

**Hymns: 371 Sweet Hour of Prayer 372 More Holiness Give Me 373 Dare to Be a Daniel**

### **Daniel**

**Daniel 1:1-21** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. **2** And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. **3** And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring *certain* of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; **4** Children in whom *was* no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as *had* ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. **5** And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. **6** Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: **7** Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel *the name* of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego. **8** But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. **9** Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. **10** And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which *are* of your sort? then shall ye make *me* endanger my head to the king. **11** Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, **12** Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. **13** Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. **14** So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. **15** And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. **16** Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. **17** As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. **18** Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. **19** And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. **20** And in all matters of wisdom *and* understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers that *were* in all his realm. **21** And Daniel continued *even* unto the first year of king Cyrus.

### **Faithful Living in a Faithless World**

*Blessed Hope Bible-Presbyterian Church*  
*Studies on the Book of Daniel*

The Book of Daniel is set during the Babylonian Captivity. Daniel was a teenager when he was deported out of his homeland in Jerusalem in 605 B.C. He was among the first group of exiles deported from their homeland. The invading Babylonian army besieged Jerusalem and finally destroyed it and the Temple in 586 B.C.

This begins 70 years of God's chastening hand upon His wayward people who had sinned against Him by going awhoring after idols for centuries. The Northern Kingdom had already been destroyed in 722 B.C. well over a hundred years ago. The spiritual decay of God's chosen people seemed to see no bottom. The worship of God has become a mockery to Him. They had only "a form of godliness" and God is not mocked. He saw through their hypocrisy. Because God loved His people, He chastised them.

**Hebrews 12:5-7** *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

But God did give Israel a second chance after 70 years of captivity during the time of the Persian Empire, God moved the heart of Cyrus for the remnant to return home. Temple worship was restored under Nehemiah, Ezra, Haggai and Zechariah.

But the time leading to the second destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the invading Roman army will be much more severe which will be for the next nearly 1900 years. Israel did not recover since. Israel came together as a nation again on 14 May 1948. There is no longer Temple worship in Israel today.

Temple worship in Israel will only be fully restored in the Millennium at the second coming of Christ.

Recall when God first instituted worship when they came out of Egypt into the wilderness with the construction of the Tabernacle in our study of the Book of Exodus. The people covenanted with God to walk with Him. And how God led them to possess the Promised Land through Joshua, Moses's successor, who left them this pertinent formula for spiritual prosperity.

**Joshua 1:8** *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

When Israel followed after God wholeheartedly, they became a strong nation. But when they were seduced to go after other gods as a result of the mixed marriages that Solomon had, Israel declined.

It was God who gave Judah into the hand of the invading Babylonian under the leadership of king Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel was deported to Babylon in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah.<sup>1</sup>

He lived in a time when the word of God was not honoured in the land. This was the Jehoiakim who burned the Scriptures (Jer. 36:23). But Daniel was different. Though young, he was a man of faith. He showed to us how godly youths can make a difference in an ungodly world. He lived righteously all his life. He exemplified how a true man of God should live. He knew and honoured the living and true God of Israel.

The name Daniel means, "God is my judge" or "judge of God." His lived up to the responsible name by which he was called. He lived a godly, upright life in a crooked world. God approved him by calling him a man greatly beloved (Daniel 10:19). He fully exemplified one who lived in the world but is not of the world. He held on to his precious identity as a child of God to reflect the glory and testimony of the living and true God.

The book of Daniel is most relevant for our generation. He showed us how we can maintain a consistent Christian testimony in a hostile world. Daniel's life exemplified how Christians should live as salt and light in a sin-ridden world. The world is always threatening to totally erase God from the face of the earth. But God always has His courageous remnant that dare stand with God. God manifest His life through His faithful remnant that are humble and would love Him above all. Daniel exemplified such a man. Daniel's life has much relevance to our lives. He was part of a believing minority in a largely pagan culture. As the world sought to tear down our faith, our Christian values and our identity, we must be like a Daniel.

As subjects of Babylon, the king sought to systematically brainwash them to serve the Babylonian Empire by separating them from their past. Daniel and his friends were given name of the false gods of Babylon and were taught to live and think like Babylonians. They were forcibly indoctrinated so that they would become officers of their new master.

Daniel – God is My Judge	Beltshazzar – Bel protect his life
Hananiah – the Lord is gracious	Shadrach – Command of Aku (moon-god)
Mishael – Who is as God?	Meshach – Who is as Aku is?
Azariah – The Lord is my help	Abednego – Servant of Nebo

How could Daniel and his three friends keep their faith in such a hostile environment? Any defiance can be immediate execution!

### **(1) Begins with a conviction (v8a)**

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<sup>1</sup> The Southern Kingdom consisted of the following kings – (1) Rehoboam (2) Abijam (3) Asa (4) Jehoshaphat (5) Jehoram (6) Ahaziah (7) Athaliah (8) Joash (9) Amaziah (10) Uzziah (11) Jotham (12) Ahaz (13) Hezekiah (14) Manasseh (15) Amon (16) Josiah (17) Jehoahaz (18) Jehoiakim (19) Jehoiachin (20) Zedekiah.

**8** But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

The Bible tells us he “purposed” in his heart not to defile himself with the king’s meat and wine. The word “purposed”, in the perfect tense signifying completed action, means “set, determine, fix”.

His conviction to be an obedient child of God was fixed and settled. Daniel determined in his young heart to be dedicated, committed and devoted to his God. Daniel made up his mind in advance he will be loyal to God. He settled it in his heart what he will do and what he will not do. He will not defile or contaminate himself with the pollutions of the idolatrous Babylonian culture that he found himself captive. He made a commitment in his heart to spiritual purity. It was a step of separation unto holiness.

He took such a step come because Daniel knew whom He was serving. The fear of God is the beginning of true wisdom. He will not live his life as dictated by circumstances but by God’s Truth!

Daniel kept his heart with diligence. He kept a watch on his own heart as Solomon taught well

***Proverbs 4:23*** *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

He will not eat the king’s food. The Jews had special *kosher* diet. Daniel kept to it. It protected him from defiling himself for they were possibly offered to idols.

## **(2) Follows with Courage to Do Right (8b)**

Daniel “*therefore requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself...*” (Daniel 1:8b). He knew the right thing to do as a worshipper of the living and true God. He was steadfast to do what’s right according to God’s Word, leaving the outcome to God. This trait meant possible affliction and suffering but his heart was set.

God granted him the courage to act out his conviction. This determination in his heart was seen throughout in his life where we saw in his later years, he would rather go to the lions’ den than to stop praying to His God. Though young, God was pre-eminent in his life. Daniel put God first. He trusted God with all his heart.

As Solomon said in ***Proverbs 1:10*** “*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*”

God honoured Daniel’s faith. Daniel had the courage to live out God’s Word and behold the glory of God. He had the courage to say “no”. Say “No” to alcohol and choose to be sober. To say “No” to temptation and yes to God. To say “No” to sin and yes to Jesus Christ. To say “No” to going on the Broadway of life and choose

the narrow way to stand even alone! Say “No” to slothfulness and yes to boldly witness for Christ.

**(3) Begets God’s Blessings (v9 cf. 17, 20)**

*9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.*

Daniel, in not defiling himself, was a clean vessel for God to manifest His glory. God blessed him in the following ways.

(1) By his obedience, Daniel found favour with God and God gave him favour with men, Daniel 1:9 *“Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.”* Daniel knew the truth and he abided by it. God blessed him.

(2) He was bestowed with godly wisdom, Daniel 1:17, 20 *“As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams...And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.”*

Jesus puts it this way for your encouragement - **Matthew 6:33** *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

Expect God to be fighting for us when we stand with Him. God’s commandments are given for our protection and blessing rather than to harm us. We are to trust God and act according to His Word leaving the outcome to God. A life of faithfulness in a faithless world.

**CONCLUSION**

May we like Daniel, purposed in our hearts not to defile ourselves even when the pressures of external circumstances and influences pressed hard upon us. May the Lord help us to evaluate each area of our life – in school, at work, at home, in our leisure, that we keep our spiritual purity. May the blessings of spiritual purity be our portion till we meet our Lord.

Question:

- (1) Are there areas of your life that is not separated unto holiness?
- (2) How can I put away sin and turn to God?