



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Aliens in a Strange Land Series, Lesson 23

Lesson Title: Daniel and the King's Dream

Take Home Point: No matter what, trust in God.

Warm-Up:

My daughter occasionally requests my help with her high school algebra and geometry. It is always interesting because it's been a long time since I have had to solve those problems! Sometimes we struggle through it together; sometimes I know what the answer is and how to solve it. When we run into that situation, I will guide her through the equations one step at a time. Every so often, she gets frustrated with that approach and asks me just to give her the answer. When that happens I tell her she just has to trust me. I'm not perfect but I'll do the best I can for her. That I have been through it myself, and that I have helped her before, gives her confidence that I can help her again. But it doesn't guarantee it. She has to trust me.

Read: Daniel 1-2; 1 Peter 2:11-12

Observation (What happened?):

How did Daniel and his friends end up in Babylon?

Who revealed the dream and its interpretation for the king?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What was wrong with the royal food and wine that caused Daniel and his friends to refuse it?

What does Peter mean when he says we are "aliens and strangers" in this world?

Insight:

When you talk to others about Jesus and they ask you why they should trust him, what do you tell them? Have you ever seriously asked yourself why you trust in God? What reasoning do you provide yourself? It's an important question. The very essence of trust means you do not know exactly what the object of your trust will be or do or say. If you know all these things exactly, no trust is involved. Of course there are many scripture verses in which God himself encourages us to trust him, as well as the admonitions we get from the writers. The Bible also provides many examples of God acting exactly as he said, and we read of circumstances that clearly are the result of his moving in our world. But that we know what was does not mean we know what will be. Once again we face the essence of trust – we do not know so we take people at their word. So trust is an act of the will; we choose to trust God. We choose to believe he is perfect, always right and never wrong. We cannot see or know, so we walk by faith. Evidence supports our belief, but does not prove it. That is why those who seek to rationally reach God through human intellect are doomed to disappointment. And God will not force us to trust him, but he gives us every opportunity to do so by his revealed character in words and deeds in Scripture, history, and promise.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How do you live your life as one who is an alien and stranger in your world?

In what circumstances is God asking you to trust him for an answer?

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