



GOD'S PEOPLE AND THE TRIALS OF LIFE
"THE TRIAL OF DANIEL"
DAN. 12:13

IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE WHO SERVE IN HIGH-PROFILE POSITIONS TO GO THROUGH THEIR CAREERS UNSCATHED. WE HAVE SEEN MANY SUCH INSTANCES OF RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL LEADERS WHO HAVE BEEN PUBLICLY DISCREDITED FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF SCANDALS WHICH HAVE BEEN EXPOSED. WHEN A PERSON STANDS IN A PLACE OF PROMINENCE WHERE PEOPLE CAN DAILY EXAMINE HIS LIFE, IT IS VERY DIFFICULT FOR THAT PERSON TO ESCAPE VARIOUS ACCUSATIONS. BUT DANIEL IS AN EXCEPTION. WE CAN PUT DANIEL ALONGSIDE JOSEPH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AS AN EXAMPLE TO YOUNG AND OLD OF THE ABILITY OF A PERSON WHO KNOWS THE LORD, AND WHO IS LIVING FOR THE LORD, TO SERVE IN PUBLIC AND MAINTAIN A TESTIMONY FOR JESUS CHRIST. THIS MORNING WE WILL LEARN MUCH FROM DANIEL'S TRIALS.

THE FIRST TRIAL

DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS WERE TO BE TRAINED UP THE BABYLONIAN WAY OF LIFE SO THAT THEY MIGHT SERVE THE KING. BUT THEY REFUSED TO VIOLATE THE DIETARY LAWS OF JUDAISM. THE DEVIL WANTS US TO CHANGE OUR APPETITES TO THE THINGS OF THE WORLD RATHER THAN TO THE THINGS OF GOD. DANIEL COULD HAVE COMPROMISED BECAUSE HIS VERY LIFE WAS IN DANGER, BUT EVEN IF HE DID SURVIVE, HE WOULD HAVE SET THE PATTERN FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE BY COMPROMISING THE THINGS OF GOD FOR THE THINGS OF THE WORLD. ARE WE CHAMELEON CHRISTIANS, WILLING TO COMPROMISE OUR CONVICTIONS IN HOPES OF GAINING SOME ADVANTAGE? THE REASON DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS ARE COMMANDED TO EAT FROM THE KING'S MENU IS FOUND IN DANIEL 1:5—"THAT AT THE END THEREOF THEY MIGHT STAND BEFORE THE KING." THE PROBLEM WAS THAT IT WAS THE WRONG KING. WE MUST MAKE UP OUR MINDS WHICH KING WE WANT TO STAND UP FOR.

THE SECOND TRIAL

DANIEL IS NOW IN HIS EIGHTIES AND SERVES AS PRIME MINISTER. HIS ENVIOUS ENEMIES DUPED THE KING INTO SIGNING A DECREE THAT NO ONE COULD PRAY TO ANYONE EXCEPT HIM FOR 30 DAYS. BUT DANIEL DID NOT CHANGE HIS PRAYER LIFE FOR THIS AND HE WAS SOON PUT INTO THE LIONS' DEN. GOD HONORED HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT AND CLOSED THE MOUTHS OF THE LIONS.

HERE, AT THE END OF HIS LIFE, DANIEL COULD HAVE COMPROMISED, BUT THAT WOULD HAVE NULLIFIED ALL HE HAD DONE PRIOR TO THIS.

WHAT KIND OF COMMITMENT DO WE HAVE?