

DANIEL  
CHAPTER

1

# DAY ONE

1. Read the chapter at least twice.  
A believer's walk of faith is often a struggle to remain morally and spiritually balanced in a world that is constantly trying to pull us off track. One must determine to make daily wise choices to avoid drifting in a direction that could cause danger. In the Book of Daniel, the question of how to remain spiritually pure and devoted in the face of a society and a King who know nothing about the One True God is a lesson in grace and patience. Don't forget the Biblical references and the NIV chapters themselves are included at the end of each study guide.

2. The first verse is rich with details that will help us understand the period and events. We want to make note of the specific references seen in the first verse.

"In the \_\_\_\_\_ year of the reign of King \_\_\_\_\_, the King of \_\_\_\_\_, Nebuchadnezzar \_\_\_\_\_ came to Jerusalem and besieged it."

3. We have included a chart of the Kings at the end of this lesson. Some led well and some led the people away from God.

How many of the Kings of Israel were good?

How many of the Kings of Judah were considered consistently good?

How many were only partially good?

It breaks the heart of God to see someone start off good and then turn to evil, especially someone in leadership. Think about it.

Who are you leading and how are you leading?

Locate King Jehoiakim on the chart.

4. Let's look at just a few generations of King Jehoiakim's family tree. (It might be helpful for future study to highlight these verses in your Bible.) What does God's word say about the rule of these kings.

Scripture Reference	The King of Judah	What was their rule like?
2 Kings 18:5-6	Hezekiah	
2 Kings 21:1-2 and 2 Chronicles 33:10-13	Manasseh	
2 Kings 21:19-20	Ammon	
2 Kings 22:1-2	Josiah	
2 Kings 23:31-32	Jehoahaz	
2 Kings 23:36-37	Jehoiakim	

5. Just so you will know how the kings of Judah ended their reign, look at these last two kings. They became vassal kings with little power after the Babylonians had conquered them.

Scripture Reference	The King of Judah	What was their rule like?
2 Kings 24:8-9	Jehoiachin	
2 Kings 24:17-19	Zedekiah	

6. King Hezekiah destroyed the idols of the land and reopened the temple. He reinstated the Passover. There was revival in the land of Israel and the people turned their hearts back to God. 2 Kings 20:21 tells us Hezekiah died and his son Manasseh became King.

Read 2 Kings 21:1-9. See how his son Manasseh ruled as King.

List any facts you see concerning King Manasseh and his rule.

7. Sadly, just because one trusts in the Lord and leads well as King Hezekiah did, it does not guarantee their children will follow in their steps. Everyone is accountable for their own choices.

What does God's word tell us about the responsibility of parents?

Read Ephesians 6:4, Proverbs 22:6; Colossians 3:21; Proverbs 29:17; Titus 2:4.

8. Manasseh's name means, "*causing to forget.*" I believe he lived up to his name. After reading 2 Kings 21:1-9, what did his reign cause others to forget?
9. Often, people want to blame their upbringing and their surroundings for the poor choices they make in life. I admit that it is much easier for someone to know what is right if they see a good example. However, (and ultimately) who chooses our actions and reactions?
- Since Josiah's father Amon, was not a man worth following in his footsteps, whose character did Josiah carefully emulate to live a life pleasing to God?
- Go back and look at 2 Kings 22:1-2, again. (Biblical reference from question 4)
10. Jehoahaz reigned for just three months when he was removed and taken as a prisoner to Egypt where he died. Who became king of Judah after Jehoahaz?  
Read 2 Kings 23:33-34.
11. Without the ability to "look back" clearly and carefully evaluate the past, it can feel as though some terrible event just "came out of left field."  
After reading about the previous kings of Judah can you see why God allowed the Babylonians to invade and take captive the nation of Judah?
- What was the #1 problem and sin in this nation?
- What did they refuse to do?  
Read Psalm 33:12  
Who have the people of Judah been ignoring and refusing to acknowledge?
12. God made a covenant with Abram in Genesis 17.  
Read Genesis 17:1-8  
What non-negotiable instruction did he give Abram?
- Genesis 17:6-8 (use a highlighter to mark all the "I will" statements)  
List the promises given by God in this covenant?
13. Now that we have seen a bit of what has been going on in Judah we are better prepared to look at the book of Daniel. God is sovereign over the affairs of all mankind.
- God is going to discipline his people. Discipline is defined as training or punishment to correct disobedience. We understand this as parents. What is the loving thing to do?  
Does it benefit our children if we consistently ignore bad behavior and disobedience?
14. The people were not without warning. God had sent prophets who spoke warnings and tried to call them to repentance. Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and Zephaniah all spoke the word of the Lord to these rebellious and obstinate people. Yet they would not listen.  
Who did God use to discipline his people?  
Read Daniel 1:1-2 again.
15. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and took captives and treasure home with him.  
What treasures did he take back to Babylon?
16. Many of the inhabitants of Judah found themselves captives and living in Babylon.  
In Daniel 1:3-4, what does King Nebuchadnezzar order Ashpenaz, his chief court official, to do?  
Be specific.

17. Can you imagine how these people might have felt? They have been conquered and relocated, possibly separated from family and friends since they are now slaves in Babylon. The articles of God's temple have been taken to Babylon and placed in the treasury of this pagan, Gentile king. He has treated the holy items as mere trinkets of plunder. Have you ever been treated unfairly by someone more powerful than you?

Did you feel all your decisions were taken out of your control or were the things you considered precious confiscated by someone else?

Did you feel like all hope was lost?

Where can one turn to find comfort and help in a time like this?  
Read Hebrews 4:16

18. Read 2 Chronicles 7:14,  
What did God say to Solomon concerning his people?

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What should we do if we find ourselves in a hopeless or difficult situation?

19. Jeremiah was a prophet during this time. These events did not simply happen to the people of Jerusalem without warning. The prophets did their best to warn the people to repent. When you look around at our nation today do you ever think we may just be too far gone?

Read Jeremiah 32:26-35  
Notice the question being asked. Is anything too hard for God?

Is the issue really the size of the problem or is it the stiff-necked, rebellious, and sinful people?

Fill in the blanks.

Verse 29: ...the people arouse my anger by \_\_\_\_\_ on the roofs to Baal and by \_\_\_\_\_ to other gods.


Verse 30: ...done nothing but \_\_\_\_\_ in my sight from their youth...done nothing but arouse \_\_\_\_\_ with what their hands have made.

Verse 32: The people of Israel and Judah have \_\_\_\_\_ by all the evil they have done.

Verse 33: They turned \_\_\_\_\_ and not their faces... they would not \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ to discipline.

Verse 34: They set up their vile images \_\_\_\_\_ and defiled it.

Verse 35: They built \_\_\_\_\_ to Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to \_\_\_\_\_ to Molek

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20. When we refuse to acknowledge our loving God and choose to live a life of rebellion like we have seen in these verses, can we really expect God to turn a blind eye to such sin?

Often people fear they have become too vile for God to forgive, and they simply resign themselves to a life of darkness and depression.

Read Isaiah 55:6-7

What are we to do?

What will we find?

Yes, it is really this simple to find forgiveness! That's what's so amazing about grace!!!

21. Did you notice God's promise to his people in Jeremiah 32:37-38?  
What had God promised?

22. Times of correction and discipline may not feel like it, but they are signs of love and compassion.  
Why do parents' discipline and train their children?

Our children may think we enjoy it, but the truth is we do it so they will grow up to be men and women of character.

Read Hebrews 12:11

What is the benefit of discipline?

What does it produce?

23. Let's get back to Daniel I  
What were those chosen by Ashpenaz expected to learn?

24. What do you believe was Nebuchadnezzar's reason for changing their names and educating these Jewish captives in this way?

25. How long was this educational program supposed to last?

After that what were they to do with this education?

26. Who were the four Israelites specifically named in verse 6?

Do a bit of research and find the meaning of their Hebrew names.

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27. What were the new names given?

See if you can find the meaning of their new names.



28. Daniel 1:8 tells us he resolved to not defile himself with the royal food and wine. What does it mean to resolve oneself to do or not do something?

29. Would you be described as a person of resolve?

When you make a decision are you easily swayed to change or are you able to stand firm when you believe it is the right thing to do?

30. What might have been the problem with the King's provisions?  
There is a clue in the word "defile." Daniel purposed in his heart to NOT defile himself with the King's food.

31. What can we learn from the way Daniel handled this difficult situation?

32. When you find yourself stuck between choosing to please God or people, how do you handle things?

What did Paul advise about this in Galatians 1:10?



# DAY | FOUR

33. Too often we forget we can ask God to help us be creative and make an appeal when faced with a choice of conscience. Think of the last time you were faced with a choice that made you uncomfortable. How did you handle it?

Would you handle things differently next time?

34. Ashpenaz was a bit hesitant to allow Daniel to choose his own diet. What did he fear might go wrong?

35. Did you notice that Ashpenaz gave us a hint as to Daniel's age?

How was Daniel described in verse 10?

36. Daniel and his friends have been enrolled in a three-year program. What does Daniel suggest as a test period?

37. Have you ever tried this diet?  
Did you notice a difference?

38. Look at verse 9  
What was the blessing Daniel enjoyed?

Fill in the blanks, "Now God had caused the official to show \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to Daniel."

39. Do you recall a time you enjoyed the favor and compassion of God?

40. Pay close attention; it was not simply their restricted diet that brought God's blessings, it was the reason behind their actions. One more time: What was their reason for not wanting to eat the king's provisions?

41. What were the results of this ten-day test?

42. These young men were bright and very intelligent, but what was the key to their exceptional ability to learn and understand the things being taught?

Look back to Daniel 1:9,17

These young men remind me of Joseph when he was in captivity in Egypt. Captivity does not have to be our down fall; it can be the steppingstone to our finest hour and fulfilling God's purpose.

43. Does God still bless his followers and help us succeed when we are focused on pleasing and obeying him?

44. Think of the last time you were faced with a great learning curve.  
Did you ask God to bless your efforts?

How did you fare?

45. Daniel was specifically blessed with understanding visions and dreams of all kinds.  
Do you think he knew how beneficial this would soon be?  
Think back along your life. In what way has God blessed you and you may not have totally understood or appreciated His blessing until much later?

Please, do not rush past this question and simply say there was nothing.

How has God helped you develop the character that set you up for success in your God-given roll?

46. The day finally arrived. Daniel and his friends were brought in to be questioned by king Nebuchadnezzar.  
Read Daniel 1:18-20  
How did things go for them?

47. This will be the first of several tests Daniel will experience while in captivity. As we said, he is a very young man at this time. It is approximately 605 B.C.  
Read Daniel 1:21  
Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 B.C.  
After reading Daniel 1:21, we know Daniel remained in captivity a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_ years.

48. Are you in it for the long haul?  
Can you remain in a situation that is not of your choosing and be pleasant to be around and useful for God's kingdom while having to wait?

Are you willing to allow God to move according to his own time and divine plan?

49. Which of God's character qualities did you see in this chapter?

50. What did you learn about God from studying this first chapter of Daniel?

51. What is one thing you might purpose in your heart this week?

52. Being in captivity can look like many things to many people. Captivity or freedom is not the issue. The issue is obedience to God and what we know is right and pleasing.

Read Micha 6:8

What will that look like for you today?

Please write out a specific action for each.

- a. Do justice
- b. Love kindness
- c. Walk humbly with your God

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