

# The Book of **Daniel**

## CHAPTER 1

IN the third year of the reign of Je-hoi'-a-kim king of Judah came -u-chad-nez'-zar king of Babylon Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Je-hoi'-a-kim of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God, which he carried into

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not eat

# Daniel 1:8-12 Daniel's Request

- *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. 9 Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. 10 And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king." 11 So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 12 "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants."*

# Daniel 1:8-12 Daniel's Request

- Daniel had already decided in his heart NOT to eat the king's food, but...
- Daniel did not want to offend God or the king, so...
- He *asked* the steward (chief of eunuchs), if he could *refrain* from eating the king's delicacies
- Daniel was allowed 10 days to test the matter
- Notice that God honored Daniel's heartfelt request
- The steward acquiesced to Daniel and tried it for 10 days to see how things would go

# Daniel 1:8-12 Daniel's Request

- Daniel was likely seen as humble
- He clearly had established a good relationship with Babylonian officials
- Obviously, God moved the overseer's heart
- Daniel did not rebel against the restrictions placed on him
- He simply and politely requested a change
- On receiving a favorable response, Daniel offered an alternative

# Daniel 1:14-16 The Test/Results

- *14 So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.*
- *15 And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. 16 Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.*

# Daniel 1:14-16 The Test/Results

- Hebrew word translated “vegetables” means:
  - things sowed (from seed), including
  - Fruits, grains, vegetables and bread
- The success of the test is seen in the results
- Modern science tells us that just eating vegetables does not provide excellent health
- Daniel & friends probably relied on God’s hand to make them healthy
- This passage should not be taken as proof text for a vegetarian diet
- The issue is loyalty to God under circumstances where meats were likely offered to idols
- The men appeared healthier either by food or God, or both

# Daniel 1:17-21 God's Blessing

- *<sup>17</sup> As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.*
- *<sup>18</sup> Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>19</sup> Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. <sup>20</sup> And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. <sup>21</sup> Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.*

# Daniel 1:17-21 God's Blessing

- God provided Daniel and friends with the ability to master the subjects they were taught
- They were given wisdom
- God also gave Daniel the ability to understand and interpret dreams and visions
- Visions are revelations while *awake*
- Dreams are revelations while *asleep*
- Visions were the primary means God used to express His will to prophets of the Old Testament
- God was positioning Daniel for a specific purpose



# Daniel 1:17-21 God's Blessing

- At the end of 3 years, the four men were tested by Nebuchadnezzar himself and passed at the head of their class (1 Sam. 2:30)
- The young men were probably about 20 years old then
- They were given important positions within Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom
- “ten times better” (v20) may be an idiom meaning “heads above the rest” or noticeably superior
- They excelled in offering excellent advice to Nebuchadnezzar
- I can see the seeds of jealousy starting in some of the others because of how Daniel & friends are perceived...

# Daniel 1:17-21 God's Blessing

- Because Daniel was given insight into dreams and visions, he would have had more understanding of future events over the other astrologers and diviners
- Daniel continued under various kings from
  - Nebuchadnezzar, to
  - Cyrus (586 BC)
  - For a total of 65 years
- Two dates bracket this chapter:
  - Daniel went into captivity in 605 BC
  - His government career ended in 538 BC
- The content of Chapter 1 focuses on:
  - The key to Daniel's remarkable career –
  - His faithfulness to God

# Daniel 1:17-21 God's Blessing

- God blessed Daniel's commitment even in a seemingly minor manner
- Daniel was already wise, but God increased that for His purposes
- Daniel and his three friends are models of how to be and remain faithful to God in difficult times
- When the world wants us to go their way, God wants us to remain faithful to Him regardless of the cost to us