

BOOK OF DANIEL
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO CONTINUING
DANIEL 1:21

INTRODUCTION

Some twenty-five centuries ago, Daniel was a young man who loved God and served God faithfully in the midst of some wicked times in his own nation of Judah.

Now when God's judgment of Judah came, Daniel was already serving the LORD and He CONTINUED to serve the LORD!

Daniel **could have despaired!** But he didn't!

Daniel **could have given himself over to the wickedness** that was going on around him with a "well, what's the use" attitude! But he didn't!

Daniel **could have allowed himself to be pressed into the mold of the Babylonian culture!** But he didn't!

Daniel **could have given up on serving the LORD.** But he didn't.

The Bible says here in Daniel 1:21 that **Daniel continued** even unto the first year of king Cyrus! **What is the significance of that?**
Nebuchadnezzar came and went. (Babylon)
Belshazzar came and went. (Babylon)
Darius came and went. (Mede)
Cyrus (Persian) came and Daniel was still there!

Daniel CONTINUED! What were the things in Daniel's life that contributed to him continuing? ? Let's consider some scriptural possibilities:

I. GODLY PARENTING!

Daniel didn't get the way he was by accident!
Scripture here reveals to us some very **godly ways** in this young man that were obviously established in his life from his upbringing!

This shows the importance of giving children **a godly foundation and training them in the way that they should go!**

Godly living in children comes not just by **proper teaching and training**—Which are most certainly essential— but by **example!**

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Parents cannot determine what will ultimately be built upon the foundation they lay in their child's life! However, whatever foundation that is laid will be with that child FOR LIFE! And it will undoubtedly be a great influence in their life!

II. GODLY PROFESSORS! (i.e. TEACHERS)

The life of one so grounded as Daniel points not only to his parents, but to other GODLY PROFESSORS (or teachers) that his parents allowed him to be exposed to and learn from!

(Ephesians 4:11-15; 2 Timothy 3:14-17)

The more a child is exposed to godly teaching, the better!

III. GODLY PURPOSE! (Daniel 1:8)

That word "*purposed*" there in vs. 8 means "*to put.*"
(i.e. Daniel put in his heart that he would not defile himself!)

Daniel was not one who lived his life **fatalistically!** (i.e. "*Whatever will happen, will happen—whatever will be, will be.*")

No, Daniel lived his life **ON PURPOSE!**

The question for us is do we really believe that God has a **PURPOSE** for our lives? Daniel did! And, he sought God's **PURPOSE** for his own life!

Did you know that the LORD has an **ETERNAL PURPOSE** for **YOUR LIFE** as one of His children!?

Paul, in *Ephesians 3:11* spoke about "*...the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:*"

That **ETERNAL PURPOSE** has more to do with our becoming **LIKE HIM** than our just being **WITH HIM** for all eternity!

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*Romans 8:28-29—“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, **to them who are the called according to his purpose.** 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did **predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:9 regarding God:
*2 Timothy 1:9—“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to **his own purpose** and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”*

Daniel’s parents and other teachers laid a proper foundation in his life, but in the final analysis, **Daniel had to CHOOSE for himself! And he CHOSE to have a GODLY PURPOSE... GOD’S PURPOSE for his life! This was a choice that had to come and DID COME from HIS HEART!**

Acts 11:23 records that when Barnabas was on one of his missionary journeys visiting and encouraging the Church at Antioch, that he *“...exhorted them all, that with **purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.**”*

He wanted them to **DETERMINE TO CONTINUE!**

We’ve already talked about how that Paul warned the young pastor and preacher Timothy of perilous times that would come and how evil men and seducers would get worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Wow, that wasn’t very encouraging! But Paul was just speaking the truth!

But he exhorted Timothy with these words:
*2 Timothy 3:14—“But **continue thou** in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;”*

Paul wanted Timothy to **DETERMINE TO CONTINUE!**

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And again in 2 Timothy 4:2 Paul exhorted Timothy to —“*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*” And even yet again in...

*2 Timothy 4:5—“**But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.**”*

And Paul pointed to the example in his own life:
*2 Timothy 3:10—“**But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,**”*

Listen, if you are going to **CLEAVE unto the LORD**, even in troubling times, and **CONTINUE with the LORD** and His purpose for your life, it will take you **PURPOSING IN YOUR HEART TO DO SO! AMEN!**

If we believe that God is Sovereign in everything—And He is—Then we can live our lives with a **GODLY PURPOSE** no matter what circumstances may come our way!

Obviously, there were MANY young men who were taken captive who **DID NOT** seek **GOD’S PURPOSE** because they gave themselves over to the defilement of the circumstances they found themselves in!

Only Daniel and his three Hebrew companions—Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—chose to refrain from defilement!
And that leads us to the next point...

**IV. GODLY PALS! (OR PEERS; OR COMPANIONS!)
(1:6-7; 2:17-18; 3)**

Oh the importance of the friendships and associations that we allow in our lives!

Remember the example of Jonathan’s friendship with David?

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How in 1 Samuel 19-20 that friendship help preserve the life of David from Jonathan's father King Saul and almost cost Jonathan his life at the hand of his father!

Remember the example of Amnon?

2 Samuel 13:3—"But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man."

(This "friend" devised a wicked plan for Amnon to be able to fulfil his wicked lusts for his sister Tamar. Amnon ended up defiling his sister and was later killed because of it in a murderous plot by his brother Absalom two years later!)

Remember the example of Solomon's son Rehoboam?

1 Kings 12:8—"But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him:"

Good friends can encourage us to live righteously!
Bad friends can encourage us to live wickedly!

We saw in Daniel 1 how that Daniel's three friends joined in with him in his purpose not to defile himself and joined in with him in the accompanying test that followed! Those three Hebrew Children also reaped the fruits of righteousness along with Daniel enjoying God's promotion!

V. GODLY PROVIDENCE! (1:9, 17)

Never underestimate the PROVIDENCE OF GOD to help you continue through a difficult time! Daniel didn't!

God's providence was evident in Daniel's life! You might describe it this way: ***"That boy had God all over him!"***

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Note 4 aspects of this PROVIDENCE that are included here:

A. Daniel Had God's Presence!

As a boy, no doubt Daniel had learned about the life of Joseph from what Moses recorded in the book of Genesis.

Recall the story of Joseph in Genesis. As his wicked brothers sold him into slavery:

Genesis 39:2—"And the LORD was with Joseph. . ."

Genesis 39:3—"And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his had."

Then as Joseph was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, things seemed to take a bad turn as he was thrown in prison.

However, God was still with him! *Genesis 39:21—"But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison."*

**We find that Daniel also had God's Presence in his life!
(Daniel 1:17; 2:47; 5:11-12; 6:3)**

Is God's presence in your life evident to you?

*Hebrews 13:5-6—"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.
6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."*

Daniel learned the truth that God is still with us even when our world is turned upside down! Have you learned that truth?

Is God's presence in your life evident to others?

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B. Daniel Had God's Protection!

We'll see this in Chapter 2 as a frustrated and very angry King Nebuchadnezzar was ready to kill ALL his wise men and counselors.

We'll see it again in Daniel 6 as a group of presidents and princes got jealous over Daniel preferential treatment by King Darius the Mede!

Daniel had God's protection through it all, but listen, we have God's Protection too!
EVERYTHING that comes our way is GOD FILTERED!

C. Daniel Had God's Provision!

God gave Daniel exactly what he needed when he needed it!

- 1. When Daniel Needed Physical Provision—God Gave It! (Daniel 1:8, 12, 17; 6:22)**
- 2. When Daniel Needed Mental Provision—God Gave It! (Daniel 2:16-19; + Ch. 5 - Belshazzar)**
- 3. When Daniel Needed Spiritual Provision—God Gave It! (Daniel 6:10; Ch. 9 - Prayer and Prophecy of 70 weeks)**

D. Daniel Had God's Promotion! (Daniel 1:19; 2:48; 6:1-3)

Conclusion

Daniel continued! Through all that God worked in his life, Daniel learned the truth that God blesses a life that is lived with His Purpose!

In order to continue you must have a beginning with God!