

Destin Church of Christ

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Chapter 18: Daniel in Exile

Daniel 1 – 3; 6; Jeremiah 29 – 31

Introduction:

In chapter 18, we encounter four young men who were in a place where “no one was looking.” They could compromise and cut corners and no one would ever know ... except God. *“Integrity is who you are when no one is looking!”* ~~ Charles Marshall

Plot Points:

- God is sovereign over the events of our lives and world empires.
- Daniel and his friends were called to a difficult task: to be a holy people in an unholy culture.
- As seen in the lives of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, pride is always punished.
- God never abandons his people, whether they are in a lion’s den, a fiery furnace, or exile.

Lesson Breakdown:

- Belly of the Beast (Daniel 1)
- Dreams (Daniel 2)
- Decisions (Daniel 3)
- A Message for the New King (Daniel 6)
- Unshakable Promise (Jeremiah 29-31)

As you watch the video for Session 18, notice some of the main points:

- ✓ Daniel resolved himself not to be defiled by the royal food and wine.
- ✓ Anyone who fails to bow down will be thrown in a fiery furnace.
- ✓ Who said you have to do wrong to rise?
- ✓ In the Upper Story, the King of kings closes the mouths of lions for bowing only to him.
- ✓ “If he doesn’t save me, I have no regrets.”

UNDERSTAND THE STORY:

➤ Daniel 1:

- In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar surrounds Jerusalem and cuts off all supplies to it. (NIB) [Daniel 1:1]

- The best and the brightest of Jerusalem’s young men are chosen and taken to Babylon. The king wanted young men without blemish, attractive in appearance, skillful in all wisdom, filled with knowledge and understanding, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace. (pg. 249) [Daniel 1:3-4]
 - Among these were the Hebrew youths: Azariah, Daniel, Hananiah, and Mishael (pg. 249-250) [Daniel 1:6]
1. They are groomed for the civil service and given Babylonian names. (pgs. 249-250) [Daniel 1:7] What were their names changed to?
 - a. Azariah:
 - b. Daniel:
 - c. Hananiah:
 - d. Mishael:
- Daniel decides that he will not defile himself with the king’s delicacies and wine. (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:8]
 - Daniel negotiates with a steward and, along with Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego, is allowed to live on a special diet for ten days, after which they will be compared with the other young men who ate the king’s delicacies. (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:12-14]
2. What special diet does Daniel request from the king’s chief official? (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:12]
 - After ten days, the steward observed that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego were better nourished than all the young men who ate the king’s delicacies. The king removed their choice food and the wine and gave everyone vegetables. (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:15-16]
 - God gave the four Hebrew young men knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom, and He gave Daniel understanding in dreams and visions. (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:17]
 - The king interviews Daniel and his companions, and they are promoted. (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:19]
 - In every question of wisdom and knowledge that the king asked them, he found them to be ten times better than all his magicians and astrologers. (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:20]
 3. How long was Daniel in Babylon? (pg. 250) [Daniel 1:21]

➤ Daniel 2

- In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar could not sleep because he was troubled with dreams. (pg. 250) [Daniel 2:1]
- The Chaldean soothsayers, when brought in before the king, could not give an interpretation, and said no one on earth could. (pg. 251) [Daniel 2:10-11]
- Nebuchadnezzar orders the slaughter of all the soothsayers, but God reveals to Daniel Nebuchadnezzar's dream ... in a dream. (pgs. 251-252) [Daniel 2:12-13, 19a]
- Daniel gives thanks to God for the knowledge granted him. (pg. 252) [Daniel 2:19b-23]
- Daniel goes to Arioch and tells him not to kill the king's wise men ... that he will interpret the king's dream. (pg. 252) [Daniel 2:24]
- Daniel acknowledges to Nebuchadnezzar that it was God who revealed the dream to him. (pg. 252) [Daniel 2:27-28]
- Daniel describes Nebuchadnezzar's dream: an image appeared, having a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, feet of iron and clay. The king saw a stone cut, but not by human hands. The stone struck the statue's feet and the whole statue shattered into pieces which the wind carried away. The stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. (pg. 253) [Daniel 2:31-35]
- The interpretation is that Nebuchadnezzar is the golden head, and the other parts of the image's body are subsequent kingdoms (Medo-Persian, Greek and Roman). When the fourth kingdom, represented by the feet, is destroyed, all other kingdoms will be destroyed along with it. (pg. 253) [Daniel 2:36-40]
- The iron and clay of the feet indicates that the kingdom is partly strong, and partly weak. The fourth kingdom will be divided into ten smaller kingdoms, each represented by a toe. During this time, God will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered by another people. This is represented by the stone. (pg. 253) [Daniel 2:42-44]
- King Nebuchadnezzar tells Daniel that the "dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure," and since he (Daniel) could reveal this secret, his God was "God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." (pg. 253) [Daniel 2:45-47]

- Nebuchadnezzar promotes Daniel, gives him many great gifts, makes him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise *men* of Babylon. (pg. 254) [Daniel 2:48]

➤ Daniel 3:

- Nebuchadnezzar makes a golden image, sixty cubits [90 feet] tall and 6 cubits [9 feet] wide. (pg. 254) [Daniel 3:1]
 - All Babylon's provincial governors, regional governors, and local governors, together with the counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the high officials of the provinces came to the dedication of the image. (pg. 254) [Daniel 3:3]
 - Nebuchadnezzar gives a command to worship the statue when the people heard the sound of the horns, flutes, zithers, lyres, harps, pipes, and all kinds of music, or be thrown into a fiery furnace. (pg. 254) [Daniel 3:4-6]
 - After the sound of the horn, some Chaldeans tell Nebuchadnezzar that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego would not fall down and worship the statue. (pg. 255) [Daniel 3:7-12]
 - Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought before him. He gives them one more chance to bow down and worship the statue, but if they refuse, he tells them they will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. (pg. 255) [Daniel 3:13-15]
4. What was the response of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to the king? (pg. 255) [Daniel 3:16-17]
 5. But even if God did not deliver them from the burning fiery furnace, what would they do? (pg. 255) [Daniel 3:18]
- The furnace is heated to seven times its normal heat. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are tied up and thrown into the blazing furnace fully dressed in their pants, turbans, robes, and other garments. (pg. 255) [Daniel 3:19-20]
 - Because the temperature of the furnace was so high, those throwing Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into the fire were burned up. (pgs. 255-256) [Daniel 3:22]
 - Nebuchadnezzar saw four men, not tied up, walking around in the fire and they weren't hurt. The brilliance of the fourth man was like the Son of God. (pg. 256) [Daniel 3:25]

- Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth (*door*) of the furnace and told Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego to come out. The three men left the furnace. (pg. 256) [Daniel 3:26]
6. What amazed the officials when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fiery furnace? (pg. 256) [Daniel 3:27]
- Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the greatness of the Hebrew God who protected the three men. (pg. 256) [Daniel 3:28]
 - Nebuchadnezzar makes a proclamation that nothing evil should be said against the God of the Hebrews. Any people, nation or language that spoke anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego would be torn apart and their houses would be made into hills of sewage. (pg. 256) [Daniel 3:29]
 - The king promoted (*caused to prosper*) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. (pg. 256) [Daniel 3:30]
- (pg. 256-257) [Daniel 4:]
7. Who wrote Daniel 4? (NIB) [Daniel 4:4]
- Nebuchadnezzar was living in his palace in peace and prosperity when he had a strange dream which troubled him. (NIB) [Daniel 4:4]
 - In the dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a great, strong, beautiful tree that reached to the heavens. It provided shade for animals and birds dwelt in its branches. It had abundant fruit that fed all living creatures. [Daniel 4:10-12]
 - The holy messenger said to chop down the tree, cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. [Daniel 4:13-14]
 - The stump was to be left in the earth bound with a band of iron and brass. Let it be wet with dew and live with the animals. Let his mind be that of an animal and not of a man for seven years. [Daniel 4:15-16]
 - This was so that those who are alive would know that God rules over the kingdoms of peoples and gives them to anyone he wishes to place over them. [Daniel 4:17]
 - Daniel said the tree was Nebuchadnezzar. [Daniel 4:20-22]

- It is seven years before he acknowledged that God rules over the kingdoms of people and that he gives them to anyone he wishes. In the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar was to be driven from among men, live in the fields with the wild animals, eat grass like an ox, and be wet with the dew from the heavens. [Daniel 4:23-25]
- Daniel advised Nebuchadnezzar to stop sinning and to do what was right. He also told him to turn away from his sins by showing mercy to the oppressed. All these things began to happen twelve months after his dream. [Daniel 4:27-29]
- At the end of seven years, Nebuchadnezzar praised and honored the God who rules forever. His sanity was restored, and the kingdom given back to him. [Daniel 4:34-36]
- Nebuchadnezzar's final statement concerning the King of heaven was: "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, extol, and honor the King of heaven, for all his deeds are right, and his ways are just. He can humble those who walk in their own pride." [Daniel 4:37]

➤ (pg. 257) [Daniel 5:]

- There is a gap of perhaps 20 years between chapters 4 and 5. King Nebuchadnezzar died and was replaced by a successor.
- The new king, Belshazzar, has a great feast. He gives the command and is brought the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem. The people at the feast drink wine from the vessels, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone. [Daniel 5:1-4]
- Suddenly, the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote on the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. [Daniel 5:5]
- The king's wise men could not read or interpret the writing, so Daniel was summoned. [Daniel 5:8, 13]
- The inscription was: Mene, Mene, Tekel , and Parsin. [Daniel 5:25]
- The interpretation was:
 - MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; [Daniel 5:26]
 - TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; [Daniel 5:27]
 - PERES: Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians." [Daniel 5:28]
- Daniel is dressed in purple, a chain of gold is put around his neck, and he's made the third ruler in the kingdom. [Daniel 5:29]

- Belshazzar is slain, and Darius the Mede receives the kingdom at about sixty-two years of age. [Daniel 5:30]

➤ Daniel 6:

- Daniel is made one of three governors over the 120 satraps (regional rulers) in Darius' administration. The king considers placing Daniel over the others. (pg. 257) [Daniel 6:1-3]
 - There is a plot hatched by the satraps, who persuade the king to sign a decree saying that anyone petitioning a god or man other than Darius will be thrown into a den of lions. (pgs. 257-258) [Daniel 6:4-9]
8. How long was the decree to last? (pg. 258) [Daniel 6:7]
- Learning that the decree had been signed, Daniel goes to the upstairs room of his house, opens its window toward Jerusalem, and prays. He does this three times per day as he had always done. (pg. 258) [Daniel 6:10]
9. Was Daniel being defiant?
- Report reaches Darius that Daniel has prayed to his God. (pg. 258) [Daniel 6:13]
 - Daniel is thrown into the lion's den; Darius tells Daniel that his God will protect him. (pg. 259) [Daniel 6:16]
 - The king sealed the entrance to the den. He then went to the palace and fasted through the night. No musicians were brought before him, and he did not sleep. (pg. 259) [Daniel 6:17-18]
 - Early in the morning, the king goes to the den of lions and calls out to Daniel. Daniel, being alive, answers him. (pg. 259) [Daniel 6:19-23]
 - The men who had accused Daniel are killed when they are thrown to the lions, along with their wives and children. (pg. 259) [Daniel 6:24]
 - Darius calls Daniel the servant of "the living God", who has kept Daniel safe from the power of the lions, and decrees that all must honor the God of Daniel. (pg. 260) [Daniel 6:26-27]
 - Daniel prospers during the reign of Darius and during the reign of Cyrus the Persian. (NIB) [Daniel 6:28]

➤ Jeremiah 29:

- Jeremiah 29 are words of a letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remainder of the elders who were carried away captive—to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon. (NIB) [Jeremiah 29:1]
- The message to the captives was: build houses, plant gardens, he married, have children and settle – the captivity will last for seventy years. (NIB) [Jeremiah 29:5-9]
- The captivity will last for seventy years, after which, he will bring them out of captivity. He will gather them from all the nations and from all the places he had driven them. (pg. 261) [Jeremiah 29:10-14]
- Cyrus issued a decree permitting Jewish exiles to return to Jerusalem. (pg. 263) [Ezra 1:1]

➤ Jeremiah 30:

- The Lord tells Jeremiah to write down everything He has told him. (pg. 260) [Jeremiah 30:1-2]
- He will bring back from captivity Israel and Judah and cause them to return to the land He had given their fathers. (pg. 260) [Jeremiah 30:3]
- Verse 8 ... (pg. 260)
- Verse 10-11 ... (pg. 260-261)

➤ Jeremiah 31:

- The LORD says the people in the land of Judah and in its towns will once again say: ‘The LORD bless you, you prosperous city, you sacred mountain.’ He will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint. (pg. 261) [Jeremiah 31:23-25]
- It appears that the prophecy between Jeremiah 30:2 and Jeremiah 31:25 was either delivered to the prophet in a dream or he be permitted to awake up from his tomb. If the latter, having seen this prosperity, he would be content to return to his grave. (NIB ... pg. 261) [Jeremiah 31:26]

In chapter 19 of *The Story*, we’ll look at the incredible return home from exile for the people of Jerusalem, along with the rebuilding of the temple.

Ezra 1 – 6; Haggai 1 – 2; Zechariah 1; 8