

## THE BOOK OF DANIEL TEACHES US TO TRUST

(Dan. 6:19-23)

### Introduction:

1. The word faith (pistis) is a word with many meanings, or maybe better to say many aspects. It means “conviction of the truth, fidelity”-Thayer. But it also carries with it the idea of “reliance”-Strong. This reliance we might call “trust”. We come to believe the truth (faith) and we then live according to that truth (fidelity) no matter what we may face (trust).
2. The concept of faith and trust being synonymous is bourn out in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Hebrews. By faith (what they knew) the men of faith of old did... (trusting fidelity).
3. There may be no better instruction on faith and trust in God than the book of Daniel. Let us consider all this wonderful book has to teach us about faith (trusting) in God.

### Discussion:

#### I. At the King's Table.

- A. Daniel and his three friends (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) were taken into Babylonian captivity (probably in 606BC). He was part of the group that was specially selected to serve the King as representative of the best of the best of a conquered people (Dan. 1:3, 4).
- B. This afforded them the luxury of eating at the King's table (1:5), but Daniel refused to “defile” (pollute, desecrate) himself with the things of the King's table.
  1. Why? Food was probably unclean, improperly prepared (strangled not bled), and almost certainly sacrificed to Marduk. Also, some scholars think it was a ploy to get the young men to leave behind their native morals and loyalties.
  2. Daniel refused for two reasons: one, he had obviously been trained as a youth in the importance of faithfulness to God and His commandments; two, he had determined in his heart to heed his training and make it his own.
- C. To refuse the King's gracious gesture would mean death, but God “brought Daniel in favor” with the chief eunuch and a test was allowed in order to support an exception (1:9-15).
- D. God blessed them with knowledge and skill so that they received special honor and position from the king (1:17-21).
- E. We too can be tempted by the things of the king's table: forbidden foods, too much food, too much unhealthy food, alcohol, and drugs. We must follow Daniel's example and determine in our heart not to defile ourselves (Jas. 1:27 is achieved via 1 Pet. 3:15a and 1 Cor. 9:27).

#### II. After the King's Dream.

- A. The king had a dream and demanded of his wise men the meaning of his dream. They could not answer him as he wished so he ordered the deaths of all of his wise men. When Daniel heard of it he offered to interpret the dream in order to save his own life and those who were being killed. Daniel did not know the dream or the interpretation (2:1-16).
- B. Daniel told his friends (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) what he had done and then they prayed that God might reveal the dream and its interpretation to Daniel (2:17, 18).
- C. God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel (2:19). As a result, God was worshipped by the king (2:46, 47) and Daniel was rewarded (2:48, 49).
- D. We too must put our trust in God when times of trouble come our way. Truly, God is our fortress, shield, and defender (Ps. 18:2).

#### III. Before the King's Idol.

- A. The king was puffed up and had a giant image crafted for all the peoples to worship on pain of death (3:1-7). But, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah would not worship the king's image and this was brought to the king's attention (3:8-13). Perhaps because of their past service, the king offered them one more chance to worship the image and escape death (3:14, 15).
- B. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah refused and speak great words of faith/trust in God. Their words also were a testimony to their faithfulness to God (3:16-18).
- C. The king had them thrown into the furnace which they escaped unharmed. The introduction of another character (one like “the Son of God”) is very comforting (3:19-27).
- D. The result of their great faith/trust is that God is praised by the king and they were rewarded (3:29, 30).
- E. We too can be tempted to worship the idols of this world. But we must remain faithful no matter the pressure to join in the world's pursuits (Col. 3:5; 1 John 2:15-17; 5:21).

#### IV. Attacked by all the King's Men.

- A. Daniel's preeminence with the king earned him the envy and animosity of the king's other servants. They knew of Daniel's great faith towards his God and thus sought to attack him in this way (6:1-9).
- B. Daniel would not stop worshipping God and thus violated the king's law (Acts 5:29). Persian law would not permit any exception for Daniel and thus Daniel was thrown into the lion's den to be killed (6:10-17).
- C. Daniel was saved from the lions by God and as a result the evil servants were killed, God was praised, and Daniel was blessed for his great faith/trust (6:19-28).
- D. We too must remain faithful to God no matter what we face, nor how many others desert Him. Our physical life can be taken but our faith./trust cannot be (1 Pet. 1:3-16).

V. Submissive to THE King's Will.

- A. In captivity, Daniel learned of God's will that Israel remain in captivity 70 years (9:1-2). Daniel had been a captive for the entire 70 years. How would he react to the will of his King?
- B. Daniel fell to his knees and prayed to God (9:3, 4). This is one of the most powerful, beautiful, godly prayers in the Bible. Daniel praises God, confesses Israel's many sins, and appeals to God's mercy and grace (9:4-19; cp. and note Deut. 4:29 and Kings 8:48).
- C. We too must remain faithful and trust God and His revealed will, even when scattered among godless people; encouraged by the hope God has given to His people (Jas. 1:27; Titus 2:11-14; Rev. 2:10; 3:21).

Conclusion:

- 1. Daniel gives the perfect example to follow in fulfilling our Lord's commands of Matt. 5:13-16.
- 2. Let us study more, meditate more, and be more faithful and more trusting of our great and merciful God.
- 3. Invitation.

**MORE ON "THE BOOK OF DANIEL TEACHES US TO TRUST"**

- 1. The King's Table entails more than simply food and drink, although food and drink are a major part. The main concept is one of refusing to allow oneself to be defiled (filthy, profane [not religious]).
- 2. "Character is who you are when no one is looking" or when the chips are down. Character is defined as *behavior typical of a person, moral strength*-Webster's New World Dictionary. Jesus was/is the exact character of God (Heb. 1:3) and we are called to be Christ-like. That means we are to have the character of God as well. Consider 1 Pet. 1:13-16; 2 Pet. 1:2-11 (esp. vv 3 and 5); Jas. 1:2-4; et al.

Thus, in times of trouble (and maybe more challengingly in times of ease and comfort) who we are and how we present ourselves (in whom we trust) says a lot about us (whose we are).

- 3. When it comes down to life and death we must remember and be assured of some things. We have already died so that we might live eternally. Fear of physical death ought to be replaced with expectation of reward. Our trust in God and His word changes death threats into reward offers. Escaping physical death by forsaking our God is the epitome of blindness (Matt. 16:24-26).
- 4. When all the world is advocating ungodliness, we must stand faithful and true, and not only not engage in the ungodliness but also shine the light of godliness upon it (Titus 2:11-14; Eph. 5:8-17). It is lonely walking with God when the world is not walking with God, but we live by faith not sight (2 Cor. 5:7; 2 Kings 6:8-23).
- 5. It is difficult to live godly in this present ungodly country, world, and time. It is very stressful trying to influence the country, world, and time for good when all seem to be running headlong the other way. But that is the work our Lord has for us to do. He has given us exceedingly great and precious promises if we do so. We must live by faith, trusting our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.