



STAND STRONG

THE LIFE OF DANIEL

DIG DEEPER QUESTIONS

Each week's 'Dig Deeper Questions' will be added on Monday by Noon.

SUNDAY, MARCH 14

IN TOUGH DECISIONS | DANIEL CHAPTER 6

This has long been a beloved Bible story for children. For adults, there are many dramatic features in this story: the jealousy of political subordinates, the vanity of a king, the integrity of a man, the power and preservation of God, and some wild animals and violence! Daniel is about 80 years of age and is being promoted to what we might consider the Prime Minister of the Medo-Persian Empire, the largest in the world at this time of history.

1. How would you feel if the people you work with decided to watch everything you did in private and public? Have you ever found yourself in such a situation where your faithfulness to God is being held against you? If you have, what was your response?
2. Who else in the Bible had been wrongly accused? Have you ever been falsely accused of something, and how did you respond?
3. What do you learn about Daniel's character from the results of the inquiry by his enemy (vs. 1-5)?
4. Why did Daniel not protest Darius' decree?
5. Daniel prayed three times a day on his knees, facing Jerusalem, giving thanks to God. Pastor Tim said, "It is possible to maintain Godly character in an ungodly world throughout a lifetime." In what situations have you, or might you, follow Daniel's example when encountering rules while remaining faithful to God and His Word?
6. What do you learn about King Darius from his willingness to sign the document prohibiting prayer to anyone but himself (vs. 6-9)? How does this resemble the sins of his predecessors? What does that tell you about those who rise to power?
7. What do you learn about King Darius and his relationship with Daniel from verses 14 - 18?
8. At break of day, the king rose and went to the lion's den. What pronouncement did Darius make concerning Daniel? Concerning God?
9. What do you think of Darius' reaction to Daniel's accusers, throwing them, their wives and children into the lion's den? How have you seen Holy God judge your enemies or the enemies of fellow believers?
10. King Darius wrote to all the people, nations, and languages in response to God's rescue of Daniel, who does that remind you of? What does that say about their character?

WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Daniel is an example to us by proving that age is no barrier for service to Christ, nor any kind of protection or exemption to temptation or trials. But because Daniel was someone who practiced his faith consistently, he possessed faithfulness even into his old age. One of the greatest lessons we can learn from Daniel is what it means to enter into a lifetime of obedience to Christ and the benefits of refusing to deviate even the slightest from God's Word and ways.

No matter what your age, what godly character do you display that may allow you **to impact the world with the love of Jesus?**

How do you **influence every[where] you go** and in every situation? How can you show you **value every[one]**, even those who wish you harm, while still being true to God's commands?

Is there someone who has wronged you intentionally or unintentionally? Was there something Pastor Tim said or a scripture verse that may have convicted you? Will you pray humbling yourself and reconcile a broken relationship?

Memorize the Apostle's Creed.



STAND STRONG

THE LIFE OF DANIEL

DIG DEEPER QUESTIONS

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

IN DIVINE MYSTERY | DANIEL CHAPTER 5

King Nebuchadnezzar reigned a total of 43 years, nine years later his grandson, King Belshazzar came into power. Chapter 5 opens 66 years after the initial exile of Israelites from Jerusalem into Babylon and 36 years after chapter 4 when Nebuchadnezzar was 'beastly'. How quickly they forget. While Nebuchadnezzar exhibited idolatry, pride of power, and vainglory ~ Belshazzar is distinguished by the public insolence of daring sinfulness, venting itself in unashamed wickedness and profanity.

1. Read Daniel 4:34-38 with Daniel 5:1-4. Discuss how Nebuchadnezzar's and Belshazzar's view of God are similar and different. How do you see God at work here?
2. King Belshazzar hosted a great feast for 1000 guests and drank wine in their presence. Discuss what that banquet must have been like and how people may have behaved.
3. Read 2 Chronicles 36:17-21 with Daniel 1:1-2. What is significance about the golden vessels (goblets) Belshazzar drank from?
4. Read Exodus 30:1-10 & 37:16-24. How were the vessels used in Temple to worship God?
5. What do you think Belshazzar was trying to prove by drinking from the golden vessels?
6. Belshazzar and his guests 'praised the gods of gold, and silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone' (v.4) as they drank from the temple vessels. What is the significance of this list?
Pastor Tim said that today "culture impacts the church when the church should impact culture." What stumbling blocks cause us to cross the line we set for ourselves to live by personally, as a church, and as a community? What lines has God given us to live by, so we may impact the world with the love of Jesus? So that we may value every[one] we meet, influence every[where] we go and give generously with every[thing] we have for others to know our immutable God?
7. Describe Belshazzar's mood and attitude when he ordered the Temple vessels be brought to him. Describe Belshazzar's mood when he watched the hand inscribe on the wall.
8. Why do you think God choose to capture Belshazzar's attention in the middle of the banquet with the mysterious appearance of "the finger of a human hand" which wrote on the wall? How does God get our attention today?
9. Babylon's wise men were not able to interpret the handwriting on the wall, just like they could not for his father (chapters 2 & 3). What might we conclude from this and how can it be applied to our society today?
10. What do you learn about Daniel, the Queen, and Belshazzar? Would the people close to you say your faith in God is strong? Who might call on you for godly advice?

11. Before interpreting the writing on the wall, what did Daniel remind Belshazzar of? Why?
12. What were Belshazzar's chief sins according to verses 22-23? How did Belshazzar receive Daniel's interpretation of the writing on the wall?

WEEK'S CHALLENGE

- What does this chapter demonstrate about the person of Daniel and his convictions as he remained in exile under Babylonian influence for 70 years?
- What does this chapter tell you about God?
- What message is God giving you as a warning to distractions in our life; pride, greed, boasting, vanity, submitting to authority, judging others, fear, worry, idolatry etc. in order to keep you humble before Him?

Memorize Hebrews 4:18

For the word of God is living and active,
sharper than any two-edged sword,
piercing to the division of soul and of spirit,
of joints and of marrow,
and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.



STAND STRONG

THE LIFE OF DANIEL

DIG DEEPER QUESTIONS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

IN REPENTANT HUMILITY | DANIEL CHAPTER 4

We have seen that in the first three chapters of Daniel King Nebuchadnezzar came to an increasing appreciation of God's greatness. King Nebuchadnezzar has finished extensive building projects, one being the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon (v. 30). He will now learn that God is sovereign over kings and kingdoms.

1. Read Daniel 3:29-30 and Daniel 4:1-3. What do you think about Nebuchadnezzar's address to the "nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth"? What does it suggest in its content, the events described, and its conclusion?
2. Pastor Tim discussed 'God's Eternal Kingdom vs. Man's Eternal Kingdom'. What are you building today for your tomorrow in relation to your family, your future, and God's Kingdom?
3. When no one could interpret King Nebuchadnezzar's dream he finally went to Daniel, who he considered the chief of the magicians, and stated he knew Daniel had "the spirit of the holy god" in him. Read John 13:34-35. In what ways are you allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your life as you **influence every[one] you meet**?
4. As you read Nebuchadnezzar's description of his dream (vs. 9 -18), what aspects of the dream might have caused the king to be terrified? What does Daniel's reaction to the meaning of the dream (v.19) say about him and his relationship with the king?
5. Three times God's purposes for giving King Nebuchadnezzar this dream is repeated (vs. 17, 25, 32). Why do you think God was so intent on impressing Nebuchadnezzar with His sovereign authority instead of His grace or His love?
6. What does it mean that God is sovereign?
7. If King Nebuchadnezzar had humbled himself and repented of his sin of pride, as Daniel advised, how might God have dealt with him?
8. What is the difference of being proud and being prideful? What tempts you to pride in yourself?
9. From King Nebuchadnezzar's experience, what have you learned about the dangers of pride? It was hard for Daniel to speak truth to the king. What has been the hardest truth for you to accept from someone else?
10. Pastor Tim asked. "When was the last time you thought to humble yourself before God?" Think of areas of unforgiveness, judging others, admit being wrong, identify sins committed or sins against others, etc. that you need to confess and repent. What are the areas of pride in your life God is asking you to lay down?
11. Read Proverbs 9:10. How does this verse speak to what God did to pride-filled Nebuchadnezzar (v.33)? How has God dealt with world leaders of our life-time who were/are much like King Nebuchadnezzar? How does it impress you concerning those things you value today; your own accomplishments, other people, objects, etc.?
12. Read Daniel 4:37 and put your name in this verse declaring the truth of who God is.

WEEK'S CHALLENGE

- 1) Find at least 8 attributes of God in Daniel Chapter 4.
- 2) This week, read Isaiah chapters 13 & 14 that speak about Babylon, prayerfully consider the areas of pride, coveting and the sovereignty of God.



STAND STRONG

THE LIFE OF DANIEL

DIG DEEPER QUESTIONS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21

IN OVERWHELMING SOLITUDE | DANIEL CHAPTER 3

When we believe in something, we stand up and fight. This last year has proved that. In this week's message, we saw how three young men stood alone as they defied their king. They knew that God was on their side and their defiance could result in a death sentence, or would it?

1. What motivated King Nebuchadnezzar to build the golden image?
2. What motivated Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to refrain from worshipping the image?
3. What motivated the sorcerers and enchanters to report the defiance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to the king?
4. Have you ever felt pressured to compromise your faith in order to be accepted with family, at work or in your community? If you can, give an example.
5. Pastor Tim mentioned demonic voices that try to influence us, to control us and to get us to bow down. Where do you see this happening in our world today?
6. What impresses you about King Nebuchadnezzar asking Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego if the allegations against them were true (vs. 14)?
7. Have you ever felt isolated because of your faith and convictions? If you can, give an example.
8. The king offered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego a change to worship the image, however they boldly confessed they would not serve his gods or worship the image. What impresses you most about their response?
9. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego made no excuse for their stand. What excuses could they have made to comply and worship the image?
10. What evidence do you see that King Nebuchadnezzar's response (vs. 13-15 and 19-23) was in conflict with God rather than the three friends? Where do you see this kind of conflict in our world today?
11. How do you see King Nebuchadnezzar's attitude change in this chapter in regard to himself, his gods, the three friends, and God?
12. How should we respond to commands or mandates imposed on us by those in authority, while remaining obedient to God? List some examples we face in our world today.
13. What attributes of God are evident in chapter 3?
14. What lessons about the risks and rewards of obedience are most significant to you personally?

WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Pastor Tim said, "People who don't know the one true God worship other people." Pray that God will reveal any idols in your life that interfere with your relationship with God and allow you to **influence every[one] you meet** as you stand strong on your faith and convictions.



STAND STRONG

THE LIFE OF DANIEL

DIG DEEPER QUESTIONS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14

IN REAL COMMUNITY | DANIEL CHAPTER 2

King Nebuchadnezzar had a terrifying dream that demanded his wise men; magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers interpret it for him or face certain death. The king also considered Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah to be included with the wise men. Daniel and his friends stood strong trusting God to intervene.

1. How did King Nebuchadnezzar react to the response of the wise men?
2. What does this say about the character of the King?
3. How did Daniel react to the King's anger and command that the wise men be destroyed? What steps did Daniel take (vs. 12 - 16)?
4. What does this say about the character of Daniel?
5. What do you learn from Daniel going to his three friends telling them about the crisis at hand?
6. Daniel sought his friends, his faith community, to pray and seek God's mercy concerning the dream and to spare the lives of all the wise men. Who in your life do you call your prayer warriors?
7. Are you facing anything that seems impossible to solve, where prayer could bring God's wisdom?
8. What do verses 20 - 23 tell you about how we should respond to answered prayer?
9. List attributes of God that Daniel praised in his prayer.

Define dreams and visions.

Pastor Tim directed us to Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17. He challenged us to pray for young men to have visions and old men to dream dreams. What kinds of blessings might we receive as we live out our mission statement; **we exist to impact the world with the love of Jesus?**

10. We all have times when we feel like we are at the mercy of people and circumstances around us. How should these four truths affect your view of the people and circumstances in your life?
 - There is a King that is above every king.
 - There is a King who holds the universe in His hand.
 - There is a King who will ultimately crush the powers that oppose Him.
 - There is a King who will save His people and rule over them forever.
11. How does this story connect with our lives today? What is God's word to you from Daniel chapter 2?

WEEK'S CHALLENGE

For a young man, Daniel showed spiritual maturity; wisdom in response to the crisis, prayer in response to a problem, and praise in response to God's work in his life.

What areas of your life will you follow Daniel's example?



STAND STRONG

THE LIFE OF DANIEL

DIG DEEPER QUESTIONS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7

IN TRUE IDENTITY | DANIEL CHAPTER 1

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem taking the temple instruments and placing them with his gods. He then commanded the royals, nobles and youth of exceptional looks and wisdom to be brought to Babylon. Daniel and his friends were probably only twelve to fourteen years of age. In Babylon they were placed into a 3-year training program where they would be indoctrinated into the Babylonian culture.

1. Is there a story behind your given name?
If you were going to change your name to identify yourself what would it be?
2. The name Daniel in Hebrew means, "God is my judge". How do you think Daniel lived up to his name?
3. Daniel showed unwavering faith as a young man. What things are you doing to help your child(ren) grow in their faith? If you are a grandparent what might you be doing to help your grandchildren grow in faith?
4. What steps did Daniel and his friends take to provide an alternative to the king's plan for the exiles?
5. Where do you see God's presence and provision for Daniel in chapter 1?
6. What challenges do you think Daniel and his friends faced with the other exiles who chose to follow the king's plan?
7. What challenges do you face today in our society to maintain your identity as a follower of Jesus Christ?
8. How can you be like Daniel when facing conflict between your convictions and what the world demands of you?
9. Pastor Tim pointed out four things about Daniel and his friends being in Babylon:
 - Prisoner of war.
 - Living in a foreign land far from home.
 - Serving under a king and his gods.
 - Given a new pagan name.How might you have responded to this as a teenager?
10. Question from Pastor Tim: 'Where has your life been polluted by your enemies: Satan, the world, or your own sinful heart?'
11. As a member of Shepherd's Gate Church how does your everyday life identify with our mission and values?

WEEK'S CHALLENGE: Memorize James 1:27