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Daniel 1

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Daniel 1.

Topics.

- Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon enters Jerusalem.
 - Jehoiakim king of Judah.
 - People of influence and skill are taken from Israel to Babylon.
 - Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.
 - Daniel asks the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.
 - God gave Daniel favour.
 - God blesses Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.
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INTRODUCTION

Daniel was exiled to Babylon in 605 BC. He was one of several young men chosen to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's court. When the Persians conquered Babylon in 539, Daniel was again given a position of power in the Babylonian Empire. Daniel remained faithful to God in all of the following hostile environments:

- The interpretation of dreams and the familiar stories of the fiery furnace.
- The lions' den and the handwriting on the wall.
- His apocalyptic visions.

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The recurrent theme of the book of Daniel is God's sovereignty over human affairs. In the historical sections (chapter 1–6) God supernaturally rescued Daniel and his friends. The rest of the book consists of visions of future judgment and deliverance by the Messiah. Some of Daniel's prophetic themes are echoed in the book of Revelation.

NOTE: for information of people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

DANIEL 1:1-2

Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon enters Jerusalem.

- **Daniel 1:1-2:** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the LORD gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god.

Jehoiakim (also called Eliakim) reigned as king over Jerusalem from (607-597 B.C) so the 3rd year of his reign was (604 B.C) it was in this year that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem.

Jehoiakim king of Judah: (originally named Eliakim) was the second son of the godly Josiah, king of Judah. When Pharaoh Necho of Egypt had him killed the people of Judah instead of making Jehoiakim king made his youngest brother Jehoahaz (Shallum) king. Jehoahaz reigned for three months in Jerusalem, when Pharaoh Necho in displeasure captured Jehoahaz and sent him to Egypt where he died. The king of Egypt then

took Eliakim, the elder half-brother of Jehoahaz and changed his name to Jehoiakim and put the land of Judah under heavy tribute and made Jehoiakim king over Jerusalem. When the scroll of Jeremiah was read to Jehoiakim he had it burned, because the words displeased him (for the story of the burning of the book see Jer. 36). He was an oppressive and thoroughly godless king, Jehoiakim died in disgrace, "buried with the burial of an ass" (Jer. 22:19).

Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon: was the great king of the Babylonian Empire who took Judah into Babylonian captivity for seventy-years. He figures prominently in the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the later chapters of Kings and Chronicles.

Shinar: (modern Iraq) is the Hebrew name for Babylonia where Babel was located and for many centuries was perhaps the most fertile region on the earth.

Nebuchadnezzar: has entered the city of Jerusalem, pillaged the temple of God and taken the gold, silver and sacred items back to Babylon

NOTICE: the LORD gave Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon victory over Jehoiakim king of Judah and even gave the king of Babylon the treasures and scared items from the temple of God (v2). This is because the people of Judah had made their heart diamond hard against the LORD'S prophets and were in blatant rebellion to God Himself and in gross wickedness.

The following sins permeated the land of Judah and Jerusalem at this time:

- Gross idolatry and Baal altars.
- Asherim worship, a goddess of love and fertility (her worship was indecent and sexual in an offensive way).
- Acknowledgement of the deity of Moloch and Israel's children sacrificed to him in the Hinnom Valley.
- Altars for worshipping the sun, moon, stars and the host of heaven were set up in the Temple court for planetary worship.
- Worship of Idols at altars that had been built under shady trees on their hills.
- Innocent people were killed and cheated out of justice.
- Leaders oppressed others for their own selfish gain.
- The rich cheated the innocent out of justice, and showed no sense of responsibility towards the poor instead of relieving their economic distress they devised new means of depriving them of their property.

This idol worship and indiscriminate, indulgent and excessive luxurious living resulted in the decay of social unity in the land of Judah (the Two Tribes at Jerusalem).

DANIEL 1:3-5

People of influence and skill are taken from Israel to Babylon.

- **Daniel 1:3-5:** Then the king (Nebuchadnezzar) commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, ⁴youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king.

Ashpenaz: Ashpenaz the prince of the eunuchs in the court of Nebuchadnezzar gave Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah their new Babylonian names (v7).

Chaldeans: (Chaldea) is the country of which Babylon was the capital, and which conquered Judah and carried its inhabitants into captivity. Chaldaea, Chaldea and Chaldeans (also translated Babylon or Babylonians) eventually established the Babylonian dynasty in the country (called Iraq today). It is located at the head of the Persian Gulf of which Babylon was once the capital.

Eunuch: comes from the Greek word (*eunouchos*) and means "keeping the bed" it applied to a castrated human male, (i.e., one who has had the testes) (the organs that contain spermatozoa) removed. From ancient times, in the far and Middle East eunuchs were used to take charge of the women in harems or to serve as chamberlains. They often attained positions of great influence.

Nebuchadnezzar was a wise king: rather than slaughter the inhabitants of Jerusalem he took people from the royal family and those who had influence, skill, wisdom and knowledge captive and lead them back to Babylon to teach for three years the people in his royal house the language of the Babylonians and literature.

DANIEL 1:6-7

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

- **Daniel 1:6-7:** Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. ⁷And the chief of the eunuchs (Ashpenaz) (v3) gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

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Ashpenaz Nebuchadnezzar's chief eunuch changed the Judean names of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah to Babylonian names.

Daniel: means God is my judge, he was born into a family of Judean nobility, and became a prince of Judah and was among the select, youthful hostages of the first Jewish deportation, taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar and given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar (meaning protect his life), thereby invoking a pagan deity. For three years Daniel and his three companions (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) were trained in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans. God bestowed on Daniel the gift of visions and of interpreting dreams which cover the course of world history the resurrections and God's final judgment and conclude with the assurance that though Daniel would come to his grave prior to these events he would yet receive his appointed reward in the consummation (the perfect ending).

The historicity of Daniel is confirmed, both by the words of Christ and by references to his righteousness and wisdom, as witnessed by his prophetic contemporary Ezekiel and Christ

(Matthew 24:15) (Ezekiel 14:14, 20) (Ezekiel 28:3).

Hananiah: means, Jehovah is gracious, he was among the select, youthful hostages of the first Jewish deportation, taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar and was given the Babylonian name Shadrach, thereby invoking a pagan deity. Hananiah was one of the three who survived the furnace of fire

Mishael: means, means who is what God is? He was among the select, youthful hostages of the first Jewish deportation, taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar and was given the Babylonian name Meshach, thereby invoking a pagan deity. Mishael was one of the three who survived the furnace of fire

Azariah: means, Jehovah hath helped? He was among the select, youthful hostages of the first Jewish deportation, taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar and was given the Babylonian name Abednego, thereby invoking a pagan deity. Azariah was one of the three who survived the furnace of fire

Belteshazzar: (Daniel) Belteshazzar means may Bel protect his life, it is the Babylonian name given to Daniel, one of the four princes (Azariah, Hananiah and Mishael) of Judah taken by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and committed to his steward (the eunuch) to be trained in the king's palace as counsellors to Nebuchadnezzar. These four had borne names containing the syllable (*el*) for God or (*iah*) for Jehovah, but the names were changed to honour gods of Babylon. (Dan. 1:7) (Dan. 2:26) (Dan. 4:8) (Dan. 5:12).

NOTE: Belteshazzar is not to be confused with Belshazzar (Dan. 5:1ff). The following three (Hananiah-Shadrach) (Mishael-Meshach) (Azariah-Abednego) were later saved from the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:12-30). The meaning of their Babylonian names Shadrach (Hananiah). Meshach (Mishael). Abednego (Azariah) is uncertain.

DANIEL 1:8

Daniel asks the Chief of Eunuchs to allow Him Not to Defile Himself.

- **Daniel 1:8:** But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs (Ashpenaz) (v3) to allow him not to defile himself.

Nebuchadnezzar assigned Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah and the people of influence that he had brought to Babylon to teach the people in the king's house literature and language of the Chaldeans a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank (v4-5).

Nebuchadnezzar treated his captives with decency, he could have given them the food the common people ate, but he gave them the food he ate, which would have been the best in the land, but much of the king's food under Levitical law was unclean for an Israelite to eat, Daniel rather than enjoying the king's food chose to stay true to his faith and to God so he determined in purpose that he would not eat of the king's food and asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.

NOTICE: Daniel didn't act in rebellion and simply refuse to eat the king's food so he could stay true to his faith, he asked the man in authority over him for his permission to grant him this favour.

DANIEL 1:9

God gave Daniel Favour.

- **Daniel 1:9:** And God gave Daniel favour and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs (Ashpenaz) (v3).

NOTICE: Daniel is a man who is absolutely devoted to the LORD his God and is being held captive in an absolutely pagan city that honours and worships many gods, yet rather than rebel and make enemies of his captives and pagan worshippers he is respected by them. Daniel is not only a man of God in his worship, but also in his lifestyle and behaviour manifested in the wise and godly way he treats those in authority over him regardless of their religious belief.

DANIEL 1:10

The Chief of the Eunuchs reply to Daniel's Request.

- **Daniel 1:10:** and the chief of the eunuchs (Ashpenaz) (v3) said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king."

Ashpenaz the chief eunuch is afraid if Daniel does not eat the King's food, Daniel will become weak and even sick and then Nebuchadnezzar would hold Ashpenaz responsible for Daniel's poor condition and might even have his head cut off because of it.

NOTICE: Daniel is classed with the youths, which means he was very young and the food the king eats is considered far better than the food of the common people.

DANIEL 1:11-13

Daniel's request to the Stewart of the Chief of the Eunuchs.

- **Daniel 1:11-13:** 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; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see."

Daniel goes to the steward that Ashpenaz (the chief eunuch) had assigned over him and suggests that he examine Daniel after ten days of eating vegetables and water and see if they appear physically weaker than those who are eating the king's food.

DANIEL 1:14-16

The Chief Eunuchs, Stewart response to Daniel's request.

- **Daniel 1:14-16:** So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. ¹⁵At 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. ¹⁶So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

It was not just Daniel who determined not to eat the king's food, but also his three companions Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah by simply eating vegetables and water were all healthier than those who ate the king's food.

DANIEL 1:17-21

God Blesses Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

- **Daniel 1:17-20:** 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. ¹⁸At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs (Ashpenaz) (v3) brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹And 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. ²⁰And 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.

God gave all four youths (Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, but to Daniel He gave the extra gift of understanding visions and dreams.

How amazing is this: Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon found Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (captive Judeans) ten times better than all his own magicians and enchanters therefore he went to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah for wisdom and understanding on every matter regarding his kingdom.

DANIEL 1:21

The first year of King Cyrus.

- **Daniel 1:21:** And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Daniel was in the seventy-year Babylonian captivity until the first year of King Cyrus. Cyrus the Great was King of Persia from 550-529 B.C. On Oct 29th 539 BC he entered and defeated the Babylon and gave the people of Israel written permission to return to their beloved city Jerusalem and rebuild the LORD'S temple.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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