

## Daniel 1

### Where Do You Draw The Line?

#### I. Review

#### II. Introduction

##### A. Why Study The Old Testament?

##### 1. It gives us examples...

##### a. It gives us examples of what not to do

1 Corinthians 10:6-11 *“Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.” Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”*

##### b. It gives us examples of what we should be doing

Hebrews 12:1 *“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,”*

##### c. It gives us examples for our encouragement

James 5:10-11 *“As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the<sup>l</sup>endurance of Job and have seen the<sup>l</sup>outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.”*

##### 2. Because it is a tutor to lead us to Christ

Galatians 3:24 *“Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.”*

3. To convict us of sin

Romans 7:7 *“On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’”*

Romans 5:20 *“The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,”*

4. To see that God is sovereign, faithful and unchanging throughout history
  5. In Daniel we will see some of God’s plan and see that He isn’t done with it yet
- B. What do you use to decide when to draw the line when you are required or encouraged to comply with the world’s system?

### III. Read the whole of Daniel chapter 1

#### IV. History

- A. Why is Nebuchadnezzar here at Jerusalem?

1. He is God’s servant and carrying out His will

Jeremiah 27:6-7 *“Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and I have given him also the wild animals of the field to serve him. All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson until the time of his own land comes; then many nations and great kings will make him their servant.”*

2. To take the children of Judah into captivity because of their evil under Manasseh  
2 Kings 21:10-16; 2 Kings 24:3-4; 2 Chronicles 33:1-20
3. To take the children of Judah into captivity because of their failure to give the land its Sabbath rest  
2 Chronicles 36:20-21; Jeremiah 25:6-11
4. Prophecy  
Isaiah 39:5-7; Habakkuk 1:5-11
5. Israel did not follow the commands of God  
Leviticus 26:27-35; Deuteronomy 28:15-68
6. God is using earthly government to chasten His people

B. When are we in history?

1. There were 3 deportations from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar
2. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah are deported in the first
3. Most likely 50-75 young men are taken at this time
4. 605 BC – Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:34-24:6; 2 Chronicles 36:5-8)
5. 597 BC – Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:8-16, 25:27-30; 2 Chronicles 36:9-10)
6. 586 BC – Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:17-21; 2 Chronicles 36:11-20; Jeremiah 52:1-11)
7. During the last incursion Nebuchadnezzar is tired of the rebellion and razes Jerusalem and the Temple

V. Daniel and Friends

- A. They were young (v4)...Most likely between 13 and 15
- B. They were of the nobility or royal family (v3)
- C. They were without defect and good looking (v4)
- D. Intelligent, knowledgeable and had an aptitude for learning (v4, 17, 20)
- E. Had godly parents?
  1. Daniel = God is my Judge
  2. Hananiah = Yahweh is gracious
  3. Mishael = Who is what God is?
  4. Azariah = Yahweh had helped
- F. They were men of conviction (v8)
- G. Men of prayer (2:17-18, 6:10, 9:4-14)
- H. Additionally for Daniel
  1. Understood dreams and visions (v17)
  2. Righteous (6:4-5) and listed by Ezekiel in 14:12-20 in company of Job and Noah
  3. Wise (Ezekiel 28:3)
  4. Of exceptional quality (6:3)
  5. Student of scripture (9:2, 10:12)
  6. Humble (2:27-28, 10:11)
  7. Bold with the gospel (4:24, 27; 5:22-23)
  8. Esteemed by God (9:23, 10:11)

- I. These were men who were in it for the long haul (v21)...Daniel is most likely in his mid 80s when he is dealing with Darius and the Lions

## **VI. Where Do Daniel and Friends Draw The Line?**

- A. What kind of pressure were Daniel and his friends under to comply with the Babylonian (world's) system? What was expected of them as they came into Babylon?
  1. They were expected to learn the language (v4)
  2. They were expected to learn the literature of the Chaldeans (v4)
  3. They were expected to eat the King's food (v5)
  4. They were assigned new heathen names (v7)
    - a. Daniel - Belteshazzar = Bel protect the king
    - b. Hananiah – Shadrach = I am very fearful of Aku
    - c. Mishael – Meshach = Who is what Aku is?
    - d. Azariah – Abednego = Servant of Nebo
  5. They were instructed for 3 years (v5)
  6. What kind of guy was Nebuchadnezzar when it came to disobedience?
    - a. Note the response of Ashpenaz in v10
    - b. Note Nebuchadnezzar's response to the wise men in 2:5, 12
    - c. Note Nebuchadnezzar's response to Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego in 3:13, 19
    - d. What he did to Zedekiah in Jeremiah 52:1-11
  7. These four were under the real possibility of execution if they didn't comply
- B. Where did Daniel and friends draw the line when it came to compliance to the world's system?
  1. Food and Wine (v8)
  2. Why? – So they would not defile themselves (v8)
  3. How would food have cause them to defile themselves?
    - a. They had the Levitical Law (Lev 11; 17:10-16)
    - b. Apparently the Babylonians were big on pork
    - c. They also would not have prepared it according to the Law (blood still in it)
    - d. Would have been consecrated the Babylonian gods to idols
  4. How would wine have caused them to defile themselves?

- a. Is there a scriptural command not to drink wine?
  - b. Only for the Nazarite and these guys weren't
  - c. This was an area of conviction for Daniel most likely based on the fact that the wine was also consecrated to idols
5. Why didn't they draw the line at the other things required of them?
- a. Names, Learning, Language
  - b. No scriptural mandate
  - c. No issue with conscience or conviction
6. How many didn't choose to draw the line?
- C. As they chose to draw the line how did Daniel do that?
1. They were respectful
  2. They actually requested permission of the authorities...asked Ashpenaz permission (v8) and their direct overseer (v11)
  3. They were persistent...tried twice, the second time with a proposed solution
  4. They worked within the system to gain permission
- D. How does God reward their faithfulness
1. They look better after the test (v15)
  2. They graduated top of the class (v19, 20)
  3. They are gifted (v17)

## **VII. Where and how do we draw the line?**

- A. So the next time you are confronted with having to draw a line what will you use to draw the line on compliance to the world?

1. Scripture...A direct command of God
2. This goes for the dos and the don'ts

James 1:22 *"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."*

Romans 12:2 *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

3. By working to study and understand and be firmly convinced of our convictions  
Romans 14:1-6 *“Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. <sup>4</sup> Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.”*
4. Hopefully you will not...
- a. Just comply because everyone is doing it
  - b. Turn to your non-christian friends for advice

B. The next time you have choose to not comply how will you do that?

- 1. Will you complain and grumble against the authority
- 2. Will you be passive aggressive...just be quiet and disobey?
- 3. Will you assault the character or level of intelligence of the authorities?
- 4. Or will you be like Daniel and offer the authorities the honor and respect that we are commanded to give them?

Romans 13:5-7 *“Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience’ sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor”*

<sup>1</sup> Peter 2:17 *“Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”*

C. How does our pressure to comply with the world’s system compare?

- 1. How many of you have feared for your life because of your faith?
- 2. Here we have little to be afraid of at this time in this place regarding our physical safety

3. Even if we were, we should look at this from Jesus perspective  
*Matthew 10:28 “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*
4. Will it always turn out well circumstancially? Not necessarily but hopefully we will respond as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego  
*Daniel 3:16-18 “...O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”*
5. As we deal with the pressures of the world and work on determining where and when to comply, or not, my prayer is that we will turn to scripture, have well formed convictions and be respectful in our interaction with authority, relax in God’s sovereignty over our situation and be the people of character that we see with Daniel, Mishael, Azariah and Hananiah