



September 8, 2019
“Faithfulness Rewarded”
Daniel 1 - Part 2
Pastor Gary Hamrick

This is a biblical principle: If we live a life that honors and glorifies God, he will take care of us, bless us, and use us for his glory. Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, certainly found this to be true. When faced with multiple challenges and difficulties, Daniel remained committed to the Lord. As a result, the Lord took care of him, the Lord blessed him, and the Lord used him for his glory. The wonderful news is that the same is true for every Believer!

Historical Background

1. Pastor Gary said, “What we see here with these four guys [Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, and Daniel], and Daniel in particular, is that when you stand strong in the Lord and when you know who you are in him, and when you, therefore, live a life that honors and glorifies God, he will take care of you, he will bless you, and he will use you. ... These guys were committed to standing strong in a world that was constantly assaulting their faith, values, and principles. They weren’t going to compromise!”
2. [Psalm 18:24-27](#) - *“The LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight. To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd. You save the humble but bring low those whose eyes are haughty.”* (1984 NIV)

Faithfulness Rewarded With Influence

3. [Daniel 1:9](#) - *“Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.”*

4. Daniel told his “boss,” Ashpenaz, that they would not eat or drink from the recommended menu provided to all of the young men in the three-year training program.
5. **Daniel 1:14** – *“So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.”*
6. Pastor Gary said, “Daniel got his way, and why did he get his way? Because God had given him favor, and good will with the chief of the eunuchs. And when you have favor then you have influence. ... If you aren’t favorably disposed [people] they will not allow you to influence them.”
7. **Proverbs 16:7** – *“When a man’s ways please the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.”*
8. Bible scholars are divided as to whether Ashpenaz only gave the special diet to Daniel and his friends or whether Ashpenaz took away the king’s food and drink from the menu the other young men received, thus giving every young man a diet of vegetables, grains, and water.
9. **Psalms 5:12** – *“For you, O LORD, will bless the righteous; with favor you will surround him as with a shield.”* (1984 NIV)
10. Biblical examples of godly men and women who had favor and influence because they were people of integrity who honored and lived for God, include:
 - a. Joseph
 - i. **Genesis 39:2-4** – *“The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority.”*
 - b. Esther
 - i. **Esther 2:15b** – *“And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.”*
 - c. Jesus
 - i. **Luke 2:52** – *“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”*

Faithfulness Rewarded With Insight

11. **Daniel 1:17-21** – *“As for these four men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now*

at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.”

12. Daniel and his three friends were considered to be ten times better than any of the other young men because they were given insight and wisdom by God.
13. Pastor Gary said, “I believe that by being a Christian... and a follower of Christ and having the Spirit of God within you, gives you insight and wisdom into matters and situations and people that you otherwise would not have without the Spirit of God. ... Knowledge without insight and wisdom is just more information. ... This is the information age and it hasn't made us any wiser. It might have made us smarter, but again, all kinds of knowledge without insight and wisdom is just superfluous information. ... Another book is not going to give us wisdom. What we need is insight and wisdom from above, and that's what God gave [these young men] because they were [living] in a way that honored and glorified God. ... We just need to pray and ask God to unfold that insight and wisdom in our lives that we would then be guided and governed more by his wisdom and insight than just information.”
14. **1 Corinthians 1:30–31** - *“But of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God – and righteousness and sanctification and redemption – that, as it is written, ‘He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.’ ”*

Faithfulness Rewarded With Interpretation

15. King Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing dream, so he called all of his counselors (magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, etc.) to not only interpret his dream but tell him what the dream was! ¹
16. Pastor Gary said, “The basis for their insight and knowledge was demonic. [This is just an historical fact], you can trace all occult worship today back to its roots in ancient Babylon. ... They didn't just study the stars like astronomy, they worshiped the stars, which is astrology. Let me just say all of the zodiac stuff and horoscopes... [and] tarot cards, if you're into all of this kind of stuff trying to discern omens... is just demonic and you need to stop looking at that kind of stuff.”

¹ **Daniel 2:1-13**

17. Daniel was considered to be counted among the king's counselors and advisors even though he did not participate in the demonic.
18. **Daniel 2:14-19** - *"Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon; he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, 'Why is the decree from the king so urgent?' Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel. So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah, his companions, that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven."*
19. Pastor Gary said, "The first thing Daniel [did] when he [thought he was going to die was] call a prayer meeting! ...
20. "We tend to use prayer as a last resort, but God wants it to be our first line of defense. We pray when there's nothing else we can do, but God wants us to pray before we do anything at all." - Oswald Chambers ²
21. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** - *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."*
22. **Daniel 2:20-23** - *"Daniel answered and said: 'Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are his. And he changes the times and the seasons; he removes kings and raises up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; he knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with him. I thank you and praise you O God of my fathers; you have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's demand.' "*

Discussion Questions

1. Read **Daniel 1:8-21** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's remarks about the ways the Lord works in the lives of people who live a righteous life. (See #1 above)
3. Read and discuss **Psalms 18:24-27**. (See #2 above)

² <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/166479-we-tend-to-use-prayer-as-a-last-resort-but>

4. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about times when they've been given influence. (See #3 through #9 above)
5. Spend time talking about the examples Pastor Gary gave concerning godly people who received favor and were able to influence others. (See #10 above)
6. Read and discuss [Daniel 1:17-21](#). (See #11 above)
7. How has the Lord given you knowledge, skill, and insight because of your faithfulness to follow his will and his ways?
8. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks on the blessing of being given knowledge, insight, and wisdom. (See #13 above)
9. What are some of the ways you are following the counsel of [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#)? (See #21 above)
10. Read and discuss [Daniel 20:14 23](#). (See #18 and #22 above)
11. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)