

Unshakable Faith: Made for this!

Psalms 112:1-9 (the righteous person will not be shaken)

-Bad news will come, but they will remain steadfast, trusting in the Lord (not themselves)

Daniel 5 & 6

Pick up the story for chapter 5:

Daniel had somehow been moved into obscurity (the king wasn't aware of him)

He had been in a place of honor and authority under King Nebuchadnezzar, but it had been years since he died, and now the king didn't know him.

How many kings were between chapters 4 and 5?

Four kings ruled Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar:

1. Amel-Marduk (562–560 BC) — Nebuchadnezzar's son.
2. Neriglissar (560–556 BC).
3. Labashi-Marduk (556 BC) — ruled only a few months.
4. Nabonidus (556–539 BC) — Belshazzar's father.

Belshazzar governed Babylon as a co-regent under Nabonidus.

Daniel is about 80 years old and is about to be called back into the spotlight.

Vs. 10-14: You are not forgotten, and you do not need to know who or how you will be repositioned. (The anointing in you is always fresh.)

-What was Daniel doing in obscurity for decades? Living faithfully and consistently, even when he was not leading or in the spotlight. Faithfulness is who he was, not what he did for the job.

Vs. 29-30: Daniel was rewarded and repositioned into a seat of power just before the downfall of Babylon. Darius the Mede then kept the nobles from Babylon and brought them into his council. **So Daniel 5 is a setup to position Daniel for chapter 6.** God's timing is perfect.

Daniel 6:1-5: Daniel is leading again, and jealousy targets him.

Verse 4 – no corruption in him.

Verse 10- when Daniel heard the decree, he went home and climbed to the “upstairs room” (what do you do when you hear bad news? **We take it to the Upper Room, anointed for this, get into the Spirit).**

He opened windows toward Jerusalem as Solomon prescribed 420 years earlier; 1 Kings 8:46–49 speaks of Israelites praying to God from the land of their captors, facing toward the city God had chosen.

3 times a day, as he did before. In times of crisis, we lean into our habits and customs.

Today’s theme: “made for this!” It’s taken a while to set this up, but I want you to hear this major point today. Daniel didn’t become faithful in the crises. Daniel was unshakable because his faithfulness was formed before the crises. In fact, all of the stories we read in this book reveal unshakable faith that was a pre-chosen choice, decision, and habit before the test.

Our disciplines, habits, and routines form us.

I have heard it said that in times of crisis or opportunity, we do not rise to the occasion; we fall to the level of our habits, disciplines, and preparation.

We are what we do repeatedly; excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.-Will Durant

We first make our habits, then our habits make us.- John Dryden

Before we move on with Daniel, I want to dive into the **habits, routines,** and **rhythms** God prescribed for His children. We often call them **laws** or **commands**, and in doing so sometimes fail to realize they are for our **benefit, protection,** and **development**, making us unshakable and faithful through training and habit, not just hoping to be faithful in the time of testing. (*We see that Daniel had eating laws and prayer routines that shaped his discipline.*)

Rhythms:

Weekly Sabbath: God shaped their priorities Exodus 20:8–11; Deuteronomy 5:12–15

Every seventh day, Israelites were commanded to stop their ordinary labor.

Sabbath required them to trust that God would provide even when they weren't producing.

Prayer and worship: Ex. 29:38–42; Num. 28:3–8 (morning and evening sacrifices)

Scripture: Deut. 6:4–9; 11:18–21

Community through Sabbath observance, Annual festivals, sacred assemblies: God shaped their relationship through shared memories and experiences- Leviticus 23; Deuteronomy 16:11-16; 31:10-13;

The festivals retold the story of God's relationship with Israel.

- **Passover: God delivered us.**
- **Feast of Weeks: God provides for us.**
- **Day of Atonement: We need God's cleansing and forgiveness.**
- **Feast of Tabernacles: God sustained us through the wilderness.**

When God led his children out of Egypt and introduced himself to them, he also began to form them into his people, not simply by saying he wanted them to be his people, but through discipline, training, practice, learning, and formation. Even in the way they set up camp **(picture of the tabernacle in the middle, day and night, first and last image in your eyes)**

I ask: what rhythms and habits can you point to that are forming you and your children, centering your lives to live unshakably in this world?

Daily, weekly, monthly, annual routines and habits that are forming you consciously and unconsciously? **That is what will show up in times of crisis, facing lion's dens.**

I would suggest:

Weekly church (feel like it or not), like Sabbath, resets your mind on Him and reorients your priorities around Him. Put your faith in him over your job.

Small Group builds a community of faith around you before you need support.

Make holidays more important and make time to retell the stories: Christmas season and Easter season, not just the day.

Tithing and Giving: (like sacrifices) make generosity a lifestyle and build it into your life by using money to build God's kingdom and help those outside of yourself. This keeps our heart and priorities focused outward and on eternal things.

Daily prayer

Daily bible reading

Wednesday night for youth and kids, and bible study for you. (Statistics show teens who attend a midweek service are far more likely to keep their faith when they leave for college.)

You may say, "I don't want to do any of those things," or maybe pastor Kevin is just trying to get us to church... then I would ask, **what rhythms are you consistently doing that are forming you into an unshakable believer for this world? What's your plan? What habits are you forming? How will you not just hope to be unshakable but actually become unshakable?**

Back to Daniel: He goes into the lions' den. God protects him, and his accusers are judged. Once again, God uses this pressure to have Daniel preach Himself to a new king, Darius. I will say this one more time as we close this series. So much of the pressure and challenges we face are about more than us; they shape, prove, and reveal us, but they also preach who God is to those around us.

Alter call:

1. **Salvation**
2. **Pray for those who feel forgotten to be faithful**
3. **God, help me form habits that form me into the person you have purposed for me to be.**