

**COMING OUT BETTER . . .  
ON THE OTHER SIDE**

**DANIEL 1:3-19**

Woodland Park Church of Christ

25 February 2018

# BACKDROP

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- ✘ In the third year of Jehoiakim's reign in Judah, Nebuchadnezzar attacked (besieged) and prevailed over Judah
- ✘ Of course God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah, had already pronounced this years earlier during the reign of Hezekiah, Jehoiakim's great, great, great grandfather **See II Kings 20:16-18**
- ✘ Certain young men of the captives – the best and the brightest – find themselves in Nebuchadnezzar's court in a 3-year training course to learn of Babylon's ways and customs

# SHEDDING THE SHACKLES OF “ME TOO”

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- ✘ The only ones to push back against King Nebucadnezzar’s edict were Daniel, Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach) and Azariah (Abed-Nego).
- ✘ Many times it’s easy to get caught up and follow the crowd.
- ✘ However, you do not need a crowd to reach your divine destiny.
- ✘ I have learned that animals are herded to the slaughter – one behind the other.



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Don't despair when you break from the herd . . .  
It could very well be your salvation!!!

*“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are **many** who go in by it. Because narrow is gate and difficult (straight) is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”* **Matthew 7:13-14**

# 1. HAVE THE DETERMINED HEART

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- ✘ But Daniel **purposed in his heart** that he **would not defile himself** with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank . . . Daniel 1:8
- ✘ Possess a made-up mind
- ✘ Before the trials, temptation & difficult times come, have a prepared heart
- ✘ Rehearse your plan of action – Fire drills

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Long before the episodes that became Biblical headlines, our heroes had already purposed to order their steps in the Lord . . .

Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-Nego had a certain spirit before Nebuchadnezzar commanded them to bow to his image. **Daniel 3:13-18**

Daniel's prayer life was already in order before King Darius issued his decree ordering a 30-day ban on petitioning anyone else but him. **Daniel 6:10-17**



## 2. AVOID THE WORLD'S POLLUTANTS

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- ✘ Sexual promiscuity
- ✘ Obsession with materialism
- ✘ Preoccupation with self

*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, Phil 2:3-5*

### 3. SEEK TO PLEASE GOD - HE MAKES A WAY

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- ✘ Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs (Ashpenaz). **Daniel 1:9**
- ✘ Daniel was able to strike a deal with a man who ordinarily would have nothing to do with him.
- ✘ Being a friend of the captives was not among Ashpenaz's core job duties.



## 4. BECOME BETTER & MORE HIGHLY FAVORED

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*Then the king interviewed them,  
and among them all none was found  
like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael,  
and Azariah; therefore they  
served before him.*

**Daniel 1:19**

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- ✘ The world tries to make it seem like we are missing out when we do not join forces with them.
  - ✘ If we are not following their lead, we are somehow behind.
  - ✘ Rules and regimen are somehow too restrictive.
  - ✘ We get to eat all this good food and drink this expensive wine.

# BETTER AFTER THE DUST SETTLES

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- × Gained respectability
- × Retained your dignity
- × Grown and developed
- × Protected your reputation
- × Preserved your relationship with the Lord



## STAY IN FAITH & TRUST GOD

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- + God will supply your need. **Phil. 4:9**
- + God will provide serenity – a peace that surpasses human comprehension. **Phil. 4:7**
- + God will carry you through the valley(s) of life, even when you can't see light due to night. **Psalm 23:4**
- + Do and be someone great – **MAKE HISTORY!!!**

# LORD'S INVITATION EXTENDED TO ALL

## ✘ Be added to the Lord's body

Hear the gospel (**Romans 10:17**)

Believe (**Hebrews 11:6, Acts 15:7**)

Repent (**Acts 2:38**)

Confess (**Romans 10:10**)

Be baptized for the remission of sin  
(**Acts 2:38**) or

# LORD'S INVITATION (CONT'D)

- ✘ Be reconciled unto the Lord (I John 1:8-9);  
or
- ✘ Desire prayer (James 5:16).



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***May GOD'S richest blessings be yours!***