

# Table of Contents

---

---

Daniel 1 .....	7
Daniel 2 .....	13
Daniel 3 .....	21
Daniel 4 .....	27
Daniel 5 .....	33
Daniel 6 .....	41
Daniel 7 .....	49
Daniel 8 .....	55
Daniel 9 .....	61
Daniel 10 .....	69
Daniel 11 .....	75
Daniel 12 .....	83

## Introduction

Daniel was taken to Nebuchadnezzar's court eight years before the first group of Jews went into exile (2 Kings 24:1; 2 Chronicles 36:6,7). He went in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (2 Kings 23:36-24:7). The first deportation took place in 597 BC when Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar. This means that Daniel and some other youths from the royal and noble families of Judah were taken to the king's palace in about 605 BC.

It happened more often in those days that a king brought royal sons of defeated enemy nations into his own palace. The king hoped that holding them hostage would ensure the defeated ruler would act with care. At the same time, these sons were trained and educated in the culture and language of the conquering king. Later the indoctrinated sons might be put in charge of the conquered nation in the hope they would prove to be loyal vassals.

## Daniel at Nebuchadnezzar's court

Daniel and his friends were at the court of Babylon to be assimilated into the Babylonian lifestyle. They had to be taught Babylonian literature and language.

Daniel and his friends are called youths in verse 4 (NIV has "young men"). They were still quite young, about 16 years old, or maybe even younger. They were from the royal family which means that they were descendants of David. About a century before, King Hezekiah had sinned against God by not giving God the glory when Babylonian envoys came to visit him (2 Kings 20). Then God, through the prophet Isaiah, said that some of

Hezekiah's own sons (or "descendants" as in the NIV) would be taken away and would become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. The deportation of Daniel and others from the royal family was part of the punishment for the sins of Judah and its kings. Later on, in Daniel 9:5, Daniel will confess before God the sinfulness of the Israelites, and will include himself: "we have sinned". Daniel was a God fearing descendant of David and Hezekiah.

In Daniel, we see Satan attempt to destroy the people of God, especially the house of David from whom the Saviour of God's people would come. Satan was quite successful in tempting the kings of Judah to follow other gods and turn away from God, with the result that Judah was conquered by their enemies. The situation of Daniel and his friends, held hostage at the Babylonian court, is a far cry from the glory time under King David!

As long as there are God fearing descendants of David, Satan's work is not finished. At the court of the Babylonian king, there was a battle going on between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. It is not just part of history, nor is it simply an interesting story like we might find in a book for boys: 'The adventures of Daniel and his friends', or something like that. What happened at the court of Babylon is part of the history of salvation. The "history of salvation" is a term that is used for all God's deeds in history that lead to the coming of the Saviour. As a part of the history of salvation, the battle at the court of Babylon determines whether the Saviour can come or not. If the house of David is lost and Satan succeeds in destroying the people of God, then God will not be able to fulfill his promises.

We know that God will never give up the work that he has begun, and he will fulfill his covenant promises. Therefore we also know that what we read in the book of Daniel is the work of God. He must be glorified and praised for it.

### **Daniel's faithfulness**

King Nebuchadnezzar tried to change Daniel and his friends in various ways. The first change was to transform them from citizens of Judah into faithful servants of his empire. He wanted them to forget their instruction in the Word of God, and instead be filled with knowledge from the Babylonian books. Even their language should be changed to the Babylonian language. In this way their whole outlook would be influenced and determined by the way of thinking of the Babylonian philosophers.

and compassion in the chief eunuch that he went along with the proposal. It was unheard of that someone would go against the king's requirements, but through the grace of God, Daniel and his friends were allowed to do so.

### **Trust in God**

Remember that Daniel was only a boy, 14 to 16 years old. It took courage for him to come with this request. But when he stood up and decided to remain faithful to the LORD, God blessed him and opened ways for him to do so. Daniel trusted in God. That is one of the themes that we will see coming back time and again in the book of Daniel. The outcome of the great battle between the empire of Satan and the empire of God does not depend on us. It depends on God. If we are faithful to God, then we may know that God will use us in that battle. It is for us an honour and privilege to be used by God. Our task is to be faithful to God; and we know God's will from the Bible. We should live according to God's will in all that we do. If we are faithful, then God will open ways for us to do his work.

### **Questions**

1. In Daniel's time Satan tried to prevent Christ's birth by attempting to destroy the people of Israel. Since Christ has already come and conquered, what is Satan trying to do now?
2. The struggle between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God is sometimes described as a chess match (in which the victor has already been determined). What would you describe as the opening moves? How do we see that for every one of Satan's moves God has already prepared a counter-offensive?
3. Satan, through King Nebuchadnezzar, tried to force Daniel and his friends to become more like the culture around them. How does Satan do that to us today? How can people distinguish us from the world?
4. Daniel and his friends were identifiable as God's children by their different language. Even though we all speak English, can you be identified as God's child by your language? (Think of swearing, and the slang you use. Also, do you speak of blessings and providence or good luck?)
5. In today's terms we might say that in his early teens Daniel suddenly lost family, church and Bible, and was placed in a totally heathen society. He was ready to stand up for his faith. Are you?