

When Our Faith Defines Our Character

When we lack control over our circumstances or when our culture pressures us to compromise our faith, it can be difficult to stay committed to following God's commands and living out what we believe. Daniel and his Jewish friends knew what it was like to live in a culture that was not particularly welcoming to their faith practices. As the book of Daniel opens, we meet Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—four young Jewish men preparing to serve the Babylonian king. Join us as we unpack the context in which the book of Daniel takes place. We'll discuss how and why the Israelites found themselves living in exile in Babylon and study the challenges these four young men faced in Daniel 1. Together, let's witness what God can do when we let our faith, not our context, define our character.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- What does it mean to live in exile?
- How do you honor God with your life?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [When Our Faith Defines Our Character](#)

READ [Daniel 1](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- In segment 1, hosts Darrell Delaney and Scott Hoezee review Israel's history and note that Israel's exile to Babylon was a consequence of their failure to be faithful to God's design for living, despite God having sent multiple prophets over centuries to call them to repentance. What did you notice yourself thinking or feeling as Darrell and Scott reviewed Israel's history? What did their discussion about Israel's history reveal about God?
- The author of Daniel purposefully uses the Hebrew names of the main characters to make the point that, even in Babylon, they were Israelites and they belonged to God. As Christians, we belong to and carry the name of Christ wherever we go. How does this knowledge of who you are and who you belong to give you power and encouragement in your daily life?
- Have you ever been tempted to compromise your values because of what standing firm might cost you? Reflect on that experience. What did you learn from it? What (if anything) do you wish you had done differently?
- In segment 3, Scott summarizes the experience of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: "They are true to God and God is true to them, and they give God the glory." How so? Would this statement remain true even if the king had decided to put them to death? Why or why not?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Deuteronomy 28](#), [Ezekiel 10-11](#), [Jeremiah 29:7](#), [1 Corinthians 10:31](#), [Colossians 3:17](#), [Romans 12:1-2](#)

CONCLUSION

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were unwilling to conform to the patterns of their Babylonian surroundings. Their faithfulness stands in contrast to the behavior of the Israelites who were unfaithful before the exile. And their actions were a living witness in the king's court to God's goodness, blessing, and design for human flourishing. In prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind any areas of your life where you find it difficult to be a faithful living witness to Jesus Christ. Pray for the courage that Daniel had, and ask God to show you how you can bring him glory in your life.

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