

## Sermon Notes – Daniel 1 How to Take Advantage of an Opportunity

**Daniel** was about 15 years old when his life was over. The world was a mess for Daniel's countrymen. Assyria, led by King Nebuchadnezzar, was taking over the world. These Assyrians didn't worship the same God, didn't speak the same language, didn't have the same history, and didn't eat the same foods.

Then Daniel got an incredible opportunity, though many would certainly question whether he should take this opportunity. He took full advantage of it.

**Collapse** – The question here is what to do when your life collapses. There are several ways life collapses. Your **health can collapse** or someone you love can have a health collapse. You can have a **job collapse**. You can go to **college** or **get a job** and find that this new world you live in is nothing like the world you were raised in. You can have a **relationship collapse**. Maybe you were **born into collapse**. But the issue of collapse is an issue you will face in your life.

Where is God in all this collapse?

**Read Daniel 1:1-7** – The Collapse

Daniel had a couple of choices here.

1. He could be absolutely depressed. He could wake up sick to his stomach every morning, dreading every day.
2. He could turn to the dark side (Assyria destroyed his culture and was continuing to destroy culture all around.) He could become a completely different person.
3. He could fight against the collapse. But this is the kind of collapse you can't fight. It would have crushed him.

Here's what Daniel did. It's kind of surprising.

**Daniel believed that God was in control of everything, whether it looked like it or not. – Daniel 1:1-2**

Daniel began with the belief "Everything happens for a reason." It isn't that God wishes for bad to happen, but without collapse, life usually doesn't change.

**Daniel resolved not to spoil his relationship with God -- Daniel 1:8-16**

Daniel's first decision was to have a few basic rules to never break. These rules are for the purpose of not spoiling your relationship with God.

*It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell. – Acts 15:28-29*

**Daniel took full advantage of his opportunity -- Daniel 1:17**

We make all kinds of excuses not to take advantage of what opportunities we have. It is The Gospel that we as a church are supposed to create opportunities for people.

**Daniel devoted his life to being a blessing – even to those who did not deserve it -- Daniel 1:18-20 (also Matthew 6)**

This is the transformation that God needs you to make. The nature of the Kingdom is that you bless others and that others bless you. And by blessing even the evil person, you draw them in to the Kingdom of God.

**Conclusion:** Everything happens for a reason. And the reason for collapse is to bring the Kingdom of God further into our reality. You have to decide how to respond in collapse. Put God first. Make the best of the opportunity. Then be a blessing.