

Convictions In A Hostile World: The Book of Daniel

2 – THE PREPARATION OF DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS (DANIEL 1:1-21)

I. Daniel's Deportation (1:1-7)



Historical Note: The Deportations to Babylon

The Babylonian captivity refers to the time period in Israel's history when Jews were taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It is an important period of biblical history because both the exile and the return of the Jewish nation were fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies. God used Babylon as his agent of judgment against Israel for their sins of idolatry and rebellion against Him. The first deportation from Judah occurred in 605 B.C. when Babylon defeated the Egyptians and King Jehoiakim because a vassal to Babylon. Daniel, Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach) and Azariah (Abednego) were among the captives taken to Babylon in the first deportation. The second deportation from Judah occurred in 597 B.C., as a result of the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. The purpose of this action was to punish King Josiah's son Jehoiakim, once Babylon's vassal, for allying with Egypt and rebelling against Babylonian dominance (2 Kings 24:1). King Jehoiakim died during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem and his son Jehoiachin became king. During the second deportation, Nebuchadnezzar ordered King Jehoiachin and the elite citizens of Judah deported, together with the most valuable treasures of the Temple and the palace (2 Kings 24 1-16). Among the captives was the prophet Ezekiel, though not Jeremiah, who remained in Jerusalem, where he counseled cooperation with Babylon. The third and final deportation took place in 587 or 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar appointed King Zedekiah to rule as his representative over Judah, but after nine years Zedekiah led Judah in rebellion against Babylon one final time (2 Kings 24–25). This resulted in Nebuchadnezzar again laying siege to Jerusalem. Jerusalem fell in July 587 or 586 BC, and Zedekiah was taken captive

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to Babylon after seeing his sons killed before him and then having his eyes plucked out (2 Kings 25). At this time Jerusalem was laid to waste, the temple destroyed and all the houses burned. The majority of the Jewish people were taken captive, but, again, Nebuchadnezzar left a remnant of poor people to serve as farmers and vinedressers (2 Kings 25:12).

A. The defeat of Judah (1:1-2)

1. The time (1:1a)

- The events took place in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, which was 605 B.C.

2. The siege of Jerusalem (1:1b)

- Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem with his Babylonian armies.

3. Judah defeated (1:2a)

- The writer records that God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to defeat Jehoiakim.

4. Articles from the Temple (1:2b)

- The Babylonians took some of the Temple treasures to the house of his god.

B. Nebuchadnezzar's instruction (1:3-5)

1. Royal princes are taken (1:3-4)

- Nebuchadnezzar commanded that young Jewish princes would be taken for service.
- These young men must be good looking and possess the ability to learn.
- They would study the language and literature of Chaldeans.

2. The king's provision (1:5)

- The king provided food and wine for the young men.
- They would enter the king's service after three years of training.

C. Daniel and his friends (1:6-7)

1. Jewish names (1:6)

- The writer provides the Jewish names for Daniel and his friends.

2. Babylonian names (1:7)

- The writer provides the Babylonian names for Daniel and his friends.

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II. Daniel's Devotion to God (1:8-16)

A. The request (1:8)

- Daniel determined not to defile himself with the Babylonian food.
- He makes his request to the chief of the eunuchs.

B. The request granted (1:9-14)

1. God's favor (1:9)

- God moved the heart of the chief eunuch to show favor and goodwill to Daniel.

2. The chief eunuch's concern (1:10)

- He was concerned that he would suffer if Daniel did not thrive physically.

3. Daniel's request (1:11-13)

- Daniel proposed a test period of ten days with a certain diet to his steward.
- At the end of the test period, they should be compared with those who eat the king's food.

4. The agreement (1:14)

- The steward agreed and tested them for ten days.

C. The result (1:15-16)

- At the end of ten days, Daniel and his friends were in better condition than the others.
- The steward replaced the king's food with the Jewish diet.

III. Daniel's Appointment (1:17-21)

A. Their progress (1:17)

- God endowed Daniel and his friends with knowledge and wisdom.
- God gave Daniel an understanding concerning all visions and dreams.

B. Their appearance before the king (1:18-20)

- At the end of their training, they appeared before the king.
- The king interviewed them and found them to be superior to others.

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C. The length of Daniel's service (1:21)

- Daniel served until the fifth year of Cyrus' reign, which was 539 B.C.