

Hello Kitty

I. Announce:

- A. **Jen Mellor** - Interview (missionary off to Kosovo). [Experience both in P.I. & Kosovo]
- B. **Father/Son Outdoor Adventure** - Mammoth.
- C. **Kenny Ferguson** (Rick Mossa's son-in-law. Wife/Wendy, Joseph/Ashley) - traveling 17 mpg on his road bike, car parked in bike lane, ran right into the back of an SUV. Severely damaged spinal cord, broken back/face. no feeling in arms/legs. Breathing machine. Induced coma.
 1. Swelling to go down. Feelings back. Reconstructive surgery on face.

I. Intro: Hello Kitty

- A. How are we supposed to respond when our *highest court* makes their decision on issues, which is outside our ability to do anything about them? Like what happened this week?
 1. Chief Justice John Roberts said, *This Court is not a legislature. Whether same-sex marriage is a good idea should be of no concern to us. Under the Constitution, judges have power to say what the law is, not what it should be. The people who ratified the Constitution authorized courts to exercise "neither force nor will but merely judgment."*
 2. **Yes** as our friend/lawyer Bob Tyler wrote me & said, *it's possible we have now launched into an unprecedented era in American history where we will experience serious assaults upon our religious liberty.*
 - a) **Bob Tyler** w/**Advocates for Faith & Freedom**, will continue to do everything possible *to effect positive change in our laws & culture.*
 - b) **And I** will continue to **remind us** of *how we should act when our rights are taken away...as is Daniel's case here.* [team work]
 3. As a side note...I am glad to hear when a homosexual feels comfortable enough to attend our church services **and weren't** scared away by the *adulterers, pornographers, tax cheats, liars and other messed-up people* in the seats around them.
- B. **Maybe** you've had a hassle with a **promotion** from other people at work, like Daniel did.
- C. **Maybe** you've gotten hassled for being a **Christian** from other employees at work, like Daniel did. How did **you** respond? How will **Daniel** respond?
 1. We should **not go out of our way** to either **invite** or **avoid** persecution.
- D. Here we have Daniel as a senior citizen (in his 80's). **We're** in the year 539bc.

1. **Darius** (*duh-RIGH-uhs*) the Mede at 62 years old is king (due to the capture of Babylon).
- E. Life is littered with Lion dens...what will we do?

II. FIRST LION DEN (1-9)

- A. (4) **Faithful** – It's required of servants that they be found? (faithful)
 1. 1 Pet.2:11,12^{nit} Dear friends, I warn you as *temporary residents and foreigners* to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.
 2. Are you so devoted to God that the only place to attack is your **faith**?
 3. If **your life** was **sifted**, as we are about to hear/see again with the presidential candidates, what would they **dig up** on you?
 - a) No *digging up dirt on Daniel*.
- B. (8) **Does not alter** – Their law was diff from the Babylon's.
- C. (6-9) **Illegal to pray**...*Ha, things haven't changed much.*
 1. We can keep demanding our **secular institutions**, like our schools, to give time for our kids to pray. **Or, we** can be teaching our children to pray before school & at their breaks/lunch period & have an *attitude of prayer* throughout the day.

III. SECOND LION DEN (10-17)

- A. (10) **Prayer a matter of life or death.** Is prayer a matter of life or death for you?
 1. **Prayer:** If you've lived in a climate where you must deal w/a Winter freeze, one thing you have to constantly keep warm is **your car's engine block** (to keep the oil from freezing). Only engines that are **kept warm** will do the job. We also must keep our **spiritual engines warm**. **Only by regular use and by receiving power from an outside source** can spiritual power be maintained.
- B. Lessons from *Daniel's Daily Maintenance* on his Prayer life:
 1. He had a **Place** to pray - do you have a place special to you?
 2. He had a **Period** to pray - a time. 3 x's a day. Like David in Ps.55:17 **Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, & He shall hear my voice.**
 3. He had a **Posture** to pray - on his knees. Eyes open. On your bed, though not for long.

4. He had a **Position to pray** - toward Jerusalem. All prayers in a sense went *through* Jerusalem (i.e. temple/God's presence there). **Now**, we direct it *in Jesus name*.
- a) *I remember reading of a very wealthy Muslim man who had his seat in his learjet designed & calibrated to constantly point towards Mecca.* [may *our hearts* be designed same]
5. He had a **Purpose to pray** - giving thanks, asking, **not arbitrary & aimless**.

C. There was no way Daniel could *hide his faith* for 30 days.

1. He couldn't go **a day, not even 1/3 of a day**.

D. What would you be comfortable with if **you** were in Daniel's shoes?

1. It's only 30 days, I'll wait & pick up afterwards, God will understand.
2. I'll just shut my windows, & pray *in my closet...I don't want to be seen by man you know*.
3. I'd still pray **but** if I was caught on my knees...I'd just say *I was praying to Darius...God knows my heart that I wasn't really*.
4. I'd still pray **but** if I was caught on my knees...I'd just say *I lost my contacts... where was that thing.* **or**, None of the above.

E. **When he knew that the writing was signed** – Daniel didn't quit believing. He never gave up on God. *Come read this verse (10) whenever you are tempted to compromise.*

F. **On his knees** – Allow your kids to see that mom/dad bows their knee before their God at times.

1. It expresses **humility before God**.

a) I remember one of the **superman movies** where **Lex Luther** breaks into the White house, President sitting behind the desk, secret service standing in front of it, Luther asks him to come & bow down before him, he does, Luther says, "*you're not the president, no leader would bow so quickly!*"

b) Very humbling to be made to bow before someone. [dogs at dog park. small dog side. alpha male. new dogs greeted at gate. dominance/submit]

c) **Very happily** we bow before *the King of Kings & Lord of Lords*.

(1) It's a simple reminder who we are & who He is.

(2) I believe bending our **knees** help us to bend our **hearts**.

(3) Eph.3:14,15 **For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven & earth is named.**

(4) **When do you bend your knee? When could you?**

G. **Towards Jerusalem** – Why this custom? [so they'd know who he was praying to]

1. Why was that important then, but not now? [presence of God was manifested in 1 location then; now indwelt in believers everywhere]
- H. What did his prayer time consist of?
1. Gave thanks vs.10. General praying & asking for supplication/supply, vs.11.
 2. Giving thanks for all things is a characteristic of a spirit-filled life.
- I. We all have old patterns/old habits - Some rage. Others have a heaviness of spirit, despair, depression. Others a critical spirit...*It's everyone else's fault.* Some run back to an old compulsion or an old comfort.
1. But old patterns **can** change. What if we practiced a **holy habit** long enough? What if we reacted in the Spirit? What if our default was immediately into the things of the Spirit?
- J. (11) I've been framed (this was like fishin in an aquarium)
- K. (13) Arrested for worship. I like the question, *"If you were arrested for following Jesus, would they find enough evidence in your life to convict you?"*
- L. (14) The lion king owns his own wrong doing.
- M.(16) Lion Facts: Their roar can be heard up to 5 miles away. Females eat 11lbs food a day (M/15)
1. Ruth Corlett, my friend Stu's wife from NZ living in Chiang Mai, went to the place where you pet the lion cubs. Inside the cage with the "trainer", the docile 200 lb. cub decided to latch onto her thigh. The "trainer" threw his stick down & ran. She finally got him to release. After many months & operations/ infections later, she doesn't recommend petting little lion cubs.
- N. Great testimony from a pagan king, *Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.*
- O. (17) Sealed it w/his own signet ring - Darius, wasn't afraid of the lions but of the threat of foul play from his enemies.

IV. FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF THE LION TAMER (18-23)

- A. (18) Funny it seems like this should be reversed...Daniel up all night fretting & the king sleeping in his palace.
- B. (19) He comes at the crack of dawn to roll the stone away from the mouth of this opening...*sounds familiar?*
- C. (20) The living God - God hasn't gotten older, or even smarter over time. He hasn't changed. *What a great reason to confide in Him.*

1. **Martin Luther** during a time of danger & fear was seen tracing on his table w/ his finger the words, *“He lives! He lives!”*
 2. **Alexander Maclaren** - *People come and go. Leaders, teachers, and philosophers speak & work for a season and then fall silent and powerless. He abides. They die but He lives. They are lights that glow, yet are ultimately extinguished. But He is the true light from which they draw their brightness, and He shines forever more.*
- D. (22) **The Invisible Restrainer** - **My God sent His angel.** *Sometimes we picture God in Heaven as God being very far from us.*
1. So, He gives us reminders of *just how close He is to us.*
 - a) God was there...marvelously there...*Terribly there!*
- E. **Muzzled Lions.** **Ever Watch an alligator documentary?** You see a man w/his bare hands hold shut an alligator’s tremendously strong jaw. **How?** *They have hardly any muscles to open their jaws, all the muscles work the other way to “snap” their prey, but few muscles to open it again.*
1. *I think our mouths work the opposite, easy to open, hard to close.*
 2. So, if a **man** can hold an alligator’s mouth closed, **an angel** can stop a lions... *no problemo!* [maybe it was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah in there with him?]
- F. (23) **Faith like Daniel’s cannot be shaken, for it is the result of having been shaken.**
1. God didn’t keep Daniel **out of** the den, He protected him **in** the den.
 - a) **Why?** Because he had faith. *He believed in his God.*
 - b) Heb.11:33 **who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.**
 2. Ps.18:30-32 **God’s way is perfect. All the Lord’s promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to him for protection. For who is God except the Lord? Who but our God is a solid rock? God arms me with strength, and he makes my way perfect.**
 3. *“Some men count the lions others just count on their Lord.”*
- G. **What critics are you facing? What lions? What lion dens? Can you trust in the Lord to deliver you?**
- H. The next verse I believe was written for the skeptic who’ll say, *Hey, maybe the lions weren’t hungry! Yes, the kitty cats were hungry that day...read vs.24-27*

V. LIONHEARTED (24-27)

- A. (24) **1st** the lions mouths were shut & now his critics.
1. Thus proving Prov.11:8 **The righteous** is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the **wicked** instead. *boomerang effect*
- B. (26) A big change from everybody forced to worship **Darius**...to worship the **Living & True God**.
- C. The reason for Darius writing this, is that **Daniel's God lives** whereas the gods of the Medes and Persians were **dead idols**.
1. This God is eternal, His kingdom is indestructible, He intervenes in people's affairs and delivers those who trust Him. He works by miraculous power to perform His will, including the miraculous delivery of Daniel.

VI. THE LION'S SHARE (28)

- A. (28) I guess you can say Daniel was **lionized** i.e. *"to look on or treat a person as a celebrity"*.
- B. Once again God used **one man** to effect a **whole kingdom** that bowed to the Eternal King.
- C. Daniel was a man who could be, *promoted, demoted, & even disregarded*. Then be *promoted again, demoted again, & even disregarded again*.
1. **How do you deal with promotions & demotions?** *never easy*.
 - a) Daniel didn't care because he was there to **serve the Lord His God** in any & every state he found himself in.