



The Daniel Dilemma

How to Stand Firm & Love Well
in a Culture of Compromise

Owasso First Assembly of God

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Teenagers in turmoil

Romans 12:2-4 (NLT2) *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

1. Daniel was born around **620 BC**.
2. When he was about **15-17**, he was taken into Babylonian captivity.
3. His book covers a span of about **75** years.
4. His **courage** and **commitment** to God shines from beginning to end.
5. The story begins with Daniel and three of his friends having to **stand** for God in a new land.

I. God is always in control

Daniel 1:1-2 (NLT2) ¹ *During the third year of King Jehoiakim's reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.* ² *The LORD gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah and permitted him to take some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God. So Nebuchadnezzar took them back to the land of Babylonia and placed them in the treasure-house of his god.*

1. Jehoiakim was a **corrupt** ruler. (He was the son of Josiah- one of the best kings of Judah)
2. **God** gave victory to Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian King, over Jehoakim, the King of Judah.
3. **God permitted** Nebuchadnezzar to take some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God and take them back to the treasure house of Babylonian gods. Story to follow.

II. The devil is always trying to poach God's possession

Daniel 1:3-7 (NLT2) ³ *Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief of staff, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah's royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives.* ⁴ *"Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men," he said. "Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace. **Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon.**"* ⁵ *The king assigned them a daily ration of food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for three years, and then they would enter the royal service.* ⁶ **Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah** were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah. ⁷ *The chief of staff renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Belteshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego.*

1. Nebuchadnezzar **selected** the best of the Jewish young men to train for his work.
2. He changed their **location**, their **training**, their **diet**, and their **name**. This training lasted for **three years**.

III. Daniel determined not to defile himself

Daniel 1:8-16 (NLT2) ⁸ *But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods.* ⁹ *Now God had given the chief of staff both respect and affection for Daniel.* ¹⁰ *But he responded, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has ordered that you eat this food and wine. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded."* ¹¹ *Daniel spoke with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief of staff to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.* ¹² *"Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said.* ¹³ *"At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's food. Then make your decision in light of what you see."* ¹⁴ *The attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days.* ¹⁵ *At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king.* ¹⁶ *So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others.*

1. Daniel **asked for permission not to eat** the food of the Babylonians and asked to have vegetables and water instead.
2. Daniel took the risk of asking for an **inspection**.
3. Daniel honored God in the place where he **could**.
4. Daniel and his friends **passed** the test.

IV. God gave Daniel and his friends success

Daniel 1:17-21 (NLT2) ¹⁷ *God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for understanding every aspect of literature and wisdom. And God gave Daniel the special ability to interpret the meanings of visions and dreams.* ¹⁸ *When the training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief of staff brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar.* ¹⁹ *The king talked with them, and no one impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they entered the royal service.* ² *Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom.* ²¹ *Daniel remained in the royal service until the first year of the reign of King Cyrus.*

1. God gave the **ability**.
2. God gave them **opportunity**.
3. God gave them **favor**.
4. God gave them **influence**.

Ephesians 6:10-11 (NLT2) ¹⁰ *A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.* ¹¹ *Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.*