

1. Last week I finished the introduction to the book of Daniel. Now we are ready to begin an analysis of Daniel Chapter One.

KJV

Dan 1:1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

NIV

Dan 1:1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.

1. After the Battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar pursued the army of Pharaoh Necho. The Egyptians were in full scale retreat having been beaten by the Babylonian-Medo Persian coalition.

2. As Nebuchadnezzar followed Necho's Expeditionary Force south he passed by the beautiful city of Jerusalem.

3. Using divination to determine what he should do, he decided an attack of Jerusalem was the preferred course of action so he allowed Necho's Expeditionary force to escape to Egypt.

Eze 21:21 For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.

Eze 21:22 At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to appoint captains, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting, to appoint battering rams against the gates, to cast a mount, and to build a fort.

4. After surrounding Jerusalem Nebuchadnezzar demanded its surrender; in response Jehoiakim king of Judah shut its gates and a battle ensued.

KJV

Dan 1:2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

NIV

Dan 1:2 And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.

1. After several days of fighting Jerusalem negotiated terms and surrendered.

1.1 At some point, perhaps just before or just after negotiating the terms of surrender, Nebuchadnezzar received word his father, Nabopolassar, had died; consequently he returned to Babylon.

2. Nebuchadnezzar was not only impressed by the beauty of Jerusalem but he no doubt had heard tales of how Hezekiah imprudently displayed the entire wealth of Jerusalem to Merodach-Baladan, one of several prominent chieftains of Babylon.

2.1 The Book of Second Kings records the historical event and the Book of Isaiah provides an historical record and prophecy of the ramifications of Hezekiah's error.

2Ki 20:12 At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of Hezekiah's illness.

2Ki 20:13 Hezekiah received the messengers and showed them all that was in his storehouses--the silver, the gold, the spices and the fine oil--his armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.

2Ki 20:14 Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, "What did those men say, and where did they come from?" "From a distant land," Hezekiah replied. "They came from Babylon."

2Ki 20:15 The prophet asked, "What did they see in your palace?" "They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them."

2Ki 20:16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD:

2Ki 20:17 The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD.

Isa 39:3 Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, "What did those men say, and where did they come from?" "From a distant land," Hezekiah replied. "They came to me from Babylon."

Isa 39:4 The prophet asked, "What did they see in your palace?" "They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them."

Isa 39:5 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD Almighty:

Isa 39:6 The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD.

Isa 39:7 And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

Isa 39:8 "The word of the LORD you have spoken is good," Hezekiah replied. For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my lifetime."

2.1.1 So in fulfillment of prophecy Nebuchadnezzar took many of the Temple implements his "house of the lord" in Babylon.

2.2 Though originally denied by many secular historians we later learned from archaeology that the Chaldeans practiced the custom of taking "worship" implements" from the "temples" of other nations and placing them in their own places of worship.

2.3 This was seen as a sign that "my god is better than your god". The practice was quite old and no doubt practiced by many nations in the area of Palestine.

2.4 For example the Philistine took the Ark and to their great chagrin placed it in their temple of Dagon - the fish god.

1Sa 5:1 And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod.

1Sa 5:2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon.

1Sa 5:3 And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set it in his place again.

2.4.1 This god was Dagon, who is mentioned in the Ras Shamra tablets as the father of Baal - similar to Bellu of the Babylonians.

2.5 Now let's return to our study of Daniel chapter one verse two.

3. Nebuchadnezzar needed a puppet king so he placed Jehoiakim on the throne and wisely took measures to guarantee Jehoiakim's loyalty.

4. As was the custom he gave orders to Ashpenaz to pick the "cream of the crop" from the land as hostages.

KJV

Dan 1:3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

NIV

Dan 1:3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring in some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility--

1. These young men were to be selected carefully as we will see.

2. They were to come from the royal line - young Jewish noblemen. Their family position was to be such as to make them valuable hostages.

3. Tradition tells us there were about 70 such men taken; only four, including Daniel, are listed in Scripture.

4. The word translated "master" in the KJV and "chief" in the NIV is better "prince of the eunuchs." The word RAV in the Chaldean means "head, large, or prince".

4.1 We must remember that both the Hebrew and the Greek terms for eunuch was sometimes applied to "people filling important posts", without regard to corporeal emasculation, although it is possible Daniel and the others were emasculated.

4.1.1 On page 328 of Merrill F. Unger's famous Bible Dictionary, he makes the point that "eunuch may very well have simply meant "a man in a position of authority".

5. Now let's look at verse four where we find a description of those taken.

KJV

Dan 1:4 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

NIV

Dan 1:4 young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.

1. The purpose of the taking in part was to ensure the loyalty of Jehoiakim.

2. As you have just read they were to be taught to speak and think like Chaldeans in order to better serve the king of Babylon.

3. The statement they were to be "young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace" tells us that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego with the some 66 others must have been:

3.1 between the ages of 14 and 17;

3.2 physically attractive;

3.3 intelligent;

3.4 well mannered and

3.5 royalty.”

4. Ashpenaz had the job of selecting and training the young men. He was "a member of the king's inner circle holding what would be today a cabinet level position".

5. Daniel, as earlier noted, and the others taken may or may not have been physically emasculated. On this point we cannot be sure.

6. What we do know, Ashpenaz and his subordinates had the responsibility of teaching them the language of Chaldean, the customs, mores, history and religion of Babylon.

7. The end product in Nebuchadnezzar's plan was "a thorough brainwashing" of some 50 to 70 young men who would stand and serve in his palace as "Chaldeans." It was his intention they cease to be Israelites becoming instead talented and respected Chaldeans.

8. Nebuchadnezzar recall was impressed with Jehoiakim's loyalty to Egypt's Pharaoh Necho therefore he had confidence King Jehoiakim would do a good job but to make certain he deemed the hostages important "insurance".

KJV

Dan 1:5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

NIV

Dan 1:5 The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.

1. The plan was for the "cream of Israel's royal crop" to be trained for three years.

2. At about age twenty they would then begin to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's palace as "ministers" to the King.

3. These were not your average run of the mill hostages.

4. Their daily provision was the royal food of the King.

5. While all of the hostages received the same training, the Scripture will concentrate only Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

6. They were to eat the finest of food and wines.

7. The meat was not blooded and both the food and wines eaten had often been offered to Babylon's gods.

KJV

Dan 1:6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

NIV

Dan 1:6 Among these were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

1. Brain washing didn't begin with the POWs of the Korean War.

2. Recall there is nothing new under the sun says Ecc 1:9.

Ecc 1:9 What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.

3. We now have the Jewish boys listed first by their Jewish names; each of which name has meaning and significance.

4. Let's look at their Hebrew names and their meanings:

4.1 Daniel - his name means "God is judge."

4.2 Hananiah - his name means "The Lord is gracious."

4.3 Mishael - his name means "Who and what is the Lord."

4.4 Azariah - his name means "The Lord is my help."    ö

5. Given what Scripture we have it would seem Daniel was the most unusual of all the boys taken hostage.

5.1 In his appearance, he was aristocratic and good looking. He was intelligent - recall Ezekiel implied Daniel was a genius. Ezekiel in Eze 28:3 compares the brilliance of Satan to that of Daniel.

5.2 As the greatest of all he receives the most special of Chaldean names.

6. Let's go to verse seven where we will analyze the meanings of the new Chaldean names given each boy.

KJV

Dan 1:7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to

Azariah, of Abednego.

NIV

Dan 1:7 The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

1. Daniel's new name is Belteshazzar which means "Bel's prince."
2. Bel was the supreme Akkadian god, Bellu, the ruling god of the Babylonian pantheon and equivalent to Zeus the chief god of Greece and Jupiter the chief God of Rome.
3. Daniel must have looked as though he came from the hand of Bellu.
4. Daniel was identified with the chief of the Babylonian gods.
5. A young man found himself with this early pressure of being selected to receive the "best of names."
6. Little did the Babylonians know that Daniel was already a man of doctrine. They could change his name but they could not change the inner man.
7. Daniel would learn much about the Chaldean language, religion and customs however he would not be swayed from that which he knew was absolute, the Word of God.

End Lesson Taught 7-9-2000