In His Hands #1 “God is My Judge” Daniel 1: 1-21

Intro: ***He’s got the whole world, in His hands…***

* Silly song of a child… naïve. Ignorant of the harsh realities of life --- sickness, suffering, injustice and brutality…
* First published in 1927 by Dr. Edward Boatner, Director of Music for the National Baptist Convention. “*Spirituals Triumphant, Old and New*” --- Old, Old, Old… Born in the hearts and minds, forged in the lives of African Americans.
* ***He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands… You and Me***..

Not the Silly , shallow sentiments of a child

**Heavy, Precious Theological Truth forged in the Fire**.

**t/s** – Kenneth Gangel, DTS, was writing a commentary on the Book of Daniel when his wife was diagnosed with cancer. Daniel’s song would be, “*He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands*.”

**Daniel 1: 1-21**

Daniel Sets the Scene… begins and ends with chronology

 **Daniel is in Exile.**

 **The LORD is on His Throne.**

Read with Comments ---

**Vs. 2** – Year 605 Nebuchadnezzar dominating Assyria and Egypt

 Framed Theologically = Neb/Jehoiakim; Babylon/Jerusalem;

 House of God/House of his gods (40+ temples)

 “***Shinar***” – anachronistic… Gen. 11… Old center of Evil.

 Tower of Babel…arrogant human hostility

 ***Where is the LORD in this Defeat?***

**Vs. 5** – A policy of taking the best and brightest “royals” to Babylon.

* Leverage over the royal family
* Hard to find good help in an expanding empire
* High Standards – looks, brains, polish, character…
* Three years graduate degree… for “Youth” – 14-17 years.

Language, Literature, Culture, Religions, world view…

… Goal is to Change these young men… mold them.

**Vs. 7** – Hebrew Names all make reference to the LORD

 *God is My Judge; YAH is my Help; YAH has been Gracious;*

 *Who is what God Is*? (unrivaled)

 **Note**: The parents who named these boys, raised them!

 Raised during **Josiah’s Revival**/Renewal

**Vs. 8b** – ***“Assigned” “Assigned”… “Made up his mind*** (resolved)”

* Same Hebrew Word = ***Determined***

The commander determined his name, but Daniel Determined His Own Heart and Mind!

* None of the King’s Food --- ***defile***, taint, dishonor himself.
* Why? (Accept language, name, education… Draw line!)

Not Koser, dietary Laws or Food Offered to gods ---

***King’s Choice Foods*** (5X) --- I am NOT the King’s Man.

“Share the Table” = solidarity, identity… ***Cross the Line***!

Practical Point – **Integrity Draws Bright Lines** **in shadowy places**

 Compromises are almost always subtle… “eat the food!”

ILL – Lonesome Dove (Larry McCurty) Jake Spoon attaches himself to an outlaw gang to make it through hostile country. Woodrow Call hangs him with the rest. Gus MacRae, “I am sorry you crossed the line, Jake.” Jake, “But Gus, I never saw no line.”

People of Integrity develop a capacity to **See the Line**. They see clear Lines when others see shadows…

John 17 – “***Disciples live IN the world, but not OF the World***.”

 Daniel is a model… He could function as an Exile, live in an ugly

 pagan society; and still not cross the Lines to defile himself.

**Some of you are crossing lines that you do not even see anymore!**

**t/s** – Let’s see How Daniel Did It.

**Read vs. 8-14**

 Daniel’s winsome personality and wisdom with people.

 Does not stage a protest, march in the street, hunger strike.

 He works quietly, carefully and persistently… respecting authority to keep his Integrity and Purity.

**Vs. 16** – In this culture, healthier means “fatter”… not just the virtues

 Of a vegetarian diet…. ***God’s favor***.

**Vs. 21** – 605 to 539 and beyond… 70 years…

 Long after Nebuchadnezzar and his family are gone,

 ***Daniel will still be Standing***!

**Practical Lessons for Life in Exile.**

* Draw Clear Lines; Anticipate Pitfalls; Nurture Friendships
* Daniel is an Example of Wisdom – **Proverbs 4: 18-19**

**T/S** – This is Not, primarily, a story about Daniel.

 Daniel is Telling us the Story of How the Lord was at Work when he was in Exile. ***He introduces the Theological Theme***.

**Vs. 17** – Ashpenaz was educating them, They were studying; but,

 Their knowledge and intelligence… ***God GAVE***…

 (He is not dead, defeated, left behind in Jerusalem)

**Vs. 9** – ***God gave*** Daniel Grace and mercies before…

 Was the source of the kindness the commander… the Lord.

**Vs. 2** – ***The Lord gave*** Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.

 Wow! Nebuchadnezzar did not TAKE Jerusalem!

 The Lord Gave it to him… Judgment.

 ***Lord*** = Adonai (same root as Judge) – Owner, Master, Exalted

Sovereign = Responsible for All the Happen

Do you Believe that?

Do you believe that the Lord is the Owner, the Master; and He is in Control of His World. Do you Believe that there is a God and He is in Charge? ***God knows what He is doing; and He is doing it!***

Not the Silly , shallow sentiments of a child; but **weighty, Precious Theological Truth forged in the Fire of Exile**. God is **The** Judge

**Daniel** – ***God is My Judge***

 Judge = Lord… (no separation of judicial power)

 Judge not merely declare, He determines.

 He humbles the proud and rebellious; and

 He exalts the humble and faithful.

Daniel embraced the truth of His name. He lived, even in exile, he lived accountable to the Lord, His Judge.

**Gospel** = Not One of Us Is Right before our Judge.

 Jesus said, I have not come to Judge the World, but to save

 The world…. The world is Judged Already!