

# Daniel 03 – Discernment in Action

Dr. Leon L. Sanders  
Daniel 1:8-16

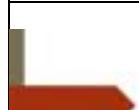
## Prologue: Daniel's World

- Regional conflicts reshaped Daniel's world
- Medes-Babylonians ally to destroy Assyria
- Egypt reasserts hegemony in the Levant
- Judah intrudes without ~~now~~ guidance from God
- Babylon battles Egypt to win Levant hegemony
- Judah enters captivity

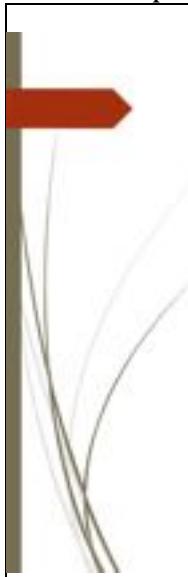


## Prologue: Jews Disobeyed Despite God's Warning of Diaspora

- God warned the Jews multiple times of their impending doom when they proved themselves unfaithful. (Ex 21:28; 28:41ff)
  - God warned them not to return to Egypt for horses and LBA military technology (chariots); Solomon ignored becoming an arms dealer (2Kg 17:16-18; 1Kg 10:26, 26-27; 2Ch 1:18-19)
  - God warned them not to go to Egypt for wives; Solomon ignored (2Kg 17:17)
  - God told them not to amass too many riches; Solomon ignored (2Kg 17:18)
  - God told them not to return to Egypt ever; Solomon ignored (2Kg 17:19)
- Solomon led Judah into disobedience despite gift of wisdom (Ex 31-46)
  - Solomon had many foreign treaty wives, including Egyptian (1Kg 11:1-8)
  - Solomon had great wealth, great wisdom and great pride (1Kg 10:22-23, 29)
  - Solomon's heart turned from God to idolatry legitimizing sins in Israel (1Kg 11:4-13)

 <h2>Prologue: Israel Warned of Captivity by Nation with Strange Tongue</h2> <p>(Dt 28:47-58; Ac 2:9-18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tongues were a sign of coming judgment of God on the Jews<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>When Solomon dedicated the Temple, he asked God to hear His people when they <del>were</del> carried into captivity if they repented; then God would hear their plea bringing them back again to Jerusalem, to His Temple (1Kings 8:46-50)</li><li>God warned Solomon that if <del>he</del> and his future descendants sinned then God would throw away the Temple; all would know it occurred because the Jews rejected God (1Kings 9:6)</li><li>God fulfilled His promise that He would cast off Jerusalem in response to their continual embracing the world: Mt Ebal (Dt 27:15-26; Ac 2:26-27)</li><li>Good or Evil, Judah's kings <del>and</del> her people brought this punishment on themselves: Proving the need for a Messiah from God as people <del>choose</del> fail</li></ul></li></ul>	
 <h2>Old Testament – Teach by Example New Testament – Teach by Precept</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Paul gave major points of guidance for Christians which he could have learned from this study in Daniel<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Obey government <del>when</del> it is <u>not</u> demanding you violate God's morality (Ro 13:1-7)</li><li>In so far as <del>you</del> are able, live at peace with <del>all</del> people (Ro 12:18-21)</li><li>God judges the world: believers judge practitioners of evil in their midst, and self (Ro 14:9-12)</li></ul></li><li>Daniel is in Babylon by God's will; therefore, to fight against his Captors is to fight against God (Parable of Good and Bad Figs): Daniel teaches us... (Ro 14)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fulfilled prophecy: Sons and daughters would be taken into captivity (Ro 11:25)</li><li>Discernment to know how to meet the goals of God and then others: coincide</li><li>Above all, faithfulness to God (Christ) rather than to the world (Ro 14:23)</li></ul></li></ul>	
 <h2>Defilement or Discernment</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Daniel had <del>no</del> clue as to the long-term will of God; and God did not tell him; Daniel had one continual goal: faithfulness to the revealed will of God which, as a Jew, included dietary restrictions (Ex 21:3)</li><li>Daniel, a teen (13-16 y/o), decided that <del>he</del> would not defile ('בָּגַד', <del>gd' al) himself with meat and wine provided by the king during his training.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Daniel motivated by God's word and not by food (Dn 1:10-14; Ro 14:17)</li><li>Jews had dietary meat restrictions: reject them and God rejects you (Ja 1:11; 1Co 8:10)</li><li>Wine dulls the senses promoting poor decisions, inhibiting discernment (Mt 23:1-8)</li><li>Purpose was <u>not</u> to prevent sin, as Christ pointed out (Mt 15:11)</li><li>Purpose was to separate Jews from others; Live faithful to God; others see God (Ro 14:13-15; 1Co 8:10-16; 1Co 10:28-30)</li></ul></del></li></ul>	

 <h2>Daniel's Steps of Discernment</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Daniel sought to learn the goal <u>and</u> obstacles that may impede progress<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <u>Daniel Listened:</u> Ashpenaz heard Daniel's respectful request; he then clarified his responsibilities and penalty for failing his responsibilities: Death</li><li>■ <u>Daniel Analyzed</u> the problem and developed a solution to meet all needs</li><li>■ <u>Daniel Synthesized</u> a counter solution and asked his immediate overseer to give him, and his three friends who walked in God's word, a vegetarian diet and water for ten days and then compare their health with those Jewish young men who ate from the King's table to see if met Ashpenaz's goals<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Ten: Number of completeness, responsibility (Four Judgment and Six-Man)</li></ul></li><li>■ After ten days Daniel and his companions <u>gained weight</u>, looked healthier; thus, they could continue <u>their</u> diet <u>in tact</u></li><li>■ They decided to set themselves apart to God and not be swayed by the King's table (Dan 1:11-12)</li></ul></li></ul>	
 <h2>Discernment: Before or After the Testing</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Did Daniel, and his companions receive discernment after their demonstration of faithfulness to both God and the captors, or before?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Daniel demonstrated discernment before testing based on his <u>already acquired</u> learning in God's word</li><li>■ Purpose of God's word is to teach wisdom and discretion so the faithful could learn true discernment rather than simply sinful manipulation (Dan 1:12-13)</li><li>■ The diligent study <u>and</u> practice of God's word teaches a person to gain prudence and eschew arrogance which is the curse of Satan (1 Cor 10:12)</li><li>■ These teens were taught faithfulness by, though separated from, their parents (Dan 1:4)</li><li>■ These teens <u>decided</u> to <u>remain faithful</u> despite their circumstances and peer pressure to survive away from home, country, family and Temple</li></ul></li></ul>	
 <h2>Christians Should Learn from Daniel Young, <u>Faithful</u>, Teen {Man in his Day}</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Christians can purpose to live their lives according to the word of God in a lost world without being seduced by the world<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Christ gave Peter specific and clear revelation that dietary laws were no longer applicable since Christ's sacrifice and the New Covenant (1 Cor 10:4)</li><li>■ New Covenant = different want to's separate you from the world (Rom 14:1-3; 1 Cor 10:24)</li><li>■ Christians are to combat their own sin (1 John 2:16)</li><li>■ Christians are to recognize and remove sin in the church (1 Cor 5:1-2)</li><li>■ Christians leave God to judge the world; <u>forcing</u> morality onto the world is not the Gospel; force begats force (1 John 2:16)</li><li>■ Only by proper hermeneutics and practice can one <u>learn</u> to distinguish between good and evil; this is Christian maturity (Rom 13:1-8)</li></ul></li></ul>	

	<h2>What Christians Should <u>Not</u> Learn from Daniel</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Through poor hermeneutics people <u>pull</u> the <u>wrong</u> lessons from Daniel; they read their interpretations <u>into</u> Daniel: Esegesis<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Daniel is <u>not</u> advocating a certain diet nor are Christians enjoined to practice Jewish dietary laws; this appeals to and <u>strengthens</u> the flesh (cf. 2:10-12)</li><li>■ Bible is not a magic book; one should be following a formula, principles, expecting the same results; Daniel successful because it was God's will to promote him to speak through him to Nebuchadnezzar, Satan and us</li><li>■ Isaiah and Jeremiah also faithful to God's word but suffered for their faith at the hands of sinners and did Christ Himself; Death, such might be <u>your fate</u> (cf. 1:13-16)</li><li>■ Christians are to be faithful as we have the <u>mind of Christ</u> and not because of worldly success; We look for a city <u>yet</u> to come, as did Abraham (cf. 4:1-2; cf. 1:13-16; cf. 4:1-4; cf. 2:1-4)</li></ul></li></ul>	