

God's involvement in the affairs of men

Every government is set up by God for His purpose

Dan 1:1-21 NIV In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 **And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God.** These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.

- Joh 19:10-11 NIV "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered, "**You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.** Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."
- Rom 13:1 NIV Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for **there is no authority except that which God has established.** The authorities that exist have been established by God.

God positions us in time and place for HIS purpose

3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility-- 4 young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. **He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.** 5 **The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.** 6 Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. 7 The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego. 8 **But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.** 9 **Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel,** 10 but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." 11 Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, 12 "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." 14 So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. 15 At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. 16 So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

He does this so that men will seek him

- Act 17:25-27 NIV And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. (26) From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and **he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.** (27) **God did this so that they would seek him** and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.

God prepares and equips us to be used for His purposes

17 To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. 18 At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. 19 *The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service.* 20 *In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.* 21 And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream

- He could not understand it and it troubled him
- He asked his wise men to interpret - (actually more) to actually TELL him the dream, THEN interpret it - this way he was certain he would be getting the truth
- But no one could do this so he ordered that all of them be executed
- Daniel began to seek the LORD for an answer

Daniel ACKNOWLEDGES GOD in front of Nebuchadnezzar

- Dan 2:27-28 NIV Daniel replied, "**No wise man**, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, (28) **but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.** He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you were lying in bed are these:

God's purpose - Daniel called upon the LORD - Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God

- Dan 2:45-47 NIV This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands--a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. "The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy." (46) **Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel** and paid him honor and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him. (47) The king said to Daniel, "**Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.**"

Nebuchadnezzar's golden image

Dan 3:12-14 NIV But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon--Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego--who pay no attention to you, Your Majesty. **They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.**" 13 Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, 14 and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up?"

Dan 3:17-18 NIV If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, **the God we serve is able** to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. (18) But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that **we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.**"

THEY TRUSTED IN HIM - and God's purpose was established

Dan 3:28-30 NIV Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! **They trusted in him** and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. (29) **Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way.**" (30) Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Dan 4:1-3 NIV King Nebuchadnezzar, **To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth:** May you prosper greatly! (2) It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. (3) How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation.

Darius the Mede and the Lion's Den

Dan 6:10-16 NIV Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, **giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.** (11) Then these men went as a group and found Daniel **praying and asking God for help.** (12) So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: "Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days **anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions' den?**" The king answered, "The decree stands--in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." (13) Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day." (14) When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him. (15) Then the men went as a group to King Darius and said to him, "Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed." (16) So the king

gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "**May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!**"

God's Purpose - Daniel Trusted in his God - and Darius acknowledged Him

Dan 6:20-28 NIV When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" (21) Daniel answered, "May the king live forever! (22) My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty." The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, **because he had trusted in his God.** (24) At the king's command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones. (25) **Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth: "May you prosper greatly! (26) "I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. "For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. (27) He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions." (28) So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.**

Cyrus

2Ch 36:22-23 NIV In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing: 23 "This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "**The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah.** Any of his people among you may go up, and may the LORD their God be with them."

- 1) Governments are established by the LORD
- 2) The people of God are placed by the LORD strategically within countries and under governments whether good or evil
- 3) God's purpose is that men would acknowledge Him - that the whole earth will know there is a God
- 4) The role of the people of God is
 - a) To pray to him and acknowledge him (Nebuchadnezzar's dream)
 - b) To remain committed to Him (The fiery furnace)
 - c) To trust Him (The lion's den)

Hopefully our confidence and trust in God will result in miraculous events that will cause the world to acknowledge God