

Daniel's Early Life

Daniel 1:1-7

I. **Introduction:**

A. **The Book of Daniel**

1. It's said the greatest of the prophetic books of the Old Testament is the Book of Daniel
2. The Book of Daniel is one literary writing, yet it contains two sections.

(1) – History

- a. The first six chapters are historical with prophesy included meaning these chapters tell the historical events that Daniel recounts in the first person.
- b. In those historical events God revealed to Daniel prophesy about the future.

(2) – Prophesy

- a. The last six chapters of Daniel are primarily prophesy. Daniel received visions and messages from God that he recorded.
- b. In 1 instance angel was sent to answer Daniel's prayer & deliver a message to him.

B. **Prophetic Framework**

1. Book of Daniel is the framework to all of biblical prophecy.
2. It's the skeleton upon which the prophesy of the Book of Revelation hangs.
3. To fully understand the prophesy in Revelation, understanding God's overall plan as revealed in the Book of Daniel, is needed.
4. It's important to read the Bible, and understand it, in its totality.

C. **Daniel's Early Life**

1. The Book of Daniel opens with a historical account of Daniel's early life.
2. Historical Setting: The events of Daniel's life are set in world history.
3. Events & people referenced by Daniel are easily verifiable. Verse 1 began in 612 BC.
4. Babylonians & Assyrians: In **612 BC** Assyrian capital of **Nineveh** fell to Babylonians.
5. The Assyrians tried to regroup at a place called **Haran**, but by 610 BC they were soundly defeated. In 609 BC remaining Assyrians made alliance w/ Egyptians to fight against the Babylonians. **Pharaoh Neco II** led an army to do battle w/ the Babylonians.
6. Josiah (2 Kings 23:28-30): **Josiah**, king of Judah, fought against **Pharaoh Neco II**, apparently to incur the favor of the Babylonians.
7. Judah's army was defeated and Josiah was killed in the process.
8. In **605 BC** Nebuchadnezzar attacked & defeated the Egyptians at **Carchemish**.
9. In **605 BC** Nebuchadnezzar's father, **Nabopolassar** died.
10. Nebuchadnezzar: After defeating the Egyptians, Nebuchadnezzar went home & received the crown. Then he began to expand his kingdom.
11. In **605 BC** Nebuchadnezzar went to Jerusalem to bring the Jews under his dominion.

II. **Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem (Daniel 1:1)**

A. **Jehoiakim**

1. Jehoiakim was the oldest son of King Josiah who lost his life fighting the Egyptians.
2. Jeremiah the prophet foretold the arrival of the Babylonians.
3. Babylonian siege was brought about by God as judgment for sin & rebellion of Judah.
4. Jehoiakim did not resist Nebuchadnezzar & Jerusalem was made a vassal state of the Babylonian Empire.

III. **Sovereign Plan (Daniel 1:2)**

A. **All was of God**

1. The rise of the Babylonian Empire was of God including the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon's greatest king, was of God.
2. God sovereignly moved world events to being about His plan for Israel.
3. Babylon was an instrument in the hand of God to bring chastening upon His people.

B. **Contemporary World Events**

1. Current society & the associated world events, are often discouraging.
2. Society is spiraling out of control moving further away from God and His holy law.
3. Wickedness & rebellion against God is ever expanding, but God is in control of human affairs in this world. God's sovereignly bringing human history toward His culmination.
4. One day the church of Jesus Christ will be raptured out of this world & God will judge the wicked directly during the seven-year tribulation.
5. At the end of the tribulation Jesus returns setting up His kingdom here for 1,000 years.

C. **Treasures Carried Away**

1. Daniel tells us in verse 2 how the treasures of Jerusalem were carried away to Babylon.
2. This was actually a fulfillment of prophesy spoken by **Isaiah** the prophet.
3. **King Hezekiah** boasted to a Babylonian delegation regarding Israel's wealth. He even showed the Babylonian delegation the treasures.
4. Nebuchadnezzar carried the treasures of Jerusalem to Babylon. (**2 Kings 20:16-18**)

D. **House of His god**

1. Treasures of Jerusalem, including sacred vessels from the temple, were placed in pagan temple in Babylon. It was ancient way of saying our god is bigger than your god.
2. The Name of God: The true & living God's name gets dragged through the mud because of our sin. Israel was and is the chosen people of God.
3. They were supposed to be an example, a testimony to the lost world around them.
4. Because of their sin & rebellion, they were humiliated in defeat & the name of God humiliated with them.
5. Lesson: Our sin & rebellion has potential to drag the name of Jesus through the mud.
6. When people know we're Christ followers, they watch our every move (**Matt. 5:14-16**)
7. Our testimony before a lost world is vitally important.
 - a. – It reflects on Jesus: Our lifestyle and life choices reflect on Jesus.
 - b. – It opens doors: Our lifestyle and life choices open doors to share the gospel.
 - c. Our verbal testimony has no power if it's not supported by the way we live.

E. **Time of the Gentiles**

1. The subjugation of Jerusalem and the Jewish people took place in 605 BC.
2. Verse 2 identifies this prophetic marker which began the "**Times of the Gentiles.**"
3. Jesus spoke of Jerusalem's impending destruction by the Romans. (**Luke 20:24**)
4. The "*times of the gentiles*" is time in history when the covenant land and city are under the control of the Gentile nations. This prophetic period of time began in **605 BC**.
5. This time will continue until Jesus sets up His millennial kingdom in Jerusalem.

IV. **Captives In Babylon (Daniel 1:3-7)**

A. **Life Altering Event**

1. Daniel, a teenager, was royalty in the house of Israel living life in upper society.
2. Now he's among young men taken to Babylon to serve in the court of the king.
3. This meant the following for Daniel's life:

(1) – His personal life forever altered.

- a. Daniel would never again see Jerusalem, but rather live his remaining life in Babylon to die there.
- b. He would never again see the land of God's promise or his family & friends.
- c. The life Daniel knew ended as he walked the 800 miles to Babylon.

(2) – His religious life forever altered.

- a. Daniel was devout follower of God. He grew up worshipping in Solomon's temple.
- b. He would never again be able to worship in the temple.
- c. In **586 BC** Nebuchadnezzar returned to Jerusalem because the Jews were rebellious against him. He razed the city and the temple, burned all to the ground.

(3) – His life plans forever altered.

- a. Every Jewish man wanted to marry a Jewish woman and have a family.
- b. Whatever Daniel's plans were, his life was no longer his own to direct.
- c. His life was now in the hands of a pagan king.

B. Life Altering Events

- There are three lessons we can learn from Daniel when life does not go as we planned.
 1. – Never blame God
 - a. Daniel never forsook faith in God or blamed God for bad things happening in his life
 - b. Daniel continued to worship and obey God in the midst of his troubles.
 - c. Daniel wouldn't allow life's circumstances to define or influence his walk with God.
 - d. When unexpected tragedy strikes our lives, we need same commitment to serve God.
 2. – Maintain our testimony
 - a. In the worse imaginable circumstances of life, Daniel still lived openly for God.
 - b. Daniel determined that he would not defile himself before God, even in a pagan land.
 3. – God's will is most important.
 - a. It was all part of God's will for Daniel to be in Babylon.
 - b. That which is terrible in our lives today has a purpose in sovereign design of God.
 - c. We cannot always know why God allows certain things in our lives.
 - d. It's important that God be glorified through our lives, not that our lives go in the direction we think they should go.