

# The Church at Myrtle Lake

## Daniel: Foundational to Understanding Revelation

*“Presenting the Whole Counsel of God and the Truth of the Gospel In the Time of Christ’s Soon Return”*



*Watchmen  
On the Wall*

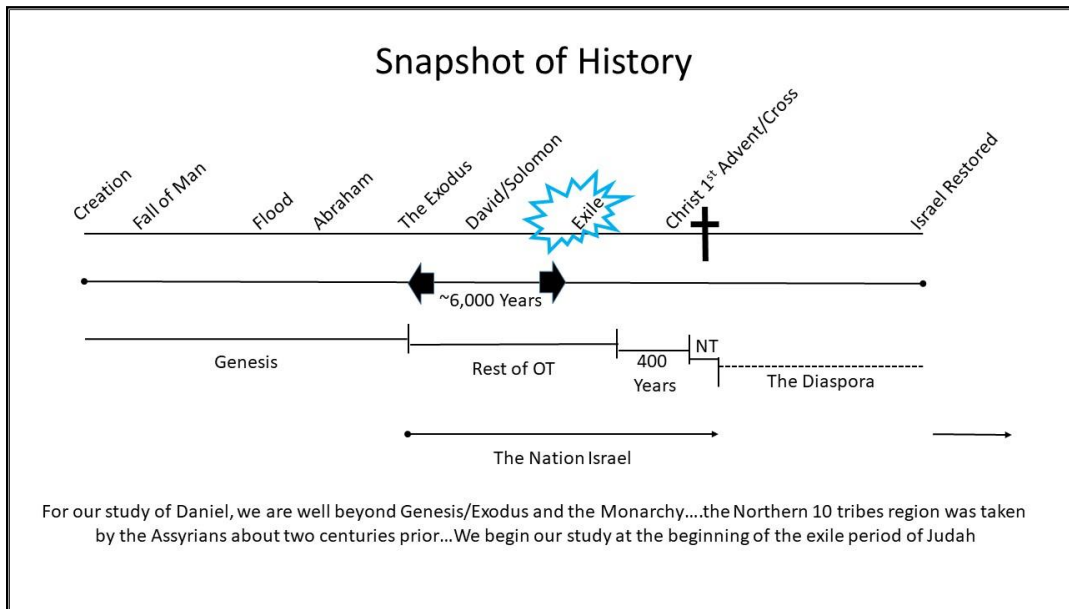
### Lesson 2 Notes

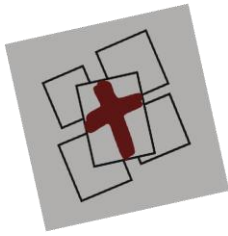
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The King James Bible is used throughout this study series.

Sunday  
3 March, 2024

We are learning about what is happening at the beginning of the prophesied 70-year exile period. It is during this period that Daniel is given revelation about the history of the Gentile world, from king Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon all the way to the future empire of the anti-christ that Jesus will smash at his second coming. In the NT, Luke describes this period as “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24)





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### **Daniel 1: 1-4**

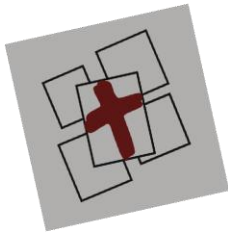
*In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.*

We read here about the first siege of Jerusalem by king Nebuchadnezzar of the growing empire of Babylon. Daniel and his companions are taken hostage back to the capital of Babylon, along with temple artifacts (Solomon's temple).

**Discuss:** In this portion of chapter 1, we read "*And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand...*" Who is in charge/in control here with regard to both Judah and Babylon?

Nebuchadnezzar instructs Ashpenaz to bring children of Israel back to Babylon. These children were to be of noble heritage, of the royal line, the "best of the best". Why? Simply, Nebuchadnezzar wanted to assimilate the cream of the crop of the conquered and have them become servants in the king's palace. In addition, these children of Israel were to get a thorough crash-course in the ways, language and culture of the Chaldeans.

Remember, the Chaldeans are the progenitors of the Babylonian empire. It starts with the city-state of Babylon and expands from there (see graphic on next page). This area is also known as the plains of Shinar (the general region around Babylon – modern Iraq). Later, this area becomes known as Mesopotamia (Sumer) (translated as the land between two rivers – specifically the Euphrates and Tigris rivers). Remember in our previous lessons that Abraham and his family hailed from Ur of the Chaldeans/Chaldees.



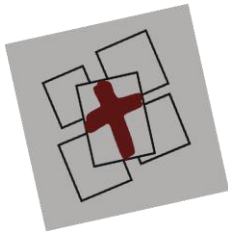
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**Verses 5-9:** *“And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.”*

Nebuchadnezzar ensures these new captives (students) are treated well and nourished so they can learn the ways of the Chaldeans over the next three years. So, they are provided top-notch food and drink. Among the cohort in training are Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These four young men (estimated at 12-15 yrs old) are given new names – specifically Babylonian names, as part of the overall assimilation process.

Daniel decides (purposed in his heart) not to defile himself by consuming the king's food/drink. Note: Daniel was probably taught not to eat meat sacrificed to idols (it was



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likely that the meat served to the king and subsequently, to Daniel and his companions, was first presented to the Babylonian gods). Refer to: Exodus 34:15

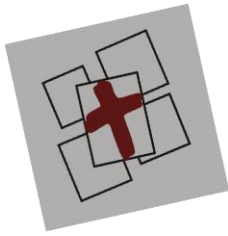
*“...otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice,”* and Revelation 2:14 *“But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.”*

**Discuss:** How can we relate to Daniel here? God is in full control, like we read, yet Daniel’s life has fallen apart – his nation has been invaded and he has been taken captive against his will to an unknown and foreign land (also, we’re not sure what happened to his parents and extended family). Further, he is in the process of being pressed into service in the despot’s palace and surrounded by pagan influences (while they attempt to indoctrinate him into these pagan ways).

How does Daniel respond in these troubling times? As Christians, how should we respond to adversity? How should we respond to a world/nation bent on indoctrinating and molding us in its wicked ways?

**Verses 10-17:** *“And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”*

In verses 5-9, the Bible says Daniel formed a good relationship with his overseer, Ashpenaz. Again, it is God who is in control of events: *“Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.”* (emphasis mine). Daniel first approached Ashpenaz and requests an exemption from consuming the meat and drink offered to him. Now, Ashpenaz is very apprehensive about Daniel’s request – he



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was afraid for his life if Daniel looked malnourished by the king. So, Daniel approached the next person in the chain of command (Ashpenaz's underling, Melzar). At this point, a very shrewd and wise Daniel proffers a bargain on behalf of himself and his three companions – *let us eat pulse (vegetables) and drink only water for 10 days and then evaluate their physical condition. Based on your (Melzar) analysis of our condition at the end of ten days, deal with us accordingly.* Melzar agrees!!

*As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams...* Again, God is the provider of knowledge, skill and understanding. Here we see God blesses Daniel further by giving him understanding in all visions and dreams. This will be useful very soon.

**Verses 18-21:** *“Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.”*

In verses 18-21, we fast forward to the end of the three year training period, and Daniel and his companions are found to be exceptional *“ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm”* Note: remember, Nebuchadnezzar inherited his father's advisors when he assumed the throne after his father's death. It is apparent that Nebuchadnezzar did not trust these advisors (or at a minimum, wanted to validate their credentials and purported skills). We will see Nebuchadnezzar test the advisors in the next chapter, next week. Finally, the Bible indicates Daniel continues until the first year of king Cyrus.....king Cyrus is king of the Media-Persia empire that conquers Babylon later on (see graphic for the timeline). Daniel will not only rise to prominence in the Babylonian kingdom, but also in the kingdom of the Medes and Persians.

Now that God has placed Daniel in a good stead with the king and his underlings, and has been gifted by God with understanding in all visions and dreams, God will answer Daniel's (and companions) prayer to tell the king his dream and its interpretation (Chapter 2), when God's Word will give us “history written in advance”. Until next week.