

Daniel 03 – Discernment in Action

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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 any 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. (2K 21:26, 26:47-51)
 - God warned them not to return to Egypt for horses and U&A military technology (chariots); Solomon ignored becoming an arms dealer. (2K 17:16, 18:35, 20:24, 20:13, 21:17)
 - God warned them not to go to Egypt for wives; Solomon ignored. (2K 17:17)
 - God told them not to amass too many riches; Solomon ignored. (2K 17:18)
 - God told them not to return to Egypt ever; Solomon ignored. (2K 17:19)
- Solomon led Judah into disobedience despite gift of wisdom. (2K 5:1-14)
 - Solomon had many foreign treaty wives, including Egyptian. (2K 11:1-9)
 - Solomon had great wealth, great wisdom and great pride. (2K 10:20-28, 29)
 - Solomon's heart turned from God to idolatry legitimizing sins in Israel. (2K 11:4-18)

Prologue: Israel Warned of Captivity by Nation with Strange Tongue (Dan 2:47-52; Ac 23-25)

- Tongues were a sign of coming judgment of God on the Jews
 - When Solomon dedicated the Temple, he asked God to hear His people when they repented carried into captivity if they repented; then God would hear their plea bringing them back again to Jerusalem, to His Temple (1Ki 8:44-52; 2Ch)
 - God warned Solomon that if he and his future descendants sinned then God would throw away the Temple; all would know it occurred because the Jews rejected God (1Ki 9:7-9)
 - God fulfilled His promise that He would cast off Jerusalem in response to their continual embracing the world: Mt Ebal (De 27:1-3; Jos 24:25a-27)
 - Good or Evil, Judah's kings and her people brought this punishment on themselves: Proving the need for a Messiah from God as people obeyed fail

Old Testament – Teach by Example New Testament – Teach by Precept

- Paul gave major points of guidance for Christians which he could have learned from this study in Daniel
 - Obey government **when** it is not demanding you violate God's morality (Ro 13:1-7)
 - In so far as **you** are able, live at peace with all people (Ro 12:18:20)
 - God judges the world: believers judge practitioners of evil in their midst, and self (1Co 5:12)
- 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... (Lk 24)
 - Fulfilled prophecy; sons and daughters would be taken into captivity (De 28:41)
 - Discernment to know how to meet the goals of God and then others: coincide
 - Above all, faithfulness to God (Christ) rather than to the world (Mt 4:10-22)

Defilement or Discernment

- Daniel had no 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 (De 28:26)
- Daniel, a teen (13-16 y/o), decided that he would not defile (תקדש, qd' al) himself with meat and wine provided by the king during his training
 - Daniel motivated by God's word and not by food (De 8:2; Mt 4:1-4; Lk 22:27)
 - Jews had dietary meat restrictions; reject them and God rejects you (Le 11:24; 26:18)
 - Wine dulls the senses promoting poor decisions, inhibiting discernment (Pr 23:1-5)
 - Purpose was not to prevent sin, as Christ pointed out (Mt 18:11)
 - Purpose was to separate Jews from others; Live faithful to God; others see God (De 10:1-10; 2Ch 21:1-6; Mt 9:13-14; 12:28-42)

Daniel's Steps of Discernment


- Daniel sought to learn the goal and obstacles that may impede progress
 - **Daniel listened:** Ashpenaz heard Daniel's respectful request; he then clarified his responsibilities and penalty for failing his responsibilities: Death
 - **Daniel Analyzed** the problem and developed a solution to meet all needs
 - **Daniel synthesized** 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
 - Ten: Number of completeness, responsibility (Ten Judgment and Six-Mon)
 - After ten days Daniel and his companions gained weight, looked healthier; thus, they could continue their diet (2:12)
 - They decided to set themselves apart to God and not be swayed by the King's table (2:17-23)

Discernment: Before or After the Testing

- Did Daniel, and his companions receive discernment after their demonstration of faithfulness to both God and the captors, or before?
 - Daniel demonstrated discernment before testing based on his already acquired learning in God's word
 - Purpose of God's word is to teach wisdom and discretion so the faithful could learn true discernment rather than simply sinful manipulation (2:13, 2:14-17)
 - The diligent study and practice of God's word teaches a person to gain prudence and eschew arrogance which is the curse of Satan (2:4-6)
 - These teens were taught faithfulness by, though separated from, their parents (2:24-25)
 - These teens decided to remain faithful despite their circumstances and peer pressure to survive away from home, country, family and Temple

Christians Should Learn from Daniel Young, Faithful, Teen {Man in his Day}

- Christians can purpose to live their lives according to the word of God in a lost world without being seduced by the world
 - Christ gave Peter specific and clear revelation that dietary laws were no longer applicable since Christ's sacrifice and the New Covenant (2:103-4)
 - New Covenant = different way to separate you from the world (2:414, 12:14)
 - Christians are to combat their own sin (2:71-8)
 - Christians are to recognize and remove sin in the church (2:37-12)
 - Christians leave God to judge the world; forcing morality onto the world is not the Gospel; force begets force (2:72)
 - Only by proper hermeneutics and practice can one learn to distinguish between good and evil; this is Christian maturity (2:111-14)

 <h2>What Christians Should <u>Not</u> Learn from Daniel</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Through poor hermeneutics people pull the <u>wrong</u> lessons from Daniel; they read their interpretations into Daniel: Eisegesis<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 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 <small>1Co 2:26-28</small>■ 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■ 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 your fate <small>2Pe 1:12-18</small>■ 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 yet to come, as did Abraham <small>Ro 4:14-20; He 11:13-16; Jn 4:1-4; He 11:14</small>	