

## ***The Moral Condition to Understand God's Mind***

### Lesson Two: Daniel One

Introduction: This first chapter gives ample evidence of the sovereign hand of God in the affairs of both nations and individuals.

Throughout history, foreign armies have invaded nations, taking people captive and transporting them to unfamiliar territory. Tragically, this action usually separates family members from one another – sometimes for a lifetime. As far as we know, Daniel was taken from his family by a Babylonian military leader who besieged Jerusalem in the seventh century. By studying this book, we will learn a great deal about God and how we should respond to Him, to His strategy in human history, and to those with whom we come in contact.

Daniel chapter one makes it clear that certain personal risks may accompany our commitment to God and His standard of holiness. However, the price tag of holiness cannot compare to what is being protected.

### ***The condition suited to spiritual enlightenment.***

- A. Chapter one sets forth the moral condition suited to enlightenment in the ways and counsels of God.
- B. The truth of God is learned through the conscience. So, if we want enlightenment in divine things, we must walk in the power of an ungrieved Spirit, for “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him” (Psalms 25:14).

### ***God gave Nebuchadnezzar victory (1:1-2)***

- A. In these verses we find fulfilled the word that God had been previously declared by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others of the prophets.
- B. The fall of Jerusalem looked like the triumph of the pagan gods over the true God of Israel – but it was actually a victory for God.
- C. So wise and powerful is our God that He can permit men and women to make personal choices and still accomplish His purposes in this world.

### ***God gave favor to Daniel and his friends (1:2-16)***

- A. The king's policy was to train the best people of the conquered nations to serve in his government. He could benefit from their knowledge of their own people and could also use their skills to strengthen his own administration.

- B. Facing the test!
  
- C. A difficult test!
  
- D. Passing the test!
  - 1. Inner conviction.
  
  - 2. Wise approach.
  
  - 3. Throughout Scripture you will find courageous people who had to defy authority to obey God and in every case their approach was wise and gentle.

### **The risks of holiness**

- A. Too often Christians do not stand up for the Lord because more mature Christians have not spoken plainly about the risks of holiness and prepared them to pay the price.
  
- B. If we do not see practical reasons for holiness, we may falter to hold the standard God asks of us. We can take many blows and bear heavy burdens if the purpose is clear. God uses Daniel to explain why we must stand firm for the Lord in difficult situations.
  - 1. The first reason for holiness in this early trial of Daniel's life is that his stand prepared him for spiritual battles ahead.
  
  - 2. God's further purpose in our holiness is to shield us from further spiritual harm.
  
- C. All this might have seemed to many of the Jews a trivial matter. However, it brings out a principle that should appeal to our conscience. The only way to go on with God is by being faithful in little things.
  
- D. It is because these men were careful to maintain a good conscience that they were given spiritual enlightenment above all the men of their times.

**Conclusion:**

- A. In a world filled with people who rebel against the divine King, it is inevitable that believers of all ages will face situations in which their convictions will be challenged. We who are parents need to prepare our children for those occasions by both teaching them God's truth and modeling integrity. All of us who are Christians need to personally commit ourselves to living God's way regardless of the temptations to live otherwise. Recalling and applying two principles that are embedded in the first chapter of Daniel will help us keep that commitment.
  - 1. Inner conviction can overcome any outer pressure to compromise.
  - 2. God honoring convictions yield God given rewards.
- B. It is of grave importance that we bear this principle in mind in these Laodicean times. We live in days when everything that once was deemed important is looked upon as a matter of indifference.
- C. What a lesson for us – that purity of heart and faithfulness to God comes before enlightenment in divine mysteries.
- D. The events in this chapter should be an encouragement to us when we face trials and temptations, because when God is not allowed to rule, He overrules.
- E. Studying the Book of Daniel will help us to learn how God's servants can live boldly, yet graciously, in a godless culture.
- F. Godly men like Daniel and his friends did not prevent the fall of Babylon. But it did prevent them from falling into the lure of compromise.
- G. So, what do we do?
  - 1. Be Faithful
  - 2. Be Gracious
  - 3. Be Vigilant
  - 4. Be Steadfast
  - 5. Be Strong
  - 6. Be Consistent
- H. As a result, Daniel was greatly used of God to display His absolute sovereignty in Babylon.