

Lecture #2

Daniel 1:3-21

DANIEL 1:3-7

There is no question that if you can indoctrinate young people with some counterculture belief system that is contrary to truth, you can capture the culture. Nebuchadnezzar, in the days of Daniel, knew of these tactics. He knew that if he captured the young people and reprogrammed them and brainwashed them, he thought he could reprogram the world to not believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Let's keep in our minds the historical background behind the events of Daniel. God is punishing Israel for her rebellion and her refusal to respond properly to Him. One hundred and fifteen years before these very verses, Hezekiah made a remarkable prediction in II Kings 20:18 - the king of Babylon will take away some of your sons and they will become officials in his palace. When we come to this portion of Daniel we are faced with the reality that Nebuchadnezzar is fulfilling precise prophecy, and what he is personally trying to do is reprogram everything connected to Israel. As Dr. Warren Wiersbe said - his goal was to transform and brainwash the Jews into becoming Babylonians (Wiersbe, p. 14).

**WHEN GOD PERMITS HEATHENS TO BE IN CONTROL OF HIS PEOPLE, THEY WILL ATTEMPT TO SWAY GOD'S PEOPLE INTO BECOMING HEATHENISTIC; HOWEVER, GOD WILL ALWAYS HONOR THOSE WHO REFUSE TO BE SWAYED.**

In this passage, Nebuchadnezzar does everything he can do as a king to try to get the children of Israel to conform to the Babylonian culture. Now the Babylonian captivity was not as bad as the Egyptian captivity for the nation Israel. In fact, Jeremiah told Israel that when she was taken captive by the Babylonians, she should build houses and plan to live there awhile as comfortably as possible (Jeremiah 29:4-7). However, Nebuchadnezzar had a plan not just to provide Israel a nice place to live for awhile; he wanted to reprogram the entire nation away from God.

**Daniel 1:3-4** – What the King ordered.

King Nebuchadnezzar ordered Ashpenaz, his leading official, to take some of the sons of the Israelites and bring them to Babylon. That word "bring" means this was not optional; those selected had no choice. The word "officials" literally is the Hebrew word "eunuch." Josephus claims that Daniel and his three friends were castrated by Nebuchadnezzar (*Josephus*, p. 222). However, this is very unlikely for at least two reasons: 1) The choice of young men were to be those without any physical defect (**1:4**); 2) Jewish Law certainly frowned on castration (Deuteronomy 23:1), and if Daniel and his friends protested against food, one would certainly think that there would have been a major protest against being castrated.

**(Characteristic #1)** - They were to be Jewish men. **1:3b**

Before we look at this verse, I want to bring out the fact that these young men had done nothing to deserve this. They did not deserve to be taken captive out of their homes to a foreign country and culture. Truth is the fault was with their parents, not the young people.

The young men he selected were to be the “brightest and the best.” When this book begins, Jewish young men are taken captive to bring them under Babylonian influence. By the time the book ends, some of the Jewish young men ended up bringing many out of Babylonian influence to an influence of the God of the Bible. **No matter what culture you live in or work in, you can influence it for God if you stay faithful to Him.**

The terms “son of Israel,” of “royal family” and of “nobles” indicate there were to be several Jewish young men selected; some from royal kingly lines and some from families who held honorable positions. According to Josephus, Daniel and his three friends were from Zedekiah’s royal line.

Now one might ask why Nebuchadnezzar wants these kinds of Jewish people living in Babylon.

- 1) Help keep royal and high ranking family members in check, knowing he is holding their sons.
- 2) Continually remind the king (Jehoiakim) that he has captured the best of Israel that there is.
- 3) To have these Jewish men help in administering things in regard to Israel in future times.
- 4) To brainwash the best from Israel into becoming Babylonians, so they could influence others.

**(Characteristic #2)** - They were to be young men. **1:4a**

Mind control begins with the young. What Nebuchadnezzar did not realize is that some of these young men were already well-trained in the things of God. Obviously in some “Timothy-type” fashion, some of the young men had been trained from their early days and were already solid in the things of God.

It has been calculated that Daniel must have been about fifteen or sixteen years old when he is captured because he is still serving at a high level some sixty-seven years later in 538 B.C., which would have made him 82-83 years old.

At the time Daniel lived in Jerusalem, there were no Sunday school programs or youth programs. He went to the Temple and he listened and learned.

**(Characteristic #3)** - They were to be physically healthy. **1:4b**

In many eastern religions a perfect body was supposed to indicate real favor of the “gods.” Heathen cultures have always placed a major emphasis on external beauty. This was also true of Nebuchadnezzar.

These young people were not to have any physical defects. In other words, they were not to have any physical handicaps; either in form, face or body. He wanted them to be good-looking young men. The Hebrew word “defect” is one used to refer to physical defects (Leviticus 21:17-18; II Samuel 14:25).

Obviously, Daniel and his three friends did meet this requirement. What this does tell us is that you can be a knock dead, gorgeous, physical specimen as a young man or young lady and still be sold out to God and His righteousness. It is possible to be very good-looking and glorify God as a young man or young woman.

It is a depraved society indeed that judges a person by whether or not there are any defects. God is the One who says He allows all people to be born; some blind, some deaf and some with various defects (Proverbs 20:12; Exodus 4:11). Societies right with God see the value of every person, regardless of physical defects.

**(Characteristic #4)** - They were to be mentally healthy. **1:4c**

The Hebrew words used in the last part of the verse give us great insight as to the kind of mind for which Nebuchadnezzar was looking.

**Statement #1** - They were to show “intelligence” in every branch of wisdom.

The word “intelligence” is one that seems to mean to have an analytical mind that is able to think through things and understand things (*BDB*, p. 968). The word “wisdom” is the one used often in Proverbs, which speaks of being skilled and prudent (*Ibid.*, p. 315). Combined, these words describe one capable of analyzing something and coming to a skilled level of understanding.

**Statement #2** - They were to be “endowed with understanding.”

The words literally mean “knowers of knowledge.” These words in Hebrew seem to suggest that they were to be able to study something and come to a complete level of understanding to the point where they could make discerning judgments (*Ibid.*, p. 395).

**Statement #3** - They were to have “discerning knowledge.”

The word “discern” in Hebrew means to be able to look between things and come to an intelligent level of understanding (*Ibid.*, p. 106). The word “knowledge” means things that can be measured (*Ibid.*, p. 551). These men were to be able to analyze measurable things and be able to understand at a high level that which they were analyzing.

God obviously grants certain minds the ability to understand things. One can have a great mental flair for learning and be a powerful, righteous man of God.

**(Characteristic #5)** - They were to be personable . **1:4d**

These men were to be able to serve in the King’s courts. That word “serve” means they needed to be able to stand in the King’s environment in a presentable way (*Ibid.*, p. 763). They needed to be able to present themselves in the kingly world in a way that properly related. They needed to understand proper protocol and etiquette at a high political level.

**(Characteristic #6)** - They were to be teachable . **1:4e**

The young men were to have a capability of learning Chaldean literature and language. They needed to be able to study things like history, agriculture, astronomy, math and the Akkadian language. The Aramaic language these young men learned is not the Aramaic language of today. Linguists have determined there are five types of Aramaic languages:

1. Old Aramaic (925-700 B.C. - found on various Canaanite inscriptions); 2. **Official Aramaic** (700-300 B.C. - found in Assyrian & Persian Empires, which are preserved in letters and Bible); 3. Middle Aramaic (300 B.C.-200 A.D. - found in New Testament and used by Jesus (Mark 7:34; 5:41; 15:34); 4. Late Aramaic (A.D. 200-700 - found in Palestinian and Samaritan writings and Christian Targums); 5. Modern Aramaic - spoken today in Iraq. **Daniel was trained in type #2.**

All of this training would be designed to retrain, to reprogram and to separate these young men from their previous Jewish culture, environment and worship.

**Now I want you to carefully notice that there is no emphasis on being moral or right with the God of the Bible. In fact, there is no emphasis on being spiritually minded at all.**

To the heathen all that matters is their education. However, the thing that makes education valuable and the thing that made these four young men so powerful was their relationship with God. When a person is committed to God and has a mind dedicated to God, that person and that mind will be used by God at the highest level.

**Daniel 1:5** – What the King appointed .

The word “appointed” (**v. 5**) means that the King actually specifically assigned these things pertaining to these captives.

(Appointment #1) - He appointed their daily food . **1:5a**

The Hebrew words “choice food” (pathbagh) means food offered as an offering or tribute to false gods. Nebuchadnezzar wanted to lure these young men away from God, so he brought them to Babylon and saw to it that they could live in the lap of luxury.

(Appointment #2) - He appointed their daily wine . **1:5b**

Daniel was accustomed to wine drinking in Jewish culture. In fact, later in the book of Daniel it is apparent that Daniel drank wine (Daniel 10:3) because he gave it up for a three week period. The Babylonian custom was that the food and wine were always dedicated to the false gods before they were served.

(Appointment #3) - He appointed their education . **1:5c**

They were to be trained for three years and then put into the King’s service. It is a known fact that three years of intense training can accomplish an education. Jesus trained His disciples for three years. Paul was trained by Jesus Christ for three years. Bible schools and colleges and seminaries still believe that three intense years are needed to train for ministry.

The goal of this education was to poison and pollute their minds with a thorough Babylonian brainwashing. The goal was to reprogram these Jewish young men, to get them to change their thinking and pull them away from truth and God.

There is a satanic brainwashing that is fully operative today that is just as diabolical as this. High Schools, colleges, universities, television and radio ministries, movies and media are all designed to pull one away from God and His truth.

Young people, you need to learn that you can study in secular schools and remain solid. Moses was well-educated in all learning of the Egyptians (Acts 7:22), but he was solid as a rock and that education did not prevent him for standing up for what was right and for God's truth.

### **Daniel 1:6-7 – Who the King appointed .**

If we carefully look at chapter 1 of Daniel, we know that there were many Israelite young men taken into this captive program. The noun "youths" is plural (**1:10, 15**). There were many Jewish men in the program but only four are named and only four are critical to the book of Daniel. Two names contain the "El" Elohim and two contain the "yah" connected to Jehovah.

- 1) Daniel – "God is Judge"
- 2) Hananiah – "Jehovah is gracious"
- 3) Mishael – "Who or What is God"
- 4) Azariah – "Jehovah helps"

These young men have solid biblical names which means they came from godly homes, which means there were some very godly homes still in existence when God sent a scathing rebuke against Israel through Jeremiah.

Names were sometimes changed when a new power took over. For example, Neco changed Eliakim to Jehoiakim (II Kings 23:34). The King took these four and changed their names. The purpose of changing names is to try to get these four to forget about their godly background and get them to falsely worship an abominable Babylonian deity. The satanic purpose for the name change is to obliterate all traces of Israel and the God of Israel.

Daniel was changed to Belteshazzar - Bel (god of Babylon) protect his life  
Hanniah was changed to Shadrach - the command of the god Marduk  
Mishael was changed to Meshach - who is the moon god  
Azariah was changed to Abed-nego - servant of Nego - Babylonian god

Is it possible to be a young person and live in a God-honoring way in a godless world? Is it possible to be living and studying and working in a totally secular environment and be mightily used by God? Daniel says yes. No matter how corrupt the power or evil the environment, you can make a tremendous impact for God.

Remember that this week in your world. Keep God first and God will use you and He will honor you.

When Dr. Harry Bultema came to this series of verses he said - many wonder how a young man like Daniel, who had hardly outgrown the shoes of his childhood, could have been treated so nobly by Nebuchadnezzar in the Babylonian world. Bultema says, the answer as to that question is right here (Bultema, p. 46).

This is a critical scene in the book of Daniel because it is this scene that separates Daniel and his three friends from all of the other Jewish young people in Babylon and sets the stage for the incredible blessings of God and usability by God.

H. A. Ironside said it is Daniel and his three friend's carefulness right here that moves God to give them tremendous spiritual enlightenment (Ironside, p. 19).

**OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD IN ANY SITUATION OR CIRCUMSTANCE WILL EVENTUALLY BRING GREAT PROMOTION AND BLESSING FROM GOD.**

**Now carefully notice the proposition - faithfulness will eventually bring great promotion, it will not necessarily bring promotion immediately.**

Daniel would rather be at odds with the whole world than abandon God's truth. If it came down to a choice between what God's Word said and what the Babylonian world said, Daniel would always choose God's Word.

Now let us contextually observe that this scene occurs before **verse 17**, which informs us that God gave these four youths tremendous mental abilities. So this decision to obey the Word of God has a tremendous affect on the rest of the Daniel narrative. The secret of the Lord will always be to those who fear Him.

God will do great things with and for those who choose to obey Him. The younger the person is when he/she decides to obey God's Word, the better it will be for them. The more powerful he/she will become.

**Daniel 1:8a** – Daniel makes a decision not to defile himself with the King's food or wine.

When the personal account of Daniel opens this way, we learn this principle - it was disobedience to God that brought Israel into captivity and it will be obedience to God that will bring her out of captivity.

The word "defile" in Hebrew means that Daniel would not do something that would pollute or desecrate him as a Jewish young man (*BDB*, pp. 145-146). The emphasis of the Hebrew verb stem "Hithpael" indicates Daniel originally made the decision himself. The Hithpael stem throws the action back to self (Gesenius, *Grammar*, p. 151). Daniel acted and would not violate God's Word. The issue at stake is whether or not he will obey God's Law, which meant by eating meat sacrificed to idols he would defile himself as a Jew. Daniel opted for obedience.

Daniel lived with a constant attitude that relied on the Scriptures. It becomes quite evident that Daniel and his three friends were actually carefully assessing what the Scriptures said, even about the food they would eat. Obedience is a personal choice we make in view of Scripture. The Hithpael stem indicates we are responsible ourselves for the action. You must decide yourself whether or not you will obey God. Grandparents and parents cannot decide this for you. It is your own personal decision.

Now for Daniel to actually decide not to indulge was a tough decision and a big risk. Dr. Leon Wood lists six reasons why it was such a big risk (pp. 37-38):

- 1) The king had specifically ordered that they have this food and drink.
- 2) To disobey a Babylonian king was very dangerous and punishable.
- 3) There was a risk of hindering good healthy growth by not eating and drinking properly.
- 4) The food and drink were the best there was in the Babylonian world.
- 5) The Jewish young men were all far away from home and out from under Jewish influence.
- 6) God had enabled these young men to be viewed favorably and they could view this food and drink as part of the favorable blessings of God.

Now the reason why Daniel and his friends decided not to drink the wine or eat the meat was not because they did not like meat or a good glass of wine. Neither was forbidden in Scripture. In fact, later in the book, Daniel does eat meat and drink wine (Daniel 10:3). Part of the O.T. Law included a wine sacrifice (Lev. 28:1-3; Ex. 29:40). After a Nazarite vow one could drink wine (Num. 6:3, 20). However, later in the book God is honored; not some Babylonian deity. The reason they would not partake is because of the fact that it would defile them in at least two ways:

- 1) Some of the meat would include unclean animals which were forbidden by Mosaic Law (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14:2-20).
- 2) Both the wine and the meat were items the King sacrificed to an idol, which was also forbidden (Exodus 34:14-15).

The initial intent of giving Daniel the King's food and wine is to get him to turn away from God (**1:8**). Later Daniel enjoys food and wine (10:3) because Daniel's reputation was known as one who would not turn from God even if you threw him into a lion's den.

Royal food and drink was first dedicated to a Babylonian "god." Now remember, Nebuchadnezzar's goal is to make these Jewish people good Babylonians (**Daniel 1:4**). If the Jews ate the meat and drank the wine sacrificed to a foreign idol, then the credit for their prosperity could be given to a foreign idol, not the God of the Bible.

**Daniel 1:8b** – Daniel makes a request to the commander to not eat and drink the King's provisions.

I like what Dr. Renald Showers of Friends of Israel said - when Daniel decided to obey God, he did not go on some fanatical rampage (Showers, p. 6).

Daniel did not protest or picket the food and drink and he did not try to burn down the food building, nor demean those who were indulging. He didn't threaten anyone. He didn't demand that every person take the same position he held. He simply let his request be made to the one in charge over him. This is quiet abstinence and not self-righteous arrogance. **Daniel is always respectful of leadership all throughout this book.**

People God will use greatly will always be gracious toward leadership, not hostile to leadership. Daniel was open and honest. He was quietly and respectfully faithful to God.

**Daniel 1:9** – God grants Daniel favor in his request.

The commander is a heathen commander, but God reached into his mind and heart and turned it so it was favorable to what Daniel was asking. Now, what prompted God to do this? Daniel's decision to obey the Word of God. This is the real key to favor with God.

**Those who purpose to obey His Word will always gain the favor of God and God will turn other people's minds and hearts to favor them.**

**Daniel 1:10** – The commander favors Daniel, but fears the King.

The commander knew that if he did not serve the King's food and wine to Daniel and his friends and they started to look sickly, his life could be on the line.

**Daniel 1:11-13** – Daniel gives the commander a solution to eliminate his fear.

God's will does at times create problems in society but it also presents solutions!

Daniel says test us for ten days. Now ten days is not enough time to make a noticeable dent in one's physical appearance. In ten days, one could see a little difference, but it would not be a huge noticeable difference. Daniel's proposed test was fourfold:

- 1) Give us vegetables (Hebrew word means that which is grown from sown seed);
- 2) Give us water to drink;
- 3) Observe our appearance and compare it to others;
- 4) Make a decision based on what you see.

Daniel does not preach to the commander about his need to have more faith in God, he basically says - we will run a test and see what God will do.

**Daniel 1:14-16** – The commander listened to Daniel and tested them for ten days.

At the end of ten days, he observed the following:

- 1) Their appearance was better than the other youths.
- 2) They were fatter than all the youths who had eaten the King's food.

Obedience to God is healthy spiritually and physically and emotionally.

**Daniel 1:16** – The commander continues to allow Daniel and his friends to eat vegetables.

We are not called to be conformists, but we are called to be transformists. Instead of Daniel and his friends being influenced by the Babylonian culture, they did the influencing of the culture for the glory of God.

When they were miles from home and faced with a choice of whether to obey God's Law or eat the King's food and drink wine sacrificed to idols, they chose to obey God. God always honors that kind of commitment, whether one is young or old, male or female, Jew or Gentile.

**Practical Insight:**

- 1. Feed and drink from God's Word on a regular basis and see if you do not become stronger.**
- 2. There are moments when we must choose to obey God's Word or not obey it. These are defining moments for every one of us. They ultimately determine what God will do with us.**
- 3. Obedience starts with one person making a personal choice to believe God and obey God regardless of what all others may be doing or not doing.**

**DANIEL 1:17-21**

The thing that made Daniel so powerful was not his secular education in Babylon; it was his Bible education in Jerusalem. It was Daniel's training in Scripture and his application of Scripture that made him such a powerful man of God. God blessed Daniel's life and mind.

In the opening verses of the book of Daniel it is very clear that God, literally "the God" (literally in Hebrew "The Elohim," v. 9, 17) was caring for Daniel and his three friends. He was watching over them physically, spiritually and, as we shall see, mentally. Daniel's decision to do what was right before God paid rich dividends. No matter where you put Daniel, God's hand of blessing was on him. In fact, the whole point of chapter 1 is to show us how God was caring for these four young men.

**EVEN WHEN HEATHENS ARE CONTROLLING YOUR WORLD, IT IS STILL POSSIBLE TO HAVE GOD'S FAVOR AND GOD'S BLESSING ON YOUR LIFE IN ALL AREAS OF LIFE IF YOU PURPOSE TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO GOD.**

You do not have to live in a godly environment to have a wonderful relationship with God. You do not have to work in a godly company to have God's blessings on you. You do not have to be in a Christian college to have God's blessings on you. You can work for a secular company; you can go to a secular school and be powerfully blessed by God.

**Daniel 1:17** – The God of the Bible blessed the four young men.

By the time we get to **verse 17**, Daniel and his three friends are about twenty years old. They have been in Babylon and had been studying Babylonian language and literature for over three years (**1:5**). During this time, Daniel and his three friends excelled in everything they studied. They were the top students. No matter what they studied, they got it and the reason was God. God gave them their abilities and their advancement. Keep in mind they are studying heathen kinds of things, but God gave them success, which means God let them understand things at a deep level, which could clearly see and understand truth from error. It is true they did have to study hard, but God let them get it.

There is a big controversy that exists today and it is this - should believers study worldly things? Some believe studying worldly things is a waste of time. This controversy is certainly not new.

For example, Tertullian (A.D. 160-220) said, “Athens had nothing to do with Jerusalem ... the academy had nothing to do with church.” However, one cannot deny that God powerfully has used those who love Him and study secular things. For example, Moses was educated in Egyptian studies (Acts 7:22). Paul quoted from the Greek poet Menander (Acts 17:27-28) and Epimenides (Titus 1:12). What this tells us is that they were certainly knowledgeable of secular literature. Certainly, the most valuable knowledge of all to gain is that of the Bible - for it is the inspired Word of God. But this does not mean you cannot study other subjects or work a secular job. As long as God is first in your life, He will honor this no matter where you are.

According to the last part of **verse 17**, Daniel received one thing extra - he was given the ability by God to understand visions and dreams. This of course refers to prophetic revelations from God. All prophetic visions and revelations from God could be interpreted by Daniel because God gave Daniel this prophetic ability. It was a supernatural ability that enabled Daniel to unravel dreams and the future.

This becomes very important to the book of Daniel because God is going to communicate future things to Nebuchadnezzar through odd dreams and God will only allow Daniel to unravel and interpret these things. This ability could not be mastered in any course of study. In other words, you could not learn certain techniques academically that could unravel the deep mysteries of God. God, Himself, needed to reveal this.

There are four applications I want to make concerning this verse:

- 1) God is the One who should be praised for all of life’s accomplishments, which He permits His people to have.
- 2) When God is giving knowledge and intelligence to a person, he/she will discern truth from error, no matter what the subject being studied.
- 3) God only blesses a few people at this level who have demonstrated they love Him and will stand for Him (i.e. **1:8**). Not everyone really comes to understand the things of God.
- 4) It is possible to shine bright for God in a heathen world and heathen classroom.

**Daniel 1:18-20** – The King of Babylon recognizes the superiority of the four young men.

At the end of the three years of education (**1:5**), it became time for the commander (Ashpenaz – **1:3**) to take his students before King Nebuchadnezzar for an interview and for inspection. This would have been an oral examination conducted most likely in the Babylonian language. Keep this in your mind because Daniel and his three friends actually have a better grasp of things than some of his national leaders who only knew the Babylonian language and culture. Daniel and his three friends master Babylonian language and culture above the most educated nationals. The reason for this of course was God.

This test would have been a very important moment for Ashpenaz because he was being held accountable for what he had done for three years. There was a lot of time and expense involved in three years worth of training, so I am certain this was a very anxious moment for him. Keep in mind that he is parading several young men before the King (**1:3-4**), who are all the brightest and the best.

Now **verse 19** informs us that the King interviewed all the young men and was so impressed with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah that he immediately appointed them to the King’s service. In all reality, these are men who obey God rather than the King (**1:5, 8**) and he ends up appointing them.

Do not overlook the fact that they are named here by their Jewish names, not their Babylonian names (1:7). This tells us that they maintained a testimony of being true Israelites. This was a critical key to God's blessing them. Even though there were many Jewish young men, God's hand was specifically on these four for their faithfulness. Just because there are millions of Christians does not automatically mean God's blessings are on them equally.

According to **verse 20**, he discussed all kinds of things at this interview, which would have included their fluency in the Babylonian language, their level of knowledge of Babylonian culture and history, and he also would have examined their personal characteristics and mannerisms. Nebuchadnezzar was a very smart man. But remember this about him - he was God's servant used to dominate Israel. Even though he is not giving glory to God - his power and intellect are from God.

Also **verse 20** makes it clear that he recognized that these four were ten times better than the most educated and skilled of his country. In fact, the Hebrew literally reads, he found that these four were ten hands better. This was not due to natural ability but supernatural enablement. The wisdom of God is always ten times better than the wisdom of the world. These four had the wisdom of God. This immediately began to create a jealousy between the Babylonian magicians and conjurers and the faithful Israelites.

**Daniel 1:21** – Daniel lives to be an old man.

Now some see a discrepancy between this verse (which says "first year of Cyrus") and Daniel 10:1 (which says "third year of Cyrus"). But there is no discrepancy. The point that is made is that Daniel's life and ministry lasted not only throughout the entire Babylonian captivity, but right on into the time of the Persians. Daniel lived longer and ministered longer in a secular world dominated by heathens. Because of Daniel's faithfulness to God, he was blessed by God all the time of his captivity. He outlasted kings.

This verse is contextually eye-opening, for it tells us God blessed Daniel for the whole duration of his life and he lived to be an old man. Keep in mind that this is a verse that is in a context discussing Daniel when he is twenty. From Daniel's twenties to his eighties - God blessed him. Kings came and went. Nations rose and fell, but Daniel remained as a faithful and useable man of God.

Now the first year of Cyrus was an important year because that was the year that Cyrus made his famous edict to permit Israel to have the liberty to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1-4). What this verse tells us is Daniel survived all captivities - Babylonian, Median and Persian - as a great leader for God and powerful man of God. In fact, Daniel probably did not return to Jerusalem, but stayed where God had so blessed him and used him. What we see about Daniel was that he was a powerful man of God when he was old.

Why is all of this brought up here? Because, Daniel is a big part of the reason why all of this happened. God used this faithful, obedient man to set the stage for bringing Israel out of Babylonian captivity. It was his faithfulness and his purity that put Israel back on a course of God's blessings.

**STUDY QUESTIONS – LECTURE #2  
(Daniel 1:3-21)**

1. What is the difference between Egyptian captivity and the Babylonian captivity?  
Life was better but the Babylonians want to reprogram Israel.
2. Why would Nebuchadnezzar want the top Jewish men living in Babylon?  
A. Keep families in check; B. Remind Jehoiakim they captured the best of Israel;  
C. Use them to help control Israel; D. Brainwash the nation.
3. What are the six characteristics of those chosen to go to Babylon and what one quality was missing?  
A. Jewish men; B. Young men; C. Healthy; D. Mentally sharp; E. Personable;  
F. Teachable. The missing quality is that they did not have to be spiritual.
4. Why would a new king go to the trouble of renaming Israeli people?  
To try to eliminate God and godliness.
5. If Daniel had initially eaten the king's food and drank the king's wine, how would he have defiled himself?  
A. By eating unclean animals forbidden in O.T. Law;  
B. By eating and drinking something sacrificed to a foreign god or idol.
6. What was Daniel's attitude toward leadership, even corrupt leadership?  
Always one of respect.