

**Articles and Sermons :: The Importance of Discrimination - Foster****The Importance of Discrimination - Foster - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2015/5/14 19:45**

Revelation brought various values to Daniel, but the first which we shall consider is the power to discriminate. Paul prayed for the Philippians that their "love might abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment", so that they might "approve the things that differ" (Phil. 1:9, 10, RV. marg.). Revelation brings discrimination, ability to detect the true nature of things behind the mere appearances. By this first vision Daniel was made to realize that the imposing and popular kingdom is not necessarily the lasting one. He saw that, however much the Lord may permit what is of the earth and seem to prosper it, we must not be led astray and imagine that it can truly serve Him. It is not what He wants, and it is doomed from the start. More than that, as vision succeeded vision Daniel came to realize that the final development of this kingdom must result ultimately in Antichrist. There are many kings and princes described here; there is no need for us to try to identify them, but let us observe that in their final issue they all produce a personage who is directly opposed to Christ. "He shall speak words against the Most High" (7:25), "he shall also stand up against the prince of princes" (8:25) and "shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods" (11:36). It is an enlightening but most sobering fact that the kingdom which has its origin in the natural heart of man, however good it may seem in its beginnings, and however much it may seem to be permitted and even supported by God, will be found in the end not only to be not of Christ but to be His rival for the throne. Let our own hearts witness how true this is.

This first vision is basic. It revealed that after all there are only two kingdoms: one of man and earth, and so really of Satan; the other of Heaven—the kingdom of God. How we need to discriminate, if we are to find our way through to God's goal, as Daniel did, without defilement and without compromise. Not that the discrimination must be only negative. While Nebuchadnezzar was being identified as the head of gold, Daniel and the others were able to identify themselves; they saw the other kingdom to which they belonged. The difference is spiritual, not legalistic. We must not draw any rash conclusions from Daniel's purpose of heart and request as to the king's meat and drink (1:8), "for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). He did receive his food from Babylon (even the pulse and water), and later on he received its honors and administered its civil affairs. Yet there was a difference, for Daniel never compromised in matters of spiritual affinity and heart attachment.

One thing is very important. In spite of his clear discrimination, Daniel never permitted himself to be critical of his brethren. They failed, they compromised, yet we may look in vain in his prayer in chapter nine for any trace of superiority, of critical condemnation or of a separate spirit. He did not denounce them; he loved them, he prayed for them; in a right way he identified himself with them. This is a lesson which we must take much to heart, for discrimination without love can be very hard and unhelpful. At the same time Daniel never allowed his love for his brethren to deflect him from absolute obedience to the Lord. That would be false love. We shall not help our brethren by compromising; we must be true to the Divine vision, absolutely firm and unwavering, as befits those who know that they belong to the heavenly kingdom, even though they have to live and work in Babylon.

-excerpted from Thy Kingdom Come by Harry Foster