

**HARRINGAY UNITED CHURCH-BAPTIST****SUNDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009.**

BIG TOPIC: GETTING THE BEST OUT OF THE WORST SITUATION 7

***Topic: You are a force to reckon with.***

We are now in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Daniel and king Nebuchadnezzar had another dream which caused him afraid as opposed to his first one he had in chapter 2 which caused him troubled. It is interesting that God caused who do not know Him to know the future

Eric Liddell said "Circumstances may appear to wreck our lives and God's plans, but God is not helpless among the ruins. Our broken lives are not lost or useless. God comes in and takes the calamity and uses it victoriously, working out his wonderful plan of love." This is true of the Jews in exile.

Yes, the Jews were in slavery in Babylon but God is still in control of Babylon and her king. Although they have lost their freedom but God is capturing their captor in the comfort of his room. He may use bold face in the public but he suffers trembling, fear and insecurity on his own bed. God is revealing Himself to the most powerful person of his time.

Chapter 4 of Daniel is the most exciting in the Bible because in it is the autobiography of a pagan monarch appreciating the sovereignty and eternal nature of the true Almighty God.

**Man of war praying peace**

In this text, king Nebuchadnezzar the man of war opened his address pleading a multiplied peace upon his subjects. Bestowing peace upon each other is a customary greeting in the east and still is today. The Hebrews will say "Shalom" and the Muslim world will use "Assalamu alaikum"; Nebuchadnezzar has fought all his life. He conquered the surrounding nations even as far as to Egypt. Now all wars have ceased and he is enjoying the spoil of his enemies and that is the moment his own warfare started inside of him.

It is an irony that a king who inflicted injuries and destabilised the peace and unity of people in all his world has now known what it means to have peace because he has enjoyed peace in his kingdom after all his warfare.

You know sometimes when people are troublesome, disruptive and giving people around no peace, it is very likely that they themselves never knew any peace within them. Once they knew peace they would like to guard it jealously and would not want to lose it.

But listen to what God says in Isaiah 33:1 "Woe to you, O destroyer, you who have not been destroyed! Woe to you, O traitor, you who have not been betrayed! When you stop destroying, you will be destroyed; when you stop betraying, you will be betrayed." NIV

Although it appears that the kind of peace Nebuchadnezzar was enjoying was the absence of war but the peace God gives is different. It is a deep peace that is not dependent on our situation and circumstances but it depends only on God who is the prince of peace.

Do you want to have this peace? Jesus Christ is the answer. Accept Him as your Lord and saviour; believe that He is the son of God. That He died for you on the Cross and He was raised on the third day. He is now at the right hand of God pleading for us and he will come back to judge the world.

Once you believe this and you confess with your mouth, that peace will come and in addition you will inherit eternal life.

### **The king acknowledged God's greatness**

Nebuchadnezzar has experienced the one and only true God as sovereign and omniscient in special ways. He experienced God in his first dream and also at the deliverance of the three Hebrews from the blazing furnace.

Hence he declared the signs and wonders he received from Him. He declared His kingdom as everlasting and His dominion run from generation to generation.

Daniel and his three friends trusted God in the face of adversities and danger. They did not mind their lives but they prefer to die for the cause of God. God is faithful He always shows them favour and fulfils His promise never to leave nor forsake them. He confounded the Jews' enemies and elevates the Jews on each occasion.

If we are committed to God in all situations He will always see to it that we are not ashamed. We are children of covenant, we are not ordinary people.

There was a story of a young woman called Nancy. She was working for a big Government organisation. Her boss, who was also a woman, said to her that she will not be promoted if she does not join their cult. Nancy replied that she would not join the cult. The boss then said that over her dead body Nancy was going to be promoted and she was working actively and vigorously for Nancy's dismissal. But Nancy stood her ground and said it is better that she hold her promotion. She also retorted that if God is ready to promote her, no one could stop Him. She enlisted her Christian friends to pray and kept trusting God. Promotion time came Nancy was not promoted; instead a junior of hers was promoted above her. The office was like a

furnace to Nancy but she did not waiver she was faithful and still doing her job as unto the Lord.

All of a sudden, there was a new Minister who looked at the evils perpetrated by this cult. He dismissed Nancy's boss and now promoted Nancy to replace her. What a wonderful and powerful God we serve?

This type of testimony is coming your way too, in Jesus' name.

### **The king's dream:**

He saw a tree grew tall and strong with beautiful leaves and fruits providing shelter and food for the birds and beasts and all flesh. The sight of the tree must have been awesome.

Then the king saw an Angel whom he referred to as a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven and gave an order to hew down the tree, cut down its branches and all the beast under it and the birds on it be scattered.

The stump should be left with a bind of iron and brass. It will be wet with the dew of heaven and his portion will be with the beast of the forest.

Let his heart be changed into that of beast for seven times (seasons) which all scholars agree to be seven years.

It is a decree of the Angel and demand from God so that people may know that the Most High rules in the affairs of people and gives it whomever He wants.

The king did not understand the meaning and he first sought its meaning from his magicians and enchanter from Babylon but they were unable because their understanding was limited and human despite the fact that they heard the dream from the king.

One would have thought that after the first dream, the king would have learnt that such things belong to God.

Daniel 2:27-28 "Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come.

And the king's own testimony in Daniel 2:47 "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." NIV

But mark you, it's almost twenty odd years that he had the first dream hence he must have forgotten.

However, God has a way of making Himself known and way of reminding humans about Himself.

It is not clear whether the king called Daniel or Daniel walked into the king's presence but the king now turns to Daniel for help. He sought its meaning from Belteshazzar (Daniel).

True knowledge belongs to God and He is the only one that can reveal what will happen in the future but He reveals it to anyone He wishes, even pagans.

### **What is in here for me?**

#### ***Is our conversion genuine?***

Though Nebuchadnezzar had an intellectual conviction of the Almighty God, it is not certain whether he has a heart conversion that could save him.

The lesson for us here is that we may have seen the awesome signs and wonders of the Almighty God, we may have heard of His omnipotent and omniscient nature, we may recite the Bible from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22, the question remains: Do we have relationship with Jesus, the fourth Man? Are our behaviours reflecting the One we claimed to be our God and the one we promised to follow? We may not have an all round perfection now, but there must be evidence that we are growing in grace and love and that we are reflecting the image of our Lord.

#### ***We are not Ordinary people.***

We are children of the Most High and He cares about us. No matter what we face and the situation we find ourselves, we must refuse to defile ourselves by what the world say or do. The fact that the world approves something does not make it right especially when it goes against the will of God which we find in the Scripture.

He will endow us with wisdom that will distinguish us in our department, our community and family. He will give us understanding that will confound our enemies and make us a force to reckon with.

He will make us to be in front and not behind, on top and not below and first and not the last.

We are not ordinary people, we are children of covenant. Let us remain covenanted with Him.