



CAPITOL COMMISSION®

When God Gives Good Things to Evil People

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Daniel 1:1-3 *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.*

2) *And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.*

3) *Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, (NKJV)*

THE BOOK OF DANIEL SHOULD BE THE TEXTBOOK OF EVERY MODERN POLITICIAN. IF I HAD MY WAY I SHOULD COMPEL, NOT ONLY EVERY CHRISTIAN, BUT THE PRIME MINISTER, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, AMBASSADORS, THE CONSULAR SERVICE, AND ALL DIPLOMATS TO STUDY IT. IT IS A PANORAMA OF THE MAIN POLITICAL EVENTS AT THE END OF 'THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.'

E. L. LANGSTON

What major battle marked a turning point of the empires in world history and the coming of the Babylonians to Jerusalem? Who was the father of Jehoiakim and why was he so well liked? What direction had Jehoiakim led his nation? Did King Nebuchadnezzar conquer Jerusalem or did God give it to him? Is there a double emphasis on the articles of the house of God being brought into the house of Nebuchadnezzar's god? Were other articles of the Temple later taken home again by Nebuchadnezzar? Was the kidnapping of the royalty of Israel already predicted? What did God have to say about eunuchs and His own house, the Temple? How old were these young men who were kidnapped by this ruthless foreign king? What major calamity caused the king's hurried retreat to Babylon?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- FEBRUARY 10: DANIEL 1:3-7 *ONLY THE BEST SLAVES WOULD SERVE NEXT TO THE EMPEROR*
- FEBRUARY 17: DANIEL 1:8-15 *DANIEL & HIS FRIENDS ALONE TAKE THEIR STAND FOR GOD*

The cruel Assyrians with their capital in Nineveh had repented at the preaching of Jonah and "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it" (Jonah 3:10). Later, they returned to their cruelty and their kings, Sargon and Sennacherib, sought to build an empire through merciless conquest. When their last great king, Ashur-Banipal died in 625 B.C., his weak son was immediately unable to retain the Chaldeans led by King Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar. Soon he joined forces with the Medes and destroyed Nineveh in 612 B.C. When the remainder of the Assyrian army fled to Haran, they were defeated again by the king of the Chaldeans with his son in 610 B.C. The retreating Assyrians finally joined forces with the Egyptians in the great Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. The ailing Nabopolassar sent his son to turn the tide of the empire and both the Assyrians and the Egyptians were so soundly crushed in that battle, they never recovered. The Assyrians were annihilated and the Egyptians fled back to Egypt. While continuing to chase the retreating Egyptians, Nebuchadnezzar surrounded Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom of Israel.

'ALL THAT IS IN YOUR HOUSE, AND WHAT YOUR FATHERS HAVE ACCUMULATED UNTIL THIS DAY, SHALL BE CARRIED TO BABYLON; NOTHING SHALL BE LEFT,' SAYS THE LORD. 'AND THEY SHALL TAKE AWAY SOME OF YOUR SONS WHO SHALL DESCEND FROM YOU, WHOM YOU WILL BEGET; AND THEY SHALL BE EUNUCHS IN THE PALACE OF THE KING OF BABYLON.' ISAIAH 39:6-7

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30 AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 6TH FLOOR SPEAKER'S CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 6TH FLOOR SPEAKER'S CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

When God Gives Good Things to Evil People

I. GOD'S PURPOSE

DANIEL 1:1-2A

Since Joshua had conquered the promised land about 1400 B.C. Judah had enjoyed the land that God had given them. The pride of all Israel was Solomon's temple, build in 966 B.C. and considered a wonder of the world. The southern kingdom of Israel had many good kings, but also some wicked kings. The most wicked being Manasseh had who filled the streets of Jerusalem with innocent blood (2 Kings 21:16). Following Manasseh was one of their best kings, Josiah, who had led a tremendous revival throughout all Judah all the way into the boyhood days of Daniel. King Josiah had been killed in battle by the Egyptians whom he had tried to prevent from joining the Assyrians at Carchemish. When his wicked son, Jehoiakim, took the throne, he turned the nation back to wickedness. Nebuchadnezzar came and surrounded the capital city, Jerusalem, and because of their sin, their Master, "*the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.*"

BECAUSE OF THE SINS OF MANASSEH, ACCORDING TO ALL THAT HE HAD DONE, AND ALSO BECAUSE OF THE INNOCENT BLOOD THAT HE SHED; FOR HE HAD FILLED JERUSALEM WITH INNOCENT BLOOD, WHICH THE LORD WOULD NOT PARDON. 2 KINGS 24:3-4

II. GOD'S PATIENCE

DANIEL 1:2B

Daniel would have remembered when the most important article of God's house had been taken by the enemies of Israel, the Philistines. Israel had foolishly brought the ark of the covenant with them into battle because they thought that it would guarantee God's presence with them and they would win. Instead they were soundly defeated and the Philistines captured the ark of the covenant! They immediately took it to their temple in celebration that their god was more powerful than Israel's God. They had set it by the statue of their god, Dagon. The next morning, "*there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. So they took*

Dagon and set it in its place again. And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands were broken off on the threshold" (1 Samuel 5:3-4). Also, the Philistines nearby immediately got tumors. So they sent it to Gath where they suffered a "*very great destruction*" by tumors. So they sent it to Ekron, where they became so terrified that they "*cried out, saying, 'They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us, to kill us and our people!'*" (5:10) Obviously, Daniel was very interested to see what would happen to the Babylonians because they had taken these articles from the house of God. Nebuchadnezzar seems to sense a problem as well and he stores them "*in the treasure house of his god.*"

THE GREAT AND MOST IMPORTANT THEME OF DANIEL IS THAT THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, WHO IS JEHOVAH, AND THAT HE IS SOVEREIGN OVER THE EVENTS OF HISTORY.

JAMES MONTGOMERY BOICE

III. GOD'S PEOPLE

DANIEL 1:3

Notice that Ashpenaz is "*the master of the eunuchs.*" He is given the responsibility to choose those whom he will train and especially will share his male humiliation as well as political exaltation. This would have been more than humiliation to Daniel and his three friends because it limited their access to God. According to the Law of Moses, priests who were eunuchs were not allowed to render service to God in the Temple (Leviticus 21:16-22). Even worse, any other eunuch was not even allowed to pray or worship in the temple! (Deuteronomy 23:1) Though ashamed to admit it openly, no less than seven times Daniel will emphasize that he answers to "*the master of the eunuchs.*" What a discouragement to these Hebrew youths to make them think that they are not worthy to be heard by God in prayer. Yet because they know God is in absolute control, they prevail in prayer and enjoy God's favor and answers to prayer more than anyone else!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Do you trust God and His sovereignty even when the evil may prevail?
- 2) Does God hold nations accountable for the sins that they publically allow and accept?
- 3) Are you committed to prayer so that you believe that God will hear and answer even in the darkest hour?