

## A Study of the Book of Daniel

### Chapter 1

Introduction: Babylon was located in a flat valley between the Tigris & Euphrates rivers, near modern day Baghdad, Iraq. Daniel 1:2 notes that Babylon was built in the same spot as the tower of Babel on the plain of Shinar (Gen. 11). Babylon mastered the Middle East by defeating the Egyptian armies in 605 BC. Then Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, made three attacks on Jerusalem.

The first attack was in 605 BC when Jehoiakim reigned as king of Judah. Fulfilling the Scriptures (Jer. 25:4-12) In this attack Daniel, and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were taken captive, along with others, and carried away to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar also took some of the vessels from the Lord's Sanctuary, and brought them *"Into the treasure house of his god."*

The second attack was in 597 BC against king Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim. This time Ezekiel was one of the many taken captive, along with more vessels from the temple.

The third attack was in 586 BC. This time king Zedekiah was captured and made to watch as the army of Babylon killed his sons *"before his eyes."* Then they put out king Zedekiah's eyes, bound him in chains, and put him in prison until his death. This fulfilled the Scriptures in Ezekiel 12:13 and Jeremiah 52:11. Now both Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and all except some poor people were taken back to Babylon.

The book of Daniel is divided up into two groups, history and prophecy.

The first group covers chapter's one through six, dealing with history. The second group covering chapter's seven through twelve, deal with prophecy.

**Theme of Daniel is introduced in the first two verses.**

#### **Read Daniel 1:1 & 2**

In the first two verses we find that Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Jerusalem sets the stage for how Satan attacks God down through the end of time. There are three vital parts to his attack.

1. An attack on God.
2. Against His people.
3. Against His sanctuary.

Notice as we jump ahead that Satan's attacks are all the same.

#### **Read Daniel 8:9 - 12**

Do you see the same pattern? In verse ten, *"It cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them."* In Daniel 12, verse 3 says, *"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."* In the book of Daniel "Stars" are a symbol of God's people, so in Daniel 8, verse 10, we see a power that cast God's people to the ground and stamps upon them or persecutes them. Next, we see that verse 11 says, *"He magnified himself even to the Prince of the host."* This attack is against Jesus, as the Prince or Son of God that stands for His people. The third attack here is also in verse 11, *"And the place of his sanctuary was cast down."* Here we once again see Satan's attacks on God, His people, and His Sanctuary. Notice it also says in verse 12, *"And it cast down the truth to the ground;"* Obviously, this power was attempting to take the "Truth" away from God's people. In our next passage we jump ahead and see the same pattern of attacks that Satan uses.

### **Read Daniel 11:31-33**

In verse 31 we see our first two attacks. *“They shall pollute the sanctuary...and shall take away the daily sacrifice,”* In the original Hebrew the word *“sacrifice”* was not there. It was supplied by the translators to give a better understanding. By doing this it leads people to believe it was talking about taking away the daily sacrifices of offering a lamb on the altar. But the word *“daily”* in the Hebrew means continual. This is referring to the continual ministry of our High Priest-Jesus Christ. The third attack we see is found in verse 33, *“Yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.”* Here we see the persecution of God’s people. So once again we see the strategy of Satan’s attacks, against God, His sanctuary, and His people.

With this understanding, let us go back and continue with Daniel chapter 1.

### **Read Daniel 1:3–7**

The captives were treated well. They were fed with the king’s food and drink, taught in the best schools. To change their focus of who they were and what their heritage was, their names were changed, from Hebrew names that pointed them to the God of heaven, to Babylonian names attached to the Babylonian gods. Daniel which means, God is my judge, was changed to Belteshazzar, meaning May Bel protect my life. Hananiah which means, Jehovah is Gracious, was changed to Shadrach, meaning Command of AKU (moon god). Mishael which means Who is what God is, was changed to Meshach, meaning Agile or Expeditious. Azariah which means Whom Jehovah helps, was changed to Abednego, meaning Servant of Nego (god of education).

### **Read Daniel 1:8-12**

This verse is interesting because it shows Daniel’s determination, along with his three friends, to keep themselves pure and undefiled by the Babylonian food or customs. It says that Daniel *“Purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the kings meat, nor the wine which he drank.”* Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah must have had faithful parents. Proverbs 22:6 says, *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”* Obviously he had been trained to be loyal to God! It all starts at home! In foreign countries it was common for the meat and drink to have, before hand, offered to their idol gods. It could have also been unclean, but, either way Daniel did what was right in God’s eyes and asked for an alternative diet. The Hebrew word *Zeroa* translated *“Pulse,”* (vs.13) is built on the same root as the word *“Seed”* in the record of Creation, where it mentions *“every herb seeding seed,”* and again, the *“fruit of a tree seeding seed.”* Gen. 1:29. ***This makes it clear that Daniel’s request included grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables –a vegetarian diet of good variety, together with good clean water.*** Daniel and his three friends stood faithful to God through this trial, when others went along with the orders, not wanting to make a wave.

### **Read Romans 12:1**

This verse tells us to *“Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.”* It is a proven fact that people are what they eat! We live in a world that is focused on living for yourself and self gratification. Yet the bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 10:31, *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”* And in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, *“Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”* Even today God desires that we glorify God, through our temple (our body), which means we need to be careful what we put into our bodies, so we can be strong and healthy like Daniel and his three friends were.

**Read Daniel 1:13-20**

Have you ever gone on a diet? How much of a difference does ten days make? Not very much, yet because of their faithfulness to God, He blessed their health and also gave them “*Knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.*” “*In all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.*” God wants to bless His people today if they would follow the health principles He shows us in the Bible.

**Read John 17:17**

We are sanctified through the Truth. The Bible is our roadmap to discover what God’s will is for our lives. Within the Bible we find principles that can guide every aspect of our life.

**Read Daniel 1:21**

Because of his faithfulness, Daniel is able to be alive when Cyrus, king of Persia, issue the decree to restore and build Jerusalem and the temple. Daniel is an example of what God’s people must be at the end of time. They must be willing to be faithful to the truths of God’s Word, regardless of life, position, or money!

**Read Daniel 12:1-3 & 13**

In the end God’s people come out of captivity, and they are ultimately vindicated in the resurrection of the Just.

**Summary:**

When Nebuchadnezzar attacks God’s Holy City and the Sanctuary, he tries to subvert God’s people and His truth. Daniel and his friends stayed true to God, and God blessed them with wisdom and understanding of visions and dreams. Through the experience of Daniel, God gives an example for His people in the last days. We are able to understand the prophecies **only** when we surrender our wills to God in obedience to His Word.