

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

LESSON 1: CONVICTION AMID CONFLICT AND COMPROMISE

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THE BOOK OF DANIEL DEALS PRIMARILY WITH THE SOVEREIGNTY AND PROVIDENCE OF GOD, YET IT ALSO HIGHLIGHTS THE CONVICTION AND FAITHFULNESS OF HIS SERVANTS – SEE 4:17.

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EVEN IN THE FIRST CHAPTER OF DANIEL WE NOTE SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF THE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF GOD IN THE WORLD:

- THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IS MANIFESTED IN HIS PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED – V. 2.
- THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IS ALSO MANIFESTED IN HIS PROTECTION AND PROVISION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS – VV. 9, 17.

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WHEN WE RECOGNIZE THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD OVER ALL PEOPLE AND EVERY SITUATION, IT IS MUCH EASIER TO PERSONALLY AND FAITHFULLY COMMIT TO WORSHIPING AND SERVING HIM – 1:8.

- EVEN WHEN THERE IS CONFLICT, WE CAN MAINTAIN OUR RESOLVE – vv. 1-2.
- EVEN WHEN OTHERS COMPROMISE, WE CAN MAINTAIN OUR RESOLVE – vv. 3-7.

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FOR INSTANCE, THE BABYLONIANS TRIED TO BREAK THEIR CAPTIVES BY MODIFYING THEIR WORLDVIEW, THEIR VALUES, AND THEIR IDENTITY – 1:4, 7.

- THE NAME OF DANIEL (“GOD IS MY JUDGE”) WAS CHANGED TO BELTESHAZZER (“BEL [BABYLONIAN SUN GOD OF FERTILITY AND STORMS, MARDUK?] PROTECT HIS LIFE”) – SEE ISA 46:1.

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FOR INSTANCE, THE BABYLONIANS TRIED TO BREAK THEIR CAPTIVES BY MODIFYING THEIR WORLDVIEW, THEIR VALUES, AND THEIR IDENTITY – 1:4, 7.

- THE NAME OF HANANIAH (“YAH IS GRACIOUS”) WAS CHANGED TO SHADRACH (“COMMAND OF AKU [BABYLONIAN MOOD GOD]”) – SEE ISA 46:1.

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FOR INSTANCE, THE BABYLONIANS TRIED TO BREAK THEIR CAPTIVES BY MODIFYING THEIR WORLDVIEW, THEIR VALUES, AND THEIR IDENTITY – 1:4, 7.

- THE NAME OF MISHAEL (“WHO IS LIKE GOD?”) WAS CHANGED TO MESHACH (“WHO IS WHAT AKU IS?”) – SEE ISA 46:1.

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FOR INSTANCE, THE BABYLONIANS TRIED TO BREAK THEIR CAPTIVES BY MODIFYING THEIR WORLDVIEW, THEIR VALUES, AND THEIR IDENTITY – 1:4, 7.

- THE NAME OF AZARIAH (“YAH HAS HELPED”) WAS CHANGED TO ABED-NEGO (“SERVANT OF NEGO [PROBABLY NEBO, THE BABYLONIAN GOD OF WISDOM AND WRITING]”) – SEE JER 50:2.

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IN SIMILAR FASHION, THE WORLD AROUND US IS TRYING TO CONFORM US TO ITS IMAGE; INSTEAD, WE MUST ALLOW GOD TO TRANSFORM US – ROM 12:2.

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THIS REQUIRES, HOWEVER, THAT WE STRENGTHEN OUR RESOLVE, DETERMINING BEFOREHAND THAT WE WILL BE FAITHFUL TO THE LORD – DAN 1:8; ACTS 11:23.

- **THIS MEANS THAT WE WILL NOT VIOLATE THE WILL OF GOD OR DAMAGE OUR REPUTATION AND INFLUENCE AS HIS SERVANT – SEE DEUT 14:3-21; 1 COR 10:14-33.**

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THIS REQUIRES, HOWEVER, THAT WE STRENGTHEN OUR RESOLVE, DETERMINING BEFOREHAND THAT WE WILL BE FAITHFUL TO THE LORD – DAN 1:8; ACTS 11:23.

- **THIS ALSO MEANS THAT WE WILL TRUST IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD AND LOOK FOR PEACEFUL YET UNCOMPROMISING WAYS TO LIVE IN THIS WORLD – SEE DAN 1:9-16.**

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IF WE RESOLVE TO CLING TO THE LORD, TRUSTING AND OBEYING HIM, HE WILL BLESS US; HE IS ABLE TO DO SO BECAUSE HE IS SOVEREIGN – DAN 1:17-21; SEE Ps 63:8.