

"Living with a New Normal"

Daniel 1

Part 2

**Introduction:** Last week we started into a short series on the life of Daniel. We are looking at him to consider what to expect as we face a "NEW NORMAL" in our nation. In the life of Daniel we can clearly see how the enemy tries to get God's people to conform to the ways of the world.

**History:**

God had delivered the Jews into captivity because of their sin.

**Jeremiah 25:1-11**

*The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon;*

*<sup>2</sup> The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,*

*<sup>3</sup> From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened.*

*<sup>4</sup> And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.*

*<sup>5</sup> They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever:*

*<sup>6</sup> And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.*

*<sup>7</sup> Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the LORD; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.*

*<sup>8</sup> Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words,*

*<sup>9</sup> Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and*

*against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.*

*<sup>10</sup> Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.*

*<sup>11</sup> And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

Daniel was a young man who was deported from Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Nebuchadnezzar deported tens of thousands of Jews.

## **2 Kings 24:13-16**

*<sup>13</sup> And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.*

*<sup>14</sup> And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.*

*<sup>15</sup> And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.*

*<sup>16</sup> And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.*

The siege on Jerusalem lasted some 20 years and in this there were several deportations. Daniel was in one of the first deportations. Ezekiel would be taken about 9 years later.

Last week we considered how God was in control of all that happened in the captivity. God placed Daniel in the palace and Ezekiel in with the exiles. Each man had a ministry in the captivity.

Now when the Babylonians captured the people, they had a plan, and the plan was to seduce the captives. They would not torture and kill them as the Assyrians but instead they would take them to Babylon and do all they could to make them Babylonians. They had several means which they used in their attempt to remold the Jews.

## I. The Ways of Seduction

Let us look a little closer at the ways of seduction that the Babylonians used.

### 1. Isolation

This means involved separating the Jews from their support structure. They separated them from their family, friends, and their God. They would isolate them knowing that when they did it would cause them to question all they had been taught. If they were not grounded, then they would question their God in the midst of the isolation and wonder where He was and why he allowed all of this to happen.

#### **Application:**

This is what we must guard against in our lives today. Our enemy and the world will use whatever means possible to lead us away from our support structure. We can become too busy for the Bible, prayer and church. These are means of support that we cannot do without. I don't care who you are if you neglect the gathering together you will be weakened and you become a prime candidate to be conformed to the ways of the world.

#### **Hebrews 10:23-25**

<sup>23</sup> *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*

<sup>24</sup> *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*

<sup>25</sup> *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

God calls for us to be fully committed to walking with Him.

#### **1 Peter 4:1a**

*Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind:*

#### **Matthew 16:24**

<sup>24</sup> *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

Daniel had that very kind of commitment. Daniel never compromised in all of his years in Babylon because someone had poured into his life before the captivity ever happened. He lived in Babylon, but he never allowed Babylon to live in him.

Now if we allow ourselves to be isolated then we will most likely fall for the next means of seduction.

## 2. Indoctrination

### Notice Daniel 1:1-4

After the Jews were isolated, they were then taken and taught the knowledge and the language of the Babylonians. You can clearly see the attempt to make the Jews Babylonians.

### Application:

This is something that we as believers must be very aware of in our day. There is a great attempt today to confuse everyone about what is right and what is wrong. This is why it is so important that we become grounded in the Word of God. When we isolate ourselves from the teaching of the Word, we are then susceptible to indoctrination.

### Hebrews 5:12-15

*<sup>12</sup> For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

*<sup>13</sup> For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

*<sup>14</sup> But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

Notice the words of one of Hitler's men, Joseph Goebbels:

*"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State."*

The TRUTH is the best defense against a lie and therefore we MUST be grounded in the Bible.

### Ephesians 4:11-14

*<sup>11</sup> And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

<sup>12</sup> For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

<sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

<sup>14</sup> That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

### **Psalm 1:1-5**

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

<sup>2</sup> **But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.**

<sup>3</sup> *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

<sup>4</sup> *The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*

<sup>5</sup> *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*

In the world in which we live there is so much confusion. But in the Word of God we find:

#### **a. Comfort**

### **2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*

<sup>4</sup> *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

This comfort comes through God's Word.

#### **b. Wisdom**

### **Psalm 119:98-101**

<sup>98</sup> *Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.*

<sup>99</sup> *I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.*

<sup>100</sup> *I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.*

<sup>101</sup> *I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.*

### c. Guidance

#### Psalm 119:105, 130

<sup>105</sup> *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

<sup>130</sup> *The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.*

In this world today we desperately need all three of these. We need comfort, wisdom and guidance. The Bible tells us what the last days will be like.

#### 1 Timothy 4:1-2

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

<sup>2</sup> *Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

There is yet another means that was used against the Jews.

### 3. Changed identity.

#### Notice Daniel 1:5-7

Daniel and his friends had names that reflected the glory of God. These names were stripped away, and they were given names connected with the gods of Babylon. The Babylonians changed their names so as to change their identity. They wanted them to forget their past and start over in Babylon. They wanted them to forget who they were in Jerusalem. The Babylonians did everything they could to wipe the slate clean and make the Jews conform to the ways of Babylon.

#### Application:

Our society is not changing our names, but I can assure you they want to change your identity. Let me explain.

Our identity is in Christ. As believers we are called to be holy, righteous and set apart from the ways of the world. As believers we are called to stand against sin and to call it what it is.

**2 Corinthians 6:14-17**

*<sup>14</sup> Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*

*<sup>15</sup> And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?*

*<sup>16</sup> And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

*<sup>17</sup> Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.*

Our society is trying to change our identity in that they want us to blend in with and accept the world's philosophies. They tell us that to stand against sin is being racist, or bigotry. **They want us to forget who we are in Christ and be like them.** They want us to accept abortion, homosexuality, transgenderism and everything else that the world is involved in.

**Conclusion:**

The problem today is that many believers have forgotten who they are in Christ.

Keep in mind the world is like the Babylonians and it was to seduce us to be like them. Let us refuse to compromise no matter the cost and stand firm for Jesus Christ.