

Sunday 27th September - Lessons from the Life of Daniel

- What thoughts first come to mind when you think of the Biblical character, Daniel? Read Daniel Chapter 1.

Background: Daniel was taken captive to Babylon on the first of three steps to overthrow Jerusalem (in 605BC, then in 597 BC and finally in 586 BC).

Daniel was one of a group of young Jewish nobility (probably between the ages of 14-18yrs). These young men were the 'cream of the crop', physically and mentally. They were handsome, fit strong, with good posture and good bearing who excelled in every way.

- What was to happen after they were taken and for what purpose?
- Are there any modern day parallels to this religious and ethnic cleansing?
- What shapes our sense of identity and how significant is our 'name' for being who we are?
- Why did Daniel decide to take a stand (v8) on food? The authorised version translates this, 'But Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself'.
- What was at stake here?
- What opposition might he have faced from a, The chief official? b, 'the other young men of his age' v10?
- How might you experience peer pressure (to 'go with the flow')?
- Instead of rebelling outright Daniel chose the path of negotiation v12. What does that teach us about how to work through issues we disagree over?
- What was the outcome for Daniel and his friends?
- What can we learn from this passage about a. God? b. your identity c. how to live in a society that does not live by God's laws and still be distinct as the people of God?
- How important was Daniel's daily discipline of prayer (6:9) for holding him fast when temptation came to let go of his faith in God and live in obedience to him?

Pray for one another, to be assured that God is in control, that He is with us (as he was with Daniel) and that he will give us courage to stand for our faith in Jesus when the time comes.