

DANIEL: THE AGONY OF VICTORY
(John Stanko)

POINT REMEMBER: DANIEL LEARNED TO PROSPER IN A FOREIGN ENVIRONMENT AND SO CAN YOU.

I. The Relocation - Daniel 1:1-7.

A. What we know about Judah.

1. Jerusalem was the capital.
- 2. Judah remained loyal to the covenant long after Israel fell to Assyria**
3. Judah had the Temple and the Law.
- 4. Judah had the throne of David.**
5. In spite of the warnings of the prophets, Jerusalem fell for the first time to Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC. The city would eventually be destroyed in 586 BC.

B. What we know about Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar.

1. Babylon was built by Nimrod - see Genesis 10.
- 2. Babylonians were a warlike people.**
3. They were an idolatrous people with many gods - see Revelation 17:5.
- 4. Babylon was a great city of hanging gardens and city walls so wide that six horses could ride on them while harnessed side by side.**
5. Nebuchadnezzar reigned as king for 43 years. He was a strong ruler with a bad temper.
- 6. Babylonians had a custom of relocating large groups of people from the nations they had conquered to prevent rebellion.**

7. God gave Judah into the hands of this heathen king and nation.

C. What we know about Daniel.

1. He was a young man, maybe 17 years of age.

2. He was a prince from the kingly line.

3. Daniel was handsome, smart, and physically fit.

4. He was spiritual, staying loyal to the covenant of his fathers.

D. What we know about Daniel in Babylon.

1. Undoubtedly he walked the 600 miles to Babylon.

2. His future was drastically changed through no apparent fault of his own.

3. His name was changed to one that included the name of a false god.

4. He was probably made a eunuch - see Isaiah 39:6-7.

5. Daniel was forced to attend a Babylonian school and learn a new language, culture, and monetary system.

II. The Response - Daniel 1:8.

A. Daniel decided:

1. Not to be angry toward God, the king, or his captors.

2. Not to rebel or undermine the Babylonian society where he was to work.

3. To see God's purpose ordering this state of affairs.

4. To maintain his joy, forgiveness, and a positive attitude. These things are always a decision.

B. With these decisions, Daniel enjoyed a long position of leadership in Babylon for over 60 years.

III The Resolve - Daniel 1:8-17.

A. Daniel resolved not to eat the king's food.

1. The world is always trying to make us eat its food.

2. We must eat the "food" of our Father in heaven.

a. **John 4:34.**

b. Hebrews 5:12-14.

B. Daniel also resolved not to drink the king's drink.

1. We have our own drink - Matthew 20:22.

2. 1 Peter 2:21-25, 4:1-2, & 4:12-19.

3. Hebrews 2:10, 18.

C. You must embrace the suffering, drink the cup, just like Daniel did.

D. Job 13:15 says, "*Though He slay me, I will hope in Him.*"

1. The gospel will be spread by men and women who do not love their lives unto death.

2. They do this knowing that they will inherit the crown of life for their faithfulness.

**DANIEL'S SPIRITUAL LIFE:
RELATING TO GOD IN CAPTIVITY**
(Jim Britnell)

POINT TO REMEMBER: THE THREE MAIN WAYS THAT WE SEEK GOD IS BY HEARING, PRAYING, AND OBEYING.

I. Hearing - "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17.

A. **John 14:19-23 - Jesus tells the disciples how they are to have communion with Him after He has left them.**

B. John 1:1, 14 & Revelation 19:13 - Jesus is the Word.

1. Christ and the Bible are one.

2. Bible is the written word - Jesus is the living word.

3. The Bible reveals Christ - Christ fulfills the Bible.

4. Your relationship to one is the same as your relationship to the other.

C. **2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All scripture is profitable - you can't pick and choose.**

D. 2 Peter 1:20-21 - Inspired by the Holy Spirit.

E. **Matthew 7:24-25 - Hearing and doing will cause you to be built on the rock, which enables you to withstand storms.**

F. Acts 20:32 - Causes you to be built up.

G. **Proverbs 4:20-22 & John 6:63 - Words of God are life and health.**

H. James 1:21 - Must be received with meekness.

I. **John 12:48 - Standard at the judgment.**

J. Practical suggestions:

1. **Have a set time daily to study.**
2. Write down convicting points and pray about them.
3. **Pay attention in classes and during preaching.**
4. Start in the New Testament.
5. **Avoid: Deep-sea fishing method.
Box of chocolates method.
Just favorite scriptures we know.**

II. Praying - When it's all said and done about praying, there is more said than done. Nothing of eternal value can be accomplished without prayer.

A. How you pray - Jonah 2.

1. Verse 2 - Out of distress.
2. **Verse 3 - When God is dealing with you.**
3. Verse 5-7 - When it's almost too late.

B. Lessons that we can learn from Jonah 2.

1. Verse 1 - No place is unsuitable for prayer.
2. **Verse 2 - It's never too late.**
3. Verse 10 - God will hear a desperate prayer.

C. How should we pray?

1. Consistently - The way to avoid a desperate prayer life is to develop a consistent prayer life.

2. Honestly - Psalm 145:18 - Jeremiah 33:3.

3. Persistently - Matthew 15:21-28.

4. In the Spirit - Ephesians 6:18.

III Obeying.

A. Principle: 70 - 12 - 3 - 1.

B. 1 John 2:3-6 - Obeying causes His love to be perfected in us.

C. 1 Samuel 15:22 - To obey is better than sacrifice.

D. John 15:10 - If you obey His commands, you will remain in His love.

WE CANNOT BE OF THOSE WHO JUST HEAR AND PRAY. REAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD DEMANDS THAT WE OBEY.

DANIEL AND HIS ADVERSARIES
"HOW TO WALK IN FORGIVENESS"
(Jim Newsom)

POINT TO REMEMBER: ANY TIME YOU PLACE A BARRIER BETWEEN YOU AND ANOTHER CHRISTIAN THERE IS A BARRIER BETWEEN YOU AND GOD.

- I. Daniel had the power of God flowing from his life. Daniel knew how to maintain a full measure of God's power.

The secret of Daniel's ability to keep a flow of the power of God is found in how he responded to his adversaries.

A. Daniel 4:19 is an example of this secret.

B. Daniel's secret of keeping a flow of God in his life was to keep himself free of any obstructions or barriers that might interfere with that flow.

C. Many Christians have a barrier in their lives that keeps them from experiencing all that God has for them.

D. A barrier will block spiritual growth and progress.

1. Ephesians 2:13-14 - At Calvary all barriers were removed.
2. **From Calvary on, if any barriers arise between God and man, they are on man's side and not God's.**
3. Take a moment and remember what you experienced when you first accepted Christ. Revelations 2:1-5.
4. **The reason you experienced so much liberty, peace, joy, and power is, at that time, there weren't any barriers to hold back the flow of God.**
5. Since that time many of you have erected barriers that are slowly but surely frustrating all that God wants to do in your lives.
6. **Since you are the one that has put them up, only you can take them down.**

II. During this session we want to deal with the main barrier that interferes with the flow of God in your life. It's the same barrier that Daniel never erected in his life, the "BARRIER OF UNFORGIVENESS."

A. Matthew 6:9-15 - Verse 12 contain the key words, "as we." **You can't change that. You are entitled to ask for forgiveness to the degree that you give it.**

1. Verses 14-15 shows you how important the Lord felt verse 12 was.
2. **Another way of saying it is, "the way you forgive others is the way that the Lord is going to forgive you."**
3. When you erect a barrier between you and another person you automatically erect a barrier between you and God.
4. **Forgiveness sets the stage for fighting temptation and being delivered.**
5. When you are walking in unforgiveness, Satan has legal claim over your life.

B. Matthew 18:19-20 - These verses contain the power house of the church, the place of all power and authority for the believer. **It's important that you read these Scriptures in their context.**

1. If you read verses 15-18 and then verses 21-35 you will see that this promise of power is guarded with a fence.
2. **This fence is called "Right Relationship."**
 - a. If you haven't matured enough to love and relate to one another, then you aren't mature enough to handle the power and authority that God has made available to all of us.
 - b. **The power to live a victorious Christian life is generated by being in right relationship with God and each other. There is power in relationships.**

C. Matthew 18:18 - Many Christians abuse this passage of Scripture because they take it out of context.

1. **Unforgiveness is a blocking, a holding back, a binding.**

2. Forgiveness is a releasing, a loosing of something.

D. Matthew 18:23-35 - "The Unforgiving Servant."

1. Verse 32 - God considers failure to forgive others as wickedness.
2. **Verse 34 - The unforgiving servant was delivered to the tormentors, (when you harbor un-forgiveness in your heart, the devil has legal claim over you).**
3. Verse 35 - Likewise your Heavenly Father will also do to you.
 - a. **Do what? - Hand you over to the tormentors.**
 - b. If you are in mental torment, physical torment, emotional torment, or spiritual torment, then there may be "unforgiveness" in your heart.

E. Matthew 5:21-26 - Forgiveness is the key to deliverance from the devil.

1. How do we keep a barrier of unforgiveness from being erected in our lives?
 - a. **Verse 26 - Agree quickly with your adversary**
 - b. By not agreeing quickly you give the devil time to bring to mind other things. What started out as a mole hill will soon become a mountain.
2. **Ephesians 4:26-27 - By not dealing with your anger quickly, you give the devil an opportunity to turn that anger into un-forgiveness.**
 - a. If you will forgive (your part), The Lord will deliver you from the devil (His part).
 - b. **Satan knows that if he can get you to put up walls between you and others, then you automatically put up walls between you and God. Therefore Satan has a "heyday" with you by tormenting and imprisoning you.**

IN CLOSING REMEMBER TWO THINGS:

1. **SATAN IS AFRAID OF THE POWER THAT IS GENERATED BY YOU BEING IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND EACH OTHER.**
2. **YOUR BARRIERS OF UN-FORGIVENESS CAN COME DOWN TODAY IF YOU WILL LET GO OF THE HURT OR OFFENSE. THERE IS NO HURT OR RESENTMENT THAT IS WORTH DAMAGING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.**

DANIEL AND HIS LEADERS
“THE ISSUE OF AUTHORITY”
(John Stanko)

POINT TO REMEMBER: ALL AUTHORITY IS FROM GOD AND TO UNDERSTAND THAT IS TO FREE GOD TO USE AUTHORITY TO DIRECT YOUR LIFE.

I. Daniel understood authority.

A. In Daniel 1:8, Daniel ask permission of his captors.

B. By doing so, he joined the ranks of Joseph, Moses, and David who also understood the issue of authority.

C. All authority is from God - Romans 13:1.

D. This does not mean that ll authority is moral, or perfect, or correct, or godly.

E. This does not mean that God approves of how the authority is used.

F. It does mean that God expects His people to respond correctly to those in leadership - see Psalms 75:6-7.

II. Daniel was faced with unjust authority.

A. In Daniel 5:10-17 & 22 - we see that Daniel was faced with helping an authority who had in essence “fired” him.

B. In Proverbs 21:1 - we see that God uses authority to do His will. God is a “government” God.

C. God gave Pharoah and Nebuchadnezzar dreams because He works through authority.

III Jesus was faced with unjust authority.

A. We must deal with immoral r wrong authority the way our Lord dealt with it - John 19:10-12.

B. The apostles understood this principle - Acts 4:13-21 & Acts 5:40-42.

IV We must learn to relate to authority because one day we will be in authority.

A. Daniel, the prophet, revealed this in Daniel 7:13-14 & 27.

B. Godly authority must learn to represent the heart of God when it rules.

DANIEL'S FRIENDS
(Jim Britnell)

POINT TO REMEMBER: GOD DOESN'T PROMISE TO KEEP US FREE FROM TROUBLE, BUT HE DOES PROMISE TO BE WITH US IN THE TROUBLE.

I. Let's look at Daniel's Friends. These three Hebrew children, who from here on we will refer to as the three Hebrew Champions, in the face of tremendous temptation, testified of their faith in God. They walked triumphantly through the fire and experienced the power of God to preserve them even in the fiery furnace.

A. Daniel 2:49 - This seemed to be a happy ending for these three youths. You would think that the king would have had such appreciation for these men that nothing would allowed to threaten them further.

1. This king had more pride than compassion, and he would rather kill than allow an exception to his orders.
2. **This is true in your experience. There is no permanent place of rest that is struggle free.**
3. Living victoriously is a quest. It takes a persistent spirit.
4. **It's not something that is achieved in one act. It's a continuous pursuit of the goal.**
5. One of the great things about "Daniel's Friends" is their taking this next test in stride. There is no crying out against God or life's fate. If they are to be tested again, so be it.

B. In Daniel 3 - we see three things concerning these three Hebrew Champions.

1. Their Temptation.
2. **Their Testimony.**
3. Their Triumph.

II. As we study this chapter of Daniel, we'll see how God wants us to triumph over temptation. In doing so He wants us to testify to His great ability to work in our lives, to change us from who we are to what He created us to be.

A. Their Temptation - Verses 1-12 - The command was given to bow down and worship the golden image, which was an idol. Babylon was already full of idols.

- 1. Their temptation came when they were given the choice of worshipping the idol and preserve their lives, or staying true to God and lose their lives.**
2. There is also a real temptation for us to worship the things of this world and preserve our lives, or stay true to God and lose our lives.
- 3. Let's look at three major temptations, three idols, that men will uniquely face.**
 - a. Freedom.
 - b. Conformity.**
 - c. Lust.

B. Their Testimony - Verses 13-18 - These three Hebrew Champions determined to die in their integrity rather than live in their iniquity. Their testimony was comprised of three very powerful statements.

1. No need to answer - verse - 6.
- 2. God can deliver us - verse - 17.**
3. Even if He doesn't, we will still serve Him - verse 18.
 - a. This last statement is the most powerful because we live in a world where people choose their gods on the basis of what they can get. So often, when God does not save us or help us, we just choose another god.**
 - b. Real faith is to accept God's will for us regardless of results. Real Christianity is a call to heroism and a challenge to undertake the difficult things in the name of God.

C. Their Triumph - Verses 19-30 - Because of this testimony, the king was furious and angry. But the three Hebrew Champions were unrelenting.

1. Their triumph over the trial didn't come until their commitment to stay true to God was tested.
2. **It's not until we decide to go God's way that the angel of the Lord stands beside us to strengthen us and comfort us.**
3. If they wouldn't have faced this trial, they would have missed His presence.
4. **The fire burns the bonds but not God's servants. The fire consumed the very things that had them bound up.**
 - a. You must go through some fiery trials to really get free of some of the things in your character that bind you up and caused you to get into the trial in the first place.
 - b. The truth will set you free, but real truth is found in the furnace.**

D. In conclusion, consider the following statements.

1. **God's greatest servants are sometimes called to pass through heavy trials.**
2. God is able to deliver when help seems farthest off. He doesn't promise to keep us free from trouble, but He does promise to be with us in the trouble.
3. **God's furnace purifies but never destroys.**
4. God's children must never be ashamed of Him no matter how adverse the situation. We must be bold and steadfast in our witness.
5. **When we pass through fiery trials and remain true to God, even the raging heathen will give glory to God.**

DANIEL AND THE LION'S DEN
(Jim Newsom)

POINT TO REMEMBER: DANIEL DIDN'T SEE HIMSELF AS A CAPTIVE BUT AS AN AMBASSADOR.

I. Ephesians 1:11 & Romans 8:28 - God is sovereign.

A. God is in control. He knows what He is doing. He either does it or He allows it.

B. He is working from His definition of what good is and not ours. It's our ultimate good that is His concern, and not our immediate good.

C. Daniel 6 - Daniel was a man who understood the sovereignty of God.

1. He knew that God was able to redeem anything, even his Babylonian captivity.

2. He knew God had the power to minimize the damage of his captivity and maximize the good, if he would stay faithful.

D. In chapter 6 this revelation was both tested and demonstrated. The demonstration of God's word mainly comes through the testing of God's word.

E. Three things stand out from this chapter.

1. The promotion of Daniel.

2. The proving of Daniel.

3. The preservation of Daniel.

II. As we study this chapter of Daniel, we'll see how the revelation of Romans 8:28 saw him through these three things and brought him to a place of ultimate good.

A. The Promotion Of Daniel - How was Daniel, a Jew, and a prisoner, able to prosper and be promoted in an alien and hostile environment?

1. **Because of his revelation of the sovereignty of God, Daniel didn't see Babylonian captivity, but rather God's purpose for his life.**
 - a. He didn't see himself as a captive but as an ambassador.
 - b. He didn't focus on trying to get out of his circumstances, but rather on bringing something of God into his circumstances.**
 - c. He didn't focus on where he was, but on why he was where he was.
 - d. He didn't try and change his circumstances but allowed God to use his circumstances to change him.**
 2. He also understood that he wasn't dealing with Darius but with God - Romans 13.
 - a. Daniel was able to be faithful to the king because of his faithfulness to God.**
 - b. Duty to God should secure the faithful discharge of your duty to man.
 3. **Once Daniel understood that he was dealing with God, He gave his best - verse 3.**
 - a. Proverbs 22:29 - "Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men."
 - b. 1 Samuel 2:30 - "Those who honor Me, I will honor."**
- B. The Proving Of Daniel - Promotion always brings proving. Luke 12:48 - "Where much is given, much is required."
1. **Verse 5 - The faithfulness that gets you the blessing will be tested with the apparent loss of the blessing.**
 - a. Following God was the path that led Daniel to the palace, but it was also the same path that was to lead Daniel to the lion's den.
 - b. Following God brought Abraham a son and following God would cause him to sacrifice that son.**

2. A godly man will act not from expediency but from principle, not from what is advantageous but from what is right.

C. The Preservation Of Daniel - Verse 16 - If we want to possess Daniel's character, we must be prepared to share Daniel's experiences.

1. If we want the life of Christ, we must share in the death of Christ. First the suffering and then the glory.

2. 1 Peter 1:3-6 - "Shielded by God's power ... though now for a little while we suffer." These words don't seem to fit together.

- a. The Lord knows how to let you go through it and still preserve you - Psalm 33:18-19 & 34:19.

b. God is more interested in what you become than in what happens to you.

- c. God is more interested in the production of character than He is in the provision of comfort.

3. 1 Peter 1:7 - "These have come so that . . ."

- a. "Your faith is of greater worth than gold . . ."

b. "Your faith will be proved genuine . . ."

- 1) To God - If you have the real thing, you would rather go to the lion's den than give it up.
- 2) To Yourself - If you have the real thing, it will preserve you in the lion's den.
- 3) To The World - The lion's den displays the reality of what you are to the world. Daniel 6:26-27.

In Conclusion: Verse 28 says "and so he prospered." Promotion brings proving that is accompanied with preservation for the purpose of prosperity. Or another way of saying it, is that God works all things together for your good, even the lion's den.