




Daniel 1

Living in exile means living differently and not being formed by the shaping influences of the world.

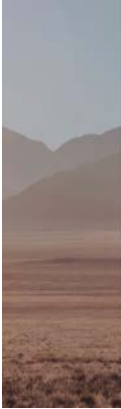


Daniel 1:1–21


In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. ...




And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god.




Dale Davis: *"Sometimes God may allow hardships to reach us because he wants his mercy to reach beyond us."*



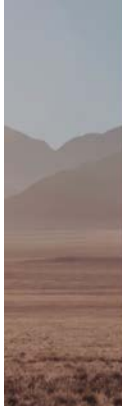
Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel (**exile**), both of the royal family and of the nobility, youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, ...




and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king.




Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Beltshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego. ...




But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, ...




and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king." ...




Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, "Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see."...



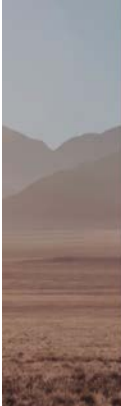
So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food. So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. ...



As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ...



And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, ...



he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom. And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

- Daniel 1:1-21



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Living in exile means **living differently** and not being formed by the **shaping influences of the world.**

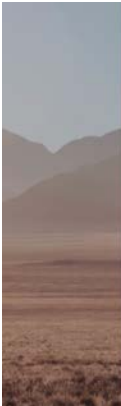


1. The shaping influences of the world (4 thoughts):




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1) The world that shapes us is called **Babylon.**



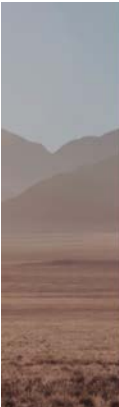
Verse 2: "And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of **Shinar**, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god."

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- "Babylon" in the Bible
 - "City of God" and the "City of Man"
 - Characterized by Power, Pride, and Pleasure (as we will see in book of Daniel)

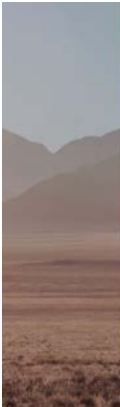


1. The shaping influences of the world (4 thoughts):

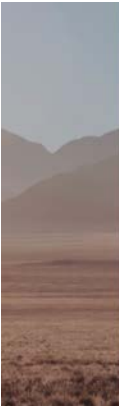
2) The way it shapes us: through literature, language, and lifestyle




Verses 3-5: Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel...to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank.




Hunter Beaumont: *"Like a fish in water who doesn't feel wet, we often don't recognize our culture, the languages and stories that explain our world. Cultures foster habits that comprise the good life and defense mechanisms that deflect the questions of outsiders. ..."*



They elevate celebrities who exemplify their ideals. Then, having done all this, cultures pull a sneaky move: they pretend they don't exist. They present themselves as 'just the way things are.' But culture is always present, and it always plays a role in our experience of faith."



Gavin Ortland: *"Since culture isn't what we see but what we see through—the glasses, not the landscape—we're often more 'conformed to this world' (Rom. 12:2) than we realize."*




An example...

"You can do whatever you want as long as you don't hurt anyone."



1. The shaping influences of the world (4 thoughts):

3) The reason why it is so powerful: *the shaping influences of the world are rooted in our identity formation.*



Verse 7: And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Beltshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.



Names and Identity in the Bible:

Daniel: *"Elohim is my judge"*

Hananiah: *"Yahweh is gracious"*

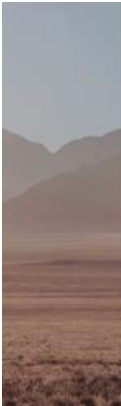
Mishael: *"Who is like Elohim?"*

Azariah: *"Yahweh helps"*



1. The shaping influences of the world (4 thoughts):

4) How it shapes us: through our *desires/loves*




Modern "Consumption-Desire"
vs
Biblical "Intimacy-Desire"

From Christopher Watkin's Biblical Critical Theory



1) Its NATURE

"Consumption desire ...is the **subject-object relationship**, and its underlying figure of the human is the modern sovereign individual, unencumbered by social responsibilities and defined by freedom to choose and consume..."

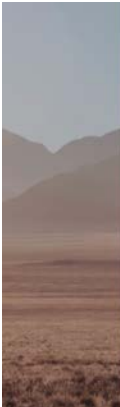


"Intimacy-desire...is the **subject-subject relationship**, and its underlying anthropology is that of the beloved individual, cultivating social ties & defined by her freedom to love & give."



2) ITS APPROACH

"Consumption desire is cyclical, moving through a **recurring cycle of lack, desire, consumption, satisfaction, and dissatisfaction**, each revolution of the cycle propelled by the desire for a new object of consumption. But this cycle is a **scorched earth policy** of draining the novelty of its latest object before discarding it and moving on." ...



"Intimacy desire, by contrast, is linear in the sense that it forges a **cumulative depth of relationship** over time with the one God and a community of local believers going deeper and deeper like a mine shaft. But this very linearity is cyclical because intimacy-desire does cycle back incessantly to the same beloved, investing in it again and again."



3) Regarding EXCESS

"Consumption-desire is **economic**, obeying the laws of scarcity, equivalence, merit, and performance... Intimacy desire is **aneconomic**, running free in a world of bounty, superabundance, gift, and grace. it is not motivated by debt but by thankfulness, and the more I give the more I have."



4) Regarding GOAL

"Christian intimacy-desire, however hard it works, **tends toward rest** (Gen 2:2-3; Matthew 11:28), but consumption-desire, however much leisure it enjoys, **dances to the rhythm of restlessness.**"

5) Regarding PAIN

"Consumption-desire understands **pain as lack**, to be remedied by further consumption. Intimacy-desire understands **pain as growth**, to be worked through and harnessed to deepen the relationship."

6) Regarding POSSESSION

"Consumption-desire is indexed by **possession**: I grow as I accumulate more things. Intimacy-desire is indexed by **dispossession**: I lose my life to save it (Luke 9:24), pour myself out to others (Phil2:17), and enjoy the liberating insouciance of self-forgetfulness. The more I lose, the more I gain."

Summary: Instead of being formed and shaped by the world, Christianity invites and calls us to be formed and shaped by the Cross.

Christian friends:

- 1) Awareness and Intentionality
- 2) Cultural liturgies vs Gospel liturgies (Spiritual Formation)

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What it means to live differently:

1. You live with Conviction

Verse 8: But Daniel **resolved** that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank.




Living Differently

Dale Davis: *"Babylon is where he (Daniel) would live, but Babylon would never be his home."*



Paul Tripp on Biblical Conviction:

1. It is always based on Scripture.
2. It is always predetermined. Long before we enter a situation we have decided to live accordingly. It's a heart commitment, made long beforehand to each new situation.




3. A biblical conviction does not change with circumstances or outside pressure or opinion.

4. Biblical convictions are inflexible. They are not negotiable, offered up, dealt away, or compromised to get something else.



5. A biblical conviction is bold and takes courage.

6. A biblical conviction is lived out daily.



"Someone without convictions will have no internal restraint system. They will do right when there is external pressure to do so but if not they will falter. They need a personal conviction and commitment to obey God no matter the cost."
- Paul Tripp



What it means to live differently:

2. You live in a way that brings Favor

Verse 9: And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs...

What it means to live differently

3. Your faith reflects Excellence

Verse 20: And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.

"ehh, good enough"



- Mediocrates

Andreas Kostenberger: *"My call to excellence came at my conversion when I was gripped by a realization of the utter excellence of God. I was impressed by the fact that because God is excellent in every way, everything I do for him ought to be characterized by excellence. This, to me, is what it means to bring glory to God—to do everything I do for him with excellence."*

What it means to live differently

4. Your life is rooted in the gospel.

Daniel

LIVING IN EXILE