

**"Living for God in the Midst of Difficult Times"**

**Part 5**

**Daniel 1**

**Introduction:** Today as we return to our study of Daniel's life I want to do a quick review to get us to where we are today. We have followed Daniel from Jerusalem to Babylon. Daniel and about 74 others were taken in the first deportation under the invasion by the Babylonians. They were taken as hostages due to the fact that Nebuchadnezzar had to return home when his father died. He needed a way to keep Jehoiakim king of Judah in check while he was away and so he took young men who were of the royal line.

Behind this God's hand was at work and His plan was being carried out. God had warned the southern kingdom of the judgment that was coming and He had given them many warnings. But they ignored God and they ignored the warnings. They most likely believed that what had happened to the northern kingdom would never happen to them. But they were wrong.

So the Babylonians came into Jerusalem in the year 605 BC and took Daniel and his friends off to Babylon. Now there would be 2 other deportations. The next would take place in 597 BC and the last would take place in 586 BC. This means that Daniel was taken to Babylon 19 years before the other captives arrived. This was God's plan because God desired to get His men in place of leadership before the remaining Jews arrived.

When Daniel and his friends arrived at Babylon they were submersed into the ways of the Chaldeans. They were taught the language and the ways of the Chaldeans. They were stripped of their godly names and they were given names which were connected with the false gods of Babylon. They were then to be fed with the food from the king's table.

All of this was an attempt to brainwash these young men and mold them into Chaldeans whom the king could use in his palace as servants. Now Daniel would accept the teaching of the Chaldeans and he would accept the name change but Daniel refused to eat of the king's food.

**Notice Daniel 1:8a**

The reason was because of what was recorded in God's Word. God's Word did not forbid the study of foreign cultures. The Word of God did not forbid changing your name. But the Word of God had something to say about eating the food set before Daniel and his friends and drinking the wine from his table. Last week I shared with you why Daniel refused the

food and the wine. We need to first of all understand that this food would have been offered to idols. Here is what God's Word stated to the Jews concerning the meat offered to idols.

**Exodus 34:12-15**

*<sup>12</sup> Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:*

*<sup>13</sup> But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:*

*<sup>14</sup> For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:*

*<sup>15</sup> Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, **and thou eat of his sacrifice;***

Daniel would not partake of the wine because he was a prince and wine was forbidden for the princes.

**Proverbs 31:4-5**

*<sup>4</sup> It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; **nor for princes** strong drink:*

*<sup>5</sup> Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.*

So the point we looked at last week was that Daniel was controlled by the Word of God.

Then we looked at how Daniel handled the situation.

**Notice Daniel 1:8 again.**

Daniel had finesse about him. He saw the situation as an opportunity to share with the prince of the eunuchs what was taught in the Word of God. **In this thought last week we were able to see that Daniel was not ashamed of his convictions.**

This brings us to where we are today in our study.

**1. Daniel's Persistence**

**Notice Daniel 1:9-10**

God had brought Daniel in favor with the prince of the eunuchs but when Daniel requested that he not defile himself the prince of the eunuchs feared the king far too much to meet Daniel's request. So from it appeared as though Daniel would be forced to eat the king's food and therefore compromise the Truth of God's Word.

**Notice Daniel 1:11-13**

Here we see that Daniel refused to *COMPROMISE* but instead he went to the man whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over him. Just because the prince of the eunuchs had closed the door on Daniel it did not mean that Daniel would give in to *COMPROMISE*.

**Application:**

This is a reminder to all of us that when we are determined to stand for the Lord in the midst of difficult times we can expect there will be opposition. There are going to be who will tell you that you are too radical. There will be people who will tell you that the stand you have taken or the path you have chosen to walk is far too dangerous.

Satan is always going to place someone along the way that he will use to in an attempt to get you to compromise. Now we have talked about this before but I need to remind you again that it is often those who are the closest to us. It is often a friend (as the case with Daniel here) or it can be a family member. But it is often someone who is close that Satan will work through to get us to lower our standards. Let me give you a few examples:

- A. **Adam** - Satan worked through Eve to get him to compromise and eat of the forbidden fruit.

We know what the consequences were. Adam's compromise led the entire human race into sin.

- B. **Abraham** - Satan worked through Sarah to get Abraham to compromise.

**Genesis 16:1-4**

*Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.*

<sup>2</sup> *And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.*

<sup>3</sup> And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

<sup>4</sup> And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

Now at the same time we must realize that Satan will also use others around us.

C. **Peter** - Satan used a young maid to intimidate Peter into denying the Lord.

**Mark 14:66-68**

<sup>66</sup> And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

<sup>67</sup> And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

<sup>68</sup> But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

I could go on and on but the point is this, when we are determined to live for the Lord there will be people whom Satan will use who will try to drag us down below the standards which God desires us to live at. They will try to drag us down to a lower level.

We must not allow that to happen!!

**Luke 14:26-27**

<sup>26</sup> If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

<sup>27</sup> And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

**Matthew 10:34-36**

<sup>34</sup> Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

<sup>35</sup> For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

<sup>36</sup> And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

## 2. Daniel's Discipline

### Notice Daniel 1:12-13

There is something here that we do not see right on the surface. Daniel requested that he and the other 3 young men to be given "pulse" and "water". This was a meal of vegetables and water. This was the food which would have been fed to the servants. But the point I want you to see is the rest of the group was eating the king's food.

This speaks very loudly about the self-discipline of Daniel and his friends. I can assure you that Daniel's flesh desired to have the king's food. If someone gave me the option between a veggie burger and a hamburger I can assure you my flesh would desire the hamburger.

But Daniel had learned to deny the flesh and so in all of this we can see the self-discipline of Daniel. Daniel would not give in to the desires of the flesh.

### Application:

When you and I face times which try our faith we must learn to gain victory over the desires of the flesh. We must learn to exercise self-discipline.

Someone who has no self-discipline will be quick to compromise when the pressure gets turned up. A believer with little self-discipline will be given over to a life of compromise.

### Illustration:

I battle everyday with the desires of the flesh. My flesh would love to take the life of ease and the path of least resistance. But that is not the path which makes a difference for God.

We who are believers do not need to give into the desires of the flesh because we have been given victory over the flesh. The very power that resurrected Jesus from the grave lives within us and so it is a combination of that power and what happened on the cross 2000 years ago which gives us the victory.

**Romans 6:3-6, 11**

<sup>3</sup> Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

<sup>4</sup> Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

<sup>6</sup> Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

<sup>11</sup> Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Galatians 2:20**

<sup>20</sup>I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

## **3. Daniel's Faith**

### **Notice Daniel 1:12-14**

Daniel and Melzar agreed to a trial run of vegetables and water for 10 days. Now ten days is not very long so why would Daniel agree to just ten days? Because Daniel knew the power of God and he knew that with God all things were possible.

Daniel knew that God was far greater than the situation which he faced so Daniel had faith that God could do the impossible. This is the same faith which David showed when he faced Goliath. Let me show you the words David spoke.

### **1 Samuel 17:32-37**

<sup>32</sup> And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

<sup>33</sup> And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

<sup>34</sup> And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

<sup>35</sup> *And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.*

<sup>36</sup> *Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.*

<sup>37</sup> *David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.*

David was not afraid of Goliath because he knew what God could do when faith was involved. Notice the words of Jesus in Matthew.

**Matthew 19:26b**

*With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.*

**Application:**

As we face the difficult times of life faith must be a part of our lives.

**Hebrews 11:6**

<sup>6</sup> *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

**Conclusion:**

**Notice Daniel 1:15-21**

These men became a light in the midst of the darkness. In verse 17 we are told that GOD GAVE THEM KNOWLEDGE< SKILL< AND WISDOM.

When we are:

1. Persistent
2. Self-disciplined
3. Walking by faith

We will be amazed at what God will accomplish through us.