



Silverdale Baptist Church

STAND • STAND OUT • DANIEL 1 • 5/30-31/2020

Main Idea

The world wants to control you and change you, but the world doesn't own you!

Introduction

Have you ever noticed how couples begin to look alike as they grow old together?

Why do you think that is?

One theory is that we begin to mimic the facial responses of the person we are close to over time. If your spouse laughs a lot, there is a good chance you will have laugh lines when you grow old. The point is, the thing we grow close to, the thing that we focus on shapes us.

Other than the Bible, what book has influenced your life the most? Why?

Books shape our thought processes, the way we view the world. The Word of God shapes our mind to see the world the way God sees the world.

Is your focus on God or on the world?

Understand

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ DANIEL 1:1-4

The book of Daniel begins in the year 605 B.C. The country of Babylon is the superpower and Nebuchadnezzar is the king.

According to verses 1-4, what is the background for this story?

What do you learn about God in verse 2?

How are the Jewish captives described in verse 3?

What is supposed to happen to the Jewish captives?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ DANIEL 1:4-7.

Verses 1-7 set the context for the rest of chapter 1 and chapter 1 sets the context for the whole book of Daniel.

What do you learn about the circumstances of the captivity for Daniel and his friends?

Names are important. In the Bible names reflect identity. What do you believe could be the purpose of changing the young men's names?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ DANIEL 1:8-17.

Describe the situation outlined in these verses.

Why does Daniel disagree with the official diet program?

How do they handle the disagreement?

How did the commander respond at first to Daniel and his friends?

What changed his mind?

In the end, what did God do?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ DANIEL 1:18-21.

How were the men received by King Nebuchadnezzar? Why?

In a situation that demanded unconditional obedience Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah chose to stand for God rather than kneel before peer pressure or the accepted standards of their day. In this case, God spared them and used them to accomplish His purposes in the culture of their day.

Application

Though this story seems to be about Daniel and his three friends, look at the mentions of God in verses 2, 9, and 17. What do you learn about God in these verses? Since God does not change (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8), how might the truth about God in Daniel 1 apply to your life?

In verse 8, Daniel resolved (literally set upon his heart) that he would not defile himself with the king's food. How would Daniel, or anyone else, know what foods would be approved of or not approved of by God?

What practical steps can you take to know the Word of God, and therefore know the God of the Word?

Commentary

| DANIEL 1

1:1 Although Daniel recorded these events as taking place in the third year of ... Jehoiakim, Jeremiah wrote that it was in the fourth year (Jr 25:1, 9; 46:1). Daniel probably used the Babylonian system which did not count a king's year of accession, while Jeremiah used the Israelite system of counting, which did include the accession year. The events took place during the accession year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, probably when he was still co-regent with his father and just after the battle of Carchemish (605 BC).

1:2 Although Nebuchadnezzar viewed his defeat of Judah as a victory for his gods, Daniel's perspective was that it was the Lord who handed Jehoiakim over to the Babylonians. The historian Berosus mentioned these events when he wrote that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Hattiland (referring to Syro-Palestine). At that time, Nebuchadnezzar took vessels from the house of God, in fulfillment of Isaiah's prediction when Hezekiah showed them to the Babylonian king a century beforehand (Is 39:2, 6).

1:3 His chief eunuch could also be translated "his chief official," since the meaning of Hebrew saris varies (see the word's use in Gn 39:1; 2Kg 20:18; Est 2:3; Is 56:3).

1:4 The Hebrew word for young men here literally means "children" or "boys" and probably refers to teenagers, a good estimate being around age fifteen. Chaldean language and literature refers to an ancient university-style education in Sumerian, Akkadian, and Aramaic.

1:5 Persian literature shows that three years was the customary time allotted for such training.

1:6–7 Daniel and his friends, whose original names honored the God of Israel, were given other names intended to honor the false gods of Babylon. Daniel ("God is My Judge") became Belteshazzar ("Bel Protect Him"); Hananiah ("God Has Been Gracious") became Shadrach ("The Command of Akku"); Mishael ("Who Is What God Is?") became Meshach ("Who Is What Aku Is?"); Azariah ("The Lord Has Helped") became Abednego ("Servant of Nebo").

1:8 The word determined means literally “set upon his heart,” referring to inner resolve. Daniel decided that he would not defile himself with a diet that included non-kosher meat such as horseflesh and pork, or drink wine that had been offered to Babylonian gods.

1:9–14 Only God’s Spirit could have convinced the official to disobey the king even for ten days.

1:15–16 The fact that Daniel and his friends looked better and healthier is not a biblical endorsement of vegetarianism (Gn 9:3). Rather, God in his providence made them healthy and strong.

1:17–19 The ability of Daniel and his friends to excel intellectually was clearly given by God.

1:20 Throughout the book of Daniel, there are six different expressions for the king’s counselors. The first two, used here, are magicians and mediums. The word for “magicians” comes from a root that means “engraver.” It refers to those who engraved Babylonian religious activities and astrological movements of the stars on clay tablets. The word “mediums” means “conjurers.” It refers to those who used spells and incantations to communicate with the spirit world.

1:21 Daniel saw the end of the exile, living until the first year of King Cyrus (539 BC) and even beyond that time (see 10:1, where “third year” dates to 536).[1]

[1] Rydelnik, M. (2017). Daniel. In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (pp. 1324–1325). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.