

Daniel 1:1-21

Dare to be a Daniel It's Decision Time!

RIGHTEOUSNESS

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Saturday
June 20, 2020

- Workshop 1) Using the Word:**
Using the word of God to navigate us to our true destiny
- Workshop 2) Trusting God:**
Trusting God to being instrumental in our past, present and future to give us that expected end
- Workshop 3) Standing for Truth:**
standing for truth through making Godly choices directed by the calling on your life

Executive Summary:

Greetings to you in the precious name of Jesus our soon coming King. Whenever men serve together in the kingdom great things can be accomplished. The integrity that Daniel displays in Babylon propels him to a position of service and influence so that the King and other officials had to submit to the word of God that was in his mouth.

The 2020 Sons of Issachar Conference focuses on the skill and humility of this significant old testament prophet with hope that it will serve as a catalyst for change and progression in the lives of both young men and the elders.

While the Sons of Issachar understood the times, Daniel was a man for his time and used to give clarity to the King's confusion. What a great example to emulate, what a tremendous person to follow which is why your participation in this year's conference is an absolute must.

Come prepared to challenged leave with a commitment to serve your family, church, and community!!

Bishop Dexter Edmund



Greetings from our Patron

Greetings to you all in the precious name of Jesus. It is truly an honour and a privilege to be able to greet you in these times. I thank God for this opportunity, and I do not take it for granted at all.

This year's theme and popular phrase 'Dare to be a Daniel' was coined by the song writer and American composer Phillip Paul Bliss in a song we have all come to know quite well. It speaks of Daniel's character, particularly, his boldness and willingness to stand alone in adversity. This was something truly notable about Daniel and of paramount importance during his rise to a high-ranking position within the Babylonian kingdom.

Daniel's willingness and boldness can be seen when he was forbidden to pray for thirty days, but disobeyed Nebuchadnezzar's decree and continued to pray three times a day until his prayer was answered. In Dan 11:32 he said, 'but the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.'

Daniel was chosen of the kings' seed and the princes of Israel. He had good character and as a leader he was very understanding, much like the sons of Issachar. Theologians say he was a great man of the times, and it is said that great men such as Abraham Lincoln and Sir Winston Churchill have looked to Daniel for leadership qualities and found them.

Young men of today, I pray that this year's conference will richly blesses you. Stand out and stand up because strong men do so in difficult times. May God bless you all in Jesus name.

Yours in Christ,

Overseer Bailey



Context:

This season, God has directed us to tabernacle in the book of the prophet Daniel. This is not an easy book to make sense of however, one thing that remains noticeably clear is that young Daniel had a relationship with the God he served. So much so, that he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. The focus for this year's theme will be based on the 1st book of Daniel from verses 4, 5, 7, 9, 17 and 19. Daniel chapter 6 and verse 3 will conclude matters.

Well, let us now consider the wider context that Daniel had to navigate within such as the cultural, environmental and political, with due consideration being given to any other significant characters that held some sway and indeed influence, whether negative or positive. I pray that as we carefully manoeuvre our way through this text that the understanding of the theme will emerge.

'Dare to be a Daniel – it is decision time'

Just by way of a brief outline (not exhaustive), the book of Daniel is in two parts, firstly historical: Daniel is the historian of the captivity, what can we learn from this? Carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Secondly prophetic: consisting of three visions and one lengthy prophetic communication. Daniel sits 27th in the ordering of the Old Testament books and he is known as the 5th major prophet.

The main message of the book is God's message to his people during their captivity in Babylon. According to one Bible thesaurus the theological theme is best described in the following paragraph: The theme of the book is summarised in chapters 4: 17; 5: 21. **"The Most High (God) is sovereign over the kingdoms of men."** Daniel's vision always shows God as triumphant (7: 11, 26 – 27; chapter 8 – 25; chapter 9:27). The climax of his sovereign rule is described in Revelation: **"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ (i.e. Messiah) and he will reign for ever and ever."** (Revelation 11: 15; and Dan. 2: 44; 7: 27)

The name Daniel in the Hebrew means **'God is my judge'**. He was one of those Jews who had been led away captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar around 605 BC. He captured many thousands of Jews including all their princess and the strongest and best of the inhabitants. Nebuchadnezzar also defiled God's Temple that King Solomon had built to furnish his own Babylonian temple; what a cheek!!

Imagine for a moment that you are forcibly taken from your family, hometown, friends, the temple of God and wider community on a long journey (Jerusalem to Babylon), probably having to walk (no

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Context: (cont).

Ubers those days!) to a new place and situation not knowing if the man in charge would treat you kindly. I would like to propose that during this time Daniel and the other boys may had carried out a personal reflection of what they were leaving behind and what they may now expect. Probably somewhere on this journey, their resilience and mind-set were made up to keep the faith, no matter what.

After they eventually arrived into Babylon, they were almost immediately identified through a clear criterion by the King. It read, ***“children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans”*** (Daniel 1. 4)



Now, many of us might have given up either at the point of captivity or during the journey not knowing that God in his 'divine providence' has already designed a specific and bespoke set of measurements (criteria) that would mark you (Daniel) out as being different and as such to be appointed as 'special' in more ways than one. Those determined to meet the criteria were to attend a local school to be taught by the best educators in the land, notably the wise men of Babylon whose remit was to teach them to speak the language of the Chaldeans and to strengthen the King's hand in all matters.

Note, Daniel and co, were no ordinary young men, by this I mean, they could have behaved in a way that would see them as conformist. Perhaps the following had some influence on their response: they were of noble descent / Jewish royalty, aged around 20 years old when they were removed from their homeland. However, because of their strong believe system in what they had been taught, this in fact gave them the desire to ensure this would not be forgotten, but instead would be preserved. Therefore, enabling Daniel, along with his three companions Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah to behave well in their new environment

The King chose the best of the young men who were healthy and strong. To maintain this outward presentation, he provided them the quality food and drink form his own kingly table. No doubt, many a young man then and even now would succumb to this attention, yet, for these boys there was something on the inside that said no to this temptation and happily consume these foods. The questions that emerges right now is, ***'do we love God enough to do what is right?'*** when I consider the reason (s) why the king's food was thought to have the potential to defile one, there are a couple of schools of thought that come to mind. Firstly, the Bible explains in Numbers 11 the Law of eating holy things and clearly sets out that such.

Context: (cont).

“that parteth the hoof and is cloven footed and cheweth the cud, among the beast, that shall ye eat. However, these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you”.

‘Defile’ could also mean destroy for instance, 2 Kings 23:10, **‘and he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley’**. David wrote in the Psalms (119:1), **“blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord”** referring to the laws of God given through Moses in Leviticus and Numbers. Isaiah weighed in and said, **“the earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant”**. From this text we can deduce that the word **‘defiled’** is given because of disobedience of the law of God by those who inhabited the earth. Secondly, could it be that Daniel did not wish to be separated from God by defiling his flesh with defiled (unclean) food, because he understood the heart of God as demonstrated through the law given through Moses.

What can I make of all this?

The learning will emerge from the following verses arising out of chapter 1 (v. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 17 & 20) and concluding in Chapter 6: 3. This influx of historical information at the opening of the book of Daniel, sets the scene to identify Daniel and the three other young men as instruments that God would use to forward His plans and purposes, during Israel’s Babylonian captivity. The Bible declares from v 4 **“children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach.....”**

There are several significant words used in the above paragraph, such as **‘blemish’** and **‘favoured’**. In Ex. 12: 5 when the children of Egypt came out of Egypt and the Passover was instituted, they offered a lamb without blemish; signifying a type and shadow of Christ who had no blemish (1st Peter 1: 19). It is apparent that the choice of these boys was by divine appointment. (see also Lev. 24-19/20).

The Bible said that Rachel was well favoured (Gen. 29: 17) and was one of the two women who gave birth to sons who formed the tribe of Israel. Jacob showed his affection (favour) by placing her and Joseph at the back when going to meet Esau. We also read about other women in who also received ‘divine favour’ from God. Lk 1: 28 the angel said to Mary, **“hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee....”**

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Context: (cont).

Can you imagine your parent (s), line manager or colleague using such adjectives to describe you? He is of, good appearance, character, morale standing, an intellectual heavy weight with teachability traits and a charming temperament? I am sure all of us would be pleased to read a statement like this. Notwithstanding this, the fact that Daniel and others were forcibly removed from their country, God had already provided a divine descriptive platform that would set these boys apart. Jeremiah said that **"I know the thoughts....prosper and an expected end"**. Beloved, you may not fully understand where you are going at this time of Covid-19, nor indeed what God is doing, but rest assured that He has a plan to bring you out. Therefore, we must stand for holiness and righteousness knowing that God will vindicate you for doing what is right.

Verse 5 "and the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so, nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king"



An interesting commentary from Adam Clarke records that the customs of the Kings of Persia at that time were to order the food left at their own tables as the daily provisions for their courtiers which Daniel was one. This process of **'nourishing them'** would continue for about three years, thus ensuring that they were proficient in the language, sciences, and norms of the Chaldeans. The purpose being to ensure that nothing was lacking in terms of their intellectual / social potential and good in appearance.

There will no doubt come a time in your walk with God that you too will be identified as a carrier of God's anointing and too His wisdom. One could argue that this type of strategy or **'buttering-up'** is simply to get you to a point of surrender. You may rightfully ask what I must surrender or give up. That is just it, your identity!! The plan in the 21st century is to get the Apostolic church to forget her **'speckle bird'** identity, so to appear the same as everyone else.

Consider Daniel et al, the arrangements were designed to offer them this choice meat and luxurious living to get them to forget who they were and the country of their origin. It is no wonder the subtleties and somewhat wiles of our common adversary is to blind our eyes to what is happening around us. His desire is for us to sleepwalk into oblivion. If this was not enough, Daniel and the other boys were subjected to a name change, with the aim of adding to the erosion of their identity.

Verse 7 "unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Beltshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego"

Context: (cont).

You can begin to understand that the decision to change their names was a sinister plot to indoctrinate them with Babylonian creeds in a heathen culture. What is in the name, one may ask? An anonymous writer said, **“a name is a life jacket that keeps us afloat in the ocean of anonymity”**. Daniel name means, **‘God is my judge’** in the Hebrew language, while his new Babylonian name was ‘Belteshazzar’ which means, **‘Protect the Life of the King, or ‘Bel’s Prince’**. ‘Bel’ was one of the names of the Babylonian gods, and it is evident that a new name would provide a new identity with a vastly different focus. This move was designed to remove all traces of Hebrew roots from the mind and memory of these young noblemen and thus replacing it with a Babylonian mindset / philosophy.

Daniel’s three friends had names that also honoured the God of Israel. **‘Hananiah’** meant **‘God is Gracious’** was changed to Shadrach, meaning ‘illuminated by Sun-god’. The name **‘Mishael’** proclaimed the rhetorical question, ‘who is like God?’, which demanded the response **‘No one is like unto our God’**, was changed to ‘Meshach’, meaning who is like ‘Venus’. And the meaning of **‘Azariah’** was ‘God is help’, which suggests the well-loved psalm, **“God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change, and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea”**. His name was changed to **‘Abednego’**, meaning ‘slave of Nebo’. It was despite this failed attempt to erase the memories and transform the minds of these four young men and implant an allegiance to gods and culture that we discover this book to be one of hope and encouragement for the future restoration of Israel. Men of God, stand strong, become the man God intends you to be and in so doing you will find that in this story of slavery, selection and favour, God is faithful to His people.

Verses 8 – 20 summarised:

The Bible declares that, **‘Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself’**.

Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the Chief of Staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods. Now God had given the Chief of Staff both respect and affection for Daniel. But he responded, **‘I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? Then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king’**. Daniel then spoke to the eunuch to ask for special dispensation for ten days to prove His God would take

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Context: (cont).

care of them during this time. At the end of the ten days, the young men looked healthier and better nourished than the other young men that had been eating the defiled food assigned by the king. Thereafter, they were fed only with vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others. It was God that gave these young men the unusual aptitude for understanding every aspect of literature and wisdom. And God gave Daniel the special ability to interpret the meanings of dreams and visions. When the training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief of staff brought them to stand before king Nebuchadnezzar.

The king talked with them, and no one impressed him as much as young Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. So, the story goes they entered the royal service and the rest is history!

What principles can we take from this?

Daniel's was cognisance that his name meant **'God is my judge'** and remained steadfast and faithful because he lived constantly knowing that at some time God would judge him. This he remembered which consequently made wise decisions.

- We have the power to choose
- There will always be consequences for the decisions we make
- To become an anointed and mighty vessel of God you must be faithful
- Always remember that God is our judge AND our works will be tried
- When God returns, will He find us faithful
- The Bible declares, 'in all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct our paths.'



What can we learn from the text?

In the 3rd year, God raised up Neb for the purpose of taking Jerusalem (Israel) into captivity. This decision was recorded by the prophet Habakkuk that God would raise up his vessel of punishment. Not only was Jehoiakim and the people captured, but some of the temple vessels too. Hebrews 9 mentions the vessels, i.e. the furniture.

There is a subtle yet significant biblical rendering that occurs between verses 3 and 6; to many scholars, it is the transition moment. The Bible declares in verse 3, **'and the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and the king's seed, and of the princess'**. And verse six reads, 'now among these were of the **children of Judah**, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah'.

We see the transition – those taken captive from Israel (verse 3) were soon to assimilate into the Babylonian culture and pagan lifestyle. They quickly forgot their theological and cultural heritage and lived the way of their captives. There is a classic relativism (when values & practises determines what is right or wrong) **'when in Rome do as the Romans do'!**

Yet, those noted in verse 6 were of the sons of Judah, meaning praise. Distinction sub-category of those from Judah, individuals who wanted to give God praise: are you someone who want to honour God and live a God praiseworthy life? we are called to reflective God's character, (Gen 1:27), we were made in His image and likeness. Israel assimilated and drank the Kings wine and ate his food however, those from Judah held on to their names knowing that their names held theological significance which tied them to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There will always be a few in Sardis who will not defile their garments.

It was Daniel's commitment to biblical truth that caused God to move. We must understand the importance of spiritual truth and the laws associated with spiritual and natural laws. Know of a surety, what we sow we shall reap. See Gen. 8:22, and Galatians 6:7. If we determine not to defile ourselves or assimilate, then God will move in our lives. Favour and grace are covenantal words, that when applied causes God to move. As a direct result of their stance, God gave them knowledge in every book because they did not defile themselves, God moved in their lives in a supernatural and physical way. It is not as simple as some would have us believe which is to preach a prosperity message, but it is about pleasing Almighty God, knowing His heart and desires for our lives. Solomon asked for wisdom and God gave him much more. What will be your request after you read and meditate on these words?

Finally, we give God thanks again for what He is doing in our lives. The story of Daniel and the other Hebrew boys is a compelling one, because it speaks of tremendous challenges that comes from being taken captive, to walking with the knowledge that your history should not bind you, rather be a source of power. They used their history to direct their very thinking and decisions. The Bible say, so a man thinketh, so is he. We have read that Daniel purposed his intentions in his heart. In other words, he 'put upon his heart (Hebrew rendering) to choose to pay

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Teaching

attention to one thing in the place of something else, i.e. the food offered by a pagan king.

We have read that at the end of their process, they not only served Nebuchadnezzar but became his confidant!

Let us end this writing by reminding ourselves that in the beginning, Adam and Eve were told not to eat the fruit. Eve realised that it was good for food, however, it brought about their subsequent spiritual death. Daniel, however, and the other Hebrew boys decided not to be tempted thus not eating the food that was pleasant to the eyes and for many would make them wise. They choose to obey God by not partaking in food offered to idols and came out of the ten days process stronger in all things. God provided Himself in this situation to be God all by Himself.

Deacon Gilbert R Pomell



Teaching (1) – It is often said that many a young man’s life is often characterised by the decisions he tends to make. This workshop will provide a Biblical insight into how we as men can use the written word of God to alter / change the course of our destiny to what God truly intends for us. The expected outcome is understanding how to use the ‘word’ as our weapon of engagement

Teaching (2) – Using Daniel’s story as the backdrop to exploring God’s sovereignty over our lives, how can this story enable us make sense of our history, the spiritual journey we are currently on and how best these experiences can be articulated to be used as a source of strength and not condemnation. The expected outcomes are to understand that a Godly stance comes with a sacrifice, but in the end like Daniel, we will be victorious.

Teaching (3) – In order to stand for truth like Daniel, what do we need to know to make such Godly choices? What was the significance of Daniel wanting to abstain from the Babylonian foods? What do you understand to be the principals and foundational truths that will help us to make the right decisions during prophetic events taking place? Furthermore, what is the significance of a name? Daniel and the other young men had names that reflected the theological significance of their histories, which could be argued is the very reasons why they defended it at any cost?

Message from Elder Neil Richards

My name is Neil Richards and I am a member of the Northern District of churches under the Pastorship of Overseer David Miller.

Since being been involved with the Sons of Issachar (SOI) I have found it to be a wonderful forum where men cannot only share personal experiences safely, but also learn from each other. We receive the Word of God in the form of workshops, teachings and proclamations from anointed Men of God. SOI provides a framework to look at issues that encourage the development of men through the lens of men....

Read the full message online www.sonsofissachar.co

2020 Sons of Issachar Conference will be online, on our website, due to Covid 19 and the current lockdown situation in the UK. The following will be released on Saturday 20th June 2020 and remain on our Conference Page until 31st December 2020. All are Welcome to visit free of charge.

Acknowledgement

The SOI Planning Team would like to thank ALL the individuals who assisted in putting this programme together, under such difficult circumstances, and also thank ALL who donated and continue to donate to this worthy Ministry.

To God be the Glory.

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Order of Service

Opening Service

The Three Workshop Presentations

The Spoken Word

Sons of Issachar... understanding of the times....

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