a young man could find himself in and God honored him. And beloved, that's an example to you and God saying I will honor you also if you'll listen.