

Character Study: Daniel

Part 1 – Daniel Is Selected to Serve the King

Daniel 1:1-21

What's happening?

- Daniel lived during the time in which Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon) attacked Jerusalem and took many Jews captive. Daniel found himself growing up in the idolatrous nation of Babylon. (1:1-2)
- King Nebuchadnezzar sought men among the captives who were worthy to serve in his kingdom. He looked specifically for individuals who were good looking, well-educated and intelligent. Anyone selected would be trained for three years in preparation for their work in the palace. (1:3-5)
- Among the men of Judah, four men were selected: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Because their names honored Yahweh (Daniel meant “God is my Judge”), they were given new Babylonian names: Beltshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. (1:6-7)
- The men were given the privilege to eat and drink the same meals that were prepared for the king. Daniel, however, realized that the meals were not appropriate to eat (unclean meat, food offered to idols, etc.) so he requested vegetables and water instead. Because Daniel had developed a good reputation, the four men were granted the request. After ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier than the other men, so the vegetables were allowed to be their permanent diet. (1:8-16)
- When the four men were finally brought before the king, the king was very impressed. He found them to be superior to all the other men, and even concluded that they were ten times greater in wisdom and understanding than the magicians and astrologers who worked in the kingdom. (1:17-21)

What's God doing?

> God's people were in captivity because of their disobedience. Yet God still sought faithful individuals whom He would use to make an impact on the world. God had placed Daniel in a position to do just that.

What's to learn?

→ Even in a pagan society, Daniel's focus remained on living for God. God had placed Daniel where He wanted him, and as Daniel simply remained obedient, he quickly became someone God could use. In the same way, God desires to work through all of us!