

1. DANIEL WAS RESOLVED (8-12)

- What does it mean to be “resolved” – to “set your heart”

Set: **שׂים** (ya-śym)

- To lay, set (down)
- Arrange, fix, stand
- Put, install, mount
- **Establish, confirm**

Heart: **לֵב** (lēḇ):

- The heart; one's inner self; inclination, disposition
 - **Determination, courage; will**
 - Intention; attention
 - Consideration, reason

- **Resolved against sin** (He wasn't chasing a “pet” issue) (8, 11-12)

⁸ But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank.

^{8b} Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.

¹¹ Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

¹² “Test your servants for ten days;

Daniel accepts re-education and a new name, but makes his protest on the second of the three issues, that of food supplied from the royal table: in Babylon **no distinction was made between clean and unclean animals**, and therefore to eat the king's meat would have been to break the Levitical food laws (**Lev. 3:17; 11:1–47**). There was, for instance, **no taboo on the pig, and pork was highly prized. Horse was also eaten freely. Moreover the Law insisted that the blood was to be drained from the meat and was on no account to be eaten (Lev. 17:10–14)**.¹ The command to avoid ‘unclean’ food was taken very seriously by the Jews, and food was always a problem in foreign surroundings. **Josephus tells us of certain Jews in Rome who lived on figs and nuts in order to avoid offence**²

HOW DO I STAY RESOLVED

¹² Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

³ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. ⁴ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,

nor be weary when reproved by him.

⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”

¹ Baldwin, J. G. (1978). *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 23, pp. 91–92). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

² Binns, L. E. (1942). *Daniel*. In C. Gore, H. L. Goudge, & A. Guillaume (Eds.), *A New Commentary on Holy Scripture: Including the Apocrypha* (Vol. 1, p. 547). New York: The Macmillan Company.

⁷ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

⁹ Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

¹² Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:1-13

~ **Make difficult decisions** (1)

~ **Trust in God** (2)

- The same grace that saved you will forgive you
- The same power that raised Jesus from the dead will empower you

~ **Consider the consequences** (5-11)

- **Human discipline:**
- **God's discipline:**

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“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
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Hebrews 12:5-6

¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:10-11

~ **Take confidence** (12-13)

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever followed through with a resolution or change you wanted to make in your life? Would you share?
2. What are some things God wants us to be resolved to do? (*Use Scripture*)
3. How does God discipline his people? How does Romans 1 inform our idea on God's discipline?

2. DANIEL WAS REINFORCED (9-19)

- **He trusted in and experienced God's grace (9, 14, 17-19)**

⁹ And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs

¹⁴ So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days.

¹⁷ As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. ¹⁸ At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king.

~ God's grace is greater than our sin, but it is also greater than our circumstances:

- **We can trust in and experience God's power**

⁴ For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

1 Corinthians 13:4

¹⁹ (That you might know) what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places

Ephesians 1:19-20

- **He trusted in and was supported by friends**

~ This is one of the goals of Small Group:

~ But programmed accountability doesn't work. Accountability needs to be open, honest, and organic.

~ **ACCOUNTABILITY:**

Problem #1. When accountability partners are absent

Problem #2. When accountability groups are programmatic

Problem #3. When accountability partners are sincerity-centered

Problem #4. When accountability partners are obedience-centered

Problem #5. When accountability partners forget the gospel

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. How has God shown you faithfulness?

2. How does God promise to show faithfulness? (Use Scripture)

3. Have you ever had an accountability partner? How was your experience? What are some things we can seek accountability for?

3. DANIEL WAS REWARDED (15-21)

¹⁵ At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food.

¹⁹ And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. ²⁰ And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom. ²¹ And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. How does God reward his people? (*Use Scripture*)
2. For what does God reward His people?
3. Is it good or wrong to make reward your motivation?