

“Different”

New Series: Different

Tension:

- Focusing on the life of Daniel, who was extraordinarily able to remain faithful, pure [undefiled], and ‘different’ - set apart - in the unGodly culture in which he found himself
- If there was ever a time that we in the Church need to learn or re-learn the lessons that Daniel has to teach us, it’s now
 - Daniel and his friends were ‘aliens’ and ‘foreigners’ in a strange land
 - Different culture
 - Actually citizens of another country, Israel, living in a foreign land/kingdom
 - Parallel= we are citizens of heaven/ Kingdom of God and are living in a ‘foreign land’= “the world
 - We are living in Babylon and the ruler of this world/culture isn’t Nebuchadnezzar, it’s Satan, who “prowls around like a lion looking for someone to devour”
 - It’s Challenging to be different and holy in today’s world...especially when so much in the world is pressuring us and molding us into Babylonians BUT as it says in
 - John 4:4: “the One who is in (us) is GREATER than the one who is in the world”

Daniel 1 New International Version (NIV)

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 delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia^[a] and put in the treasure house of his god.

- “Lord delivered” Judah to Nebuchadnezzar
 - Interesting to think about
 - Disobedience led to this, brought exile and detour of the Promise
 - Didn’t keep the covenant
 - Ignored the sabbath years
 - Idolatry (Lev. 25:4, 26:27-35; Duet 28:15-68; 2 Kings 25:1, 2 Chr. 36: 20-21)
 - Chose other gods

- Rebellion and disobedience leads to loss of favor

3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility— 4 young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.^[b] 5 The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.

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 - 1 Peter 2:9-12 (NIV)
But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

6 Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. 7 The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

- Names:
 - Daniel = "God is Judge" or "God is My Judge"
 - Hananiah = "The Lord Shows Grace"
 - Mishael = "Who Is What God Is?"
 - Azariah = "The Lord Helps"
 - Their names themselves decree the wonders and character of God
 - Names changed meant they were to be subject to Neb, BUT
- Chief official changed them, not the Lord
 - Lord changed names throughout the Bible= Abram/Abraham, Jacob/Israel

- Interesting that we know most by their changed name, but not Daniel

8 But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

- Romans 12:1 (NIV)

A Living Sacrifice

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

- Resolved
- Defile
 - Satan, the deceiver wants us to be defiled
 - ‘Be careful little eyes’, etc.
 - Watch, listen to, speak
 - Pornography, Gossip, Slander, Promiscuity, Lust, Greed, Gluttony, Anger
 - Holy= Set apart
 - God wants us not to be defiled DIFFERENT than the world
 - “Be holy as I am holy”
 - Royal Food= sacrificed to idols, unclean animals (by preparation or type)
 - Food laws of the Jews
 - Holy Food
 - Word, Water= Holy Spirit
 - Makes you stronger, if you are not in the Word and Prayer everyday your ability to withstand defilement is weakened
 - Also weakened / defiled but what we DON’T do as well as what we do - Time with Lord or in the Word?
 - How much in Word and Prayer?
 - 16 hours a day
 - 1 hour enough?
 - Daniel = “God is My Judge”
 - Just made me wonder - how are we going to defend our defilement when we are judged by the Lord?
 - God: “I gave you everything you needed to withstand defilement and be pure - I gave you myself, and you didn’t choose Me, you chose other gods...”

9 Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel,

- When we resolve not to defile ourselves with the 'things' of the world we receive the Lord's favor and can receive the favor of man (Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.)
- Doesn't mean everything is going to be easy, Daniel's friends end up in a fiery furnace (spoiler alert), Daniel ends up in a lions den (spoiler alert), Jesus dies on a cross (spoiler alert) haha

10 but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your^[c] food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." 11 Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, 12 "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 The"n compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." 14 So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

- Daniel didn't rebel against the authorities placed over him but instead asked for a test
 - Today's society= rebel first ask questions later

15 At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. 16 So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

- Not logical for them to look healthier and 'fatter' as some versions put it
 - Only God, supernatural
- Wasn't the food that sustained them, it was the Lord
 - Communion
- Daniel Fast last year for Brent

17 To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

- Gifts of the Spirit
 - Revelation Gifts= Prophecy, Knowledge, Wisdom
- Again, “God gave”; Favor of the Lord rested upon them

18 At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. 19 The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king’s service. 20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

21 And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

- Kingdom principle= Blessing and Multiplication
 - Daniel didn’t defile, kept himself holy and the Lord blessed and multiplied
 - They didn’t defile themselves and they were found ten times (multiplication) better than the others (ten days=ten times better)
- Favor with God and man
 - Stationed in kings court= promoted
 - God did the promotion, least=last, servants=greatest

Closing

- Repent
- Pray for each other for RESOLVE to not be defiled - pray earnestly about what you want your life to look like and for God’s help
- Re-claim citizenship of Heaven
- Withstand the wiles of the evil one;