



Hebrews 11:32-33 *“And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions.”*

In some ways Paul is talking about the boys. A group that displayed their faith in trying times. Yet, Daniel is part of a group of prophets that were taken to Babylon during the 70-year captivity. I don't consider them men although they could have been. Instead, I call them the boys. Young men brought to a strange culture. Yet, these boys resisted the culture in favor of honoring their God. The boys are Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and others. I believe they are a remnant that God preserved to keep the word of God alive.

Daniel is part of this group brought captive to Babylon. This must have been tough. What did he see and experience there? Jeremiah is called the weeping prophet. Oh, the things he must have witnessed. Nehemiah and Ezra mention Daniel too. God was hard at work as the nation fell. It is interesting that it appeared like the nation was done. Israel perished, yet Judah survived in captivity. The faithful remnant I called the boys.

I group them all together because Paul mentions the prophets but not by name. It is all of them! By faith they all endured for God. I would even say they endured for the nation to survive. Their faith and work helped God's word and expectations last forever. The heroics of the prophets

encouraged and inspired future generations. If these boys/men were young. Their faith and resolve is even more impressive because of their age. One of the reasons I think they were young is the Bible. Joshua was young. So was Timothy and the boys (Joshua and Caleb) who took everyone into the promised land. Strangely enough it seems that younger people tend to believe God more than older stubborn folks.

Let's talk about Daniel. I chose him because Paul mentions the lions. Yes, the Bible mentions that David and Samson killed a lion. They too are mentioned as men of faith. Yet, again they were young in these stories. Daniel is a strong character just as David was. This (young) boy held strong in his faith regardless of peril. In Captivity you most likely are a slave if you survive at all. Daniel speaks truth and faith regardless of potential death. Imagine a slave saying no! They would have been a short conversation. However, Daniel had God on his side.

I find Daniels faith legendary. Paul probably would have had high praise for this man. I look at Daniels faith in three parts. The first is his dedication to God under trying circumstances. Daniel and others were selected to be in the Kings court. For a slave this must have been a blessing. The King then in-turn gave them good food from the Kings table. Daniel was a Jew and asked to only eat what God allowed them. The overseer of the King did not like the request. Yet, Daniel was bold. He told the overseer that Gods diet would be better and he could prove it.

By faith Daniel wanted to please God even at his own peril. Yet, God blessed Daniel with health and wisdom to the King. Then comes the second part to Daniels faith. The King is having terrible visionary dreams He could not understand them. The wise men could not answer the dreams either, so they were to be killed. Daniel stood up for the men and asked to interpret the Kings dreams. Not only that but he demanded that the wise men be spared. God gave him the answers and everyone was saved. Daniels boldness and faith was on full display yet again.

The third part of Daniels faith is his consistency. Even after all his success and all his victories for God Daniel's faith never waivered. What I mean is he never got too comfortable or lazy. An edict was made in Babylon to worship King Darius only. It was found out that Daniel was praying to his God. This King liked Daniel a lot but a law was a law in Babylon. So, the punishment was to be thrown into the lion's den. The next morning, they found out that Daniel was still alive. By faith he refused to pray to other Gods. By faith Daniel went into the lion's den. God honored that faith by sending an angel to protect him. After these three events, Daniels status elevated in the eyes of men.

Real faith does not care about the things of this world. Real faith sticks to Gods way. Daniel is a great example of bad situations being overcome by faith. What I find truly amazing is Gods way. The young Jews in Jerusalem could have been killed or put in terrible circumstances. Yet, God gave them opportunity in the king's house. In-fact the King educated them and elevated them. One of the preservations of the Bible came from this incident. The Septuagint Bible was written and preserved in Babylon. Even in captivity God found a way to keep his word alive.

Daniel is a real-life hero. He stuck to his morals. He stuck to his God. I wonder if the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the 70 years captivity is a direct result of Daniels faith. The kings of Babylon found favor with God through Daniel. Maybe Ezra and Nehemiah were blessed with favor because of the faith of Daniel. I suspect little Jewish children were raised to love Daniels faith. How much did that affect Paul the Apostle? By faith Daniel is a great man of God that we can all thank.