

Daniel's Decisions

Daniel 6: 1-28

10/5/03

Intro

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The story of Daniel quickly progresses and now in chapter six we find Daniel serving a different king, a Mede, by the name of Darius. Daniel is probably in his 80's at this point in his life.

The kingdom was first passed to Nebuchadnezzar's son, Belshazzar, but even though he knew all that happened when his father, the king, was humbled and recognized God as supreme, he did not learn from it. He was therefore weighed in the scales and found wanting. The kingdom was then taken from his hand and that very night, the Medes conquered the Babylonian kingdom and Darius became king.

As the story found in chapter six unfolds, Daniel has risen in stature above others because he "possessed an extraordinary spirit", and they believed they must stop him before he gained even greater stature.

Not finding any "skeletons in his closet" they devised a plan to trap him by taking advantage of his relationship with God. It is here that we learn important lessons for our own lives.

We would all like to have the strength of character of Daniel, what, then, were the decisions Daniel made that set him apart?

These, then, are the decisions that Daniel made that we also should choose.

I. He chose integrity

A. Definition: the construction within

- The dictionary definition of integrity is simply, "Adherence to a moral code or law,"
- But this definition falls woefully inadequate.
- **It is the consistency of it that makes it integrity. It is the construction within that no one sees that defines a man's integrity.**

Ps 26:1-2 "Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering. Examine me, O LORD, and try me; test my mind and my heart."

B. And elevated in the sight of God and man

- Daniel chose to walk in his integrity and so they could find no cause to accuse him.
- **It was because of his character and integrity that he rose in the eyes of God and man.**
- Daniel's fame spread throughout the world.

1 Peter 5:6, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time."

C. When principles collide

- Daniel found himself in a place where he must decide between two principles that were colliding;
- **Should he submit to the law of the land, (which is indeed an important principle); or should he continue in his commitment to pray?**

- What should we do when principle collide?
- **“Choose the highest good,” is the guiding principle in these matters.**

Illus – When a godly principle collides with a worldly one, “choose the highest good.”
When a godly principles collides with another godly principle, “choose the highest good.”

Illus – When Jordi was pregnant with Chelsea and had an emergency situation...

2 Sam 23:12, “But he took his stand in the midst of the plot, defended it and struck the Philistines; and the LORD brought about a great victory.”

II. He chose to walk with God

A. In the way he lived

- Daniel decided to bring God into all the areas of his life.
- He chose to operate his life by godly principles.

II Corinthians 4:2, “...but by walking in the manifestation of truth; commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.”

B. In the way he prayed

- Daniel is a great example in his life of prayer.
- He prayed consistently and he prayed openly.

Illus – many people don’t like to be seen praying, especially by unbelievers.

Rom 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes...”

- Yet some try to show off, and Daniel was not doing that either.

Illus – the friend who liked to pray extra loudly in restaurants.

Matthew 6:5, “When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.”

C. In the way he stayed faithful

- There was a consistency to Daniel’s walk with the Lord which is a great example to us.
- **He established spiritual practices and disciplines in his life and committed to them.**

Psalm 57:7, “My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises!”

Illus – Eleazar, son of Dodo, one of David’s mighty men, clung to his sword in a great battle and they had to pray his hand from it.

III. He chose to trust in God

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A. During the good times

- Many people let their relationship to God slip during the good times.

Illus – God warned Israel that this could happen just as they were coming into the promised land.

Deuteronomy 6:6-13 – do not forget your Lord.

B. During the difficult times

- It would have been easy for Daniel to compromise his faith; he could have continued to pray, but in secret.
- But he decided to trust God even in difficult times.
- In fact, God often uses times like these to strengthen our character. It’s the troubles that enlarge our spiritual capacity.

Illus - Researches have discovered that our bodies are stronger when we are around pets and other sources of assaults to our immune system.

Illus – the shipper of cod...

C. During the critical times

- These are the times when many people don’t know what to do.
- Many wonder if God has abandoned them.
- **But it is during these times when we need to trust in Him most of all.**
- **Daniel trusted in God and kept his faith through it all.**

Psalm 119:114, “You are my hiding place and my shield; I wait for Your word.”

Proverbs 18:10, “The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run into it and are saved.”

Conclusion

If we truly desire greater character in God, then we must also make these choices now before the times of trouble come.