

A Godly Man in an Ungodly World

Daniel 1:1-4

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 articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

3 Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, 4 young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.

I. History of Israel

A. Godly and ungodly kings.

1. One hundred years before our text Hezekiah was king, a very good king
2. But his son Manasseh was the worst king of all Judah's history.
3. Amon was wicked as well and was assassinated.
4. Josiah was the best king since David. But he died after only 31 years.
 - a. It is believed that Daniel was the grandson of Josiah by Zedekiah.

II. God had intended for Israel to be a special people in the world to be a shining light in a dark world.

- A. Exodus 19:5 (NKJV) 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.
- B. Deuteronomy 7:6 (NKJV) 6 "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.
- C. Exodus 19:6 (NKJV) 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

III. But you see, that is what God intended for Christianity as well.

- A. 1 Peter 2:9-10 9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. NKJV

IV. The point I am making is that Daniel was a godly man even among the ungodly Judahites.

- A. There is not even a smudge on Daniel’s character.
- B. And in Daniel 9 he prays one of the greatest prayers of confession in the Bible.
- C. And nothing will cause him to sway in his faith in his God.
 - 1. Not the kings food. Under Nebuchadnezzar.
 - 2. Not offers of money and fame. Under Belshazzar.
 - 3. And not even lions. Under Darius.
- D. Daniel had a special place in the plan of God.
 - 1. Dan 10:11 And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved,
- V. But not even his character will prevent God from bring judgment on His own people.
 - A. Jeremiah 25:11 (NKJV) 11 And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.
 - B. Isaiah 39:6-7 (NKJV) 6 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the LORD. 7 'And they shall take away some of your godsons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'
 - C. In Deut 28 there are 14 verses of blessings that we read last week. But there are 43 verses of curses if they will not obey the Lord.
 - D. We like the blessings but if we fail as God’s people we cannot avoid the curses of God.
 - E. Deut 28:45-46 45 "Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.46 And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever. NKJV

God has called all of us not just to faith in Jesus Christ but He has called us to be His holy special people.

And if we find in difficult to serve Him in this “Christian” nation, what shall we do when we are carried to Babylon.

Daniel was determined to stand for the Lord, regardless of the consequences.

The Last Five Kings of Judah

