

### **Book of Daniel Chapters 1-2-3**

**It is said that the Bible** could be considered the tale of 2 cities, Jerusalem and Babylon – the first the future capital of Gods Kingdom on earth and the latter the recurring symbol for the world’s evils, the rebellion against God. Babylon, the first empire of the known world, is where the tower of Babel was erected by Nimrod and God confused the languages to disperse the peoples throughout the known world. Babylon fell 5 centuries before Christ but was partially restored by Saddam Husein in our time before he was convicted and died. The Book of Daniel is relevant for today because it portrays a period of history that is much like the culture in which we find ourselves, i.e. people who know who God is and do not compromise their faith, and the other people with pride that have no respect for any gods except their own and attempt to usurp the authority of God. But throughout history God has exercised His sovereign authority over all peoples and Nations for His glory and End of Time at His Will – always giving mankind the opportunity to turn to Him and be given eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven to come.

**Daniel 1:1-2:** Gods prophetic warnings to Judah went unheeded until finally, a little over a century after the fall of Israel (**remember there were 2 Kingdoms of what we know today as Israel – Judah the Southern Kingdom and Israel the Northern Kingdom with Israel being the first to fall with a scattering of the people across many lands, to this day known as the 10 lost tribes of Israel. Currently there is a mass regathering from many Nations with the Jews returning to their homeland.** Gods’ sword of judgement fell hard on Judah. Judah was made up by the Tribes of Judah and Benjamin, 2 of the 12 original tribes. As repeatedly thru history the Israelites fell away from God, worshipping idols, and even sacrificing their children (**sound familiar as to today?**).

Jerusalem fell in 605 BC (2 Kings 24:1 & 2 Chron 36:6) and the Jewish captives were deported to Babylon in 3 stages. The first group was the elite nobility and that was immediate. Daniel was in this first deportation because his ancestry has been identified with royalty and he was young. Two subsequent deportations occurred in 597 BC and 587 BC which left Jerusalem in ruins and leaving only poor, sick, or old people behind and their Temple ram sacked and destroyed. The trek to Babylon was 700 miles, beginning at dawn every day and ending at sunset with only meager rations of bread and tepid water – at 20 miles/day that would take 35 days. Daniel at this time was 14 years old or maybe as old as 17. This was after the siege of the city with the slaughter of much of the population and the ravaging of the Temple. Other than nobility the hostages who were young were the only ones taken, all others killed or left behind, yet many of these fell by the wayside on the long and strenuous walk and were left to rot along the side of the road (**left behind, sound familiar?**).

**Daniel 1:3-7:** Daniel and his 3 friends were chosen along with other children and some of the nobility to serve in the Kings Court as they aspired to have no defects, were good looking, showed intelligence in every branch of wisdom, and had discernment of knowledge. **Ashpenaz**, chief of the Kings officials and now the children as eunuchs, was charged with their education for 3 years in the literature and language of the Chaldeans, with rations of the Kings food and drink, plus assigned each a new name. This training would allow them to serve in the Kings personal service.

**Daniel 1:7-16:** Here we see how God responds to righteous prayer for those who follow Him. Ten days was given to the 4 to eat only vegetables and water to drink opposed to the meat and other foods and

wine from the Kings pantry. They displayed healthier attributes than all the others in training thus given permission by **Ashpenaz** to continue with this program of eating and drinking. **The first battle of the opposition was won.**

**\*The key Verse is Daniel 1:17** After the 3 years of training and education God had given the 4 children, now young adults, knowledge and skills in all learning and wisdom but with Daniel, He provided him with the ability to interpret visions and dreams. Picture these children completing this training, probably very intensive, and then being tested and interviewed by **Ashpenaz** to find favor to serve in the Kings personal service or be dispelled to laborious work as slaves for the Kings kingdom which at that time was most of the world. And you could know these 4 young adults stuck to their principals of serving their God and not the god of the Chaldeans as well as eating the food approved for them by **Ashpenaz**.

**Daniel 1:18-21:** So, brought before King Nebuchadnezzar these 4 were found to be 10 times better than the others who served the King. And Daniel, in particular, is noted to have served the kings from Nebuchadnezzar II, followed by Belshazzar, Darius I, and until the first year of Cyrus II of Persia after Persia defeated the Babylonians.

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## **Chapter 2**

**Daniel 2:1:** So, we now see where Daniel comes into prominence with King Nebuchadnezzar when the king has a dream and needs an interpretation.

**Daniel 2:2-12:** Nebuchadnezzar has a dream 2 years after he defeated and destroyed Egypt making his rule then over all the earth. The 2 greatest dreams in the Bible were by 2 kings who worshiped idols: Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh. In both cases we know that Daniel as with Nebuchadnezzar and Joseph with Pharaoh (Gen 41:1-39) brought glory to our true God through the correct interpretation of dreams. So, all of the King's magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans were charged with interpreting the dream starting with them identifying the dream first and not being told by the King what it is about other than it troubled him and at this point he apparently did not recall it. He required them to interpret the dream without knowing what it was about. Their assignment was impossible without God's inspiration, so they were threatened with death for them and their families.

**Daniel 2:13-28:** The decree went out in the kingdom to slay all of these wise men which would have included Daniel. Arioch the king's captain was charged with the task. But Daniel answered the decree to Arioch to please hold the slaughter and he was given entrance to the King. Daniel and his 3 friends went into prayer with the true God. God reveals the secret things to His prophets (Amos 3:7) and supplied the answer to Daniel whereas he came back to the King.

**Daniel 2:29-36:** Daniel supplies the details of the dream to the King that he was given by God that contains the image made of **gold** (head), **silver** (breast and arms), **brass** (belly and thighs), **iron** (legs), and **iron/clay** (feet).

**Daniel 2: 37-45 and realize that interpretation includes jump ahead verses in other Chapters:** Daniel indicates and identifies that the God of heaven has given Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom of power, strength and glory and made him a ruler over all men and animals. Thus, he as King of the empire of **BABYLON**

has a head of **GOLD**. The metals in the dream stood for 5 Nations with the second empire as **SILVER** representing the **MEDO-PERSIAN** empire. The third **BRASS** represented the empire of **GREECE**. The fourth **IRON** represented the empire of **ROME**. And then the fifth empire of **IRON and CLAY**, where iron and clay cannot be mixed as they are partly strong and partly weak, is a version of the **OLD ROMAN** empire which is the Kingdom where we are living in the **END of TIME**. The breaking of the **STONE** without hand is the eternal **Kingdom of God** to come. This kingdom with feet of clay and iron shall be divided to be partly strong and partly weak with the seed of men who will mingle with each other but not cleave to one another (**a nation divided against itself cannot stand**). Later in Daniel Chapter 7 we will see these kingdoms with more emphasis and having reference to the days of **10 Kings** that will occupy the earth in the final days of the Tribulation.

**Daniel 2:46-49:** Nebuchadnezzar pays tribute to the God of Daniel and God of all gods and grants Daniel ruler of the whole province of Babylon over all governors and wise men, and at Daniels request his 3 friends as being responsible for the affairs of the province. **But watch out for the direction of the King in Chapter 3.**

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### **Daniel Chapter 3**

**The door was opened** in Chapter 2 as to asking who is included in the 5<sup>th</sup> empire of the **OLD ROMAN** empire? Since the scripture is silent as to the role of the United States does this mean that we have no role in the revived Roman Empire? Ponder this thought as we proceed into Chapter 3 of Daniel. But consider that scripture tends to be focused more on a group of people rather than on a geographical location. Scripture is more interested in lineage rather than the borders of a Nation other than Israel as originally established. Since the Roman Empire was primarily European Nations, and since most of the United States has been of European heritage it is possible that the United States could be a part of the **Revived Roman Empire**. Remember Columbus sailed on his mission to the new world with settlers that undoubtedly was made up of some of the 10 lost tribes of Israel since they were scattered into that area of Europe where he sailed from. And remember those who sailed from England wanted spiritual freedom from the King of England and England had once been under the rule of Rome. Keep that in mind as we move forward.

**Daniel Chapter 3:1-7:** So, an image was constructed in material forms with materials of the dream that Nebuchadnezzar had. It was 125 feet high, 12 .5 feet wide, with the height 10 times the width suggesting it might be a column instead of a figure of a man. The edict went out to all peoples of the kingdom to worship this idol. It did not take long for the King to turn back to idol worship. This time period according to scholars indicate that 15 to 30 years went by from interpretation of the dream to construction of the image. Because of the widespread calling of the attendees of the conference it is again speculated that this is when he reverted to an economic policy of using gold for trade.

**Daniel Chapter 3:8-18:** So, there were those who pointed fingers at those who did not obey the Kings edict and demanded that they be thrown into the furnace of fire. The 3 friends of Daniel advised the King that they only worship and serve their God and not the god of the image.

**Daniel Chapter 3:19-24:** To the amazement of the King and his observers of the event of the fire, 7 times hotter than normal, 4 figures walked around inside of the furnace. The furnace was likely the one in which they smelted gold which requires a temperature of 1948 degrees Fahrenheit compared to a normal house fire of 1100 degrees Fahrenheit. Black pitch characteristic of this area of Iraq was possibly the fuel used to reach these extreme temperatures. This furnace had no power to consume the flesh of these 3 men.

**Daniel Chapter 3:25-30:** Nebuchadnezzar and his entourage of counselors were amazed that these men when called from the furnace bore no signs of any damage by fire, The King blessed the 3 as to an angel being sent from their God to spare their lives. So, the King changed his word to exclude the 3 from his edict to worship only him and remarked that there is no other God but theirs to make this possible. They received a promotion in his Kingdom – or received more jewels in their crown.

**An interesting parallel is observed between this fiery furnace and the Great Tribulation of the Book of Revelation. First there was a demand by Nebuchadnezzar to worship his idol and in Revelation there is a demand in Rev 13:14-15 by the Antichrist and False Prophet to worship the image of the beast. Second the image of Nebuchadnezzar is described as sixty cubits by 6 cubits in some texts while the image in Rev 13:18 is described by the number 666. Third those not worshipping the image of Nebuchadnezzar as required will be killed, as well as those not worshipping the image of the beast in Rev 13:15. The furnace of Nebuchadnezzar is 7 times hotter, and in Rev 11:2 the Tribulation is 7 years. Three men survive the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar while a remnant survives the Tribulation in Rev 7. In Nebuchadnezzar the enemies of the King are thrown into the fire and in Rev 19:20 the beast and False Prophet are thrown into the Lake of Fire.**

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