SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES



THE COMPLETE STUDY

Daniel

Chapter One

Setting the Standard — Deep Dive and Workbook Companion in One

NASB 1995 | LESSON 1 | DEEP DIVE | THREE VOICES

Every workbook question from *Discovering Daniel* lesson 1 — the Scripture written out, each answer in one sentence, cross references and the teachers — with the **Deep Dive** woven in verse group by verse group: the Hebrew behind the chapter, **Amir Tsarfati**, **John MacArthur** and **David Guzik** at length, and diagrams of the three deportations, the four tools of Babylon and the names, where Daniel drew the line, the three times God gave, and seventy years at his post.

THE PASSAGE

Daniel 1:1–21

The exile · the line · the test

THE METHOD

Workbook + Deep Dive

Capture · Analyze · Compare · Execute

PREPARED FOR ED & PAUL SMITH · BIBLE STUDY · SMITHFORCHRIST.COM

WHAT'S INSIDE

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One workbook lesson, one chapter, and the Deep Dive inside it — movement by movement

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"But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank." — Daniel 1:8

BEFORE YOU BEGIN · THE PASSAGE

Daniel 1:1–21

Setting the Standard — The Lord Gave, and Daniel Made Up His Mind

† How to Read This Study

The workbook lesson runs in the order you work it at the table — **Capture the Scene**, **Analyze the Message**, **Compare This Passage with the Rest of Scripture**, **Execute** — with every question from *Discovering Daniel* written out, the NASB95 text under it, an answer in one sentence you can copy into the book, a cross reference and the teachers (lesson 1, the first companion built, adds Chuck Missler to the three). Because the whole chapter is one lesson, *Capture the Scene* is read in four verse groups, and after each group the book pauses for **Going Deeper**: the Deep Dive movement for those verses — the passage marked, the Hebrew Daniel wrote, and the three voices at length. Diagrams sit where the history and the line matter. The book ends with the passage set inside the whole Bible, the three voices side by side, and questions for the table.

- **Capture the Scene** — what do I see? Observation, straight from the text, in four verse groups.
- **Going Deeper** — after each group, the Deep Dive for those verses: Hebrew, history and the three teachers.
- **Analyze the Message** — what does it say and mean? With *Discovering Daniel* open.
- **Compare** — how is it supported elsewhere in the Bible? Every cross reference written out.
- **Execute** — how does this affect my life? Off the page and into the week.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel | JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You | DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · DANIEL 1:8

But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

† Before the Passage

The year is 605 BC. Nebuchadnezzar, crown prince of Babylon, has just broken Egypt at Carchemish and swept south through Syria to the gates of Jerusalem; his father Nabopolassar dies while he is in the field

and he rides home to take the throne. On the way he takes Jehoiakim's submission, some of the temple vessels, and a handful of the best young men of Judah's royal and noble houses. It is the first of three deportations — 605, 597, 586 — and the smallest. It is also the one that carries Daniel. Daniel calls it "the third year of Jehoiakim"; Jeremiah calls the same year "the fourth" (Jeremiah 25:1), because Daniel, who would spend his life in Babylon, counts the way Babylon counted, with the king's accession year left out.

The headline of verse 1 is that Nebuchadnezzar came. The sentence that governs the whole book is verse 2: "the Lord gave." Judah did not fall to Babylon's strength; it was handed over, on schedule, for generations of idolatry and seventy years of unkept sabbaths (Leviticus 26:33–35; 2 Chronicles 36:20–21; Jeremiah 25:11), exactly as Isaiah had warned Hezekiah a century before: "some of your sons … will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon" (2 Kings 20:18). The king who put the vessels of God's house in the house of his god thought he had taken the God of Israel captive. The rest of the book, and chapter 5 in particular, will show who was holding whom.

Hold one word over the whole chapter: **gave** — *nathan*, three times. The Lord gave Judah into Nebuchadnezzar's hand (v. 2); God gave Daniel favor and compassion before the commander (v. 9); God gave the four youths knowledge and wisdom (v. 17). Babylon's three-year program did not make them wise, and Babylon's king did not win the war. God gave. Tsarfati reads the chapter for Israel in exile and for the believer in a Babylon of his own; MacArthur presses the line Daniel drew and the conviction settled before the pressure came; Guzik walks the dates, the names, the re-education program and the ten days. All three agree on the sermon: the decision was made before the plate arrived.

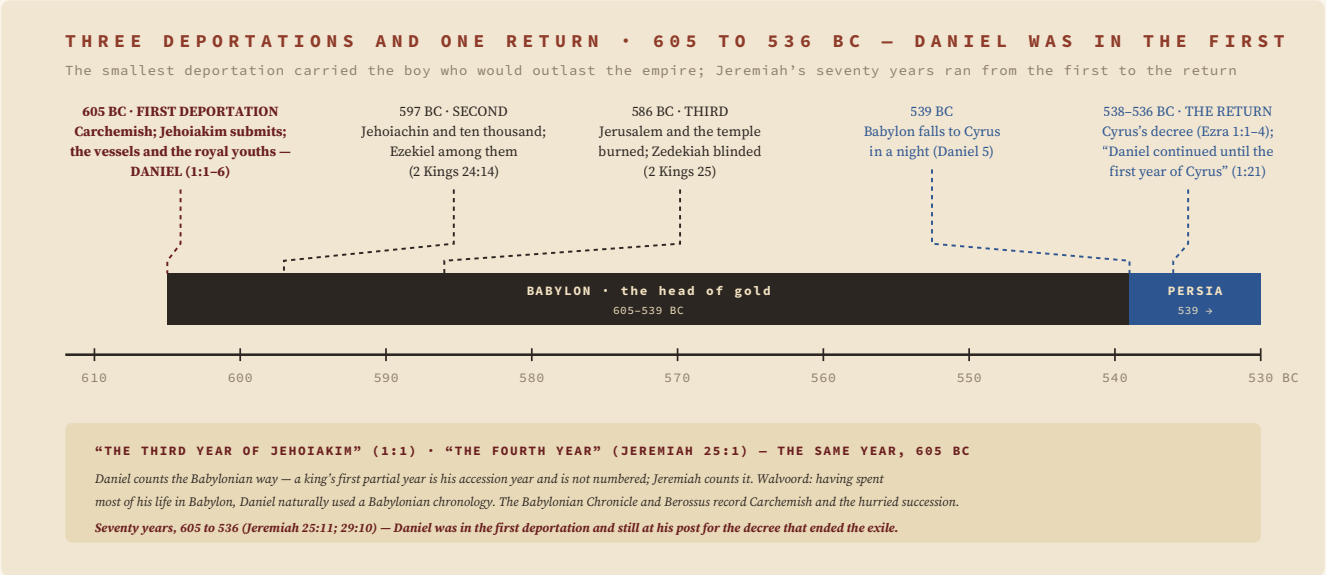


FIGURE 1 · THREE DEPORTATIONS AND ONE RETURN — 605 TO 536 BC, AND WHY DANIEL SAYS "THE THIRD YEAR"

PART ONE · DISCOVERING DANIEL · LESSON 1

DANIEL 1:1–21 · CAPTURE THE SCENE, WITH THE DEEP DIVE

Setting the Standard

The Lord gives Judah into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, and four of the best young men of the royal house are carried to Babylon with the temple vessels — to be separated, re-educated, fed from the king's table and renamed after his gods. Daniel sets it upon his heart before the first meal, draws the line where obedience is at stake, proposes a ten-day test, and God gives favor, wisdom, and seventy years at his post.

IN THIS PART

- Capture the Scene — eleven questions on Daniel 1, verse by verse, in four groups
- Going Deeper I — *The Lord Gave* (1:1–7), and the four tools of Babylon with the names
- Going Deeper II — *Daniel Made Up His Mind* (1:8–10), and where he drew the line
- Going Deeper III — *Test Your Servants for Ten Days* (1:11–16), and the three times God gave
- Going Deeper IV — *Ten Times Better* (1:17–21), and seventy years at his post

01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

What do I see? · verses 1–7

Using my Bible, working through Daniel 1 verse by verse.

KEY VERSE · DANIEL 1:8 NASB95

But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

1 What did King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army do to Jerusalem and the treasures in the house of God, the temple (Daniel 1:1-2)? P. 9

Daniel 1:1 · NASB95

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

Daniel 1:2 · NASB95

2 *The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.*

IN MY WORDS

Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem and carried Jehoiakim and the sacred vessels of God's house off to the pagan temple treasury in Shinar—but I never forget that verse 2 says the Lord gave them over, so this was God's discipline, not Babylon's strength.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Chronicles 36:7** "Nebuchadnezzar also brought some of the articles of the house of the LORD to Babylon and put them in his temple at Babylon."

CHUCK MISSLER · Koinonia House

The land of Shinar is where Babel began (Genesis 11), so Missler sees this as more than geography—the sacred vessels are being carried back to the very cradle of organized rebellion against God.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik stresses the two most important words are "the Lord gave"—Judah fell on schedule to God's word through the prophets, so even in catastrophe God was on the throne.

2 **Upon returning to Babylon, which of the Hebrew captives did Nebuchadnezzar want brought to him, and what qualifications were they expected to meet (verses 3-4)?** P. 9

Daniel 1:3 · NASB95

3 *Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles,*

Daniel 1:4 · NASB95

4 *youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them* ⚠ *the literature and language of the Chaldeans*.

IN MY WORDS

He wanted the royal and noble young men—handsome, healthy, sharp, and teachable—the very best of Judah, groomed to serve in the Babylonian court.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Kings 20:18** Isaiah's warning to Hezekiah: "some of your sons... will be taken away; and they will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon."

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur notes Babylon's strategy was assimilation, not brutality here—take the finest young minds and re-educate them so a conquered people would produce its own loyal servants.

CHUCK MISSLER · Koinonia House

Because they were of the royal seed brought into the king's palace, Missler ties this straight to Isaiah 39:7, seeing its literal fulfillment in Daniel and his friends.

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3 **For what purpose did Nebuchadnezzar want these captives, and how long would their training period last (verses 4-5)?** P. 9

Daniel 1:5 · NASB95

5 *The king appointed for them a daily ration from the* 🔁 *king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated* 🕒 *three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.*

IN MY WORDS

He wanted them retrained in Chaldean learning for three years so they could stand in his personal service, which tells me Babylon was after their minds and loyalties, not just their labor.

CROSS REFERENCE **Romans 12:2** "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."—the exact pressure Daniel faced.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik points out the three-year program was a total re-programming—language, literature, diet, and name—designed to make them think and live like Babylonians.

4 **Which four captives are named (verses 6-7)? Give their Hebrew names and the Babylonian names assigned to them.**

P. 10

Daniel 1:6 · NASB95

6 *Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.*

Daniel 1:7 · NASB95

7 *Then the commander of the officials ⚠ assigned new names to them; and to Daniel he assigned the name Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach and to Azariah Abed-nego.*

IN MY WORDS

The four are Daniel (→ Belteshazzar), Hananiah (→ Shadrach), Mishael (→ Meshach), and Azariah (→ Abed-nego).

CROSS REFERENCE **Proverbs 22:1** "A good name is to be more desired than great wealth…"—Babylon tried to strip the very names that pointed to God.

CHUCK MISSLER · Koinonia House

This is Missler's signature point: every Hebrew name honors God (Daniel = 'God is my judge,' Hananiah = 'Yahweh is gracious,' Mishael = 'Who is like God,' Azariah = 'Yahweh helps'), while each new name honors a Babylonian idol—Bel, Aku, and Nego—a deliberate assault on their identity.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik observes they could not stop others from changing their names, but no one could change their hearts—so they chose their battles wisely and stood firm where it truly mattered.

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

Movement I · The Lord Gave

DANIEL 1:1–7 · A siege, the temple vessels in a pagan treasury, the best of Judah's youth — and four tools for making a Babylonian

Before the workbook moves on to Daniel's decision, read the first seven verses as the Deep Dive reads them — the Hebrew for *the Lord gave*, *no defect* and the four names, and the three teachers on an exile that was covenant rather than chance and a program that wanted converts, not slaves.

> *"1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god."*
>
> DANIEL 1:1–2

וַיִּתֵּן אֲדֹנָי

VAYYITTEN ADONAI · "THE LORD GAVE"

Nathan, to give, hand over — the verb of the chapter (vv. 2, 9, 17). Nebuchadnezzar did not take Jehoiakim; the Lord gave him. The vessels (*kelim*) go to "the land of Shinar" — the plain where Babel was built (Genesis 11:2) — and into "the house of his god," Marduk's treasury: the king's claim that his god had beaten Israel's. Chapter 5 is the answer to that claim.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati begins where the book begins — with Israel disciplined, not defeated. The Lord gave Judah into Babylon's hand because Judah had given itself to Babylon's gods for generations; the exile is covenant, not chance (Deuteronomy 28). He stresses Shinar: the vessels of the true God carried back to the cradle of organized rebellion, and a captive boy carried with them who would outlast the empire. For Tsarfati, Israel in Babylon is the pattern of Israel among the nations ever since — scattered by God, kept by God.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

"The Lord gave." MacArthur calls those two words the key to the book and to every chapter in it. The sovereignty that will set up and remove kings in chapter 2 is already at work in verse 2, handing over a king and a temple. He notes that the vessels were put in a pagan temple as a trophy, and that God let them sit there — until the night He wrote on a wall over them. The believer's comfort in a bad year is not that God is absent from it, but that He is the one who gave it.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik handles the dating: Daniel's "third year" and Jeremiah's "fourth" are the same 605 BC, Babylonian and Judean reckoning respectively — Walvoord: having spent most of his life in Babylon, Daniel naturally counts the way Babylon counted. He cites the Babylonian Chronicle and Berossus on Carchemish and the hurried succession, and notes that the first deportation was small and select: the king took the cream, not the crowd.

"[3] Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles, [4] youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them ⚠ the literature and language of the Chaldeans. [5] The king appointed for them a daily ration from the ↻ king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated ◷ three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service. [6] Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. [7] Then the commander of the officials ⚠ assigned new names to them; and to Daniel he assigned the name Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach and to Azariah Abed-nego."

DANIEL 1:3–7

אֵין־בָּהֶם כָּל־מאוּם

EIN-BAHEM KOL-MUM · "IN WHOM WAS NO DEFECT"

Mum is blemish — the word for an acceptable sacrifice (Leviticus 22:20). The king wanted royal and noble youths without defect, good-looking, intelligent, discerning, able to serve: the best of Judah, to be taught "the literature and language of the Chaldeans," fed from the king's table (*pathbag*, a Persian loanword for the king's delicacies) for three years, and renamed. Four tools: separation, education, diet, identity.

דָּנִיֵּאל → בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר

DANIYYEL → BELTESHATSTSAR · "GOD IS MY JUDGE → BEL, PROTECT HIS LIFE"

Every Hebrew name honored God; every Babylonian name honored a Babylonian god. *Daniel*, God is my judge, became *Belteshazzar*, Bel protect his life; *Hananiah*, Yahweh is gracious, became *Shadrach*, likely tied to the moon-god Aku; *Mishael*, Who is what God is?, became *Meshach*; *Azariah*, Yahweh has helped, became *Abed-nego*, servant of Nebo. Control the name and you try to control the theology.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati reads verses 3–7 as Babylon's strategy for every generation of Jews since: not the sword but the school. Take the brightest, teach them the empire's books in the empire's language, feed them from the empire's table, and rename them after the empire's gods — and in three years a conquered people will produce its own loyal servants. He notes that the four were probably teenagers, and that the pressure was not to deny God but to forget Him.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur notes that the king did not want slaves; he wanted converts. The program was assimilation, and it was generous — the best food, the best education, a place at court. The danger of Babylon is seldom brutality; it is comfort with a worldview attached. He reads the renaming as the deepest tool: a man who answers to a name that praises Bel will, in time, think of himself as Bel's. The four answered to the names and never became what they meant.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik lays out the four tools — separation from home and temple, education in a new worldview, diet that made them dependent on the king, identity in new names — and translates the names. He adds the note on *saris*, "official," which need not mean eunuch, and the observation that they could not stop others from renaming them; no one could rename their hearts. They chose their battle, and it was not the one over the name.

HOW TO MAKE A BABYLONIAN · FOUR TOOLS, AND THE NAMES — DANIEL 1:3–7

Not the sword but the school. Take the best, and in three years a conquered people produces its own loyal servants.

SEPARATION v. 3	EDUCATION v. 4	DIET v. 5	IDENTITY v. 7
Far from home, family, temple and sabbath — the old world out of reach	"the literature and language of the Chaldeans" — a new worldview, daily	The king's choice food and wine — dependence on his table, his provision	New names after Babylon's gods — answer to Bel long enough and you are Bel's

THE HEBREW NAME			THE BABYLONIAN NAME	
Daniel	*God is my judge*	→	**Belteshazzar**	*Bel, protect his life*
Hananiah	*Yahweh is gracious*	→	**Shadrach**	*likely tied to Aku, the moon-god*
Mishael	*Who is what God is?*	→	**Meshach**	*Who is what Aku is?*
Azariah	*Yahweh has helped*	→	**Abed-nego**	*servant of Nebo*

Every Hebrew name honored God; every new name honored a god of Babylon. They answered to the names — and never became what the names meant.

FIGURE 2 · HOW TO MAKE A BABYLONIAN — FOUR TOOLS, AND THE NAMES (1:3–7)

01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

continued · verses 8–10

5 **What did Daniel resolve not to do, and why (verse 8)?** P. 10

Daniel 1:8 · NASB95

[8] *But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.*

IN MY WORDS

Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the king's food and wine—likely because it was unclean and had been offered to idols—and I love that he settled it in his heart before the plate ever arrived.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 119:11** "Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You."—conviction stored up before the test.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur calls this the hinge of the chapter: Daniel acted on conviction, not preference, drawing a clear line at the point where obedience to God and loyalty to Babylon collided.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik highlights 'made up his mind'—the decision was made in advance, and he pursued it with courtesy and wisdom rather than confrontation.

6 **What was the nature of the relationship between the chief of eunuchs and Daniel (verse 9)?** P. 10

Daniel 1:9 · NASB95

[9] *Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials,*

IN MY WORDS

God gave Daniel genuine favor and compassion in the official's eyes, so the relationship was warm—but the credit belongs to God, who was working behind the scenes.

CROSS REFERENCE **Proverbs 16:7** "When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that Daniel's courtesy and God's providence worked together—Daniel was winsome, and God moved the official's heart toward him.

7 **When Daniel requested that he and his friends not eat or drink of the king's food, how did the chief of eunuchs answer at first (verse 10)?** P. 10

Daniel 1:10 · NASB95

10 *and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king."*

IN MY WORDS

At first he said no out of fear—he was afraid that if the young men looked worse than the others, the king would have his head.

CROSS REFERENCE **Proverbs 29:25** "The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik observes the official's objection was real and reasonable, which is why Daniel answered it not with argument but with a wise, testable proposal.

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

Movement II · Daniel Made Up His Mind

DANIEL 1:8–10 · A line drawn at the king's table, before the pressure came — and a commander afraid for his head

Questions 5 to 7 asked what Daniel resolved, how God moved the commander, and why the commander first said no. The Deep Dive adds the Hebrew behind *made up his mind* and *favor and compassion*, the three reasons for the refusal, and the three teachers on the hinge of the whole book.

"8 But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. 9 Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials, 10 and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king.""

DANIEL 1:8–10

וַיָּשֶׂם דָּנִיֵּאל עַל־לִבּוֹ

VAYYASEM DANIYYEL AL-LIBBO · "DANIEL MADE UP HIS MIND"

Literally "Daniel set it upon his heart" — a settled decision, made before the plate arrived. He would not "defile himself" (*ga'al*, to pollute, stain — Isaiah 59:3; Malachi 1:7) with the king's food or wine. Three likely reasons: it was not kosher (Leviticus 11); it had been offered to Babylon's gods first; and to eat at the king's table was to pledge covenant loyalty (Baldwin: "to share a meal was to commit one's self to friendship; it was of covenant significance"). He accepted the name and the books; he drew the line where obedience to God was at stake.

חֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים

CHESED U-LE-RACHAMIM · "FAVOR AND COMPASSION"

Before Daniel ever asked, "God granted Daniel favor" — *chesed*, loyal kindness, and *rachamim*, tender mercy, the word from the womb — in the eyes of Ashpenaz. God had gone ahead of him (Proverbs 16:7). The commander's fear is real and reasonable: haggard faces, and his head. Daniel does not argue with it.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati calls verse 8 the hinge of the whole book of Daniel: a teenager in exile, with every reason to go along, decides in his heart before the first meal that he belongs to the God of Israel. He stresses that Daniel *sought permission* — the stand was not rebellion but conviction with courtesy — and that it was taken over something small, because a man who will not compromise over a plate will not compromise over a furnace. Israel's survival in exile was built on verse 8.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur reads the verse as the model of conviction: Daniel did not react to pressure; he had already decided. "Made up his mind" is the difference between the believer who falls and the believer who stands — not strength in the moment but settledness before it. He notes the line was drawn at the point where loyalty to Babylon and obedience to God actually collided, not at every point of friction, and that Daniel's manner was as godly as his stand: he asked, and he did not sulk when refused.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik gives the three reasons for the refusal — the law, the idols, the covenant meal — and then Spurgeon: "Be ready for a bad name; be willing to be called a bigot." But he balances it: Daniel was not needlessly offensive. He also underlines verse 9, that favor preceded the request — God was working on the commander before Daniel opened his mouth — and that the commander's objection was the kind of thing a wise young man answers with a proposal, not a protest.

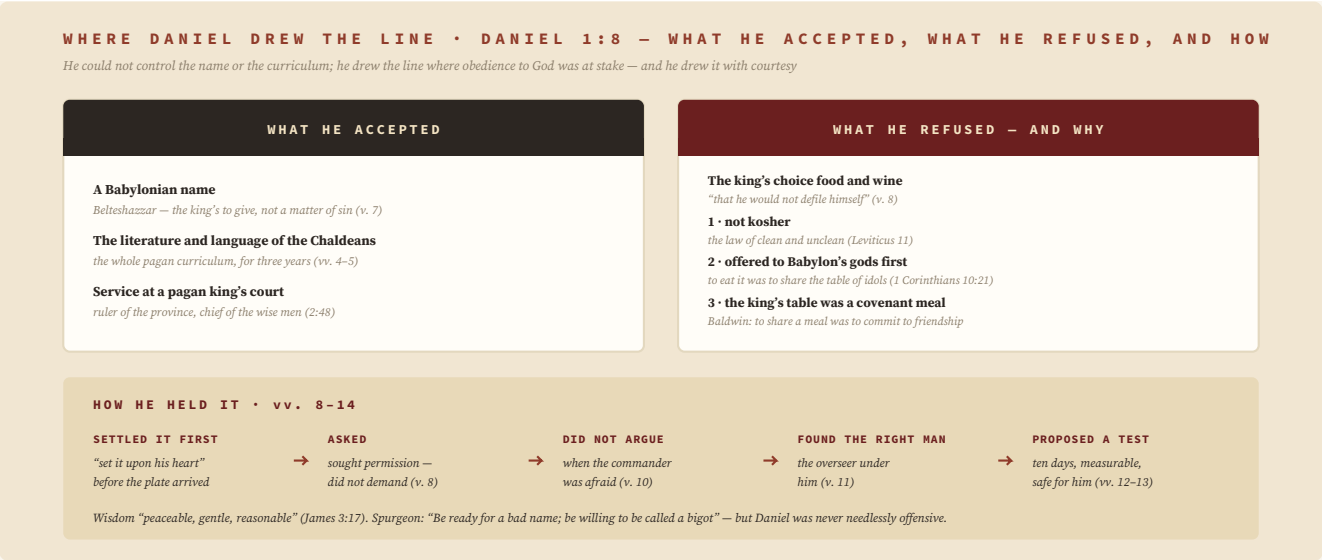


FIGURE 3 · WHERE DANIEL DREW THE LINE — WHAT HE ACCEPTED, WHAT HE REFUSED, AND HOW HE HELD IT (1:7–14)

01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

continued · verses 11–16

8 **What test did Daniel propose, and how did the chief of eunuchs respond (verses 12-14)?** P. 10

Daniel 1:12 · NASB95

12 "*Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink.*

Daniel 1:13 · NASB95

13 *Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king's choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see."*

Daniel 1:14 · NASB95

14 *So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days.*

IN MY WORDS

Daniel proposed a ten-day trial on vegetables and water with the results judged by their appearance, and the overseer agreed—faith paired with practical wisdom.

CROSS REFERENCE **Malachi 3:10** "'Test Me now in this,' says the LORD of hosts..."—a God who invites His people to prove His faithfulness.

CHUCK MISSLER · Koinonia House

Missler notes the word for 'vegetables' is zero'im—food grown from seed—and the ten-day test kept Daniel from anything tainted by idolatry while giving God room to prove Himself.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik commends Daniel's wisdom: he didn't demand or rebel, he proposed a short, measurable test that protected the official and honored God.

9 **What was the short-term result of the test (verse 15)? And the long-term result (verse 16)?** P. 11

Daniel 1:15 · NASB95

15 *At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food.*

Daniel 1:16 · NASB95

16 *So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables.*

IN MY WORDS

Short-term, after ten days they looked healthier and better-nourished than everyone else; long-term, the overseer permanently swapped their diet and kept giving them vegetables.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 Samuel 2:30** "...those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed."

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur draws the principle plainly: God vindicated their conviction, proving that no one loses by obeying God, even when obedience looks like a disadvantage.

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

Movement III · Test Your Servants for Ten Days

DANIEL 1:11–16 · A creative, limited, measurable proposal — and a result no diet explains

The test. The Hebrew for *test* and *vegetables*, the wisdom of the proposal, and the three teachers on a vindication the world could inspect and a result that came from God rather than from the menu.

> *"[11] But Daniel said to the overseer whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, [12] "Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink. [13] Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king's choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see." [14] So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days. [15] At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food. [16] So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables."*
>
> DANIEL 1:11–16

נַסֹּ־נָא אֶת־עֲבָדֶיךָ

NAS-NA ET-AVADEKHA · "PLEASE TEST YOUR SERVANTS"

Nasah, to try, prove. Refused by the commander, Daniel goes to the overseer under him with a proposal: ten days, vegetables (*zero'im*, things sown — seeds, grains, greens) and water, judged by appearance — short, measurable, low-risk for the man who had to say yes. That is wisdom "peaceable, gentle, reasonable" (James 3:17). And at the end of ten days they were "better and fatter." Ten days of vegetables do not beat a royal diet; the point is not nutrition but God's hand (Exodus 23:25).

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati stays on the method. Daniel did not demand, picket or preach; he offered a test that protected the official and left room for God to prove Himself — a God who says "test Me now in this" (Malachi 3:10). He reads the outcome as a small miracle with a large purpose: God vindicated the stand so that the four would learn, before the furnace and the lions, that obedience is never a disadvantage. The overseer never went back to the king's menu.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur draws the principle plainly: no one loses by obeying God, even when obedience looks like a loss. The test was fair, the result was God's, and the vindication was visible — the kind the world can inspect. He notes the overseer's decision in verse 16, "continued to withhold," as the permanent fruit of a ten-day faithfulness: a small stand taken well changes the system around it.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik commends the creativity: Daniel found the man who could say yes, made the test short, made it measurable, and made it safe for him. He notes that the result came from God and not from the vegetables — it was not a diet plan — and that the chapter is careful to say the four were compared with the youths who ate the king's food, in the overseer's presence. The verdict was not Daniel's; it was Babylon's.

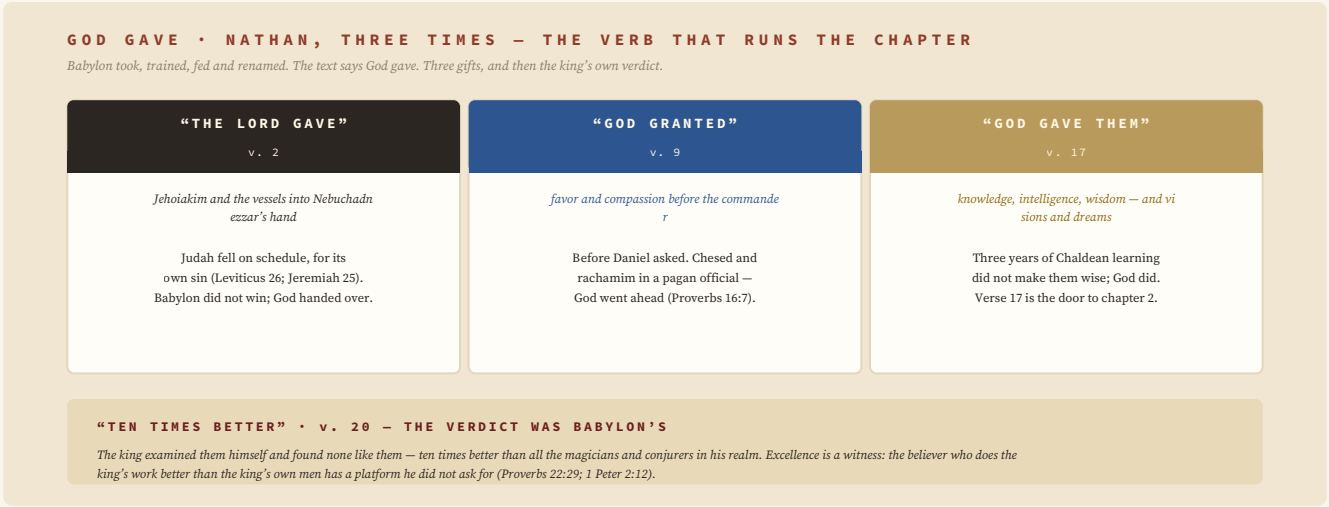


FIGURE 4 · GOD GAVE — NATHAN THREE TIMES, AND THE KING'S OWN VERDICT (1:2, 9, 17, 20)

01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

continued · verses 17–21

10 Who enabled Daniel and his friends during their training period (verse 17)?

P. 11

Daniel 1:17 · NASB95

17 *As for these four youths, △ God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood ☆ all kinds of visions and dreams.*

IN MY WORDS

God Himself gave the four of them knowledge and skill in all learning, and He gave Daniel the added gift of understanding visions and dreams.

CROSS REFERENCE **James 1:5** "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously..."

CHUCK MISSLER · Koinonia House

Missler flags verse 17 as the hinge of the whole book—Daniel's gift with visions and dreams sets up the interpreted dreams and end-times prophecies still to come.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur underscores that their brilliance was a gift, not merely talent—God is the source of true wisdom, and He equips those He sets apart.

11 **After all the training was completed, what did King Nebuchadnezzar find out about Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (verses 18-20)?** P. 11

Daniel 1:19 · NASB95

19 *The king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service.*

Daniel 1:20 · NASB95

20 *As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ☆ ten times better than all the ⚠ magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm.*

IN MY WORDS

The king found none like them and judged them ten times better than all his magicians and enchanters, so they entered his personal service.

CROSS REFERENCE **Proverbs 22:29** "Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings..."—exactly where God placed Daniel.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes 'ten times better' shows excellence is a witness—their God-given competence gave them a platform in the highest court of the empire.

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

Movement IV · Ten Times Better

DANIEL 1:17–21 · God gave the four their wisdom, the king gave his verdict — and Daniel outlasted the empire

The examination and the last verse. The Hebrew for *God gave them* and *until the first year of Cyrus*, and the three teachers on brilliance as gift, excellence as witness, and a faithfulness that outlived the empire.

> *"17 As for these four youths, △ God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood ☆ all kinds of visions and dreams. 18 Then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them, the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 The king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service. 20 As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ☆ ten times better than all the ⚠ magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm. 21 And Daniel continued until ◷ the first year of Cyrus the king."*
>
> DANIEL 1:17-21

נָתַן לָהֶם הָאֱלֹהִים

NATAN LAHEM HA-ELOHIM · "GOD GAVE THEM"

The third *nathan*. Babylon gave the four three years of Chaldean learning; God gave them "knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom" — and Daniel "understood (*bin*, to discern) all kinds of visions and dreams," which is the hinge into chapter 2 and everything after it. The king's own examination finds them "ten times better than all the magicians (*chartummim*, scribe-priests) and conjurers (*ashshaphim*, enchanters)." The verdict is Babylon's.

עַד־שְׁנַת אַחַת לְכוֹרֶשׁ

AD-SHENAT ACHAT LE-KHORESH · "UNTIL THE FIRST YEAR OF CYRUS"

Daniel "continued" — through Nebuchadnezzar, through Belshazzar, through the fall of Babylon in 539 BC, to the first year of the Persian king who signed the decree that sent the Jews home (Ezra 1:1–4). The boy taken in the first deportation lived to see the end of the exile. Faithfulness outlives empires.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati reads verse 17 as the gift that makes the book: Daniel's understanding of visions and dreams is why there is a Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9 and 12, and why Israel has a calendar for the end of the age. He draws the line from the four teenagers at Babylon's court to Esther at Persia's and to every Jew who has served a Gentile throne with excellence — in Babylon, not of it. And verse 21 is the promise: the exile had an end date, and Daniel was still standing when it came.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur notes the source of the brilliance: God gave it. The four were not merely gifted; they were equipped by the One who had set them apart, and the equipment showed. “Ten times better” is excellence as witness — the believer who does the king’s work better than the king’s own men has a platform he did not ask for. He reads verse 21 as a quiet sermon on endurance: the man who settled his heart over a plate of food was still at his post seventy years later.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik counts the three gifts — Judah to Babylon, favor to Daniel, wisdom to the four — and observes that Babylon’s program did not make them wise; God did. He quotes John 17:15–16 for the posture: in Babylon, not of Babylon. And he closes with the arithmetic of verse 21: Daniel outlasted Nebuchadnezzar, the whole Babylonian empire and its fall, and saw the decree of Cyrus. The chapter that began with “the Lord gave” ends with the Lord’s servant still there when the empire that took him was gone.

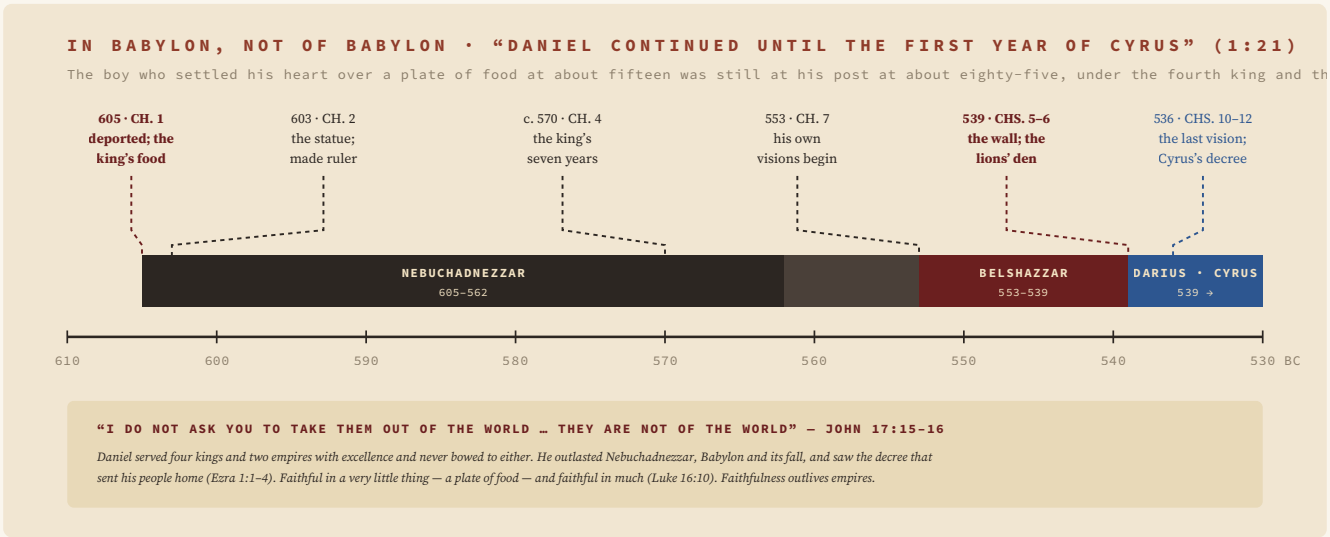


FIGURE 5 · IN BABYLON, NOT OF BABYLON — SEVENTY YEARS AT HIS POST, UNDER FOUR KINGS AND TWO EMPIRES

PART TWO · DISCOVERING DANIEL · LESSON 1

DANIEL 1 · WHAT IT MEANS, WHERE ELSE IT IS TAUGHT, HOW I LIVE IT

Analyze, Compare, Execute

With the chapter captured and the Deep Dive read, the workbook turns to meaning: the march to Babylon, the renaming and why they did not fight it, why the food was the line, what ten days tell us, and why every sin is big — then how God calls His people to live in the world, what Scripture says about compromise, Moses' choice and the two masters, and how to settle the questions before the choice arrives.

IN THIS PART

- Analyze the Message — seven questions with *Discovering Daniel*: the journey, the rebranding, the names they accepted, the food they refused, the ten days, the honor, and "every sin is big"
- Compare — Deuteronomy 14, 2 Corinthians 6 and 1 Peter 2 on a separate people; James 4 and 1 John 2 on compromise; Hebrews 11 and Moses; Matthew 6:24
- Execute — how we justify compromise, why small compromises are dangerous, what they cost, Luke 16:10 and Daniel's rewards, 2 Timothy 2:21, John 14:21, Jeremiah 29:7
- Closing Thoughts, and the study helps that close the book

02 ANALYZE THE MESSAGE

What does it say and mean?

Using both my Bible and my copy of the book Discovering Daniel.

1 **How long of a journey was it for Daniel and the other Jewish exiles from Jerusalem to Babylon (see page 22 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 11

> IN MY WORDS
>
> It was a brutal march of roughly 900 miles—the exiles didn't travel the straight desert line but followed the Fertile Crescent, so the trek could stretch well over a thousand miles on foot.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 137:1** "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion."

2 **What do you think was Nebuchadnezzar's intent in trying to "rebrand" Daniel and his friends by giving them Babylonian names (see page 26 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 12

> IN MY WORDS
>
> His intent was to erase their identity and rewrite their allegiance—swapping names that praised the God of Israel for names that honored Babylon's idols, so they'd forget who they were and whose they were.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 5:17** "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature..."—only God has the right to give a new name and a new identity.

> CHUCK MISSLER · Koinonia House
>
> Missler sees the renaming as psychological and spiritual warfare—control the name and you attempt to control the theology, the loyalty, and the self-understanding of the person.

3 **What is the likely reason Daniel and his friends didn't fight against being given new names (see page 28 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 12

> IN MY WORDS
>
> They didn't fight the name change because it wasn't a matter of sin—they saved their stand for where obedience to God was actually at stake, the food, rather than wasting it on things they couldn't control.

CROSS REFERENCE **Matthew 10:16** "...be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves."—wisdom in choosing the hill to stand on.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur draws the line between conviction and preference: a mature believer discerns which issues are worth a costly stand and which are simply the friction of living in a fallen culture.

4 **Why did Daniel and his friends believe they shouldn't eat and drink the food provided by King Nebuchadnezzar (see page 30 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 12

IN MY WORDS

The king's food and wine had almost certainly been dedicated to Babylon's gods and broke God's dietary law, so eating it would have meant sharing in idolatry and defiling their devotion to the Lord.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 Corinthians 10:21** "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons..."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that accepting the king's table was a symbol of covenant and dependence, so refusing it was Daniel's way of declaring his ultimate loyalty belonged to God alone.

5 **Daniel and his friends showed significant and noticeable differences after only ten days on their preferred diet. What does this tell us (see pages 33-34 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 12

IN MY WORDS

It tells me that when I honor God with even a small step of obedience, He can produce results that no natural explanation covers—ten days shouldn't have made that difference, but God did.

CROSS REFERENCE **Zechariah 4:6** "'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts."

6 **How else did God honor the four young men, according to Daniel 1:19-20 (see page 34 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 12

IN MY WORDS

Beyond their health, God gave them wisdom and understanding that made them ten times better than all the king's wise men, so their faithfulness opened the door to real influence.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 1:17** "...God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom..."

7 **On page 35 of Discovering Daniel, we read, "Every decision as to whether we sin or not is a big one, because every sin is big." Why is this true?** P. 13

IN MY WORDS

Every sin is big because it's ultimately against an infinitely holy God, and no offense against Him is ever really "minor"—which is why Daniel treated a plate of food as worth a stand.

CROSS REFERENCE **James 2:10** "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all."

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur argues sin's seriousness is measured by the One offended, not the size of the act, so a 'small' compromise is rebellion against a great and holy God.

03 COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH THE REST OF SCRIPTURE

How is it supported elsewhere in the Bible?

Letting Scripture interpret Scripture.

1 **How does God call His people to live with regard to the world?** P. 13

Deuteronomy 14:2 · NASB95

For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18 · NASB95

"Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "And do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," says the Lord Almighty.

1 Peter 2:9 · NASB95

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

IN MY WORDS

God calls me to live set apart—in the world but not of it—a chosen, holy, distinct people who belong to Him and reflect His light rather than blending into the culture.

CROSS REFERENCE **John 17:15-16** "I do not ask You to take them out of the world... They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik ties these together to show separation is never isolation—God sets His people apart precisely so the world can see the difference and be drawn to Him.

2 What does Scripture say about those who engage in compromise?

P. 13

James 4:4 · NASB95

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1 John 2:15 · NASB95

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

IN MY WORDS

Scripture is blunt—cozying up to the world's values is spiritual adultery that sets me at odds with God, because I can't love the world and the Father at the same time.

CROSS REFERENCE **Romans 12:2** "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur presses that friendship with the world isn't a neutral drift but active hostility toward God—there is no comfortable middle ground for the compromiser.

3 According to Hebrews 7:26 [Hebrews 11:24-26], what did Moses give up when he lived a separated life?

P. 14

Hebrews 7:26 · NASB95

For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

Hebrews 11:24-26 · NASB95

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

IN MY WORDS

Moses gave up the title, wealth, and pleasures of Egypt—the whole royal life of Pharaoh's house—counting reproach for Christ as greater riches, because he was looking ahead to God's reward.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the printed reference is Hebrews 7:26 (which describes Christ, our separated High Priest), while the account of what Moses surrendered is Hebrews 11:24-26—both point to the same call to a separated life.

4 What principle does Matthew 6:24 teach about compromise?

P. 14

Matthew 6:24 · NASB95

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

IN MY WORDS

It teaches that divided loyalty is impossible—I cannot serve two masters, so at some point every compromise forces a choice between God and everything competing for His place.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 Kings 18:21** "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him..."

5 What questions should we ask ourselves when confronted with a choice or decision?

P. 14

IN MY WORDS

I should ask whether this honors God, whether it violates His Word, whether it defiles my witness or conscience, and where the line is that I will not cross—settling it, like Daniel, before the moment of pressure arrives.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 Corinthians 10:31** "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

04 EXECUTE

How does this affect my life?

Bringing Daniel 1 home to my own walk.

1 What are some ways that we attempt to justify compromise?

P. 14

IN MY WORDS

I justify compromise by telling myself it's just this once, everybody does it, it's no big deal, no one will get hurt, or that I'll make up for it later—all ways of quieting a conscience God is trying to keep tender.

CROSS REFERENCE **Proverbs 14:12** "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

2 **Why is it dangerous for us to think that "small" compromises are okay? Once we've justified small compromises, what is likely to happen?** P. 15

IN MY WORDS

Small compromises are dangerous because they retrain my conscience and lower the bar, so what shocked me yesterday feels normal tomorrow—little surrenders always clear the path for bigger ones.

CROSS REFERENCE **Song of Solomon 2:15** "Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that are ruining the vineyards..."

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur warns that tolerated 'small' sin is never static—it desensitizes the conscience and becomes the seedbed for the very failures we swore we'd never commit.

3 **What consequences do you think compromise can have on your relationship with God?** P. 15

IN MY WORDS

Compromise dulls my fellowship with God, grieves His Spirit, weakens my witness, and slowly hardens my heart until His voice gets harder to hear.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 59:2** "But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God..."

4 **Read Luke 16:10. (a) What principle is taught here? (b) In what ways did God reward Daniel for his faithfulness (Daniel 1:9, 1:15, 1:20)?** P. 15

Luke 16:10 · NASB95

He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.

Daniel 1:9 · NASB95

9 *Now* ⚠ *God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials,*

Daniel 1:15 · NASB95

15 *At the end of* ↻ *ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the* ↻ *king's choice food.*

Daniel 1:20 · NASB95

20 *As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them* ☆ *ten times better than all the* ⚠ *magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm.*

IN MY WORDS

The principle is that faithfulness in the small things is the proving ground for the big ones, and God rewarded Daniel's small stand with favor (1:9), health and vindication (1:15), and unmatched wisdom and influence (1:20).

CROSS REFERENCE **Matthew 25:21** "'...You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things...'"

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik connects Luke 16:10 straight to Daniel—his faithfulness over a dinner plate qualified him for a lifetime of standing before kings and shaping empires.

---

5 **What do you think it means to "be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work" (2 Timothy 2:21)?** P. 15

2 Timothy 2:21 · NASB95

Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

IN MY WORDS

It means letting God clean the sin out of my life so I'm a clean instrument in His hand—set apart, genuinely useful to Him, and ready the moment He wants to use me.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 6:8** "'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"

---

6 **In what one or two areas of your life can you improve in being "useful to the master"?** P. 16

IN MY WORDS

I can grow by guarding what I let into my mind and by staying faithful in the small, unseen obediences—the private disciplines—so I'm clean and ready when God calls on me.

CROSS REFERENCE **Colossians 3:23** "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,"

---

7 **Read John 14:21. When we obey God, what are we showing to Him?** P. 16

John 14:21 · NASB95

He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.

IN MY WORDS

When I obey God, I'm showing Him that I truly love Him—obedience is the proof of love, and Jesus promises to make Himself more real to the one who walks in it.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 John 5:3** "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome."

8 **How did Daniel and his friends respond to being taken into exile and separated from their former way of life?** P. 16

IN MY WORDS

They didn't collapse into bitterness or fear—they trusted God, held on to their convictions, and served faithfully right where He placed them, letting their circumstances refine them instead of define them.

CROSS REFERENCE **Jeremiah 29:7** "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile..."

CHUCK MISSLER · Koinonia House

Missler notes their example became a template for living faithfully in a hostile culture—engaged, excellent, and uncompromised—exactly the posture God's people need in every Babylon.

9 **Have you ever found yourself in a difficult situation that required major changes in your life? What mistakes did you make? How could you have responded better?** P. 16

IN MY WORDS

Yes—and my mistakes usually came from leaning on my own fear and control instead of settling my convictions ahead of time, so the better response is always Daniel's: decide in advance to trust God and refuse to compromise before the pressure ever hits.

CROSS REFERENCE **Proverbs 3:5-6** "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding..."

Closing Thoughts · Lesson 1

When our world gets turned upside down — as it did for Daniel and his friends — we're prone to ask, Where is God when bad things happen to good people? The book of Daniel answers that question not with a lecture but with a life. Daniel purposed in his heart before the pressure ever came, drew his line where obedience to God was truly at stake, and left the outcome with the Lord.

In both Daniel's exile and Joseph's prison, God was right there with His servants, at work within their circumstances. So when I find myself asking "Where is God?" the answer is that He has not gone anywhere — my feelings should never dictate my faith. He has promised, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). No matter what situation I face, God is faithful. He always has been, and He always will be.

"God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs."

Daniel 1:9

STUDY HELPS · CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

The warning before the exile, the posture inside it, and the faithfulness that outlasts it

> *"'Some of your sons who shall issue from you, whom you will beget, will be taken away; and they will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"*
>
> 2 KINGS 20:18

> *"You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste."*
>
> LEVITICUS 26:33

> *"Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare."*
>
> JEREMIAH 29:7

> *"When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."*
>
> PROVERBS 16:7

> *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*
>
> ROMANS 12:2

> *"I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."*
>
> JOHN 17:15-16

> *"He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much."*
>
> LUKE 16:10

> *"Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation."*
>
> 1 PETER 2:12

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Isaiah's warning to Hezekiah is fulfilled to the letter in verse 3: sons of the royal house, officials in the palace of the king of Babylon. Leviticus 26 is why; Jeremiah 29 is how to live there — seek the welfare of the city. Tsarfati reads the chain as God's instructions to Israel in every exile: you are here by My hand, for My reasons, for a set time; serve the city, keep the line, and wait for the decree. Daniel did all four.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

Romans 12:2 is the pressure of verses 3–7 in Paul's words — do not be conformed — and John 17 is the posture of verse 8: in the world, not of it. MacArthur ties Luke 16:10 to the whole chapter: faithful in a very little thing — a plate of food — and therefore faithful in much, before kings and lions. And 1 Peter 2:12 is verse 20: excellent behavior among the Gentiles, observed, and glorifying God.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik lines the chain up: the warning (2 Kings 20), the covenant reason (Leviticus 26), the exile instruction (Jeremiah 29), the favor (Proverbs 16:7), the mind (Romans 12), the posture (John 17), the principle (Luke 16), and the witness (1 Peter 2). He notes that Proverbs 16:7 is verse 9 exactly — God made even the commander of the officials to be at peace with Daniel — and that Luke 16:10 is the thesis of chapter 1 for chapters 2 through 6.

STUDY HELPS · THREE VOICES

At a Glance

Three voices, one chapter

The same chapter, read three ways. Tsarfati listens for Israel in exile and the believer in his own Babylon; MacArthur presses the settled conviction and the line drawn where it mattered; Guzik walks the dates, the names, the four tools and the ten days. Together they keep Daniel 1 from becoming either a diet plan or a lecture on teenage courage.

THE MOMENT	TSARFATI · the times	MACARTHUR · sovereignty	GUZIK · text & history
The Lord gave (1:1–2)	Israel disciplined, not defeated; scattered by God, kept by God.	Two words that are the key to the book; God gave the bad year.	Third year vs. fourth; Carchemish; the vessels in Marduk's treasury.
The program (1:3–7)	Not the sword but the school; the pressure was to forget God.	The king wanted converts, not slaves; comfort with a worldview attached.	Four tools; the names translated; no one could rename their hearts.
The line (1:8–10)	The hinge of the book; conviction with courtesy; a plate before a furnace.	Settled before the pressure; drawn where loyalties actually collided.	Three reasons; Spurgeon on a bad name; favor before the request.
The test (1:11–16)	"Test Me now in this"; vindication before the furnace and the lions.	No one loses by obeying God; a small stand changes the system.	The right man, a short test, a safe one; the verdict was Babylon's.
Ten times better (1:17–21)	Verse 17 is why there is a book of Daniel; the exile had an end date.	Brilliance as gift; excellence as witness; seventy years at his post.	Three gifts; in Babylon, not of it; he outlasted the empire.
The whole Bible	Isaiah's warning kept to the letter; Jeremiah 29 as instructions.	Romans 12 and John 17; faithful in little, faithful in much.	Proverbs 16:7 is verse 9; Luke 16:10 is the thesis for chapters 2–6.

DANIEL 1 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **"The Lord gave" is the key to the book.** Judah did not fall to Babylon's strength; it was handed over, on schedule, for its own sin — exactly as Isaiah had warned Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:18). MACARTHUR
- ***Gave* is the spine of the chapter.** *Nathan* three times: Judah to Babylon (v. 2), favor to Daniel (v. 9), wisdom to the four (v. 17). Babylon's program did not make them wise; God did. TEXT
- **Babylon's strategy was the school, not the sword.** Separation, education, diet, identity — four tools to make a Babylonian out of a Hebrew in three years. The danger was comfort with a worldview attached. GUZIK

- **The decision was made before the plate arrived.** “Daniel set it upon his heart” (v. 8). Conviction settled in advance is the difference between the believer who falls and the one who stands. MACARTHUR
- **He drew the line where it mattered, and only there.** The name and the books he accepted; the king’s table — unclean, offered to idols, a covenant meal — he refused. Choose the battle. GUZIK
- **Favor came before the request.** “God granted Daniel favor” (v. 9) before Daniel asked. God goes ahead of the obedient (Proverbs 16:7). TEXT
- **The test was wise, not just brave.** The right man, ten days, measurable, safe for the overseer — and a result no diet explains. Faith and practical wisdom in one proposal. TSARFATI
- **Daniel outlasted the empire.** “Until the first year of Cyrus” (v. 21): the boy of the first deportation saw the decree that ended the exile. Faithfulness outlives empires. TSARFATI

† Questions for the Table

1 **"The Lord gave." What hard season are you reading as Babylon's strength when Scripture would have you read it as God's hand — and how does that change the way you carry it?**

The year I did not choose was given, not taken; I will carry it as discipline from a Father, not defeat by an enemy.

DANIEL 1:1-2

2 **Separation, education, diet, identity. Which of Babylon's four tools is working on you right now — what you are far from, what you are being taught, what you are fed, what you are called — and which one is quietly winning?**

I will name the tool that is working on me and stop pretending it is neutral.

DANIEL 1:3-7

3 **Daniel accepted the name and the books and refused the food. Where are you fighting a battle you cannot win over something that is not sin — and where are you not fighting the one that is?**

I will spend my stand where obedience is actually at stake and let the rest go.

DANIEL 1:7-8

4 **"Daniel set it upon his heart" before the plate arrived. What decision do you need to settle this week, in advance, so that the moment of pressure finds it already made?**

I will decide now what I will not do, so the pressure finds me settled.

DANIEL 1:8

5 **Daniel asked, was refused, and came back with a wise, testable, low-risk proposal. Where has your conviction been expressed as a protest when it should have been a proposal?**

I will hold the line with courtesy and creativity, not with a fight.

DANIEL 1:8-14

6 **Daniel was faithful over a plate of food at fifteen and still at his post at eighty-five. What small faithfulness today is the proving ground for a long obedience?**

Faithful in little is how I become faithful in much; I will keep the small post today.

DANIEL 1:15-21

❖

The Lord gave Judah into Babylon's hand, and four boys were carried to Shinar with the vessels. Babylon gave them its books, its table and its gods' names; one of them set it upon his heart before the first meal, and God gave him favor, gave him wisdom, and kept him at his post until the empire that took him was gone.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

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exact words. Hebrew from the Masoretic Text. Historical dates follow the Babylonian Chronicle and the standard chronology. · Smith For Christ · The Complete Study: Daniel 1 · Deep Dive + Discovering Daniel Lesson 1.