

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## Chapter 1

- **Recall historical background:**
  - Nebuchadnezzar defeats Assyria/Egypt before entering Jerusalem
  - 3 sieges of Jerusalem, 1st in 606 BC, 1st wave of captives (incl Daniel)
  - Nebuchadnezzar becomes King of Neo (new) Babylonian Empire
  - Last siege, 587/6 BC, Temple, city destroyed (9th of Av, important date)
  - Can verify facts of Daniel through secular history
  - The exile and captivity in Babylon for Jews was promised by God multiple times by the prophets
  - Reasons for judgment = Sabbath for land abused 490 years (every 7th year land was to rest). People owed God (and land) 70 years of inactivity. Also judged for disobedience and rebellion against God.



- The first verse reveals several important facts about **the timing and historical conditions**
- begins by stating fulfillment of previous prophecies. (Deuteronomy and prophets)
- **“And the Lord gave ...into his hand”** (his hand being Nebuchadnezzar’s hand). God allowed this. All of history (HIS-story), is in His hands.
- **Last kings of Judah: Jehoahaz (3 mos), Jehoiakim (11 yrs), Jehoiachin (<4 mos), Zedekiah (11 yrs)**. King of Egypt deposed Jehoahaz, put his brother Eliakim on throne, changed his name to Jehoiakim. No kings on the throne of David since.
- **Judgment did not come without ample warning:** 2 Chronicles 36:15-21; through prophetess Huldah in 2 Chronicles 34:19-28; through Micah [4:10, 100 yrs before it happened; Micah also predicted the fall of her capital, Samaria (1:5-7), and also foretold the inevitable desolation of Judah (1:9-16)]; through Jeremiah (25:8-14, and other places; through Habakkuk (1:5-11) and many more prophecies.
- **Temple is still standing at this point**. Destroyed 19 years later on 3<sup>rd</sup> siege.
- **Lost temple treasures**, particularly Ark of the Covenant. Many theories (including Axum, Ethiopia, Mt. Nebo, under Jerusalem, etc.). We don’t know for sure. Hezekiah’s stupid pride (Isaiah 39:1-7).
- **“Land of Shinar”** = Babylon. (also “Shinar,” land of Shinar, Sheshach, etc.)
- Daniel and friends probably from royal family or palace residents. Daniel likely 13-17 yrs old.
- In training (3 years), ate at king’s table. Treated well. Trained to be “wise men,” training included ways of Babylonians, language, culture, etc. Possibly made eunuchs (fulfilled scripture, Isaiah 39:7)
- **Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah** introduced. Hebrew names contained a form of “God.” “El” is the single form of God (Elohim plural). “Ah” is a form of Yahweh, the covenant name of God, the I AM. Names changed, part of Babylonian “brainwashing” – they were to become Babylonians.



Daniel	God is my judge	Beltshazzar	Whom Bel favors, keeper of the treasures of the prince of Bel (the main god of Babylon)
Hananiah	God is gracious	Shadrach	Illumined by Shad (a sun god)
Mishael	Who is like God?	Meshach	Who is like Shach (a love goddess)
Azariah	God is my helper	Abednego	The servant of Nego (a fire god)

- King's food very rich, best in the kingdom. **Unfortunately, much of it had been sacrificed to idols, or was considered unclean for Jews.** (see Leviticus 11:44-47)
- “But Daniel purposed in his heart...”** Before anything else, Daniel CHOSE to keep himself pure, he CHOSE to honor his God and be true to him. **Daniel's most important decision** (and ours).
- Daniel politely makes a suggestion. In good favor with head of eunuchs, but chief fears for his own life if Daniel and friends become ill from their chosen food. It was GOD who brought Daniel into favor with Ashpenaz. God was honoring Daniel's decision to honor Him.
- Daniel takes a stand for God**, already made a commitment, used discernment by with an alternative instead of rebellion. **Lesson for us! When we honor God, God will honor us.** Obviously good training as a child. One of 100s of examples of **Daniel as a role model.** Watch for others.
- Word used for **“vegetables”** sometimes translated **“pulse”** - Meaning anything grown, could include grains, fruit, vegetables, etc. This is about devotion and dedication to God, not necessarily nutrition.
- Number **“10” often had the symbolic significance of completeness.** Also, ten (10) frequently used in scripture to indicate a test, measurement, or testimony.
- Israelite boys fare well, better than all others, able to continue their “kosher” diet.
- Passage not to be taken as command to be vegetarians. About unclean foods, and honoring God's Laws. Daniel and friends were under the Law. We are not (ref. 1 Corinthians 10:25-26, Romans 14).
- “God gave them....”** God is doing all of these things. God is in control of everything. IMPORTANT!!
- Rest of training years apparently went smoothly. **These four stood out in every way.**
- “...Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”** Daniel specially chosen to be entrusted with these gifts. He would use them properly and give God all the glory (*the supreme rule for use of all spiritual gifts*). Daniel already **passed critical test – to make God sovereign in all things.**
- Look for **parallels between Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon.**
- “Final Exams and Graduation Day”** - Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah passed with flying colors, above everyone else.
- “...all the magicians and astrologers...”** references to several kinds of **“advisors” employed by Nebuchadnezzar.** Various translated as magicians, enchanter, sorcerers, astrologers and diviners.
  - Magicians** (Hebrew *chartom*), 11 times in OT (Daniel 1:20, 2:2), means scribes, writers of hieroglyphics, strange diagrams used in divination.
  - Enchanters** (Hebrew *ashshaph*) only used in Daniel (1:20, 2:21) means enchanter, astrologer, conjurer. May refer to those who used incantations, exorcism.
  - Sorcerers** (Hebrew *kashaph*) probably from a verb meaning to bewitch, or cast a spell. Daniel 2:2, 2:4, and four other times in the Old Testament.)
  - Astrologers/Chaldeans** (Hebrew *kasdiy* from the “Kasdites” implying Chaldeans), means astrologer, (Daniel 2:2, 2:4, 2:5, 2:10, 3:8, 5:7, 5:11). May also be Babylonian priests who used stars for revelation. Babylon's origins = Tower of Babel, founded on rebellion from God, has continued.
- “Daniel continued...”** glimpse of future. 70 years pass before Babylon taken over by Persian **King Cyrus.** Daniel still living in 537 BC (10:1), so likely saw exiles return to Judah from captivity. Doubtful Daniel returned – he would have been in his 90's.



**“...for those who honor Me I will honor.”** (1 Samuel 2:30) Samuel presents one of the most basic of all Godly doctrines, and Daniel shows the proof of this.