

**Episode:** Kings and Prophets Series No. 18

**Narrator:** King Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel

**Primary Scriptures:** *Daniel, Ezekiel, Obadiah*

**Story Summary:** Daniel and the exile of the Jews

**Location:** Babylon, Persia

**Time:** 605-586 BC

**Suggested Memory Scriptures:** Daniel 3:17-18; 9:23; Ezekiel 2:7; 3:19--21

The book of *Daniel* is a little challenging for modern readers because the sections are not always in chronological order, and the names are confusing. Many modern readers believe some of the stories in *Daniel* are meant to be applied to the time of Jesus' return.

Daniel was taken into exile from the Southern Kingdom to Babylon in 605 BC by King Nebuchadnezzar of the Assyrians. This was before the final exile of the Southern Kingdom in 586 BC. He was still living in exile when the Medes and Persians overthrew the Assyrians. He is treated as a prophet by Christians, but not by the Jews.

The book of *Daniel* begins by describing Daniel and his friends being taken into exile, then being chosen to serve in the king's court. Immediately, Daniel and his friends begin to distinguish themselves by following Hebrew dietary laws, and by being very intelligent. Daniel not only is wise, but is also able to interpret dreams.

*Daniel* is filled with some of the best-known stories in the Bible: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego delivered from the blazing furnace; Daniel's interpretations of various dreams; the writing on the wall; Daniel in the lions' den; and Daniel's many visions and dreams. Through all these times, both good and bad, Daniel remained faithful to God.

Daniel 12 is specifically about the time of the end of the world as we know it. What this chapter, and many other chapters in *Daniel* mean, greatly influences the many ways people interpret the Second Coming of Jesus and the times leading up to it.

Daniel 9 is one of the most meaningful chapters in the book, but it is often slighted. In it, Daniel finds an important passage in the writings of Jeremiah. This shows he was a student of the Law and Prophets. He realized that Jeremiah had prophesied that the Jews would be in exile for seventy years, then would start returning to Jerusalem.

What did he do? He started praying. He repented on behalf of his people and he praised God. From the moment he started praying, God started answering his prayer and started honoring him. That is a lesson that we should always be praising God while praying for God's people, and for forgiveness.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Daniel end up in Babylon?
2. How did Daniel come to be in the service of the government?

3. Why were Daniel and his friends so gifted?
4. Why did God save Daniel from the lions in the den?
5. In the book of Daniel, there are stories of many dreams and visions. Do you perceive that those things have already happened, or that they will happen at the End Times?

1. The Babylonians took many Jews into exile when they were victorious over King Jehoiakim of Judah. It appears Daniel was one of those. 2. The Babylonians ruled a vast empire. They chose to take the best of their conquered victims and put them to service in the government. This gave them excellent civil servants and reduced the chances of rebellion by enemy leaders. 3. God gave them knowledge and understanding of all kinds. 4. Because he was innocent. Daniel 6:21-22.

#### Application Questions:

1. In Daniel 2:27-28, Daniel gave God credit instead of taking it for himself. How could you implement this in your business and personal life?
2. In Daniel 2:49, it is revealed that Daniel helped promote his friends to places of power. Have you cultivated friends that you would be willing to promote in business or social settings? How do you choose your friends?
3. Read Daniel 4:28-33. Would you be likely to be arrogant if you knew God was going to immediately punish you for doing so? How can you train yourself to be more humble?
4. According to Daniel 9:2, Daniel had a special insight because he took the time to study Scripture. How did he act on that insight? Is prayer your first response to problems? Is repentance a part of your typical prayer?

#### Application Questions for Teens:

1. In Daniel 2:49 you see that Daniel helped promote his friends. He had earlier gone through tough times with them and had had them pray for him. How do you think you can develop friendships that are meaningful? Can you be more intentional about doing so? Should all your friendships be meaningful, or is it okay to have some that aren't? Why or why not?
2. Read Daniel 3:17-18. How does somebody ever get that much faith in God, and continue having faith whether God acts the way they want or not? Is that a level of faith you feel you can have? How might you develop it?
3. Daniel reacted to bad news by continuing to follow his habit of praying, as shown in Daniel 6:10. How can you cultivate a habit of praying regularly? Will this be hard or easy to do?
4. What lessons can you learn from Daniel 10:12?