

## Daniel Chapter 1:1-21 – “Determined to Serve God”

Sunday, October 28, 2018

### ❖ Dan. 1:1-2 – Historical Background

- **Ver. 1** – “**third year of the reign of Jehoiakim**” - the third year by Babylonian dating...which did not count a king’s initial (accession) year...but began with the following year.
  - So...the “**third year**” is in harmony with...the same year labeled as “fourth”... by the Judean system of dating.
    - **SLIDE** - This is important because it marks the beginning...of “**the times of the Gentiles**”...where the **COVENANT** land is occupied by Gentiles...and the Davidic throne is **EMPTY**.
  - “**Jehoiakim**” - the wicked son of Josiah...who ruled Judah (609–597 B.C.)... during Nebuchadnezzar’s...first plundering of Jerusalem.
    - Jehoiakim had been warned by Jeremiah...to “submit to Babylon without resistance,” which he did.
  - “**Nebuchadnezzar**” – The son of Nabopolassar...who ruled Babylon from 605–562 B.C.
  - **SLIDE** - “**Babylon**” – Map – Assyrian Empire Map – **READ Hab. 1:5-10**
- **Ver. 2** – “**some of the articles of the house of God**” → **READ 2 Kings 20:12-19** → parallel passage in **Isa. 39:1-8**.
  - “**Shinar**” – another name for Babylon
  - “**his god**” - Bel or Marduk or Aku or Nego or Ishtar...the Babylonians were polytheistic...and believed their military victories...demonstrated the superiority of...their deities over those of their enemies.

### ❖ Dan. 1:3-7 – Prerequisites to Serve the King

- **Ver. 3** – “**some of the king’s descendants**” & “**some of the nobles**” – Know how to act in a “**COURT**” or royal setting...they would **ALREADY**...be familiar with court **PROTOCOL**.
- **Ver. 4** – **PHYSICAL** and **INTELECTUAL** requirements...to serve the King!
  - “**young men**” – Probably between the ages of...14 and 17 years of age.
    - There was a “boot camp” or a royal **ACADEMY**...to determine who met these **CRITERIA** and who didn’t...in other words...it took **TIME** to determine who fulfilled these requirements.
- **Ver. 5** – “**three years of training**” – basically...three years of **BRAINWASHING!**
  - **SLIDE** - Brainwashing is an attempt to...break down the **SELF**...and **DESTROY** the core belief system.
    - This is done through an **UNRELENTING**...assault on the person’s **IDENTITY**.
      - ◆ It is accomplished through many different techniques...not the least of which is **ISOLATION** – “**three year training program**”...complete control of “food and companionship” - to produce **GUILT** and **SHAME** – “your king was not good...your nation was evil – Look how Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon provided for you”...to the **ULTIMATE** assault on identity – **CHANGE** the person’s **NAME!** → “You are not who you think you are!”
- **SLIDE** - **Ver. 6** – **Daniel** means “God is my Judge”...**Hananiah** means “Yahweh has been gracious”...**Mishael** means “Who is what God is?” or “Who is like God?”...**Azariah** means “Yahweh has helped.”

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- **SLIDE** - **Ver. 7** – **Belteshazzar** means “Bel, Protect the King”...**Shadrach** means “The Command of Aku”...**Meshach** means “Who is what Aku is” or “Who is like Aku?”...**Abednego** means “servant of Nego.”
- ❖ **Dan. 1:8-17** – Taking a Stand
  - **Ver. 8** - “**But Daniel**” – Daniel took a stand for the holiness and righteousness of God...he displayed great **INTEGRITY** and **RESOLVE** to not defile himself...for to eat of the “**king’s delicacies**” would be to honor the **FALSE** god’s...that the meat and wine had been sacrificed to.
    - “**purposed**” – means to be **RESOLVED...DETERMINED...RESOLUTE...COMMITTED...SLIDE** – **Expositor’s**: “Rather than break faith with God, Daniel was willing to risk expulsion from the Royal Academy with the disgrace and danger that entailed. His priorities were firm.”
      - I don’t believe that Daniel...**AGONIZED** over his decision → **Dan. 3:16-18**.
  - **Ver. 9** – “**Now God**” – **SLIDE** – **MacArthur**: “God honored Daniel’s trust and allegiance by sovereignly working favorably for him among the heathen leaders; he was able to earn their respect.”
    - Just like Joseph with Potiphar...the Egyptian jailer...and Pharaoh!
    - “**But Daniel**” – “**Now God**” – This is **HOW** God works in the lives of His people...when they **RESOLVE** to stand for Him – **2 Chron. 16:9** – “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart *is* loyal to Him.”
  - **Ver. 10** – The chief of the eunuchs...did not want to put his **LIFE**...or his **CAREER** in jeopardy.
  - **Ver. 11-14** – **MAKE COMMENTS**
  - **Ver. 15** – “**fatter in flesh**” – a **HEALTHY** appearance...this was an indicator of **HEALTHINESS**.
  - **Ver. 17** - “**knowledge**” - has to do with **REASONING** skills and **THOUGHT** processes.
    - They were able to think **CLEARLY** and **LOGICALLY**.
    - “**understanding**” - has to do with **INSIGHT**.
      - This points up their ability to **DISCERN** the nature of things clearly...and to **INTERPRET** them in their true light.
    - **SLIDE** – **Courson**: “You just can’t out-give God. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego gave themselves wholeheartedly to the Lord and what happened? They found favor with both God and man. When you give God your energy, talent, money, or ability, He will not “owe you one.” He’ll give back to you exceedingly abundantly above all you can ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).”
- ❖ **Dan. 1:18-21** – **FINAL EXAMS** → Examined by Nebuchadnezzar
  - **Ver. 18-19** – “**interviewed**” – **EXAMINED** - the **JOB** interview was conducted by Nebuchadnezzar...himself...he conducted **ORAL** exams...with each candidate.
    - “**served before the king**” – served before his “**FACE**” – in his presence – he immediately gave the **FOUR** friends **RESPONSIBLE** positions in his government.

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- **Ver. 20** – “**wisdom**” – insight...perception...astuteness...God is the master, creator, and giver of wisdom → **Job 28:27** → **Prov. 8:22, 23**.
  - “**understanding**” – discernment...comprehension.
  - “**examined**” – investigated...inspected
  - “**ten times better**” - The idea is that the young Hebrew men...displayed incredible skill and surpassed the other trainees...because of the **FAVOR** of their God.
- **Ver. 21** – “**first year**” - Daniel’s ministry in the royal court of Babylon...continued until the overthrow of the...Babylonian Empire by Cyrus in 539 B.C.
- ❖ **APPLICATION:** What was the **KEY** to Daniel’s **RESOLVE** and **COMMITMENT**?
- **READ Rom. 12:1-2**.
  - **SLIDE** – **Wiersbe:** “Each believer is either a conformer or a transformer. We’re either being squeezed into the world’s mold or we’re transforming things in the world into which God has put us. Transformers don’t always have an easy life, but it’s an exciting one, and it gives us great delight to know that God is using us to influence others.”