

Sermon Series: Finding True Courage

**LOCK, STOCK, AND
BARREL**

DANIEL 3:1-30

Psalm 139:16 (ESV)

- *Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.*

The Missing Sabbath Years

- ① Why were Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Babylon in the first place?
- ① Their forefathers refused to trust God with their future, specifically the Sabbath years that God commanded Israel to obey.

Exodus 20:8-11 (ESV)

- 8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work,
10but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Leviticus 25:3-5 (ESV)

- ③ For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, ⁴but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the LORD. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. ⁵ You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land.

Leviticus 25:20-22 (ESV)

- ²⁰And if you say, 'What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?' ²¹I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, so that it will produce a crop sufficient for three years. ²² When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating some of the old crop; you shall eat the old until the ninth year, when its crop arrives.

Leviticus 26:33-35 (ESV)

- ⦿ ³³And I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste.
- ⦿ ³⁴ "Then the land shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest, and enjoy its Sabbaths. ³⁵As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest that it did not have on your Sabbaths when you were dwelling in it.

2 Chronicles 36:20-21 (ESV)

- ²⁰He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

I. The Federal Regulation (Daniel 3:1-7 ESV)

- ◎ Nebuchadnezzar's statue is linked with the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11.
- ◎ It links the name of city Babel, with the verb *balal* which means "to confuse, mix or mingle."
- ◎ His statue was an attempt to demonstrate that he was independent from God-that he was the ultimate ruler.

II. The Principled Refused (Daniel 3:8-18 ESV)

- ⦿ What King Neb asked them to do was to violate the first two commandments [Exodus 20:3-6]:
- ⦿ ³ *"You shall have no other gods before me.*
- ⦿ ⁴ *"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.*

The Principled Refused (cont'd)

- ◎ Francis Schaeffer said in 1979 that he could conceive America becoming a dictatorship.
- ◎ He could foresee a situation where due to crises Americans would give up their freedoms if they could be promised two things: **personal peace and affluence**.

III. Supernatural Rescue

(Dan. 3:19-27 ESV)

- ④ ²⁴Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." ²⁵He answered and said, *"But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."*

Supernatural Rescue (cont'd)

- ⦿ Daniel and his friends were rescued by an appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ⦿ This is what is known as a theophany (God appearing visibly)
- ⦿ Or more accurately, a Christophany (Christ appearing visibly before His virgin birth).

Supernatural Rescue (cont'd)

- ⦿ Why did Jesus rescue them?
- ⦿ Because He still had more work for them to do.
- ⦿ Psalm 139:16 (ESV), *“Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.”*

Supernatural Rescue (cont'd)

- Jeremiah 1:5 (ESV), *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."*
- *What does that mean to you and me?*

Supernatural Rescue (cont'd)

- ◎ It means that the Lord Jesus in eternity past determined the moment of our conception, the moment of our birth, and the moment of our death (Heb. 9:27).
- ◎ ***You can't die until your work is done.***

Psalm 68:19-20 (ESV)

- ¹⁹Blessed be the Lord,
who daily bears us up;
God is our salvation.

Selah

²⁰Our God is a God of salvation,
and to GOD, the Lord, belong
deliverances from death.

Supernatural Rescue (cont'd)

- ⦿ The fact of the matter is you can trust God with your future-long and short term.
- ⦿ He *daily* bears our burdens.
- ⦿ He *daily* delivers us.
- ⦿ Deut. 8:18, “...*it is he who gives you power to get wealth...*”

IV. The Regulation Reversed

(Dan. 3:28-30 ESV)

- ²⁹Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.
- What if Daniel and his friends had not been delivered?

The Regulation Reversed (cont'd)

- ⦿ Not everyone who stands up for their faith in Christ is delivered.
- ⦿ How do we respond when God doesn't deliver?
- ⦿ *When a believer dies for his or her faith, we must realize that the time of their death was part of God's eternal plan* (Ps. 139:16).

Invitation

- ⦿ We cannot live a minute past our appointed time.
- ⦿ Are you making the most of the time God has given you?
- ⦿ Are you trusting God for your future?