

Daniel Chapter 1 and Outlines

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Fellowship
BIBLE CHURCH

Verse 1

- This is real history
 - Times: third year (605 BC); see also 1:21 (539 BC)
 - Kings: Nebuchadnezzar (“Nebo protect the crown”) and Jehoiakim (“Jehovah raises up”)
 - History from a human perspective
 - The Bible is set in the real world, not a pretend world, and it records real history

Verse 2

- The LORD is in control of all things
 - The name God or the title LORD appear in every chapter except 7 & 8.
 - History from the divine perspective.
 - This is really a theme of the book:
God's Sovereignty over the Kingdoms of Men.

More on the LORD's sovereignty

- In the political affairs of the world (big picture)
 - God set up Jehoiakim (2 Chron. 36:4-5 thru Pharaoh)
 - God raised up Nebuchadnezzar (4:17, 4:36)
 - God put them both down (1:2, 4:31)
- In the lives of His people (little picture)
 - God gave Daniel/friends favor in the eyes of Babylonian officials (1:9)
 - God gave Daniel/friends superb skills (1:17)

Verses 1-2: Humiliation for Israel

- Understand how bad the Babylonian takeover was:
 - From the viewpoint of the world, this was a battle of the gods, and “Israel’s god” lost. His temple articles were taken to Shinar to a foreign temple as a demonstration of Babylonian superiority.
 - Bel/Marduk/Merodach was their “god.”

Verses 1-2: Humiliation for Israel

- From the viewpoint of Scripture, this was God's punishment of Israel for covenant infidelity.
 - They were terrible and deserved what they got.
 - See Deut. 28:15-68, see esp. v. 36, covenant stipulations from 800 years earlier.

Daniel and His Friends

- Verse 3: came from an upper class, wealthy origin
- Verse 4: Healthy, smart, able to serve and learn language and literature of the Chaldeans
- Verse 5: Appointed the best of food and wine during a three-year training program

Daniel and His Friends

- Verse 6-7: Four young men, we'll guess 18 years old.
 - Daniel = Belteshazzar
 - God is my judge → Balat (a god; Bel?) protect the life of the king
 - Hananiah = Shadrach
 - God has been gracious → Royal? Great scribe? A Persian name.
 - Mishael = Meshach
 - Who is what God is → Guest of a king?
 - Azariah = Abed-Nego
 - Jehovah has helped → Servant of Nebo (Babylonian God)

Significance of a Name Change?

- New authority
- New identity

New Authority?

- Verse 8: Daniel “made up his mind,” “purposed in his heart,” “set his heart on” not defiling himself with the king’s food.
 - That food and wine did not meet the requirements of the Jewish dietary laws
- In other words, Daniel’s authority was God.

Daniel Requested Help

- Verse 9: Notice the role of God.
 - God brought grace and tender mercy to Daniel in the heart of the chief official over them.
 - *Any* grace and mercy that you receive ultimately is a gift of God, whether mediated through other people, or directly from God, as in salvation.

Daniel Requested Help

- Verse 10: Despite his favor for Daniel, the chief official Ashpenaz turned down Daniel's request because of fear of the king.
- Daniel persevered and tried again. He did not give up his religious responsibilities easily.
 - Christian: don't you default on yours. No need to.
- Verse 11: Daniel went to his immediate overseer, who was under Ashpenaz.

Daniel Requested Help

- Verse 12: Daniel requested a test, in full faith that they would pass the test since God desired for them to be obedient.
- Verses 13-15: They did in fact pass the test. Their diet was more effective than the king's.
- Verse 16: Daniel's faithfulness was rewarded.

Training

- Verse 17: God gave them knowledge.
 - Students: ask God for help in your learning.
 - In their case, God had a special hand in preparing these men for important national-level roles.
 - You may not ever have that kind of role, but you can still be a testimony for Christ in school.

Successful Training

- Verse 18: Their training was completed after three years.
- Verse 19: The king himself interviewed these young men, who were at most 21 years old.
 - They did very well, and entered the king's civil service.

Successful Training

- Verse 20: With a bit of hyperbole, it is said that the king found them “ten times better” than the magicians and astrologers.
 - The roundness of this number and its common usage even today as an “approximation” or “exclamatory” leads me to the hyperbole conclusion.
- The astrologers and magicians were basically useless in real-life endeavors.

Verse 21

- Here is another note on chronology, this showing us that Daniel survived the transition from Babylonian rule to Medo-Persian rule at 539 BC.
 - That was not at all a given. High governing authorities would normally be killed at such a transition.
 - 10:1 shows Daniel ministered until at least 536 BC.
 - That's the entire 70-year length of the captivity.

Chronological Layout of Daniel

Chapter/ Event	Date	Daniel's Age	Notes
Jeremiah	627-580	0-43	Prophecies in Judah and Egypt.
1	605	18	Daniel taken captive. Trained.
2	603	20	Interprets Nebuchadnezzar's first dream.
3	601	23	The three friends endure the fiery furnace.
Ezekiel	592-571	33-53	Prophecies in Babylon.
Jeremiah	580	43	Death of Jeremiah.
4	571	53	Interprets Nebuchadnezzar's second dream.
7	553	70	Vision of four beasts.

Chronological Layout of Daniel

Chapter/ Event	Date	Daniel's Age	Notes
8	551	72	Vision of ram and goat.
5	539	84	Handwriting on the wall. Belshazzar dies. Cyrus reigns.
9	538	85	Daniel had 40+ years to get Jeremiah's prophecy.
Return 1	538-536	85	Cyrus decrees Israelites may return. 2 Chron. 36:22-23. Zerubbabel leads this return.
6	537	86	Darius. Lions' den.
10-12	536	88	Vision of kings of north and south. Final revelation.
Return 2	458		Ezra leads this return.
Return 3	445		Nehemiah leads this return.

History and Prophecy

- Daniel records **historical events** in ch. 1-6.
 - These events include records of long- and short-term prophecies in the form of two dreams (ch. 2, 4), and angelic handwriting on a wall (5).
- Daniel also records long-term **prophetic events** in ch. 7-12.
- Note how history and prophecy are easily co-mingled.

Outline: Based on Content

1. Daniel's Service in the Court of Pagan Kings, 1-6
 - Introduction
 - Nebuchadnezzar's first dream
 - The fiery furnace
 - Nebuchadnezzar's second dream and humbling
 - Belshazzar and the Handwriting on the Wall
 - The lions' den

Outline: Based on Content

2. Daniel's Visions of the World Future, 7-12
 - Vision of four beasts (empires) and Ancient of Days
 - Vision of the ram and goat: Medo-Persia and Greece
 - Vision of the seventy sevens: Israel and Antichrist
 - Vision of the kings of the north and south
 - Tribulation and resurrection of Israel

Big Picture of Daniel

- Daniel prophetically pre-records the general outline of world history.
 - At least from the perspective of the Middle East and near west, Mediterranean, and some from the north and east (perhaps Russia), including Egypt.
 - The far west (Europe and Americas) and far east (China) don't seem to be major players.

Big Picture, cont.

- While the Gentile nations figure prominently in world history (chapters 2-7), they are not the only important players.
- Israel is at the center of God's program and gets close attention in the final 5 chapters of Daniel's history and prophecy.

Kingdoms in Daniel

- Babylon
- Medo-Persia
- Greece
- Rome and its left-overs
- Resurgent Rome (?)
- Christ's Millennial Kingdom

Language of the Book

- Chapters 2-7 are written in Aramaic.
 - The idea is that this was the *lingua franca* of the empire. This was the world's language.
- Chapters 1, and 8-12 are written in Hebrew.
 - The content centers on Israel, so uses its language.
- Thankfully, we have it translated in English!

Outline: Based on Language

1. Introduction to Daniel – ch. 1
2. Future of Gentile World Kingdoms – ch. 2-7
 - Israel is a minor player until chapter 7.
3. Future of Israel – ch. 8-12
 - Israel is at the center of this activity but the other nations play a prominent role too.