

Daniel Lesson 2 From Jerusalem to Babylon

Memory Verse

Daniel 1:17 (NKJV) *As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.*

God's Sovereignty - Sunday

The book of Daniel begins with a somber note of defeat. Judah has capitulated to Nebuchadnezzar and the temple vessels have been taken from Jerusalem to the land of Shinar. The word *Shinar* appears in the Bible in Genesis 11:2 as the location of the tower of Babel.

Daniel 1:1–2 (NKJV) *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into [the land of Shinar](#) to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.*

Genesis 10:8–10 *Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.” And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, [in the land of Shinar](#).*

2 Kings 21:10–15 (NKJV) *And the Lord spoke by His servants the prophets, saying, ¹¹ “Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations (he has acted more wickedly than all the Amorites who were before him, ... I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. ¹⁴ So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, ¹⁵ because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.’ ”*

2 Kings 24:18–20 (NKJV) *Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ¹⁹ He also did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰ For because of the anger of the Lord this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.*

Faith Under Pressure

Isaiah 39:5–7 *Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: ‘Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,’ says the Lord. ‘And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’ ”*

Daniel 1:3–7 (NKJV) *Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, ⁴ young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. ⁵ And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. ⁶ Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷ To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.*

***Daniel 1:8 (NKJV)** *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.*

Firm Resolution

First, the meals from the king's table may contain unclean meats (*Leviticus 11*).

Secondly, the diet may contain some clean animals that are butchered in an unclean manner, namely with the blood.

Thirdly, the food is likely first offered to some pagan idol and then sent to the king for his consumption. Thus, when Daniel makes clear that his request has a religious motivation, i.e., the food at the palace will defile him and his friends (*Dan. 1:8*), he is being very courageous.

***1 Corinthians 10:28 (NKJV)** *But if anyone says to you, “This was offered to idols,” do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for “the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness.”*

Revelation 2:20 (NKJV) *Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

Daniel proposed a ten days test of consuming the alternative meals should suffice to demonstrate the benefits of the diet and thus to put down the fears of the officer. Second, Daniel's certainty that the outcome would be so positive within such a short time span stems from absolute confidence in God. Third, the choice of a diet of vegetables and water points back to the food God gave humanity at Creation

Genesis 1:29 (NKJV) *And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.*

Unblemished and Wise

Daniel 1:4 (NKJV) *young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.*

Esther was good looking too, Joseph, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Moses, Saul, David, Tamar, Bathsheba, Abigail, Abishag, Vasti, Job's daughters, Adonijah.

Galatians 2:19–20 (NKJV) *For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

2 Corinthians 4:17–18 (NKJV) *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

Wherever we live, we will face the challenge of staying faithful to what we believe amid contrary cultural pressures.

Like Christian Medical students today that have to listen to their secular professors spout off a lot of evolutionary nonsense.

Daniel and his friends had to listen to a lot of Babylonian baloney.

God honors the loyalty of the four Hebrew captives, and at the end of their ten-day testing period they look healthier and better-nourished than the other students who have eaten from the royal table. So, God gives His four servants "knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom," and to Daniel alone God gives "understanding in all visions and dreams". This gift will play a significant role in Daniel's prophetic ministry.

Final Exam

Daniel 1:18–21 (NKJV) *Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. ²⁰ And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.*

Proverbs 9:10 (NKJV) *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

Job 38:36 (NKJV) *Who has put wisdom in the mind? Or who has given understanding to the heart?*

Proverbs 2:6–7 (NKJV) *For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; ⁷ He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;*

James 1:5 (NKJV) *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

Daniel 1:21 *Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.*

1. Daniel's temperance helped him live a long healthy life.
2. He lived a productive life filled with wisdom.
3. He lived a fulfilling life. When the proclamation was issued by him to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, Ezra 1:1. This does not imply that he did not "live" longer, but that during that long and eventful period, he occupied a station of influence until the captivity was over, and the royal order was issued for rebuilding the temple. He was among the first of the captives that were taken to Babylon, and he lived to see the end of the captivity - "the joyful day of Jewish freedom." - Prof. Stuart.

Leviticus 11:2–19 (NKJV) *“Speak to the children of Israel, saying, ‘These are the animals which you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth: ³ Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves and chewing the cud—that you may eat.*

⁴ Nevertheless these you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; ⁵ the rock hyrax, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; ⁶ the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; ⁷ and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, is unclean to you.

⁸ Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. They are unclean to you.

⁹ ‘These you may eat of all that are in the water: whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers—that you may eat. ¹⁰ But all in the seas or in the rivers that do not have fins and scales, all that move in the water or any living thing which is in the water, they are an abomination to you. ¹¹ They shall be an abomination to you; you shall not eat their flesh, but you shall regard their carcasses as an abomination. ¹² Whatever in the water does not have fins or scales—that shall be an abomination to you.

¹³ ‘And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, ¹⁴ the kite, and the falcon after its kind; ¹⁵ every raven after its kind, ¹⁶ the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind; ¹⁷ the little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl; ¹⁸ the white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture; ¹⁹ the stork, the heron after its kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.