Praise be to God, the Giver of Wisdom!

Daniel 2:19-23

 Good morning! Please open your Bibles to the 2nd chapter of the book of Daniel. Today we are continuing our study of the book of Daniel by looking at the way in which Daniel responds after God gives him the description and meaning of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. What has happened so far in chapter 2 is that the king had the dream, he demanded his wise men to provide him with a description of the dream as well as its interpretation. When the wise men were unable to do this he became angry and ordered that all the wise men of Babylon be killed. When the King’s Captain of the guard came to gather Daniel and his three friends Daniel acts with discernment and discretion to find out why the king made such an order. After being permitted to have time to give him an answer, Daniel and his friends pray to God. God then reveals to Daniel the dream and its meaning. After receiving the revelation from God, Daniel sings this song of praise in verses 19-23. In this song Daniel reveals attributes of God that show us what the book of Daniel is trying to teach us. Our God is not only the creator and sustainer of the universe, but He also knows all things, reveals wisdom to His chosen ones, is the savior of the world and controls everything that happens in history. **Please read with me Daniel 2:19-23 “Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven; 20 Daniel said, ‘May the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. 21 It is He who changes the times and the periods; He removes kings and appoints kings; He gives wisdom to wise men, And knowledge to people of understanding. 22 It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him. 23 To You, God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For You have given me wisdom and power; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You, For You have made known to us the king’s matter.’”**

Today as we study this passage, we will be presented with six attributes of God that show us how He gives wisdom to His people. In verse 19 Daniel has the dream revealed to him in a vision. After this revelation he sings a song of praise to the Lord. It is through this song that Daniel acknowledges the power of God and thanks Him for making the dream known to him. Before he goes back to the king to explain the dream and share the interpretation, Daniel wants to make certain that he thanks God for His grace in revealing this mystery to him.

 The first attribute Daniel mentions in verse 20 is that God is to be blessed forever because wisdom and power belong to Him. As we have said before, all knowledge that man has attained has come from God. When King David prayed for the future building of the temple in Jerusalem he said **“Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and on the earth; Yours is the dominion, Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all” (1 Chronicles 29:11).** Throughout the pages of Scripture God shows His power and wisdom in the way that He created the universe and in the way that He revealed knowledge to His people. God is over all, and everything is under His control. Daniel starts his song by praising the awesome power and glory of God. Even Job, while he was facing the struggles in his life, acknowledged the power and wisdom of God. **“Wisdom and might are with Him; advice and understanding belong to Him” (Job 12:13).**

 The second attribute Daniel provides for us is in verse 21. God oversees the times and the seasons. This attribute of God shows that everything that happens on the earth, including the changing of the seasons, take place because God is in control of it all. In addition to controlling the seasons, we are also reminded that God is in control of the entirety of human history. All the people who have ever lived and those who are yet to be born have existed because of the will of God. This shows God’s omnipotence because He knows everything that has ever happened, and He also knows everything that will take place in the future. The entirety of human history stretches out before Him in one moment. Since God is eternal, not mortal and finite like us, He is able to see how everything will play out. He knew when you are I were going to be born, and He also knows when it will be the time to call us home. Our lives are in His hands; therefore, we need to trust Him without worrying about the future. Whatever happens will take place because it is His will. Daniel knew this and it comforted him when preparing to approach the king. The Lord Jesus Christ showed His authority over the seasons when He was sleeping in the boat while the disciples were crossing the sea of Galilee. He calmed the wind and sea with just a few words. God controls everything regarding the weather and the times.

 We also learn in verse 21 that God removes kings and appoints them as well. This teaches us that all governments and rulers that have ever existed have been established by God. The Apostle Paul writes in **Romans 13:1 “Every person is to be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”** We are commanded to live peacefully with the governing authorities. This is because they have been established by God and to disrespect them is to also show the same attitude towards God. When God judged the nation of Israel and determined they would be taken into exile He used the kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon to do the work for Him. God raised those kingdoms and then used them to carry out His will. God told both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah that this would happen to them unless they repented and changed their ways. When they refused, He carried out the judgment.

 Attribute #4 is found in verse 21 as well. Daniel says that God gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to people of understanding. When we were discussing the wise men of Babylon, we said that they were unable to explain and interpret the dream because they were relying only on human wisdom. For someone to be considered wise they must not only be able to think rationally, but they must also acknowledge the existence of God and fear Him. In Proverbs Solomon tells his son that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We read also that it is people of understanding that receive knowledge from God. These people of understanding are those that seek knowledge from God Himself. In history when man has prayed to God asking Him to reveal the secrets of creation, those men have been able to make discoveries that a man using only human wisdom could not accomplish. When Daniel and his friends prayed to God to ask for His help, God answered these men of understanding because of their faith in Him.

 Attribute #5 is in verse 22 when Daniel says that God reveals the profound and hidden things and that He knows everything that happens, even those things that take place in the darkness. This is what Jonah the prophet discovered when he tried to get on a boat and escape God. He thought that he could go far away from God so that God would not be able to find him. No matter where we go or how we try to hide, God knows all that we do, and He is aware of everything that happens. When Jesus was teaching about prayer He instructed His listeners **“But as for you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you” (Matthew 6:6).** We also see that no matter what theories man tries to devise, He cannot replace the wisdom of God. One such example is the theory of evolution, which has been debunked so much because the very thought of this world existing without there being a cause is just plain nonsense. When man tries to remove God from the equation, what he ends up with is an empty explanation that is irrational. If man really wants to have the wisdom from God, he must pray to God to ask for it (James 1:5). What we also need to remember is that God has revealed Himself to us in so many ways. He has given us Scripture as well as creation. **In Hebrews 1:1-2 the writer shares that God has also revealed Himself to us through His Son. “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world.”** The profound things of this world have been revealed to us in these ways.He has most definitely made Himself known to His creation.

Our final attribute we find in Daniel’s song comes to us in verse 23. Daniel thanks God for giving him wisdom and power by revealing to him what the king wanted to know. By giving Daniel this revelation God placed Daniel into a position of power with the king. He would be able to use the position he would gain through this interpretation to provide help to the people who were living in exile. God reveals the truth to man because He is gracious and has mercy. Not only did Daniel have power, but he was granted wisdom which would put him into a great position with the king for future favor. God worked through the life of Daniel to tell the king of Babylon what the future would entail and gave him the proof needed to convince him that the God of heaven is the One and only true God over all men.

**Applications**

 We now come to the point in the message where we answer the question “What does this mean to me for today?” Daniel has modeled for us the way we need to approach God when praising Him for making His wisdom known to us. Our first application today comes from Daniel’s song, where he praised God for granting him wisdom. When going to God in prayer we need to take time to thank Him for His answer, even if His answer to our request is no. Daniel showed humility in the fact that he gave the Lord all the credit in revealing the dream. He also admitted that all wisdom begins with God meaning that he only knew about the dream because God showed mercy to Him and revealed it to him. It is very easy to ask God for what we need in prayer, but many times we do not thank Him for the answer. This is especially difficult when His answer is not what we are expecting. We should never assume that it is our right to always have everything the way we want it. God’s ways are always right and just, so we need to accept His answer whether we like it or not. The Apostle John echoes this attitude in his first epistle when he writes **“14 This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him” (1 John 5:14-15).** This was the attitude that the Lord Jesus showed in the garden on the evening He was betrayed. He prayed for the Father to take the cup of suffering away from Him, but then he humbled Himself to doing whatever the Father wanted when He said “Thy Will be done” (Luke 22:42). We may not always understand God’s way of doing something, but if we really trust Him, we will accept His answer and allow for His will to be done.

 Our second application this morning is regarding God’s gift of Scripture. Our daily Bible reading that we began in November is allowing us the ability to be in His word every day. When we consult the Word of God He is revealing to us His wisdom, which we then use in our daily lives as we face challenges and trials. The only way that the Word of God can be our protection is when we choose to use it. We must not neglect the daily reading and contemplating of the Word of God in our lives. The Apostle Paul instructed Timothy to handle the word of truth carefully in **2 Timothy 2:15 “15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”** I can assure you that no matter what you are facing your life, the Word of God speaks to it and will provide you with the wisdom you need to take that challenge on. However, to receive the word of truth we must handle God’s word accurately. We do this when we allow it to speak and guide us in the ways of God, we are not to bend the Scripture to our will. When we do this we will know the truth of God and having that truth in our lives will make us free!

 The last way this Scripture applies to us today is that it reminds us how powerful of a God we serve and what His people can do when empowered by the Spirit. In Scripture God took many people who were weak or small and He used them to accomplish His purposes. Gideon and Moses are just two of those men that come to mind. When man puts his trust in God, seeks wisdom from His Word, gathers with the people of God in worship, equips others for the work of ministry and humbly prays for God’s will to be done, the Lord will give man the wisdom and knowledge needed to overcome any obstacle. Daniel has shown us that our God loves us and will reveal His wisdom to those who earnestly seek wisdom from Him.

 As we conclude today let us ponder the words of praise that Daniel shared with us in this passage. We can face this life with confidence through God who blesses us with wisdom and the power to do amazing things through Him. If we are willing to be used by Him God will make Himself known by revealing the truth to creation. Next week we will be looking specifically at the dream the king had and what it revealed to him regarding the future. As we discovered today, God knows everything that has happened and will happen in the future. His ways are just, and we can trust Him with our lives. Praise be to God, the giver of wisdom! Let’s pray.