

Old Testament Sermon Outline No: 8

Subject: How to be a Person of Exploits

Textual context: Daniel 1-6

Introduction

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon attacked Jerusalem and carried off many of its inhabitants who were young, good looking and showing wisdom and knowledge. Included were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. They were renamed Beltshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego.

They were to be prepared for office in Babylon but Daniel purposed in his heart not to be integrated into this foreign culture. He and his colleagues had many adventures. They show that God is able to protect and further their influence if remaining true to godly principles.

1. Daniel's preparation

Right at the beginning of his captivity Daniel purposed in his heart that he would refuse to take specially prepared food and drink. He had such a presence that it was agreed that he and his colleagues would only each take vegetables and water. After ten days they were fitter than all the others.

Interviewed by the king the four were found to be far superior to all the others. They were found to be ten times better in wisdom and they served the king.

2. Interpretation of the king's vision.

The king required his wise men to give him both the vision he had and its interpretation. Failure would result in the execution of all the wise men. Following the four friends seeking God, Daniel is given both the vision and its interpretation.

It is essential to understand that Daniel first gave all the honour and glory to God before the king before he gave the interpretation. It is essential they we who have influence give testimony before the present day powers that God controls and works effectively in our lives.

The king recognises it was God and paid tribute to Daniel for his steadfast testimony.

3. Forces out to destroy Daniel

Where Christians are making a major contribution to a country, there will be people jealous of their achievements and attempts will be made to discredit them. King Darius who was now king had already appointed Daniel one of three governors over 120 satraps. He was minded to make Daniel the supreme commander over the whole realm. Opposition to this proposal came from the enemies of the Jewish men. They persuaded the king to issue a statute that any person who prayed or petitioned

any other god except the king would be killed by lions. Daniel's response was to open his windows and continue to pray three times a day.

An example for all to take note of the courage of this man.

Put into the lion's den he survives the night and his enemies are executed.

4. Daniel becomes prophetic in his ministry.

God saw he could trust Daniel and gave him an important prophetic ministry not only to the nation but to the world.

A word of warning. If we want to hold a senior position in the spiritual world we have to make sure we have the necessary commitment and courage to carry it out because there will be many enemies determined to destroy the work of God and its servants.