

# GLEANINGS FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

Repeated warnings – For decades, prophets had been warning Judah that God would punish her for her gross sins and rebellion against the Lord. Toward the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC, their warnings reached a fever pitch, yet Judah did not listen. The prophets were ignored, scoffed, or even thrown into prison and cut in two. God planned to use 70 years of captivity to bring the people to their knees and turn them back to Himself. Although His judgment was severe, He still never forgot His promises to David and always preserved a remnant of the nation and a remnant who was faithful to Himself. This is the background and context of the Book of Daniel.

### DANIEL CHAPTER 1

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god. 3 Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, 4 young men (14-18 years old) in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. 5 And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. 6 Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. 7 To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego. 8 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." 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. 17 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. 18 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. 19 Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore, they served before the king. 20 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. 21 Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

1) What kinds of people did Nebuchadnezzar take back to Babylon? Why did he take them?

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2) Were the young men allowed to keep their Jewish identity? Why or why not?

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3) In what ways did Nebuchadnezzar try to brainwash these young men?

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4) What did the king offer Daniel & his friends as enticements to convert from Judaism to Babylonian culture?

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5) At what point did Daniel draw the line, and why there?

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6) What does that tell you about Daniel's character & his relationship with God?

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7) What are some ways that the world seeks to influence and mold young minds today (be specific; give examples from culture, social media, movies, music, education, etc.)?

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8) What temptations do you face today to be conformed to the world?

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9) What did Daniel and his friends do to protect & preserve their faith?

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10) What can you do to protect & preserve your Christian faith from the ungodly influences of the world today?

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