

GOD RULES – p. 2
“The Wisdom of Daniel 1”
Daniel 1

Introduction

The most obvious feature of Daniel is not seen in English –

- It is written in two languages – Hebrew and Aramaic
- Chapter 1 – Hebrew
 - Chapters 2-7 – Aramaic; The trade language of the Babylonian Empire
 - Chapters 8-12 – Hebrew; The religious language of God’s people

The two languages were written for two different people –

- The Hebrew for God’s people
- The Aramaic to the nations of the world

Two languages for different purposes –

2 Languages	2 Peoples	2 Purposes
Aramaic (2-7)	The Nations of the World – Gentiles	God is Sovereign – He Rules!
Hebrew (8-12)	The Nation of Judah – Jews	God is a Savior – He Redeems!

And while God shows His sovereign hand to the nations, He also reveals to them His saving heart.

Worship, Wisdom and Witness

As we read the Old Testament, we should look for one of three things –

- Worship – How does the text reveal God’s character and plan that gives rise to worship?
- Wisdom – How does the text shine the light of God’s wisdom on our lives to help us please Him?
- Witness – How does the text point us to the person and work of Jesus Christ?

Last week’s message was heavy on the first purpose of OT text – We say a lot that should cause us to worship –

- God is sovereign over nations, kings and all our present circumstances.
- Today’s message will focus on the second purpose of OT text – To help us grow in wisdom.

THE WISDOM OF DANIEL 1

1 – The Wisdom of Respect for Authority

-v. 8 – *“But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king’s food, or with the wine that he drank.*

Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.”

- Daniel asked for permission...He requested permission – There’s nothing aggressive
- He didn’t “demand” or threaten a hunger strike!
 - Even after the chief of the Eunuchs doesn’t think it a good idea that they not eat and drink what the king had provided, Daniel takes the pressure off by suggesting a substitute plan.
- And he had every reason for the opposite –
 - Taken from his family, his home, his country and now an attempt to force this new way of life and identity on him...
 - Yet no hostility – not enraged or embittered.
- Instead he shows respect to his captives.
 - And this is consistent all the way through the book...
- Let’s bring this close to home – really close!
 - In this past year, Christian have done a lot of talking...and writing...and posting about authority – local, state and national authority.
 - How much of it has been like Daniel – respectful, thoughtful, and even helpful?

- Two reasons you should always respond to authority with respect –
 - One – It’s the will of God!
 - Rom. 13:1-7
 - Respect to whom it is owed – “I am a debtor”
 - Before you post ask, “Is this something a debtor would say?”
 - 1 Peter 2:13-24
 - Two – It may be used by God
 - Like here, with Daniel and his friends – v. 9 – *“And God gave favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs.”*
 - When they stood before the king, three years later, the king was impressed by them!
- Is there a time to object? Disagree? Disobey?
 - Yes there is – Daniel and his friends will model that for us –
 - Even when they are facing death, they do not act or speak disrespectfully!
- Just like two weeks ago we talked about hysteria not making for good evangelism – neither does hatred!

2 – The Wisdom of Issue Discernment

- By this I mean – “When (and where) do you draw the line?”
 - We ask that all the time and Daniel 1 gives us some wisdom to help.
- So what does Daniel do?
 - He learns the literature; He learns the language –
 - v. 17 – *“...God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom...”*
 - What doesn’t he do?
 - v. 8 – *“But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king’s food, or with the wine that he drank.”*
- Why Daniel and his friends drew the line there is a bit of a mystery –
 - Probably has to do with the significance of the body...
 - 1 Cor. 6:19 – *“...your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit...”*
 - But the wisdom we glean is that there is a line and the Bible will help us draw those lines and give us grace to live it!
- Because we love God and want to live as His distinct people.

3 – The Wisdom of a God-Centered Worldview

- What kept Daniel anchored? Do we get any indication from the story as to the foundation he stood on?
 - v. 20 – *“And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the **magicians and enchanters** that were in all his kingdom.”*
- Remember how the civilization that was victorious was thought to be superior –
 - But there’s nothing good, or beautiful or desirable that comes from the Babylonian worldview.
 - Daniel says, “Why would I worship the heavens when I can know, worship and love the God of the heavens?!”
- Constantly, throughout Daniel, it is the covenant-keeping God of the Jews that is praised, glorified and shown to be superior to the Babylonian ways.