

Book of Daniel



Key Lessons from the Book of Daniel

1. God's hand was upon Daniel, but he never used that to serve his own ends. He used whatever gifts God had endowed him with for God's glory.
2. He demonstrated the difference between living with knowledge as opposed to living with wisdom.
3. He demonstrated two key characteristics beyond wisdom – humility and hope.
4. Daniel was a victim of other's sins and the consequences it created, yet he did not use that as an excuse to not live faithfully.
5. He demonstrated a confidence and hope in God, despite the appearance of the current circumstances.

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6. He would rather face death, than fall into idol worship. A by-product of wisdom's main motif, "fear of the Lord."
7. He demonstrated true faithfulness, as opposed to living a faith that was culturally accommodating.
8. He exercised the power of the "pause."
9. Daniel allowed Scripture, God's power and promises, and his relationship with God to determine his outlook.
10. Obedience is easy when we agree with God; it's another thing altogether when it's exercised in the midst of confusion and doubt.

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11. God does not always remove the trial, but often works best in the midst of trial.
12. A moral and ethical life is not the same as a life of faith.
13. Daniel's hope was rooted in God's sovereignty and character (promises), not in a wishful expectation of outcomes.
14. Daniel's "weapon" of choice, was prayer.
15. Daniel's ultimate trust in God's goodness and power was deeper than his sorrow or confusion.
16. He genuinely desired the best interest of his captors. His every interaction was done with respect, grace, and humility. He exemplified being a servant to others.

Key Lessons from the Book of Daniel

17. He did not fear the pagan roots or the presence of evil; he knew the power of God.
18. The key lesson is to live with faith, like Daniel, but realize the results may not be the same for you.
19. Even in his older years, an angel encouraged Daniel to persevere.
20. In a culture that is becoming more hostile towards Christian faith and values, there are five qualities we need to exemplify.
 - a. Obedience
 - b. Perspective
 - c. Endurance
 - d. Confidence
 - e. Courage

God as the Central Figure

1. Every biblical story has a horizontal element, and a vertical element. The horizontal is the human component of the story; the vertical is God's.
2. Most non-biblical stories are either devoid of the vertical element, or leave it nebulous and mysterious.
3. Biblical stories are primarily focused on the vertical aspect.
4. The horizontal element is the one we relate to most.

God as the Central Figure

5. Because of this, the tendency to moralize a story is tempting and easy.
6. The dangers in moralizing are many, but one to note is that even our strengths can become a weakness, therefore derailing our best moral and spiritual intentions.
7. Without the vertical, idolatry will continue to flourish, and hope eventually evaporates.