

A WALK THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT
TIME FRAME #7– THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY
586 BC TO 538 BC
SELECTED CHAPTERS IN DANIEL

CLASS NOTES

SUMMARY

Most of what we know about the Captivity of the Jews in Babylon is found in the book of Daniel. This man of God lived for over 70 years in Babylon. His testimony of how to live in the world but be of the world is unparalleled in Scripture. His life continues to be an example for us to follow today.

Unlike the captivity of their ancestors in Egypt, these Jews were not slaves but members of the general population. They built houses, held jobs and were free to practice their faith. Since the Temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed, they developed the Synagogue, where they met for prayer and instruction in the Bible. By the end of their 70 years in captivity, the Jews were cured of their tendency to drift into idolatry. Never again would they worship other gods.

The book of Esther takes place after the Captivity and therefore these notes do not include it. However, the book is valuable in understanding the experience of the Jews in the Babylonian and Persian Empires. You are encouraged to take the time to read it.

MAJOR EVENTS

EVENT # 62 – THE JEWS UNDER BABYLON (DANIEL 1-5)

The first group of people deported from Jerusalem to Babylon takes place in 605 BC. This group included Daniel and his friends. Then, after the Jews try to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, he destroys the city, including Solomon's magnificent Temple. Most of the Captivity is under the Babylonians, and Daniel is a high ranking official for most of that time. As Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Belshazzar, comes to power Daniel is pretty much forgotten. That changes the night the Persians over run Babylon as God brings judgement on the Babylonians for their treatment of the Jews and the blasphemous use of the Temple vessels by Belshazzar. Through this time, the Jews are treated well in Babylon. In addition, they develop the Synagogue as a center of worship and instruction.

THE JEWS UNDER THE PERSIANS (DANIEL 6; 9:1-19)

Daniel rises to a prominent position in the Persian Court, where he endures the lion's den. As Daniel reads Jeremiah, he realizes the 70 years predicted for the Captivity is almost over. The next year Cyrus will issue the decree that allows the Jews to begin to move back to Jerusalem and Judah. The book of Esther takes place in Persia.

KEY CHARACTER – DANIEL

SPIRITUAL LIFE LESSON – REPRESENTING GOD IN THE MARKET PLACE

DANIEL WAS A PERSON OF SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY AND GODLY WISDOM. (DANIEL 1)

1. Daniel was knowledgeable of the Word – seen in his knowing the dietary law. Based on this knowledge and desire to obey God, Daniel determines in his heart to not defile himself with the court's food. **1:1-8**

Note: Daniel focused on Biblical Principle. He does not speak out about being given a Babylonian name that honored their god, nor against the education in Babylonian religion. He chooses to draw his line where he was being asked to disobey God.

2. Daniel knew how to appeal to authority with respect. He acknowledges the need of the man overseeing them to obey and please the king. Instead of making a demand, he offers an alternative that fulfills the need. He also gives the official the final word. Above all, he has God giving him favor in the official's eyes and heart. **vs.9-16**
3. God blesses the integrity and wisdom of Daniel, and this sequence of events puts them in a position to be noticed by Nebuchadnezzar.

NOTE: *Because Daniel had both spiritual integrity and Godly wisdom, he takes the right stand with the right tone and spirit. With God's hand on his life, he becomes a key official in the Babylonian court while never sacrificing his spiritual integrity.*

DANIEL TRUSTED GOD WITH HIS SITUATIONS; HONORED GOD WITH HIS LIFE AND LIPS; WAS USED BY GOD TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON THE WORLD AND PEOPLE AROUND HIM. (DANIEL 2)

1. Daniel's trust is seen in his prayer life. **2:17-23**
2. Daniel honored God with his testimony. **2:25-28**
3. Daniel was used by God to make an impact on the world around him. **2:46-49**

NOTE: *When we have a heart that loves God and trusts God, we will then put the focus on God that honors Him. We are now in a position to be used to make a significant impact on the world around us. This can take place in whatever arena of life we are in.*

DANIEL WAS COMMITTED TO HIS SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY EVEN WHEN IT WAS COSTLY TO HIM. (DANIEL 6)

1. The trap set for Daniel was unfair. However, Daniel's response was not to appeal to justice but to commit to personal integrity. He simply continues his spiritual practices as he had always done. **6:10-13**
2. Daniel's reputation and position is seen by the response of Darius. Daniel has a reputation and service to the king that set him apart. **6:14-15**
3. When Daniel is saved by God, he again puts the attention on the Lord, praising Him and using the opportunity to point out his innocence before the king. **6:16-23**

NOTE: *When we commit to following God with integrity regardless of the cost, we also should entrust the outcome to Him as well. Whether He chooses to deliver us or not, we can know He will be honored by our life.*