

1. Intro

- Historical background to today's lesson from the book of Daniel:
 - Due to worshipping false gods and disobeying God's Law, God judged both the northern 10 tribes of Israel and the southern 2 tribes of Judah, and their monarchies were both defeated in battle by foreign nations.
 - Israel was defeated by Assyria in 722 BC.
 - Judah was defeated by Babylon and taken into exile in 605 BC.
 - The four young men from Judah that we'll be reading about today (Daniel, Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach), & Azariah (Abednego) were part of the first group of exiles taken to Babylon.
- Today, we'll see Daniel and his 3 friends stand strong and trust the Lord while living in Babylon, serving a king who didn't acknowledge the one true Lord. And we'll also see Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego wholeheartedly trust and honor the Lord, even with their lives on the line.

2. Text

- **Daniel 1:1-7** - Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego were young men from Judah who were **exiled** to Babylon and forced into training for royal service to a **pagan** king.
 - What do you think, is it possible to worship God in an environment like that?
- **Daniel 1:8-14** - Daniel was **determined** not to defile himself by eating the king's food and wine (most likely because it was food forbidden in God's Law and it was sacrificed to idols).
 - Living out our **convictions** to honor the Lord will **impact** those around us.
- **Daniel 1:15-20** - Daniel and his 3 friends **honored** the Lord and followed their convictions, and the Lord caused them to look **healthier** and be better nourished than the young men who ate the king's food and wine.
 - **Jeremiah 17:7-8** "But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. 8 They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit."
- Daniel 2 summary:
 - One year later, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and none of his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, or astrologers could interpret it.

- Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego prayed and God revealed both the dream and the interpretation to them.
- The king made Daniel ruler of the province of Babylon and appointed Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego in charge of all the affairs in the province of Babylon.
- **Daniel 3:1-15** - The command was given to bow down and **worship** King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue or be thrown into a **blazing furnace**.
 - What would you do?
 - God didn't promise to remove trials because we chose to follow Him.
 - **1 Peter 4:12, 19** "**12** Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.
 - **19** So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for he will never fail you.
- **Daniel 3:16-18** - Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego **determined** to honor and worship God, and they simply **trusted** Him for the outcome.
- **Daniel 3:19-23** - King Nebuchadnezzar was **furious** and ordered the 3 young men to be **thrown** into the blazing furnace to their death!
- **Daniel 3:24-30** - The Lord supernaturally **protected** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from being **harm**ed in the fiery furnace!
 - There was a **4th** figure walking around in the fire along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!

3. Application

- What situation or trial in your life do you need to DETERMINE to honor the Lord in, and then simply TRUST Him with the outcome?
 - **Jeremiah 17:7-8** "But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. 8 They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit."
 - **Philippians 4:6-7** "**6** Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. **7** Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."