

SERMON OUTLINE

In Daniel 1:1-21 God sets the stage for His glory and power to shine through Daniel and his friends by giving 3 measures of equipping grace.

- I. God gave Nebuchadnezzar Jehoiakim, king of Judah (vs. 1-7).
- II. God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the king's representatives (vs. 8-16).
- III. God gave Daniel and his friends the learning, skill, and understanding required to stand before the king (vs. 17-21).

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, November 5, 2017

Passage: Daniel 1:1-21

Memory Passage: Daniel 1:17-20

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Dan. 1:1-21.** A few pieces of information: Daniel and his friends were taken captive in 605 B. C., the first of 3 deportations (605, 597, 586). Daniel was written in the 6th century BC, and covers events and visions Daniel had between 605 and 536 B. C. (cf. Dan. 10:1). The book is written in both Hebrew (1:1-2:3; 7:1-12:13) and Aramaic (2:4-6:28).

(b) **Read 2 Kings 23:31-24:7, 2 Chron. 36:1-8, Jer. 22:18-30, & 36:1-32.** Write down what you learn about Jehoiakim, son of the righteous king Josiah, and his son, Jehoiachin (Coniah).

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Dan. 1:1-21.** Why did the Lord give Jehoiakim into Nebuchadnezzar's hand (cf. Lev. 14-15, 33, 39; Deut. 4:23-31; 28:15, 64-68; 2 Kings 20:12-21)?

(b) Consider vs. 3-7 and answer these questions: (1) What criteria did Nebuchadnezzar give Ashpenaz for choosing this group, and why is this important? (2) Why would Nebuchadnezzar provide such a royal diet? (3) What is the significance of changing their names (see your study Bible notes for the meanings of each name)? (4) What was the king's ultimate goal, and how do each of these commands provide for achieving this goal?

(c) In what ways does the 21st century society in which you live and its leaders attempt to indoctrinate you in its ways?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Dan. 1:1-21.** Why does Daniel think the king's food and wine will defile him? (Hint: The answer is not as simple as "the food was not kosher," but applying this text to our own contemporary situation depends on your answer.)

(b) Why does Ashpenaz refuse Daniel's request, and how does his response contrast with Daniel's actions?

(c) Why do you think the steward responded differently to Daniel's request than did Ashpenaz?

(d) In what ways do you attempt to trust God for His provisions as you walk in the midst of a culture and society controlled by Satan? How does your walk look different from the non-believing world in which you walk? Notice that Daniel and his friends do not withdraw from their cultural surroundings, but they live faithful to God as aliens in Babylon & the king's house.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Dan. 1:1-21.** What happened "at the end of ten days" (v. 15) and why is this surprising?

(b) How did Daniel and his friends compare with the others who had been in training with them for 3 years? How did they compare with all of Nebuchadnezzar's magicians and enchanters? Why is this important?

(c) Don't skip over or miss the importance of v. 21! Why do you think chapter 1 ends with this verse (FYI: King Cyrus' first year to reign was 539 B.C. and he is a Persian)? What theological truth is being trumpeted in v. 21?

(d) Who is the main character in Daniel chapter 1? What is the primary doctrinal message of the chapter?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Dan. 1:1-21.** In case you have not seen it, be sure to notice the 3 "God/the Lord gave" statements in this chapter (v. 2, 9, & 17). It is not Nebuchadnezzar's power, or Daniel & his friends' faithfulness, but God's power and faithfulness that should capture and consume our attention. And yet, Daniel and his friends' actions are instructive for us today as well.

(b) Think back to King Nebuchadnezzar's indoctrination techniques: He isolated the best and brightest youth of the nation he besieged and showered them with luxury (learning, food, lifestyle, pampering, fame and fortune) in order to cause them to forget about their own heritage and culture. These same activities tempt many Christians today. In what ways are money, fame, better lifestyles, education, etc., temptations for you to embrace the norms of the earthly kingdom rather than the norms of God's kingdom? How do Daniel and his friends' faithfulness and trust in God's faithfulness address these temptations and encourage you to walk faithfully in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation? How does God's sovereign and faithful work in Daniel chapter 1 encourage you to grow in your trust that God is active for His purposes as you live your life?

DATE: November 5, 2017

PASSAGE: Daniel 1:1-27

The Lord God Gave