

Believers versus Babylonians

Chapter 11

Audio Lesson: Old Testament #71



Objective: To understand the book of Daniel and how his faith delivered him and honored God.



“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him. I thank and praise you, O God of my fathers: You have given me wisdom and power, you have made known to me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the dream of the king.”

—Daniel 2:20-23

The book of Daniel is the fourth book of the major prophets. Daniel and his three friends were taken to Babylon because they were intelligent young men that the king wanted to educate in Babylonian universities. God used the king’s decree to strategically place this prophet in Babylon to prepare him to minister to the other captives when they arrived. Daniel was faithful to God in very difficult situations in this foreign land, even when his obedience could have gotten him killed. God did miracles through Daniel and his friends that witnessed to the Babylonians that God is real and powerful.

The book of Daniel divides into two sections: chapters 1-6, are historical narrative, and chapters 7-12 are prophetic revelation. Ezekiel, John, and Daniel all prophesied about the end times and they were also exiled prophets. Daniel’s life is a superb example of living a strong, pure, godly life in the midst of a hostile environment even when he was only 14 years old.



1. True or false? Daniel was taken to Babylon during the first fall of Jerusalem, when only a few people were taken captive.
2. True or false? Daniel was already an adult man when he went to Babylon.
3. True or false? The fall of Jerusalem demonstrated that even God could not defeat the Babylonians.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What was included in the book of Daniel?
 - a. Only historical accounts
 - b. Only predictions of the end times
 - c. Only legends about an ancient hero named Daniel
 - d. Historical events during the captivity and prophecies about current and future events.
5. Why did Daniel refuse to eat the food of the Babylonians?
 - a. He thought it was probably poisoned.
 - b. He wanted to be obedient to God's dietary laws.
 - c. He went on a hunger strike in protest against the captivity.
 - d. He was so discouraged that he had no appetite.
6. Match Daniel and his 3 friend's names with their Biblical meanings.

a. Daniel	i. Jehovah was favored
b. Hananiah	ii. Helped by Jehovah
c. Mishael	iii. God is my judge
d. Azariah	iv. Who is like God
7. How did King Nebuchadnezzar try to give Daniel and his friends a new identity?
 - a. He gave them new names that related to Babylonian gods.
 - b. He killed their entire families so they would have no connections to the past.
 - c. He adopted them into the royal family.
 - d. He persuaded them that Babylon's culture was superior to that of the Jews.
8. Why is the fourth chapter of Daniel so remarkable?
 - a. It is the only chapter Daniel actually wrote himself.
 - b. It was added centuries later by scribes.
 - c. It predicts the exact date of Jesus' return.
 - d. It is the confession of faith of King Nebuchadnezzar, who actually wrote part of it.
9. Why was Nebuchadnezzar's request for dream interpretation so unreasonable?
 - a. No king had ever asked to have his dreams interpreted before.
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar demanded that his wise men tell him the dream before they interpreted it.
 - c. The wise men had never taken a course in dream interpretation.
 - d. He knew that dreams do not really mean anything.

10. How did Daniel react to huge, difficult, inescapable, and impossible challenges? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. He went to God in prayer and asked friends to pray too.
- b. He demonstrated faith by trusting God absolutely.
- c. He recognized God as his only source of hope and gave Him all the glory.
- d. He understood that God had a purpose for placing him in that crisis.

11. How did the king react to Daniel's interpretation?

- a. He ordered him to be executed.
- b. He decided the dream must not have been very significant.
- c. He called Daniel "the one in whom God dwells."
- d. He rewarded Daniel by sending him back to Jerusalem.

12. What Babylonian law did Daniel refuse to keep?

- a. A law that prohibited prayers to God instead of the king
- b. A law requiring taxes to be paid to the king
- c. A requirement that everyone must have a Babylonian name
- d. A requirement to honor the divinity of lions

13. What does Daniel teach us about impossible situations?

- a. We can never really understand what God's will is.
- b. God uses impossible situations to close doors of opportunity for us.
- c. The power of God is limited in some situations.
- d. Nothing is impossible for those in whom the Spirit of God dwells.



Do you believe in the absolute power of God in impossible situations? Why or why not? When you go through a crisis or challenge, how should that belief guide your prayers?



Thank God that He is the God of the impossible. If you are facing an "impossible" situation, ask Him to demonstrate His power and love to you and through you in that situation. Pray that like Daniel you will be faithful and that your faith in Him will grow stronger each day.



Going Deeper

1. Explain why God may have strategically placed Daniel and his companions in Babylon before the general captivity. _____

2. How does Daniel show us the way to live the life of a believer in a culture like Babylon? ____

3. What are the obvious applications of this to you, as a believer living in a Babylon-like secular culture? _____

4. How do the spiritual absolutes of Daniel that made it possible for him to live as a believer in the arena of the politics of Babylon apply to you today? (He believed in the power of God, in the Providence of God and in prayer, absolutely!) _____

5. How can you apply the position Daniel took when he refused to eat the unclean foods of Babylon? _____

6. What is the obvious application to the faith of Daniel when he told the officials to make an appointment for him with the king and he would reveal and interpret the dream of the king, when he actually had no idea what the king had dreamed? _____

7. When the wise men of Babylon agreed that the gods do not live in men and Daniel told the king that the God who lived in him had revealed and interpreted the dream, the king thereafter always referred to Daniel as the one in whom the Spirit of God lived. How do you relate to the faith of Daniel, that God living in us should make such a difference? _____
