

I don't want to go into all of the controversies regarding this book. All of them have been addressed by a lot of scholars and commentators – on both sides of the issues. There are 2 main issues:

1. Did Daniel actually write this book?
 - a. This is settled in Daniel 10:2 "In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks."
 - b. The fact that most of it is in third person is not unusual for Hebrew writers.
2. Did Daniel or someone else write it after the prophecies took place;
 - a. Absolutely not; All ideas supporting this have been handled quite nicely. The common theme of the naysayers is that they do not believe in predictive prophesy which explains their position.

(Daniel 1:1) In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.

Jeremiah 25:1 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; in the latter part of the third, and beginning of the fourth year of his reign; this was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon: in

(Daniel 1:2) 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.

with part of the vessels of the house of God; we read in [2Kings 24:13](#) that some of the vessels of the temple were carried away afterwards, in Jeconiah's time, and still there were some left, as the pillars, sea, bases, and other vessels, which were carried away by the king of Babylon, in Zedekiah's time, [Jer 27:19](#), **which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god;** the land of Shinar, where Babylon stood, and where the tower of Babel was built and by all accounts is the same as Babylon.

[Genesis 11:1-2](#) Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. (2) And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.

But, let's not ignore two bigger points:

1. The LORD gave the king of Judah (Jehoiakim) into the hands of the king of Babylon. The LORD never always takes responsibility for His actions. Nebuchadnezzar didn't just do this on his own!
2. It was an abomination for the priests and Levites to see the temple articles used in the worship of God Almighty being carted off to a pagan country, a pagan temple and a pagan treasury; these were all meticulously crafted under the direction of God and were ritually cleansed so that they could be used in all temple worship! They would most likely be melted down and made into idols and for other rites used in their false religion. And, the honest ones (of which

were very few), would have known that the LORD had caused this to happen by the hand of His servant, Nebuchadnezzar!

(Daniel 1:3) 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 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.

The king also commanded that several Jewish boys who were of noble lineage, be taken to Babylon.

The purpose was indoctrination into the Babylonian culture. He took "the best and brightest" and it's been said that these were boys between 13-17 years old. They would be educated in the science and wisdom of the **Chaldeans** for service in the King's court after 3 years of training. The boys could not have any blemishes and must be good-looking and teachable?

And, oh by the way, don't even think about coming against me, the king of Babylon since I have your sons!

(Daniel 1:5) 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.

Their care-takers didn't choose the food and drink they would eat – the king would! It would be the same as he ate.

(Daniel 1:6) Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

We are now introduced to Daniel and three other boys. These are their Hebrew names.

(Daniel 1:7) 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.

- i. The name **Daniel** (meaning *God is my judge*) was changed to **Belteshazzar** (meaning *Bel's prince*). Bel was a main pagan god.
- ii. The name **Channaniah** (meaning *Beloved by the LORD or God is gracious unto me*) was changed to **Shadrach** (meaning *Illumined by Sun-god*).
- iii. The name **Mishael** (or Michael) (meaning *Who is as God, or Asked of God*) was changed to **Meshach** (meaning *Who is like Venus*).
- iv. The name **Azariah** (meaning *The LORD is my help*) was changed to **Abed-Nego** (meaning *Servant of Nego*).

And so, the indoctrination and assimilation has begun!

(Daniel 1:8) 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.

Daniel, as we shall see, was not alone in this decision. His decision was based on his love for God who commanded that His children not eat meat sacrificed to idols OR were not otherwise kosher. While drinking wine was not prohibited (and has been common in most Jewish families), Daniel felt as if this should be avoided as well.

While he "purposed" in his heart (made a steadfast decision which might not end well!), he did not make any demands, but rather, made a request of the chief eunuch to abstain from these foods.

(Daniel 1:9) Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.

This was not Daniel's intent...as a matter of fact, he probably thought that it would cause issues...

The word "favor" in the Hebrew means "loving-kindness" and the word "goodwill" in Hebrew means "compassion"

(Daniel 1:10) 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."

The eunuch had a very good point and we can't begrudge him if we think him a bit selfish...it WAS a life-or-death situation!

(Daniel 1:11) 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."

Daniel's request and assurance were of God! He knew his LORD would not forsake him nor leave him in this matter. By maintaining an undefiled lifestyle, he and his friends were also maintaining their heritage and their obedience to the Law of Moses.

By the way, "vegetables" is anything grown (that is, sown), and can include bread and beans, peas etc.

(Daniel 1:14) 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.

The proof is in the pudding, as it were. They were obviously well fed and there was no sign of any weight loss either. I suppose without the wine, their countenance was brighter and more alert as well.

(Daniel 1:16) Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

It worked, and their wishes were granted!

(Daniel 1:17) 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.

During their training, it was God who was credited with their success. And he distributed His gifts according to His will! Daniel was also given spiritual understanding in ALL visions and dreams.

(Daniel 1:18) 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.**

Of all the boys captured and brought from Jerusalem, these four were chosen to serve the king.

(Daniel 1:20) 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.

This speaks volumes for their God, the LORD whom they truly served...for how can the students be considered greater than the teachers?

How? God!

(Daniel 1:21) Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

Ezekiel 14:13-14 "Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. (14) Even *if* these three men, **Noah, Daniel, and Job**, were in it, they would deliver **only themselves** by their righteousness," says the Lord GOD.

So, here we go! We're on our way to see some of the greatest prophecies in the Bible. And in those prophecies, we're going to understand that the God we serve is bigger,

more powerful, more gracious, more faithful, more than **anything** we could imagine or create.

As we study this masterpiece of the Holy Spirit, do not allow satan rob you of the blessing of seeing Our God at work in history before it even occurs! If you find yourself perplexed, ask a question; if you find yourself doubting the veracity of this work, rebuke the father of lies by the authority given to you by your LORD God, Jesus!

Then perhaps read this passage in Isaiah 40:

Isaiah 40:9-31 O Zion, You who bring good tidings, Get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, You who bring good tidings, Lift up your voice with strength, Lift *it* up, be not afraid; Say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" (10) Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong *hand*, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward *is* with Him, And His work before Him. (11) He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry *them* in His bosom, *And* gently lead those who are with young. (12) Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance? (13) Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or *as* His counselor has taught Him? (14) With whom did He take counsel, and *who* instructed Him, And taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge, And showed Him the way of understanding? (15) Behold, the nations *are* as a drop in a bucket, And are counted as the small dust on the scales; Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing. (16) And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt offering. (17) All nations before Him *are* as nothing, And they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless. (18) To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? (19) The workman molds an image, The goldsmith overspreads it with gold, And the silversmith casts silver chains. (20) Whoever *is* too impoverished for *such* a contribution Chooses a tree *that* will not rot; He seeks for himself a skillful workman To prepare a carved image *that* will not totter. (21) Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? (22) *It is* He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants *are* like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. (23) He brings the princes to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth useless. (24) Scarcely shall they be planted, Scarcely shall they be sown, Scarcely shall their stock take root in the earth, When He will also blow on them, And they will wither, And the whirlwind will take them away like stubble. (25) "To whom then will you liken Me, Or *to whom* shall I be equal?" says the Holy One. (26) Lift up your eyes on high, And see who has created these *things*, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, By the greatness of His might And the strength of *His* power; Not one is missing. (27) Why do you say, O Jacob, And speak, O Israel: "My way is hidden from the LORD, And my just claim is passed over by my God"? (28) Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. (29) **He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. (30) Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, (31) But**

those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

After all that He declares about Himself, remember the final 3 verses of this chapter and see His Loving-Kindness and His promises to all of us who wait for His return!