

October 27, 2019

Daniel 1

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The book of Daniel: This book takes its name not from the author, who is actually unknown, but from its hero, who was allegedly among the first Jews deported to Babylon, where he lived at least until 538 B.C. The book tells the story of those in Exile in view of giving encouragement to those who may live in Exile at the time that they hear the story.

KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR Nebuchadnezzar II, also spelled Nebuchadrezzar II, (born c. 630—died c. 561 BCE), second and greatest king of the Chaldean dynasty of Babylonia (reigned c. 605–c. 561 BCE). He was known for his military might, the splendour of his capital, Babylon, and his important part in Jewish history. He was the eldest son and successor of Nabopolassar, founder of the Chaldean empire. He is known from cuneiform inscriptions, the Bible and later Jewish sources, and classical authors...

The palace master gave them other names:

Nebuchadnezzar changed their names to take away their allegiance from the God of Israel and give allegiance to the Babylonian gods as follows:

Daniel in Hebrew means “Yahweh (**YWHW**) is my Judge” – his name becomes *Belshazzar* meaning “*Bel protect the King*” (same name as Nebuchadnezzar’s Son or Grandson) and Bel was a Babylonian god.

Hananiah in Hebrew means “**YWHW** is Gracious.” His name is changed to *Shadaku* meaning “*command of Aku*” (a Babylonian god).

Mishael in Hebrew means “**Who is like YWHW?**” His name is changed to *Meshaku* the *Babylonian moon god Aku*.

Azariah in Hebrew means “**YWHW helps.**” His name is changed to *Abednebo* the *Babylonian god of wisdom (Nebo)*.

Naming demonstrates ownership and a relationship. The purpose was evidently to effect Daniel’s naturalization and alienate him from the worship of YWHW. By changing the names of the Hebrew captives Nebuchadnezzar is showing the world and all the gods of the nations that Maruk, Bel, and Nebo, his gods, are the greatest, supreme gods of the World. Warfare in the ancient world was seen as a holy war between the gods, with the humans as instruments of the gods. Curiously the text changes the names again from Daniel to Belshazzar to Belteshazzar (it is said that adding the TE may mean “Bel NOT to protect the King” changing the meaning altogether); Hananiah to Shadaku to Shadrach; Mishael to Meshaku to Meshach; Azariah to Abednebo to Abednego. So there seems to be a double entendre – Babylon is trying to alienate the Hebrews from their culture, and by changing their Babylonian names with a tweak the Hebrews then subvert the name intended to first

¹ In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, **KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR** of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods.

³ Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, ⁴ young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king’s palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵ The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king’s court. ⁶ Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah. ⁷ **The palace master gave them other names:** Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

⁸ But Daniel resolved that he *would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine*; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself. ⁹ Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master. ¹⁰ The palace master said to Daniel, “I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your own age, you would endanger my head with the king.” ¹¹ Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: ¹² “Please test your servants for ten days. *Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink.*” ¹³ You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal rations, and deal

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would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine: It would seem that the “royal rations” including food that wasn’t kosher as per the commandments listed in Leviticus 11. That section concludes with the following exhortation: ⁴³“Do not render yourselves detestable through eating any of the unclean animals... so that you become unclean. ⁴⁴For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. ⁴⁵ For I am the Lord who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God; thus you shall be holy, for I am holy.” Leviticus 11:43-44. By refusing to eat unkosher, Daniel and his friends demonstrate the way in which they accommodate to their new culture without compromising their faith.

The book of Romans: Is consider the best writing of the Apostle Paul and serves as the theological basis for our understanding of what we call Christianity. Chapters 1 to 11 deal with the theological affirmation that creatures are sinful, yet God gives the free gift of love and grace, in view of salvation. Because of this, then Paul argues we should live a new life. He describes this life in chapters 12 to 16. Our selection is the climactic transition point between life in grace and what a life of grace looks like.

sacrifice : θυσία pronounced [thoo-see'-ah]: sacrifice; a sacrifice, offering; an official sacrifice prescribed by God; hence an offering the Lord accepts because offered on His terms.

The word refers to various forms of OT blood sacrifices (“types”) – all awaiting their fulfillment in their antitype, Jesus Christ.

renewing: ἀνακαίνωσις, pronounced as [an-ak-ah'-ee-no-sis] anakaínōsis (from /aná, “up, completing a process,” which intensifies kainō, “make fresh, new”; see 2537 /kainós) – properly, a new development; a renewal, achieved by God's power.

with your servants according to what you observe.” ¹⁴ So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days. ¹⁵ At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations. ¹⁶ So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. ¹⁷ To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.

¹⁸ At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, ¹⁹ and the king spoke with them. And among them all, no one was found to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they were stationed in the king’s court. ²⁰ In every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. ²¹ And Daniel continued there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Romans 12:1-3, 9-21

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¹ I [Paul the Apostle] appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as *a living sacrifice*, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your minds**, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF EXAMEN & CONTEMPLATION

- **What word, phrase or image grabs your attention?**
- **How does that word intersect with your life?; our life?**
- **How do you feel like an “exile” in today’s world?**
- **How does your faith in Jesus guide or structure your life in our changing world?**

RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE PCUSA BOOK OF ORDER – REFERENCING ROMANS 12

F-1.0301 The Church Is the Body of Christ

The Church is the body of Christ. Christ gives to the Church all the gifts necessary to be his body. The Church strives to demonstrate these gifts in its life as a community in the world (1 Cor. 12:27–28):

- The Church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life.
 - The Church is to be a community of hope, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. This new creation is a new beginning for human life and for all things. The Church lives in the present on the strength of that promised new creation.
 - The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.
- The Church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God’s transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord.

F-1.0302 The Marks of the Church

d. The Apostolicity of the Church

Apostolicity is God’s gift to the Church in Jesus Christ. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God sends the Church into the world to share the gospel of God’s redemption of all things and people.

Because in Christ the Church is apostolic, it strives to proclaim this gospel faithfully. The Church receives the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ through the testimony of those whom Christ sent, both those whom we call apostles and those whom Christ has called throughout the long history of the Church. The Church has been and is even now sent into the world by Jesus Christ to bear that testimony to others. The Church bears witness in word and work that in Christ the new creation has begun, and that God who creates life also frees those in bondage, forgives sin, reconciles brokenness, makes all things new, and is still at work in the world. To be members of the body of Christ is to be sent out to pursue the mission of God and to participate in God’s new creation, God’s kingdom drawing the present into itself. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) affirms the Gospel of Jesus Christ as received from the prophets and apostles, and stands in continuity with God’s mission through the ages.

The Church strives to be faithful to the good news it has received and accountable to the standards of the confessions. The Church seeks to present the claims of Jesus Christ, leading persons to repentance, acceptance of Christ alone as Savior and Lord, and new life as his disciples.

The Church is sent to be Christ’s faithful evangelist:

- making disciples of all nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;
- sharing with others a deep life of worship, prayer, fellowship, and service; and

- participating in God’s mission to care for the needs of the sick, poor, and lonely;
- to free people from sin, suffering, and oppression; and to establish Christ’s just, loving, and peaceable rule in the world.

F-1.0303 The Notes of the Reformed Church

Where Christ is, there is the true Church. Since the earliest days of the Reformation, Reformed Christians have marked the presence of the true Church wherever:

- the Word of God is truly preached and heard,
- the Sacraments are rightly administered, and
- ecclesiastical discipline is uprightly ministered.

F-1.04 OPENNESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

F-1.0401 Continuity and Change

The presbyterian form of government set forth in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is grounded in Scripture and built around the marks of the true Church. It is in all things subject to the Lord of the Church. In the power of the Spirit, Jesus Christ draws worshiping communities and individual believers into the sovereign activity of the triune God at all times and places. As the Church seeks reform and fresh direction, it looks to Jesus Christ who goes ahead of us and calls us to follow him. United with Christ in the power of the Spirit, the Church seeks “not [to] be conformed to this world, but [to] be transformed by the renewing of [our] minds, so that [we] may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom. 12:2).

F-1.0404 Openness

In Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all creation, the Church seeks a new openness to God’s mission in the world. In Christ, the triune God tends the least among us, suffers the curse of human sinfulness, raises up a new humanity, and promises a new future for all creation. In Christ, Church members share with all humanity the realities of creatureliness, sinfulness, brokenness, and suffering, as well as the future toward which God is drawing them. The mission of God pertains not only to the Church but also to people everywhere and to all creation. As it participates in God’s mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) seeks:

- a new openness to the sovereign activity of God in the Church and in the world,
- to a more radical obedience to Christ, and to a more joyous celebration in worship and work;
- a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity;
- a new openness to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms
- in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God’s activity in the world; and
- a new openness to God’s continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be more effective in its mission.

3870 [e]	3767 [e]	4771 [e]	80 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	3628 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3936 [e]
Parakalō	oun	hymas	adelphoi	dia	tōn	oiktirmōn	tou	Theou	parastēsai
1 Παρακαλῶ	οὖν	ὑμᾶς	, ἀδελφοί	, διὰ	τῶν	οἰκτιρμῶν	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	, παραστήσαι
I exhort	therefore	you	brothers	through	the	compassions	-	of God	to present

3588 [e]	4983 [e]	4771 [e]	2378 [e]	2198 [e]	40 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	2101 [e]	3588 [e]	
ta	sōmata	hymōn	thysian	zōsan	hagian	tō	Theō	euareston	tēn	
τὰ	σώματα	ὑμῶν	θυσίαν	ζῶσαν	, ἁγίαν	, «τῷ	Θεῷ»	↔	εὐάρεστον	, τὴν
the	bodies	of you	a sacrifice	living	holy	-	to God	well-pleasing	which is	

3050 [e]	2999 [e]	4771 [e]	2532 [e]	3361 [e]	4964 [e]	3588 [e]	165 [e]	3778 [e]	235 [e]
logikēn	latreian	hymōn	kai	mē	syschēmatizesthe	tō	aiōni	toutō	alla
λογικὴν	λατρείαν	ὑμῶν	. 2 καὶ	μὴ	συσχηματίζεσθε	τῷ	αἰῶνι	τούτῳ	, ἀλλὰ
[the] reasonable	service	of you	And	not	be conformed	to the	age	this	but

3339 [e]	3588 [e]	342 [e]	3588 [e]	3563 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	1381 [e]	4771 [e]	5101 [e]
metamorphousthe	tē	anakainōsei	tou	noos	eis	to	dokimazein	hymas	ti
μεταμορφοῦσθε	τῇ	ἀνακαινώσει	τοῦ	νοός	, εἰς	τὸ	δοκιμάζειν	ὑμᾶς	, τί
be transformed	by the	renewing	of the	mind	for	-	to prove	by you	what [is]