

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION

Daniel's Training in Babylon Daniel 1

“In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.” Daniel 1:20

Day 1: Read Daniel 1:1–21.

1. Though it might surprise the conquering King Nebuchadnezzar, God is behind all the events narrated in this book. Find three things God does in this chapter. (vss. 2, 9, 17). How has God acted similarly to these in your life.
2. The book opens with an account of the conquest of Israel by her enemy Babylon in 605 B.C. Why has the Lord allowed this disaster to happen? (2 Chronicles 36, especially. vss. 15–17)
3. Are you feeling “in exile” yourself? Are you feeling discouraged by the consequences that some sin has brought upon you? What is God’s encouragement to you? (Jeremiah 29:13–14; 33:3, 8-9)

Day 2: Read Daniel 1:1–21.

4. Babylon is like a sword in God’s hand, devouring Israel because of her sin. But what faulty conclusion does Babylon draw about her own culpability? (Jeremiah 50:7) In contrast, how does God see the deeds of Babylon? (Jeremiah 50:11–14)
5. What great reversals of fortune does God have planned for Israel and Babylon? (Jeremiah 50:18–19) What should you keep in mind when it seems that the forces of evil are winning? (2 Thess. 1:6–10).
6. Israel has been driven far from the land and the temple. Is God no longer with her? From where are Daniel and his friends receiving the help that is evident in this first chapter? (Ezekiel 11:16)

Day 3: Read Daniel 1:8–21.

7. Evidently, Daniel and his friends will cooperate and not resist service to the pagan king. Are they doing right in this, or should they be plotting insurrection? (Jeremiah 29:4–7)
8. What is the hope, the light at the end of the tunnel, that Jeremiah holds out to the exiles in his letter instructing them to seek the good of their land of exile? (Jeremiah 29:10–11)

Day 4: Read Daniel 1: 8–21.

9. Daniel will obey Jeremiah's command to seek the good of his nation of exile. But how does Daniel show that though he will go along with Babylonian language and literature studies, and will allow himself to be subjected to a name change, his allegiance to Babylon is not absolute? (vs. 8)
10. Some commentators suggest that Daniel's refusal of the king's delicacies was a private choice to discipline himself against seduction into a lifestyle of indulgence. Have you ever made such a private choice, and did it help you to be stronger in later trials and temptations?
11. In taking his stand, how does Daniel exhibit the wisdom and tact he is known for (2:14)?
12. How do Daniel's tactful dealings with the officials give us a model of wisdom in being involved with culture while maintaining our distinctive faith? How does God show his favor upon Daniel's gesture of faith? (vs. 15)
13. What would become clear to the Babylonian captives when Daniel and his friends emerge from a meager diet "healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food" (vs. 15)? Who gets the credit and the glory?

Day 5: Read Daniel 1:8–21.

14. Contrast Daniel's fearlessness with the official's fear. (vss. 8, 10) Why can a child of God afford to be fearless whereas men of this world are always in fear? (Psalm 27:1)
15. What does God give Daniel and his companions? (vs. 17) Is there a place for Christians being versed in the knowledge and customs of the world? (See also Acts 17:17–18)
16. How did your study of Daniel inspire you personally this week to serve God with wisdom, faith, tact, fearlessness, and wholeheartedness?