Daniel — Son of Man

In our current mainstream church, we often look for ourselves in the stories of the Bible. In books like Daniel, whether it be the epic story of Daniel in the lion's den or Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah in the fiery furnace, we want to see ourselves as these heroic, unwavering models of the faith. We cast ourselves as these main characters in their most defining moments, and often don't think about the surrounding parts of their stories and the story God is telling us through them.

Of course I wouldn't bow to the golden statue! I'd be in that furnace too!

Of course I would continue to pray to my God no matter what the powers of the world threatened me with if I did! Bring on the lions!

Yet if these stories were translated to our own day, would it be that simple to turn our back on power—on comfort or safety? Would I truly be able to persevere in the face of such persecution or threat? Or, would I even understand the significance of bowing to such worldly authorities when it was just seemingly normal to a people in captivity?

Would it be that simple to turn our back on power—on comfort or safety?

I wonder how these children of the Israelites who had been carried off to Babylon knew the danger of bowing to other gods or kings? How did they know how to recognize the wolf in sheep's clothing or the beast in human skin like Daniel did?

They had no formal religious education to teach them in these ways. Perhaps stories were passed down, but were they truly able to look back on where their people had come from to put such heavy stakes on their belief in God? A God who, from their perspective, let their people be carried off into captivity, their temple be destroyed, and their land overthrown? When the story is read with the full past and present in view, there might be a little more doubt in the "if I were in their shoes" mentality.

What an amazing God who created humanity with such great potential…

What a powerful remnant these men were. What an amazing God who created humanity with such great potential for chutzpah and passion and peace in the midst of such chaos or even evil.

I was recently listening to an episode of the *Wonderology* podcast about weather and tornadoes titled "Head in the Clouds." In this episode they followed the story of a storm chaser named Freddy while contrasting it to one of the most poignant lessons we learn from the first chapter of Genesis—God creates order out of chaos.

The story of how this young man ends up not just experiencing the chaos of this storm, but then saves a family whose home is completely destroyed is an emotional listen (much of it was captured on audio). Yet, something the hosts point out after sharing the story is a powerful observation about what humankind is called to do in the midst of peril.

> "We may not be able to control all the chaos around us.
> But we are able to control what we add to it."

The book of Daniel gives the children of Israel a prophecy of hope and a promise of a future—something we hear again and again in the prophets because that is one thing we all need to hear. There is hope!

But, how will we help bring it? What will we add to the chaos—even in spite of it?

How will we choose to face an evil that we know God is calling us to stand up to?

How can we be a part of what ushers in this new kingdom with all the saints and all the glory and all of creation as it should be?

Perhaps, as Daniel reveals to us, the way to do so lies in the methods and melodies of Genesis 1. In the beginning, God—bringing order out of chaos, much like the calm of a raging storm or the crescendo of a masterpiece.

What can we add to the storms that surround us, to the chaos that precludes the calm of God's voice?

What can we add to the storms that surround us?

Bring that peace in the den of lions. Be that calm in the furnace of the empire. Be who you were created in the Garden to be.

PRAYER

Let Your Spirit hover over us, a creation renewed
Never to be destroyed.
Make us each day more like who we were intended to be
Your Kingdom partners—to serve, to love, to lead.
May we listen to Your voice on the corners of the wind
no matter where or when we find ourselves.
Show us what true power looks like
That we may always choose to worship You.
Make us strong in the midst of suffering,
that we may subvert the kingdom of empire,
trusting the promise of Your future, Your Kingdom,
Your garden renewed

Amen

EPISODE 62 (SESSION 2)

THE FOUR PILLARS



BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember **to elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:

I

TEXT

What stands out from the Text that you want to carry with you as you read this? Try meditating over and memorizing parts of Daniel.

II

COMMUNITY

What is your community drawn to most in this conversation? The conversation of Daniel being not just for end times but all times? The promise of hope continued in this prophet?

III

DISCIPLESHIP

What stories can you share with a young adult persevering in empire and searching for order? How can you creatively share your own story of hope and God's promise for their future?

IV

WRESTLING

How are you still wrestling with the apocalyptic genre of Daniel? How do you see multiple sides of this conversation? How does your history with this book influence these thoughts?

Spotify

Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.

BEMA SESSION 2

MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases that we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE
SPIRITUAL FORMATION

True success is developing intimacy with God. In Session 1, we encountered the idea of "Creating Space for God" in our lives. We believe that ***if we do our part of creating that space, God will fill it*** *as He desires. You're already doing this as you dive into the Text and jump into a place to discuss. God will meet you in these places! Look for places the Holy Spirit can do work in and through you as you go about your everyday life.*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS
YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

We believe that young adults are shaping the future of this world. *Jesus modeled a ministry of discipling young adults, and that approach has and will work. If you are a college student who is listening, we want this material to be directly helpful to your pursuits. If you are not a college student, we want to challenge you to come alongside one and work together.*

SACRED STATION
THEOLOGY OF WORK

This isn't only for church or Bible study; this is about what we do every day. How we do our job and how it may take advantage of or bring life to others is something God says is central to our presence in the world. Justice is very much something God cares about. Does our physical work (our 9–5 job) bring shalom or chaos? Does it exploit creation? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products can provide relief to others. ***The work we do every day is sacred and matters!***

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