

SERMON SERIES: Responses: Daniel in Exile

SPEAKER: Scott Beckenhauer

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Key Line

God's power is revealed when we resolve to follow him no matter what.

Introduction

For many of us, our faith is circumstantial. We find it easy to thank God when things are going well. But we often blame God when things in our life aren't going.

In review: Jerusalem is in ruins. The Kingdom of Judah has been overtaken by King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians.

Seek the Word

Read Daniel 1:1-8

- Who did the king ask his chief official to bring to his palace? (*Israelites from the royal family and the nobility—young men without blemish, handsome, gifted in all wisdom, knowledgeable, quick to understand, and qualified to serve.*)
- How were they to be treated? (*They would be taught the language and literature of the Chaldeans. They would be given daily provisions of the royal food and wine. Trained for 3 years before they would serve the king.*)
- What were the new names given to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah? (*Beltshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.*)
- Why did Scott say they were given these new names? (*To take away their former identity and help them assimilate into the Babylonian culture.*)
- What did Daniel resolve to do? (*He resolved in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's food or wine. So he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself.*)

Read Daniel 1:9-16

- What happened once Daniel had resolved in his heart to follow God? (*God granted Daniel favor and compassion from the chief official.*)
- What did the chief official say? (*I fear my lord the king. Why should he see your faces looking thinner than those of the other young men your age? You would endanger my head before the king.*)
- What was Daniel's solution? (*Please test your servants for 10 days. Let us be given only vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearances with those of the young men who are eating the royal food, and deal with your servants according to what you see.*)
- What was the result of the test? (*At the end of 10 days, their appearance was better and healthier than all the young men who were eating the king's food. Thus the steward continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and he gave them vegetables instead.*)

Read Daniel 1:17

- What did God do for these 4 men? *(He gave them knowledge and understanding in every kind of literature and wisdom. And Daniel had insight into all kinds of visions and dreams.)*

Read Matthew 22:35-38

- What did Jesus say was the greatest commandment? *(Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind.)*

Talk About It

Scott mentioned that the Hebrew word for “defile” means “to pollute, to stain, to desecrate.”

- How does our culture try to defile our faith?
- What steps can we take to keep from polluting our faith?

Scott asked us 2 questions:

- Are you willing to trust God with your circumstances? *(Have you resolved to follow Him no matter what is going on in your life? What is the result if you don't?)*
- What story do you want to tell with your life?