**Old School – Week 6 (Daniel – Wisdom)**

**July 10-11, 2021**

What’s up, everyone?! We are ready for our next Old School story from the Old Testament of the Bible. Today, we are looking at a man named Daniel. However, when people refer to Daniel’s story, they usually don’t just say Daniel…his story is usually called “Daniel and the Lion’s Den.” If you’re like, “Cool! Lions!” – we’re going to hear about that part, I promise – but the reality is there is a lot more to Daniel’s life than just the lion part.

**So today…we are jumping right into the story of Daniel and then at the end, we’re going to talk about our THP for today.**

A few weeks ago we talked about three guys named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Well, Daniel knew those guys! All of them were appointed by King Nebuchadnezzar. The king gave them all the food and drinks they wanted from his palace, but Daniel thought it was all junk food…so he got an idea one day. He told one of the prison guards, “I’ll make you a deal. The four of us will eat nothing but vegetables and water for 10 days. After the 10 days are over, whoever looks the healthiest, should be appointed as the king’s assistants.”

Daniel went on a diet! He just let the other guys get fat and his group looked the best and got the job! How hilarious is that?! I mean, if we were in his shoes and we wanted to join the king, I would think if you were a guy you would have to be the best warrior, or have the most money…or if you were a girl, you would need to be courageous or the most loving, or the smartest girl…BECAUSE WE ALL KNOW GIRLS ARE SMARTER THAN GUYS!

After these guys get the job, Daniel 1:17 says this about them: *“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.”*

Now that “dream part” is going to be important for this next part of the story. King Nebuchadnezzar begins having these dreams at night. He can’t sleep at night. He has all the wise men in Babylon (astrologers, magicians, enchanters) come to his palace so that he can tell them his dream so that they could interpret it.

Turns out…NONE OF THEM COULD! Nebuchadnezzar is furious and orders all of the “wise men” in Babylon to be executed! That includes Daniel/Shadrach/Meschach/Abednego. Daniel pleads with the guards and asks them to give him some time and they agree. He tells Shadrach/Meshach/Abednego to pray and ask God for mercy and wisdom so that Daniel can interpret the dream. Daniel goes to sleep that night and God reveals the interpretation of the king’s dream to him.

Daniel begins praising God and says in Daniel 2:20, 23: *“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his…I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors: You have given me wisdom and power, you have made known to me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the dream of the king.”*

**Daniel knows that kind of wisdom can only come from God!**

Nebuchadnezzar continues to have dreams and one in particular deeply troubles him. Daniel interprets that King Nebuchadnezzar will lose his title as king and will live like an animal out in the field. Can you imagine if you had to tell THAT to the king? Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar to repent of his sins, stop his wicked ways, and stop oppressing the people of Babylon. He fails to do so and in one year, everything that Daniel said about the dream CAME TRUE!

So Babylon gets a new king, Belshazzar. Everyone say, “BELSHAZZAR!” He’s the new king and he decides to throw a little party for himself. All of the drinks are served in gold cups that were stolen from the temple where people worshiped God…and while they drank, they praised false gods. As they were doing this…**A HUMAN HAND APPEARS OUT OF NOWHERE AND BEGINS TO WRITE SOME WORDS ON THE WALL! WHAAAAAT?!?!**

The king and the people were terrified as they watched this hand write on the wall. No one could understand the writing and the people said, “Go and get Daniel! He can interpret all of this!” Well, here comes Daniel and proceeds to tell King Belshazzar that the words mean that he will no longer be king because he has dishonored God by worshiping false gods.

Daniel to the rescue again! He is named the 3rd highest ruler in the kingdom. Belshazzar, later that evening, dies in his sleep and a new king is named…Darius.

**Now, I want to pause the story here and talk about our THP for today. Here it is:**

**God gives us wisdom in difficult situations!**

Daniel has been faced with a number of challenges in this story. His life has been at stake, he has had to interpret confusing dreams, and then he had to tell them the interpretation even when it was bad news for the king! Yet, he always asked God for wisdom and God helped him in these situations.

Well, I told you at the beginning that we know Daniel’s story includes lions. Well, here it is. Daniel learns that the new king has decided that anyone who prays to anything OTHER THAN THE KING during a 30-day period, will be put to death. Well, Daniel doesn’t stop praying and doesn’t stop worshiping God. King Darius is furious and throws him into this pit overnight where the lions are kept. When they come back out in the morning, Daniel is alive and tells the king that God saved him!

Darius is amazed and issues a decree to the whole kingdom in Daniel 6:26-27: *“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 never be destroyed, his dominion will never end. 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.”*

**Do you have situations in your life that are challenging? How are you handling that? Are you asking God for wisdom? The same God who gave Daniel wisdom and rescued him from danger can help you in your life. Let’s remember our THP: God gives us wisdom in difficult situations…no matter what they are! Let’s pray!**