***Introduction to Daniel and Daniel 1***

***SUNDAY NIGHT STUDY[[1]](#footnote-1)***

***Historical Background and Context***

1. Quick history of the nation of Israel
	1. Israel was one united nation under God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rule from the time of Abraham until the time of their desire for their first human king.
	2. Israel remained one united nation under her first \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ kings: Saul (1043BC – 1011BC: 32 years), David (1011BC – 971BC: 40 years), and Solomon (971BC – 931BC).
	3. The nation of Israel divided into two separate kingdoms because of two of Solomon’s sons: Rehoboam and Jeroboam in 931BC.
		1. The ***Northern*** Kingdom kept the name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and their first king (in the divided kingdom) was Jeroboam who reigned from 931BC – 910BC. The Northern Kingdom of Israel ***NEVER*** had a godly king!
			1. Samaria was the capital city of this kingdom, idolatry was rampant, and the Temple (located in Jerusalem) was off-limits.
			2. This kingdom lasted from 931BC to 722BC when they were taken into exile by the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as discipline from the Lord (2 Kings 17:5-15).
			3. The Assyrian’s view of exiled peoples was to intermix and intermarry them with their own people so that they would lose any loyalties to their former culture. As a result, the nation of Israel (i.e., the Northern Kingdom) was NEVER re-established!
			4. In this sense, this exile was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with no clear end ever in sight.
		2. The ***Southern*** Kingdom adopted the name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and their first king (in the divided kingdom) was Rehoboam who reigned from 931BC – 913BC. The Southern Kingdom of Judah did have ***SOME*** godly kings!
			1. Jerusalem was the capital city of kingdom, idolatry was ALSO rampant (from time to time), and the Temple was the primary site of worship for the inhabitants of Judah during certain periods of their existence.
			2. This kingdom lasted from 931BC to 586BC when they were taken into exile by the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ empire as discipline from the Lord (Ezra 5:12).
			3. The Baylonian’s view of exiled peoples was similar to the Assyrians, except with not as much “intentionality.” However, when the Medo-Persian empire overtook the Babylonians, it provided the fertile soil of re-establishing the nation of Judah as the nation of Israel, because they, as a whole, were friendly towards allowing people to have their own land and own culture while still maintaining ownership over them.
			4. The Lord was clear – this exile was to be for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years.
2. The ***SPECIFIC*** context and lead up to Daniel
	* 1. In 609 BC, Josiah, Judah’s last \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ king, was killed by Pharaoh Neco (Necho) of Egypt in the battle of Megiddo. Soon thereafter Judah became a vassal state of Egypt. 2 Kings 23:29‑30
		2. After Josiah’s death, Jehoahaz his son came to power. Jehoahaz ruled Judah for three months, but then Neco took him captive to Egypt, where he remained until his death.
		3. That same year, Pharaoh Neco replaced King Jehoahaz with Jehoahaz’ oldest son, Eliakim. Pharaoh Neco named Eliakim, Jehoiakim.
			1. Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king.
			2. Jehoiakim ruled Judah 11 years, until his death in BC 597.
			3. Scripture says Jehoiakim did \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the sight of God. 2 Kings 23:30-37
		4. In 605 BC, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ defeated Egypt in the battle of Carchemish.
		5. That same year Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian forces invaded and subdued \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, taking Daniel and his three friends captive to Babylon.
			1. 2 Kings 20:12-19 relates a prophecy from Isaiah concerning this future event.
				1. In approximately BC 710, a Babylonian king, whose fledgling empire was beginning to expand, sent a get-well \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to King Hezekiah by the hand of emissaries.
				2. When the emissaries arrived, King Hezekiah foolishly showed them all his wealth, as well as the gold and treasures of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
				3. This act of pride led the prophet Isaiah to prophecy to King Hezekiah that Babylon would one day return and seize many of the temple treasures and even capture and deport many of Israel’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ descendants.
				4. Sadly, Hezekiah selfishly replied …*to Isaiah, “This message you have given me from the LORD is good.” For the king was thinking, “At least there will be peace and security during my lifetime.”* 2 Kings 20:19
			2. Just as prophesied, in BC 605, Babylon’s army came and took Jewish \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (one of whom was Daniel), along with many articles of gold and other treasures from the temple in Jerusalem.
		6. After three years Jehoiakim led Judah to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ against Babylon. This did not end well for Judah. 2 Kings 23:34-24:6
		7. In 597 BC, Nebuchadnezzar returned and Jehoiakim was killed. His son Jehoiachin (Coniah) took power and reigned in Israel for three months. 2 Kings 24:1-16
		8. On March 15, 597 BC, Jehoiachin surrendered the city of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar. King Jehoiachin, ten thousand prominent Judean citizens, and the prophet \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, were all taken captive to Babylon. 2 Kings 24:12–16
		9. Next Babylon appointed Zedekiah, a son of Josiah, as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ king in Judah. Zedekiah was Judah’s last king, ruling from 597-586 BC. 2 Kings 24:17-25:21
		10. On January 15, 588 BC, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem. On July 18, 586 BC, he finally succeeded in capturing it. In rage, he burned \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and completely destroyed the walls of the city, houses and the temple. This marked the end of the nation of Judah. 2 Kings 24:19 - 25:21
		11. Nebuchadnezzar became the greatest ruler of the Neo-Babylonian period and arguably one of the most powerful monarchs of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ world.
			1. His exploits brought Babylon to the pinnacle of economic and political prosperity, and he became very proud of his triumphs. Daniel 2:38, 4:30
			2. However, almost \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ after the death of King Nebuchadnezzar in 562 BC, Babylon’s glory began to fade.
			3. Twenty-three years later, the Babylonian Empire completely collapsed, giving way to the Medo-Persian Empire. Daniel 1:1-2
3. WHO was Daniel?
	* 1. Daniel’s name means God is Judge, or God is my Judge.
		2. Daniel was a descendent of nobility from the tribe of Judah. He was intelligent, good-looking and humble. While \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Babylon, Daniel developed into a good administrator and leader. Daniel 1:3-4, 6; 2:49, 10:1
		3. Daniel lived in the nation of Judah and as a young man was taken into exile in Babylon during the 1st of 3 deportations of the people (most likely around 15 years old), and he endured the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 70 year captivity in Babylon.
			1. Not only did Daniel endure the years of exile, during this difficult time, he \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as a political and spiritual leader.
			2. It was God who miraculously installed him as a ruler in Babylon and raised him to very high positions in government, including the Medo-Persian government which eventually conquered Babylon in Daniel’s lifetime.
		4. God chose Daniel to receive \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ revelation, and as God’s prophet, his words were recorded in the book of Daniel.
4. Based upon this context, the narrative portion of the Book of Daniel is significant in a variety of ways:
	1. The common thought of the day was that if an army was able to conquer another army, then the conquering army’s god(s) were more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than the conquered army’s god(s).
5. Judah’s temple laid in ruins, its capital had been ravaged and was empty, and its people were living as miserable captives in a foreign land – thus, it seemed that Yahweh had either become impotent or had abandoned His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people.
6. The narrative portion of the Book of Daniel is designed to prove that this type of thinking is a ***fallacy***.
7. God controls \_\_\_\_\_\_ of human history, and thus consider His sovereignty and power in the first six chapters of Daniel:
8. Chapter 1 – God’s distinguishing of his young leaders (Daniel included) and their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rise in leadership in Babylon.
9. Chapter 2 – Through Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, Daniel, once again, becomes a standout because God provides the ability to Daniel to interpret the dream. The interpretation? God’s heavenly kingdom will destroy and annihilate every other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ kingdom.
10. Chapter 3 – God’s sovereign protection of and miraculous \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
11. Chapter 4 – Nebuchadnezzar is embarrassed by God by “eating grass like oxen, he became incredibly hairy, and grew long nails,” until he was willing to recognize that Yahweh is over all.
12. Chapter 5 – Due to the disrespect of the Jewish Temple articles by Babylonian king Belshazzar, Daniel was given the interpretation of the “writing on the wall,” and God allowed the Babylonian empire to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by the Medo-Persians in one night.
13. Chapter 6 – God’s sovereign protection of and miraculous deliverance of Daniel from the lion’s den.
14. Because God is sovereign, He is able to accomplish His purposes in and through the lives of His people even in the midst of a pagan environment.
15. God is ***NOT*** limited by geography, and ***NOR*** are His plans affected by WHO is in power, WHO controls Congress or the Senate, WHO is the controlling world power, etc.!
16. This means that He will be able to fulfill \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ promise He has made in His Word. This would be a great comfort to Israel because of His intended desire to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant, which would involve an eternal kingdom.
17. Even in the midst of His discipline, God desires intimate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with His children and is still ready to meet their needs.
18. Making decisions based upon divine perspective, and “walking in the fear of the Lord” is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it! Even in the midst of imposing negative and harmful consequences, you/I will never regret making RIGHT and GOOD decisions. Never grow weary in well-doing (1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:9)

***Interesting Facts on the Book of Daniel***

* + - 1. Daniel is quoted and alluded to in the New Testament \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ any other Old Testament book.
			2. Daniel has more fulfilled \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that any other book in the Bible.
			3. Daniel is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ book to unlocking and interpreting prophecy.

***Chapter 1 Notes***

* + - 1. ***Daniel 1:1-2*** - God \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ King Nebuchadnezzar to bring judgment on Judah, the southern kingdom of Israel, because of her rebellion and idolatry.
1. God allowed Babylon to besiege Jerusalem because Israel failed to abide by her covenant with God.
	* + - 1. Only when we properly understand the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants can we correctly discern God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with Israel. Genesis 12:1-3
				2. The Abrahamic Covenant is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and in it God promised Abraham and his offspring (Israel) protection from total annihilation. Malachi 3:6
				3. The Mosaic Covenant was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and when the Israelites obeyed, they were blessed (Leviticus 26:1-13; Deuteronomy 28:1-14). However, when the Israelites repeatedly disobeyed God and worshipped false gods, He disciplined them as a nation (Leviticus 26:14-39; Deuteronomy 28:15-68).
				4. In the book of Leviticus, Moses delineated the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ stages of God’s discipline.

Stage 1: The first stage of God’s discipline would involve terror, diseases and defeat by their enemies, who would eat (destroy) the food the Israelites had planted. Leviticus 26:14-17

Stage 2: Drought and famine would follow. Leviticus 26:18-20

Stage 3: Wild animals would kill their children and livestock. Leviticus 26:21-22

Stage 4: War would follow. God would allow successful military conquests against Israel by foreign enemies. He would send plagues and destroy their food supply. Leviticus 26:23-26

Stage 5: Both the countryside and their cities would become uninhabited. Starvation would even lead to cannibalism for survival. Leviticus 26:27-32

Stage 6: In the last and most extreme stage of discipline, Israel would be exiled to foreign lands and there they would be distressed. Leviticus 26:33-39

1. God was incredibly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with His chosen people. Over a period of hundreds of years, He sent many prophets to warn them of coming judgment, but finally, when Israel refused to turn to God, He allowed the nation to be decimated. Jeremiah 25:1-11, 36:27-31
2. The mention of the “articles of the house of God” was telling, since Nebuchadnezzar would have learned of these temple vessels of gold because of King Hezekiah’s careless \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in showing these treasures to the Babylonians nearly 100 years before. Isaiah 39
	* + 1. **Daniel 1:3-7** – A diabolical plan behind a human plan: This passage highlights some of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ pagan societies use to manipulate and solidify followers.
				1. Now, why did Nebuchadnezzar choose these particular youths?
3. Nebuchadnezzar likely wanted to keep the remaining royal family in Judah from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Having these kids as hostages might help insure their country’s compliance.
4. Captives such as these would become \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ - a constant and pleasant reminder of Babylon’s victories, a human display of Nebuchadnezzar’s exploits.
5. As sons of nobility, the empire would benefit from their young minds and intelligence.
6. These young people would be ideal for interpretation and translation of their mother tongues. This skill could greatly benefit the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, especially in the “Jewish affairs” department.
	* + - 1. Besides coming from nobility, these individuals had to meet several \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in order to be trained for King Nebuchadnezzar, including: young, good-looking, intellectual aptitude, and trustworthiness.
				2. These young, noble Jewish men were to be exposed to a very intentional curriculum - besides Chaldean literature and language (Aramaic), their curriculum likely included mathematics, history, mythology, agriculture, architecture, and governance. This also likely included religious teaching, such as astrology and sorcery (magic).
				3. In addition to their studies, the king appointed for them choice foods which not only included unclean animals, but most likely foods sacrificed to idols.
				4. This training was very \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. …The ultimate purpose of the king’s three-year curriculum was to fully prepare these young men for royal service.
				5. The official’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ undertaking was to rename these Jewish youths with Babylonian names.
7. The purpose for changing their names may have been to erase \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ uniqueness and to also identify them with the Babylonian religious and cultural system.
8. All three of these undertakings – the changing of their names, language, and food – would have contributed to their enculturation and indoctrination into the pagan Babylonian \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
9. Having their names changed to Babylonian names, eating a Babylonian diet and speaking the language of the Babylonians, would all have been a process to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ national, family, and cultural allegiances and would help unify these youth in allegiance to Babylon.
10. These tactics would easily have led to a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from their childhood God-based education.
11. This process was very likely strategic for Nebuchadnezzar but even more so it would have been expedient for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ purposes. The devil always desires to capture the hearts and minds of youth. Mark 5:15, 1 Peter 5:8
12. Of the many Jewish youths taken into captivity, only the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ recorded here seemed to have remained strong and unyielding in this enculturation process.
	* + 1. ***Daniel 1:8-16***
13. In order to better understand the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Daniel’s decision, it would be helpful to ponder the circumstances in which Daniel found himself.
14. Thousands of Daniel’s people had died in war and thousands more were being mistreated as he had witnessed the Babylonians \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ his country.
15. Daniel’s world had recently fallen apart with his own deportation to Babylon, which included being separated from his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
16. Daniel made the conscious decision not to eat the king’s recommended dietary regimen, even though it would have been considered the best food available at that time.
17. The text shows that Daniel was concerned with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
18. Daniel was not acting in pride when he refused the king’s diet; rather, he was making an effort to not defile his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by going against God’s law (Exodus 34:15; Numbers 25:1-2)
19. Daniel’s decision to honor God’s word over man’s decrees led him to petition the commander of the officials to allow him to refrain from eating foods that would defile him. Jeremiah 11:1-3, Acts 5:29
20. When Daniel made the choice to follow the authority of God’s word, God honored his decision. Although the commander did not immediately allow him to change his diet, he showed compassion to Daniel. 1 Peter 5:5-6
21. Instead of being discouraged by the officer’s reluctance, Daniel came back with a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to do a ten-day test run. This was something the official could accept.
22. Daniel’s proposal showed trust in God to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the results.
23. It is important to note that Daniel did not yell and scream or demand his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He approached the government official with calm wisdom.
24. In only ten days, these young men looked remarkably \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than those eating the king’s food. Therefore, the four Hebrew youths were allowed to continue on this diet.
25. This was due to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ intervention more than to the fact that it was a good diet.
26. This victory would have strengthened the young men’s faith, giving them much needed confidence when faced with greater temptations to compromise in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
	* + 1. ***Daniel 1:17-21***
	1. God’s provision of magnificent blessings shows how God honors those who \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Him. This theme is repeated throughout this book.
27. God did not simply give Daniel and his friends knowledge; He gave them the ability to skillfully use that knowledge for His honor and glory. This is called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
28. The fact that God gave Daniel the ability to understand visions and dreams is proof Daniel was indeed a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Daniel 2, 4, 5
	1. The day came when Nebuchadnezzar recognized the excellence of these four young Jewish youths and made them important aides in his kingdom. The use of their Hebrew names in these verses emphasizes their link to God rather than Babylon.
29. It is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that these four Hebrew youths had personal interviews with the great and mighty King Nebuchadnezzar.
30. The outcome of their meeting with the king would affect the rest of their lives, their own nation’s future, the Babylonian empire, and even impact a lowly home in the town of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ some 600 years later. Matthew 2:1-12
31. In the sovereignty of God, these young men passed the king’s test with flying colors, giving God four “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ agents” in the demonically controlled Babylonian empire.
	1. Because these young captives did not compromise the truth, they were able to give King Nebuchadnezzar superior sound advice.
32. **Reflections from Daniel chapter 1**
33. Daniel and his friends must have received a godly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from their parents, as evidenced by their names and their faithfulness to God even in captivity.
34. Daniel chose to distinguish himself from the pagan culture that encircled him. Philippians 2:14-16
35. Just as Daniel did not choose to fight his name change or his education in a pagan school, we need to pick our battles \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Let the main issue be the main issue.
36. We should \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the government God has given to rule over us even if our faith in the Word of God requires that we tactfully \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ some law or requirement. Romans 13
37. We should understand the worldview of those in power and wisely \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ their reactions to a request. This will help us use diplomacy in devising godly challenges.
38. Could America become a pagan country like Israel or Babylon? Yes. It could and it has happened in some ways.
	* + 1. Moral decay in a nation typically starts with spiritual lethargy and compromise among \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
			2. Then God’s Word often becomes reinterpreted, cheapened, ignored or even deliberately \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
			3. This process gives way to moral relativity where feelings \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ truth. A low restraint in ethics, sexuality and morality begins to prevail.
			4. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ result is a totally godless nation where Christians face persecution.
1. A big thank you to DM2 ([www.dm2usa.org](http://www.dm2usa.org)) for many of these notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)