Introduction to the Book of Daniel

Commentary and Study Questions for Daniel

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Text:

Daniel 1:1-21,

1. In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.
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.
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;
4. Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful 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.
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.
6. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:
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.
8. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine
which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.
9. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.
10. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? Then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.
11. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,
12. Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.
13. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king’s meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.
14. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.
15. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat.
16. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.
17. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.
18. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.
19. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.
20. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.
21. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

Introduction:

I. History Surrounding the Book’s Content:

A. Kings and the Years of their Reigns in the Babylonian Empire

1. Nabopolassar 625-605 B.C. Daniel 1
2. Nebuchadnezzar 605-562 Daniel 1-4
3. Amel-Marduk 562-560
4. Neriglissar 560-556
5. Labashi-Marduk 556 (9months; Josephus)
6. Nabonidus 556-539 Daniel 5, 7, 8

B. Date of Assyria’s Fall: August 612 B.C.

C. Dates of Three Deportations of Judah into Babylon.

1. A great battle took place at Carchemish (on the bank of the Euphrates River). Nebuchadnezzar’s forces defeated Egypt’s forces.

   a. Egypt retreated and Nebuchadnezzar’s forces were in pursuit. Coming to Jerusalem (a vassal to Egypt), they besieged it.
b. This was 605 B.C. Interestingly, Jeremiah said that Nebuchadnezzar was going to come from the north and take Judah captive for seventy years.

i. Jeremiah 25:1-11, The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever: And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord; that ye might provoke me to anger with the
works of your hands to your own hurt. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

c. Due to circumstances (his father died), Nebuchadnezzar had to break off the siege and leave, heading home to assume the throne.

i. Nebuchadnezzar demanded of Jehoiakim loyalty and for three years received it.

ii. Nebuchadnezzar took the shortest route to Babylon (across the Arabian desert) and sent some prisoners the long route to Babylon (Davis, p. 482).
d. In this deportation the four young men (among others) of Daniel 1 were included.

i. **2 Kings 24:7**, And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

2. 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar returned to Jerusalem because of Jehoiakim’s rebellion – Jehoiachin (who reigned for three months) was king at this time (Jehoiakim was dead).

a. Ezekiel was deported at this time

i. **Ezekiel 1:2**, In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin’s captivity,

b. This is considered the first large deportation to Babylon.

i. **2 Kings 24:14-16**, And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king’s mother, and the king’s wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even
seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

3. 586 B.C. By this time Zedekiah was “king” over Jerusalem and Nebuchadnezzar could stand his waffling no more. The city was burned.

a. **2 Kings 24:4-20**, And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the Lord would not pardon. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead. And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt. Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother’s name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out
thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king’s house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king’s mother, and the king’s wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father’s brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

D. Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in October of 539 B.C.

II. An Overview of the Book of Daniel:
A. The author of the book is the Holy Spirit.

1. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**, All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

B. The writer of the book is Daniel.

1. **Matthew 24:15**, When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand). . .

C. The time the book was written: between 538-528 B.C.

D. The purpose of the book is seen in the following:

1. God’s control in the affairs of men;
2. God’s coming and conquering Kingdom;
3. God’s consecrated people;
4. God’s clear truths.

E. Structure of the book: chapters 1, 8-12 were written in Hebrew; chapters 2-7 were written in Aramaic (the international language at the time, Dorsey, p. 259).

1. Introduction/History: chapter 1
2. History: chapters 2-6
3. Apocalyptic: chapters 7-12

Note: The outline followed will be that in the Schofield Study Bible III (subject to modification).

Commentary:

Daniel 1:1-21,

1. In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.
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.
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;
4. Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful 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.
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.
6. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:
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.
8. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? Then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

11. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12. Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king’s meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat.

16. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

17. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.
20. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

21. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

I. Daniel’s Early Life in the Babylonian Court.  A Time Marker.

Daniel 1:1-2, In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. 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.

A. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

1. Became king about 605-604 B.C.

2. Skeptics assert Nebuchadnezzar did not become king until 597 B.C. ([www.skepticsannotatedbible.com](http://www.skepticsannotatedbible.com))

3. However, history records: “In 606-605 B.C., as crown prince, he served as commander-in-chief of the army. He ascended the throne within three weeks after his father’s death, on August 16, 605” (Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. 7, p. 237, 1984).

4. Shinar. Ancient name of Babylon and present day Iraq.

B. Jehoiakim, king of Judah.

1. In his 3rd year as king.
2. Cp. Jeremiah 25:1, (4th year), The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon;

3. The reason for the difference between the record in Jeremiah and Daniel is the different reckoning methods. “The one-year difference arises with other OT dates through the use of different methods of reckoning” (Goldingay, p. 14).

C. Jehoiakim (also known as Eliakim) was son of the last good king of Judah, Josiah.

1. For three years he served the king of Babylon, but then rebelled.

2. Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city of Jerusalem and bound Jehoiakim to carry him to Babylon.

3. Evidently Jehoiakim capitulated and Nebuchadnezzar, satisfied with this, let Jehoiakim sit on the throne until his death (an additional 8 years).

D. The time of this besiegement was about 605 B.C.

1. This was the first of three occasions during which inhabitants of Judah were carted off into captivity.

2. First:

   a. 2 Kings 24:7; And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto
the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

b. **2 Chronicles 36:6-7**; Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.

3. Second:

a. **2 Kings 24:10-16**, At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against he city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers; and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasure of the king’s house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king’s mother, and the king’s wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon, And all the men of might,
even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

3. Third:

a. 2 Kings 25: 1-30, And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host against Jerusalem, and pitched against it: and they built forts against it round about. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king’s garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about) and the king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon. And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he burnt the house
of the Lord, and the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man’s house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen. And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the firepans, and the bowls, and such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. The two pillars, one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord; the brass of all these vessels was without weight. The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the chapiter upon it was brass: and the height of the chapiter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work. And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door: And out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king’s presence, which were found in the city, and the
principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land, and threescore men of the people of the land that were found in the city: And Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah: And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away out of their land. And as for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler. And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethanish, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seriah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite and Jazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. And Gedalish sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldrees: dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you. But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah. And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees. And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the year that he
began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon; And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

II. The King’s Recruitment.

A. Daniel 1:3-7, 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; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful 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. 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. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 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.

B. Ashpenaz, master of the king’s eunuchs.

1. Because of who was in charge, it is thought that Daniel and his friends were emasculated.
2. **2 Kings 20:16-18**, And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, 
Hear the word of the Lord. Behold, the days come, that 
all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers 
have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into 
Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of 
thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt 
beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs 
in the palace of the king of Babylon.

3. **Isaiah 39:7**, And of thy sons that shall issue from 
thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and 
they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

C. Quality of the captive children of Israel.

1. Young men who had some schooling/training already 
and those who were descendents of the king.

2. Why? Perhaps it was because this was an attempt to 
make clear that Israel (Judah) was subservient to 
Babylon.

D. Their training. The king’s diet and curriculum. Three 
years.

E. Noteworthy young men.

   a. Daniel – Belteshazzar.

   b. Hananiah – Shadrach.

   c. Mishael – Meshach.

   d. Azariah – Abednego.
The reason for the “renaming” is uncertain, but Hailey’s words are, perhaps, as good as any: “... Ashpenaz renamed them to break that connection with the God of the Jews and make a new one relating to the Babylonian deities” (p. 25). These young men were probably between the ages of 16 and 20 (Hailey, p. 22).

III. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

IV. Daniel 1:8-21, But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? Then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king’s meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed
with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

A. Daniel’s concern.

1. Daniel’s, as well as Hananiah’s, Mishael’s, and Azariah’s, good standing before the Lord brought him good standing before the chief of the eunuchs.

2. Because of his devotion to God, he (they) requested abstinence from the king’s diet. There is no stated reason for this request except to avoid “defilement.”

3. Some speculate that Daniel had reference to the Law of Moses in Leviticus 11:45-47, and/or Deuteronomy 14:3-21.

   a. Leviticus 11:45-47, For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God; ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

   b. Deuteronomy 14:3-21, Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing. These are the beasts which ye shall eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat, The hart, and the roebuck, and the fallow deer, and the wild
goat, and the pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois. And every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye shall eat. Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; as the camel, and the hare, and the coney: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof; therefore they are unclean unto you. And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase. These ye shall eat of all that are in the waters; all that have fins and scales shall ye eat: And whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye may not eat; it is unclean unto you. Of all clean birds ye shall eat. But these are they of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray. And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture after his kind, And every raven after his kind, And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind, The little owl, and the great owl, and the swan. And the pelican, and the gier eagle, and the cormorant. And the stork, and the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat. And every creeping thing that flieth is unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten. But of all clean fowls ye may eat. Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother’s milk.
4. Perhaps Daniel and his friends were concerned that the diet had a connection to idolatry.

B. The chief of the eunuch’s concern. The concern was based on the king’s command, so his response was reasonable.

C. Daniel’s reply to the chief of the eunuchs:

1. Test us ten days.

2. Give us vegetables and water.

3. Compare us with those who eat the king’s diet.

D. The test and the results.

1. They compared much more favorably physically than the other youths.

2. The diet for the other youths was changed.

3. The Lord blessed Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah in a special way to bring about His plan.

E. The time to stand before the king.

1. At the end of the appointed time (three years), the youths stood before the king.

2. Nebuchadnezzar saw in Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah greater qualities than those possessed by the other youths.

3. They stood before the king.
4. Daniel continued to serve the various kings until the first year of king Cyrus.

a. 2 Chronicles 36:20-23, And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia; To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath. To fulfil threescore and ten years. Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

b. Ezra 1:1-11, Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be
with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredat the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them; thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives. Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

c. This simply means that his service spanned the entire seventy-year period God said Judah would be in captivity.
d. Daniel actually served into the third year of Cyrus.

e. Daniel 10:1, In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.
Questions

Daniel 1:1-21

(Questions based on NIV text.)

1. Who wrote the book of Daniel? Give reasons for your answer. _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________

2. Where was the book of Daniel written? Give reasons for your answer. _________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________

3. Why was the book of Daniel written? What was the purpose for the writing of the book of Daniel? _________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________

4. When was the book of Daniel written? Give reasons for your answer? ____________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________
5. Describe the monumental happenings with which the book of Daniel begins. See Daniel 1:1, 2. __________________________

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______________________________

6. Who was Ashpenaz and what special duties did King Nebuchadnezzar give him? ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

7. Israelites from the _______________ ______________ and the _______________ _______________ _______________ without any _______________ _______________, showing _______________ for every kind of _______________, well _______________, _______________ to _______________, and _______________ to _______________ in the _______________. (NIV)

8. If you had been in Babylon at that time, would Ashpenaz have chosen you? Why or why not? ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________
9. Ashpenaz was “chief of the court officials” (NIV), “master of his eunuchs” (AKJV). Were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah castrated? ____________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

10. Ashpenaz was to teach those chosen the ____________ and ____________ of the _____________ for ____________ years, after which they were to enter the ________________ ________________.

11. What new names were given to the four “Hebrew children”? Daniel - _______________; Hananiah - _______________; Mishael - _______________; Azariah - _______________.

12. What is the significance of these name changes? ______________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

13. What was the problem with Daniel’s eating food and wine from the King’s table? ___________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

14. When have you really taken a firm stand to do right under adverse conditions? ________________________________
15. When have you taken the “easy way out” and failed to stand with God? ______________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

16. Ashpenaz was _________________ to Daniel and wanted to ___________ him ________________. What concerned Ashpenaz? _________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

17. Is it necessary for a person to “throw a fit” in order to stand for right? _______________ Describe the approach taken by Daniel? Was this method successful? ________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

18. What changes do you need to make in your diet to make you healthier and better nourished? ____________________________
19. Of what did Daniel’s chosen diet consist? What do you eat? Is there a lesson in this somewhere for us?

20. God gave Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah ___________ and ___________ of all ___________ of ___________ and ___________. Daniel could ___________ ___________ and ___________ of all ___________. (NIV)

21. When graduation time came, who placed at the head of their class?

22. They entered the ___________ ___________ and he found them ___________ ___________ than all the ___________ and ___________ in his ___________ ___________ in every matter of ___________ ___________ about which he ___________ them.
23. _________________ remained in the king’s service until the ________________ year of ______________ ______________ which is dated to the year B.C. ______________.