

Hear We Stand

Text : **Daniel 1: 1-21**

S#1.

A. On June 15, 1966 Staff Sergeant Jimmie Howard was leading a reconnaissance team when they were attacked by a battalion of Viet Cong. **S#2.**

1. There were 18 American soldiers against 250-300 North Vietnamese soldiers.
2. The heated battle went on for more 12 hours and ended in hand-to-hand combat.
3. Before being evacuated, the Americans were literally throwing rocks at the enemy.

B. Marine team #2 on “Hill 488” held off the superior force for more than 12 hours before reinforcements arrived to evacuate them.

1. Estimates of enemy losses vary from 40 to 200 and 6 Americans were killed.
3. Team 2 became the most highly decorated unit in the war.
 - a. Each received a silver star and a purple heart.
 - b. Staff Sergeant Jimmie Howard received the medal of honor and was promoted gunnery sergeant. Terrible war, we won every battle but lost the war.

C. Christians today face an equal battle. **S#3.**

1. We live in a country that is openly striving to eradicate Christianity.
2. Each success further emboldens our adversaries to be more aggressive.
 - a. Prayer out of school.
 - b. Bible studies on public property.
 - c. Removal of religious symbols ... crosses on memorials, 10 commandments.
3. The government is even trying to limit what we can preach in the pulpit.
 - a. One congressman unsuccessfully tried to introduce a bill to have certain verses removed from the bibles printed, sold or used in the U.S..
 - b. In 2014 Annise Packer, openly lesbian Mayor of Houston, Texas ordered all sermons preached in Houston be cleared by her office,

D. Satan and his minions have sought to resist God from the beginning.

Eph. 6: 12 – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. **S#4.**

11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. **14** Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, **15** and having shod your feet with the preparation **S#5.**

of the gospel of peace; **16** in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

S#6.

E. This is a unique time in the history of America, but not uncommon in the world.

1. The Vatican says 100,000 Christians are being martyred each year.
2. The ancient Roman persecution is estimated to have killed 7 million.
3. There has seldom been a time when our faith was not under fire.

F. This lesson will study 4 individuals whose faith was under fire.

S#7.

1. It will analyze the assault on their faith.
2. It will observe the stand they took.
3. And, it will acknowledge the result of their faithfulness.

I. Let us first establish the context.

S#8.

A. The kingdom of Babylon is one of the oldest on earth.

S#9.

1. Archeologists date its beginning in Shinar about 2300 BC
 - a. Believed by many scholars to have been originated by Nimrod. (**Gen. 10**)
 - b. Those is Shinar were rebellious from the beginning.
 - c. God wanted them to fill the earth, but they wanted to stay together.

Gen. 9: 1,7 – As for you, be fruitful and multiply; populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it.

S#10.

Gen. 11: 4 – They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

2. It vacillated between strength and weakness all of its history, but has hung on. **S#11.**
 - a. Babylon became a major military power under the Amorite king Hammurabi, who ruled from 1792 to 1750 B.C., but fell apart after his death.
 - b. The Hittites conquered the Amorites and took the city.
 - c. The Elamites conquered the Hittites and captured the idol of Marduk. --
3. Nebuchadnezzar I recaptured the idol and claimed the right to rule from 1128-1104 BC

B. Approx. 702 BC the prince of Babylon sent a delegation to Kg. Hezekiah.

1. They were carrying a "Get Well" letter to Hezekiah after his illness.
2. Hezekiah took the delegation on a tour showing them all his treasures.
3. The stories of great wealth in Jerusalem grew in Babylon.

C. Meanwhile in 609 BC a very wicked king came to the throne in Jerusalem.

1. Jehoiakim was placed on the throne by the Egyptian Pharaoh Necho.
2. Jehoiakim was the son of good King Josiah, but Jehoiakim was very evil.
3. Jehoiakim was the one who cut up the scroll sent to him by the prophet. (**Jer. 36**)

D. Nebuchadnezzar II defeated both Pharaoh Necho and Assyrian King Ashur-uballit

1. After defeating these two kings Nebuchadnezzar proceeded south conquering the small kingdoms along the eastern Mediterranean rim.
2. In 606 BC and was making quick work of Judea when his father died.
3. Before finishing Judea, he returned home to secure his succession to the throne.
4. The four captives in our text were taken during that invasion.

E. Nebuchadnezzar was there because God sent him to conquer Jehoiakim. S#12.

1. **Dan. 2: 21** – It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding. (cf - **Rom. 13: 1-2**)
2. **Dan. 1: 1-2** – In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, **S#13**
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.
2 The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.

II. The Babylonians tried to erase the Jewishness from their captives.**S#14.****A. The captives were young school age boys.**

1. They were the children of the rich and powerful.
2. They were the “cream of the crop” of Hebrew boys.
3. Children were often used as hostages to control the parents.

B. They were given a new status and a new home in a far country. S#15.

1. Babylon was 900 miles away from Jerusalem.
2. They were isolated from their family, their culture and their religion.
3. They were probably made eunuchs,

Dan. 1: 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. ESV also KJV
(*eunuchs is translated as “officials” in the NAS & NIV*)

C. They were required to learn a new language and culture.**S#16.**

1. **Dan. 1: 4** – ... youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.
2. Culture is transmitted via language and literature.
3. They could not come to know the Chaldeans without learning their religion.

D. They were given new Chaldean names linked to Chaldean gods :**S#17.**

1. Daniel was called Belteshazzar.
 - a. Daniel = God is my judge
 - b. Belteshazzar = Bel protects his life
2. Hananiah was called Shadrach
 - a. Hananiah = Jehovah is gracious
 - b. Shadrach = The command of Aku (moon god)
3. Michael was called Meshach
 - a. Michael = Who belongs to God or Who is God
 - b. Meshach = Who is what Aku is
4. Azariah was called Abednego
 - a. Azariah = Jehovah helps
 - b. Abednego = Servant of Nabo (Favorite god of Nebuchadnezzar)
5. Why change their names ... to break their ties to the God of Israel.

III. The captives took a stand when it came to that which defiles.**S#18.****A. The king was showing generosity by feeding the captives his good food.****S#19.**

1. **Dan. 1: 5** – The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.
2. He offered them the best available in his kingdom.
3. The chief eunuch would have been insulted if the best was not good enough.
4. The 4 mentioned in our text were not all of the captives, not even all from Judah.

Dan. 1: 6 – Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

B. Daniel made a determination that to eat the king's food would defile him. S#20.

1. **Dan. 2: 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. (ESV)

2. He did not become obstinate or rebellious, **but** was tactful.

3. Daniel had established a moral code at a young age.

S#21.

Dan. 1: 10 – and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king." (ESV)

4. Daniel respected authority and God gave him a positive relationship.

Dan. 1: 9 – And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, (ESV)

** God is at work in YOUR daily life as well.*

S#22.

I Cor. 10: 13 – No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

5. One writer said : Any doubtful practice must be rejected if it fails any of three tests.
 - a. Is it contrary to Scripture i.e., is it expressly forbidden or inconsistent with morals.
 - b. Is my motive pure ?
 - c. Will I be defiled or will I escape defilement ?

C. The Jews did not eat with Gentiles and their food laws were different.

1. Some common items eaten by the Chaldeans were unlawful for Jews.
 - a. The Jews were not allowed to eat pork.
 - b. Jews were not allowed to eat horse meat.
 - c. Jews were not allowed to eat anything from unclean animals.
2. Jews required a specific kosher style of slaughtering animals.
3. The Chaldeans would offer the meat to idols before they consumed it.

D. When there is a clear biblical principle, the God-follower must live by it. S#23.

1. Daniel was a captive, **BUT** there are some things worth dying for.
2. Daniel didn't know what would happen if he did not eat, but he knew what if he did.

IV. What was the consequence of Daniel's action ?**S#24.****A. Influence .. Some of the other captives had the courage to join him.****S#25.**

1. Even when we don't realize it, we each one have some influence.
2. Likewise, we are all influenced by others, **BUT we can choose not to be.**
3. Daniel chose to act and allow others to react to him rather than vise-versa.

B. Daniel's stance on the dietary issue gave him a positive self-image.

1. When we knowingly do wrong we must live with guilt.
2. When one views her/himself as a failure, quitter, or compromiser, it is increasingly easier to rationalize repeated compromises.
3. Daniel had the courage to stand against much greater temptations .. lions.

C. Daniel maintained a great relation with both God and government.

1. It was rare for one in Daniel's position to survive regime changes or purges.
2. Daniel was blessed with the ability to counsel at least four kings.
3. Daniel maintained a long and positive relationship with God as His prophet.

D. No man can serve two masters, we must choose God or man.

Luke 16: 13 – No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

S#26.**CONCLUSION :****A. We live in a land that is not our home ... we are pilgrims and sojourners.****S#27.****B. Those who are of this world will pressure us to be like them.****C. We have no reason to belief it will ever get any better .. be less pressure.****D. Will we choose to be like Daniel or will we go native ??****INVITATION :**

As did Moses (**Heb 11:24-25), we urge you to choose faithfulness to God over the temporary pleasures that this world offers.**

S#28.**S#29.** ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**Daniel 1: 1-21**

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god.³ Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, 4 youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. 5 The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. 6 Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. 7 And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

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. 9 And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, 10 and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king." 11 Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 12 "Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see." 14 So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. 15 At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food. 16 So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

17 As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. 18 At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. 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. 21 And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.