

TITLE:
"THE STRENGTH OF DANIEL"

Scripture Reading: Daniel 1:8, 6:10, 11:32

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.

Daniel was born in a period where he would not like to see what he was witnessing and face what he was encountering. He was born in a period of despair and gloom.

We do not like to be born in the Philippines. Why cannot we be born in America, in Europe; only not in the Philippines; where we witnessed poverty, no job opportunities, idolatry, immorality.

Yet Daniel rose above his seemingly hopeless situation. While in captivity without the slightest compromise, he faithfully served under the administration of three Kings: Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius. He lived to a ripe old age, some even claiming he lived above **100 years** old; but definitely, into his **90s**.

Ezekiel refers him to a righteous man like Job and Noah. God is setting the examples and reputations of these three men as standards of faith, obedience, and righteous behavior under stressful circumstances for us to follow and strive to produce.

Daniel 11:32, 'but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.'

We Christians living today must be strong like Daniel.

In the midst of unfavorable circumstances, which many of you are in, we must be strong. How about daily lives?

Facing perplexing problems we must be strong.

Troubled on every side we must be strong.

Distressed by family and works we must be strong.

Persecuted, cast down we must be strong.

Overwhelmed by discouraging reports we must be strong.

When everything is crumbling down, we must be strong.

When the task becomes too big for us to handle, we must be strong.

Facing the pressure of household chores, providing for the family, we must be strong.

We must be strong doing the work for God.

We must be strong when everything is falling apart, and everybody are falling away.

Jesus said in **John 6:67**, 'Will you also go away?' The bible says clearly; in the last days iniquities shall abound and the love of many shall wax cold.

2 Cor 15:7 'Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded'. This verse was written when the people of God has faced danger because they lived in a country full of lawlessness.

Haggai 2:4 says, 'Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts:'

Three times, God says, 'be strong' in just one verse. In another translation, the phrase is take courage, take courage, take courage, work. YHWH was trying to deal with the discouragement which was developing among the community of God's people in the work YHWH has called them into.

Do you know what is the work that God is referring. It is building up the church.

Great things are not accomplished without *action*. Today God is calling us to building up this church. We must be dissatisfied with things as they were and the consequent drive to initiate action.

You will be rewarded for your works.

Jesus is admonishing us not to forsake our heavenly reward by seeking worldly rewards and acknowledgement

Human efforts without God are useless, ineffective, and temporary.

What will this reward be. We will be rewarded with roles as the judges over sphere of influence. Jesus told us that our reward will be increased with more powerful responsibilities. His reward will be responsibilities, maximizing our talents in such a way as to produce great joy. We will have a complete sense of our own significance and role in heaven and it will produce joy.

Daniel's life may be characterized by 3 distinct virtues.

1. Purpose

2. Prayer

3. Prophecy

1. Purpose

Daniel 1:8 says, 'But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.'

The main teaching is that Daniel knew the ways and statutes of God and He purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. Daniel made up his mind, resolved, purposed in his heart to follow God. Christian, we are never going to do anything, be anybody until we purposed in our heart, we are going to follow the ways of God and the laws of God.

The Septuagint renders 'Daniel purposed in his heart' somewhat paraphrastically as 'Daniel desired in his heart.' The Greek meaning assigned to the word 'heart' is 'mind.' Daniel made up his mind.

Look at the example of Abel and Cain. Abel knew the way that pleases God because his father Adam had taught him. Abel knew the sacrifice that pleases God must be an animal without blemish, the very best and blood must be involved signifying the taking away of sin. But though Cain knew the right way, he chose his own method of offering to God. You cannot serve God in your own way but God's way.

If you purpose in your heart to follow God, YHWH will be with you and would use you for His purpose. More than that God will reveal truth and manifests his power to you. YHWH will show his love, concern, and redemptive plan for others. God will show that he is in control of history. You will begin to see that the event of the world is characterized by a sense of divine sovereignty. God is in control of all events, persons, and nations. But if you did not purpose in your heart, you will not see all these manifestations.

2. Prayer

Jesus said, 'Depart from me, I never knew you.' I defined '**knew**' as 'having a deep interpersonal relationship.'

Abraham '**knew** his wife.' The word '**knew**' meant having sexual intercourse. When you have sex, it is more than just a physical act. There is a soul tie. The soul of two has become intertwined.

The only way to have a deep personal relationship with God and having our souls intertwined with Jesus is through communicating, fellowshiping, communion. This comes about as a result of prayer.

In **Daniel 6:10** we are told that Daniel prayed three times a day with his windows opened toward Jerusalem.

King Darius was tricked into signing a thirty-day decree which says that all prayers during that period is to be directed towards King Darius himself. Daniel learned of this and guess what he did?

- a.** He kept his windows opened.
- b.** He continued praying, three times a day
- c.** He knelt down
- d.** He faced Jerusalem

3. Prophecy

Daniel had been called the Prophet of Dreams. God revealed to Daniel God's secrets. The bible says that surely the LORD will do nothing but he reveals his secrets unto his servants the prophets. We live in a time where people need to hear the voice of God. And unless Christian has touched the throne of God and the power of God, his life will never be able to touch others. To have power with men, we must have power with God. Unless we are willing to live such a separated, dedicated and sanctified life, we have no message from God to the people in this world. God will only reveal His word to His servants that seeks his face and wait upon him.

2 Corinthians 14:3 says, 'The one who prophesies, preaching the messages of God is helping others grow in the LORD, encouraging and comforting them, helps the entire church grow in holiness and happiness.'

Daniel 11:32 says, 'And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.'

Another translation put it as **'And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.'** This is talking about our days. **Wicked people will perform evil against God's people who are in a covenant relationship with God.** In the Vulgate, the rendering is 'And the impious against the covenant shall feign falsely (simulant fraudster), but the people knowing their God shall possess and do exploits. There will be people in the church that are impious against those in a covenant relationship with Jesus.

These people will feign loyalty but are actual fraudster. But the real covenant people shall possess God and do exploits. The Septuagint translates this verse as 'And by sins of the covenant shall they defile themselves with a hard people, and the people knowing these things shall have the mastery and do exploits. There will be people in the church that will sin against the covenant and defile themselves with hard people but there will be a people that knows and have mastery and do exploits.

We have all failed in the three points that we have discussed today. In the first place, we have not totally surrendered our lives to Jesus. We failed in our purpose, don't have a consistent prayer life and thus do not know the secrets of God and were not mightily used of God. What we have failed, Daniel had succeeded. But there is a great Daniel in our midst today. What we have failed, he not only succeeded like Daniel, but went further than Daniel, in that he paid for all our failures and sins. When we did not surrender our lives to God, Jesus surrendered his live totally to God.

When we failed in our purpose, Jesus took it upon himself to fulfill the purpose of God by dying at the cross of Calvary. When we are not praying, he would go on our behalf to the mountains, the wilderness to pray on our behalf and for our behalf. His prayer was so powerful that at the mount of transfiguration he was transfigured before his disciples. Jesus will be more than a prophet, he will return one day to fulfill all prophecies. But when he died on the cross, he was punished by God for purposeless, prayerlessness, and without revelation from God.

When he was resurrected he has given us purpose, an effective praying life through the Holy Spirit, which he sent and will mightily use us for this end times period. You only have to come to him and surrender to him and let him take over your lives and let him do exploits and wonders through you.