

Great Stories of the Bible - 04/06/22

Daniel— A Young Man With Convictions

TEXT- Daniel 1:1-8 *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged*

INTRO - Four Hebrew teenager boys were snatched from their homes in Jerusalem and taken to Babylon. They were princes, belonging to the royal family. The Jews had refused to repent and obey the Lord, so (as Jeremiah had warned) the Babylonian army came in 606-586 B.C. and conquered the land. It is too bad when the youth of the land must suffer because of the sins of the parents.

Daniel 1:3-4 *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.*

These four young men were physically strong and handsome, socially experienced and well-liked by others, mentally keen and well-educated, and spiritually devoted to the Lord. Their lives were balanced.

Luke 2:52 *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. — perfect examples of godly teenagers!*

1 John 2:15-17 *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Dare to be a Daniel

I. The Position He Served

- A. A prince – Probably a relative of the king
- B. Well educated
- C. A good reputation – Could stand before the king
- He knew how to appeal to the Babylonian king
- D. His life was balanced
- E. He was strong and healthy
- F. He had strong convictions

Esther – If I perish, I perish

David – Is there not a cause

Caleb – Give me that mountain

“I seek not a long life, but a full one, like you Lord Jesus.”

— Jim Elliot

He is no fool to give what he cannot keep to gain that which He cannot lose.

II. The Predicaments He Faced

A. A new home

No longer were they surrounded by the things of God in Jerusalem, and no longer would they have the influence of their godly parents and teachers. When some Christians get away from home, they rejoice at the opportunity to “let down the bars and live it up”; but not so with Daniel and his friends.

B. New knowledge

The Jewish wisdom had to go; from now on it would be the wisdom of the world, the wisdom of Babylon. The education of Babylon was not godly. Like Daniel and his friends, we should do our best but not abandon our faith.

C. New diets

For the next three years, they were supposed to eat the king’s diet. The Babylonian diet would have violated the law of God.

Daniel 1:8 *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.*

D. New names

The world does not like to recognize the name of God, yet each of the four boys had God’s name in his own name.

Daniel (“God is my judge”) was changed to Belteshazzar (“Bel protect his life”). Bel was the name of a Babylonian god.

Hananiah (“Jehovah is gracious”) became Shadrach (“the command of the moon god”);

Mishael (“Who is like God?”) became Meshach (“who is like Aku,” one of the heathen gods); and

Azariah (“Jehovah is my helper”) became Abednego (“the servant of Nego,” another heathen god).

The Babylonians hoped that these new names would help the youths forget their God and gradually become more like the heathen people with whom they were living and studying.

Proverbs 22:1 *A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.*

E. A decree to be slain

No magician could interpret the king's dream

F. The lion's den

Daniel 6:10 *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.*

III. The Principles He Modeled

A. Daniel purposed in his heart

Daniel 2:28 *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;*

At the Alamo in 1836 a story is told about the extraordinary bravery of the men who died there for Texas independence. Col. Travis, knowing that the situation had become hopeless, gathered his men together and said, "We must die. Travis, only 26, saw three possibilities.

- They could surrender and face execution, or
- try to fight their way out, or
- "remain in this fort...resist every assault as dearly as possible."

Col. Travis drew his sword and slowly drew a line in the dirt and said, "I want every man who is determined to die with me to come across this line." Immediately, Tapley Holland stepped across the line proclaiming, "I am ready to die for my country!" All but two men followed him. Jim Bowie, lying sick on a cot, asked some of his men to carry him across. The next day, Santa Anna's forces breached the walls and every man who had crossed that line died.

B. He had the Spirit of God on his life

Daniel 5:11 *There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;*

C. He was a righteous man

Ezekiel 14:14 *Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.*

Ezekiel 14:20 *Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.*

D. He had the wisdom of God

Ezekiel 28:3 *Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:*

E. He was greatly beloved

Daniel 10:11 *And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. He was called "beloved" an honor given in the Bible only to one other — Jesus Christ.*

IV. He Predicted The Future

Daniel 4:25 *That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.*

Daniel had the power of God to interpret the king's dream

- 1. The four world empires**
- 2. The tree vision of Nebuchadnezzar**
- 3. The handwriting on the wall**
- 4. The visions of the coming Messiah and the end times tribulation.**

CONCL - Daniel would never have enjoyed the victories and blessings of the later years had he not lived in the will of God.