

Daniel 1:1-2

November 17, 2024



CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

MAIN POINT

We start the book of Daniel this week. Daniel follows the story of the Israelite people during exile, highlighting stories of faith in the face of oppression and the triumph of our God when hope seems lost. This week, we'll set the stage.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What types of rules did God give the Israelite people to live by in the Old Testament?

Do you think the Old Testament Israelites were faithful and obedient to God? Why or why not?

What were the consequences for disobedience? (Remember, this was before Jesus came to die for our sins.)

We are starting a new lesson series in Daniel this week: "Daniel: The Triumph of Our God." Daniel highlights stories of faith in the face of oppression and the triumph of our



God when hope seems lost. Through this study, we'll explore how God worked for, in, and through the Israelites while they were in exile.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 1:1-2.

What's happening here? What does the text tell us?

Who does the text identify as the architect of the military victory described?

What can we learn about God from this passage?

How Did We Get Here?

After God brought His people out of Egyptian slavery (recorded in the book of Exodus), He gave them the law and the Israelite people entered a covenant (agreement) with God. God promised the people great rewards for obedience (e.g., provision, abundance, peace, victory, favor) and punishment for disobedience (Leviticus 26:1-46). If they disobeyed, God promised to scatter them among the nations, away from the promised land to which He was leading them (Leviticus 26:33,43). With the Lord's help, they claimed the promised land in the book of Joshua.

It's important to note that even in the punishment for their disobedience, God desired restoration and left the door open for repentance (Leviticus 26:40-45). God has always desired relationship with us.

The people promised to be obedient to God (Exodus 19:8), but over and over again, they weren't. Between the time the Lord provided a place for them in the promised land, and the moment in which we find the Israelites in our text today, the people had drifted further and further away from the Lord.

Scripture often uses the metaphor of an adulterous wife to describe the disobedient behavior of the Israelites, and this moment fits the bill. The Israelites were desecrating the temple and participating in detestable idol worship (Ezekiel 8:5-18), which included things like burning your children in sacrifice. Through His prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, God warned the people that punishment was coming for their unfaithfulness, even detailing what would happen.

And still, the people did not repent. So, in Daniel 1:1-2, God kept His promise and scattered the people out of the promised land and into exile. Their debt for disobedience would be paid through exile; ours was paid through Jesus's redemptive work on the cross.



Our passage today opens on Nebuchadnezzar's first siege of Jerusalem, which took place in 605 BC. Note that the text identifies the Lord as the one who handed over King Jehoiakim. In fact, in His warnings in Jeremiah, God refers to Nebuchadnezzar as His servant (Jeremiah 27:6;43:10).

Though Nebuchadnezzar surely felt he was in charge of the situation, Scripture tells a different story: As always, God is sovereign on the throne. Even when it feels like our enemy has won, God isn't worried or surprised. He is sovereign and working things out for our good (Romans 8:28).

So, as we set the stage for the rest of Daniel, our passage ends with the news that Lord brought about Nebuchadnezzar's victory and records how Nebuchadnezzar carried the spoils of his victory—including "some of the vessels from the house of God" (v.2)—and a portion of the Israelite people to Babylon.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Why do you think God allows bad things to happen to us?

How does God work during difficult times?

When have you seen God working in your life when everything felt like it was going wrong?

When has God brought good out of a bad situation in your life?

When we say God is sovereign, what does that mean?

How can God's sovereignty bring us peace when things go wrong?

PRAYER

Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.

Thank God for His abundant forgiveness. Thank Him for sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sins and for forgiving us when we are disobedient to Him. Ask God to help your LIFE group remember that He is always sovereign, even when it feels like everything is going wrong. Ask Him to work in the difficult situations your group



members are facing today. Pray that He will use your group's study of Daniel to draw you closer to Him and help you know Him more.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead to next week's scripture passage as we continue our study of Daniel: The Triumph of Our God.

November 24, 2024 --- Daniel 1:3-21

COMMENTARY

Daniel 1:1-2

1:1. Although Daniel recorded these events as taking place in "the third year of...Jehoiakim," Jeremiah wrote that it was in the fourth year (Jer. 25:1,9; 46:1). Daniel probably used the Babylonian system which did not count a king's year of accession, while Jeremiah used the Israelite system of counting, which did include the accession year. The events took place during the accession year of "Nebuchadnezzar" king of Babylon, probably when he was still co-regent with his father and just after the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.).

1:2. Although Nebuchadnezzar viewed his defeat of Judah as a victory for his gods, Daniel's perspective was that it was the Lord who handed Jehoiakim over to the Babylonians. The historian Berosus mentioned these events when he wrote that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Hattiland (referring to Syro-Palestine). At that time, Nebuchadnezzar took vessels from the house of God, in fulfillment of Isaiah's prediction when Hezekiah showed them to the Babylonian king a century beforehand (Isa. 39:2,6)

