



AMPLIFY CHRIST SERIES

How-To Guide

TIMELINE

Unknown	Adam and Eve
Unknown	Noah
Unknown	Tower of Babel
2166-1991 B.C.	Life of Abraham
1916-1806 B.C.	Life of Joseph
1876-1446 B.C.	Israelites in Egypt
1446 B.C.	Exodus
1446 B.C.	Law at Sinai
1446-1406 B.C.	Wilderness wandering
1406-1399 B.C.	Joshua leads the Conquest
1360-1075 B.C.	Judges Period
1051-931 B.C.	United monarchy
1011-971 B.C.	David reigns
959 B.C.	Solomon builds the temple
931-586 B.C.	Divided monarchy
722 B.C.	Assyria conquers Israel
605 B.C.	Babylon conquers Assyria
586 B.C.	Babylon conquers Judah/temple destroyed
539 B.C.	Persia conquers Babylon
538 B.C.	Exiles return to Judah
515 B.C.	Temple rebuilt
458 B.C.	Ezra returns to Israel from Babylon
445 B.C.	Nehemiah rebuilds the wall
331 B.C.	Greece conquers Persia
175-164 B.C.	Seleucid rule over Israel by Antiochus IV Epiphanes
63 B.C.	Rome captures Jerusalem
7 to 4 B.C.	Birth of Jesus
A.D. 26-30	Jesus' ministry
A.D. 30	Jesus' death and resurrection
A.D. 45-56	Paul's missionary journeys
A.D. 70	Rome destroys the temple

Timeline of Important Dates

Understand the sequence of important events and the timing in which they occurred.

Lesson 1

INTRODUCTION

Daniel

God's "Weakness" Surpasses
Nebuchadnezzar's "Strength""Find It" and
Follow Along

A note of the passages being referenced so you can "find it" in the Bible and follow along!

"Read and Take
Note" Guide

A guide to the key information to pay attention to and make note of.

READ AND TAKE NOTE

Read Daniel 1. Look for:

- the historical circumstances (vss. 1-2)
- the depiction of God as "giver" (vss. 2, 9, 17)
- repetitive elements (references to the royal meals provided by the king)
- divinely directed irony (vss. 20, 21)

FIND IT

Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel

Who: God

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon

Daniel and his three friends—youths taken as war loot

What: a test proving God's superior provision over the feasts of the world's greatest king

When: around 605-602 B.C.

Where: city of Babylon, near the Euphrates River, south of modern Baghdad

Why: to demonstrate God's sovereignty to His people

How: by giving health and strength to His faithful servants on meager provisions

Spiritual Formation: Disciples are loyal to the Lord in all circumstances.

Setting
the Scene

Dive into the stories with key details of the story such as who, what, when, where, why, how, and spiritual formation.

Map of
Location

Know the geographic landscape of the region being discussed, fostering a deeper understanding of the setting.



NOTES

some of his own blood relatives and castrate them to serve as eunuchs (Isaiah 39:5-7).

While our lesson text does not explicitly assert that the four Hebrew youths were castrated, the limited time frame for the fulfillment of this prophecy (from 605-586 B.C.) likely points to the situation of Daniel 1. Ancient readers familiar with the times probably assumed as much, so an explicit statement was unnecessary. As a matter of fact, the four youths were put under the custody of the chief of eunuchs (1:10). (Some versions render the Hebrew word as “official” because the term does not always have the technical sense of “eunuch.” Here, the more technical term “eunuch,” however, is probably more accurate.)

The policy was consequential. Daniel and his friends would not be able to father any royal heirs who might later revolt. Further, Mosaic Law barred eunuchs from temple sacrifices (Deuteronomy 23:1), and they would likely become outcasts. Castration was an extreme way of depleting all hope of escape from Babylon or returning home to any kind of normal life. By all accounts, they were without family and community.

The surgery was meant to enforce dependency upon the king of Babylon. Accordingly, Nebuchadnezzar gave them the choicest food from his own table, royal accommodations, and, eventually, administrative power as they proved their loyalty to him. He wanted his captives to confess, “The king of Babylon is my shepherd; we will not want” (cf. Psalm 23:1). The Babylonians imagined themselves as having defeated not only the nation of Israel but also Israel’s God. The Babylonians, however, were not in control. For it was God who delivered Israel to the Babylonians

for their people’s sin (cf. Daniel 1:2).

“Questions to Consider” and Think About

Dispersed throughout, the “Questions to Consider” will keep you engaged and help you apply the information.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

In what ways does God seem defeated and not in control over the historical situation depicted in Daniel 1? How does a careful reading of Daniel 1 correct such thinking?

Under their dire circumstances, Daniel and his friends had every earthly reason to turn their allegiance and confidence away from God. In Daniel 1, then, this background highlights two great questions: 1) will the four Hebrews turn their loyalty from God to king? and 2) is God relevant and faithful to the four Hebrews even in Babylon?

AMPLIFY THE TEXT

GOD’S PROVISION TESTED (Daniel 1:8-14)

Daniel’s Request (Daniel 1:8). Daniel 1:1-7 gives us a picture of four traumatized Hebrew youths, brutally abducted from their families by a foreign aggressor. They were subjugated to a seemingly all-powerful despot who had sinister designs for them—to make them serve as eunuchs in his pagan administration. They seem altogether helpless to resist Nebuchadnezzar’s erasure of their cultural identity. As a gesture of his authority, he even imposed on them new blasphemous Babylonian names that replaced their pious Hebrew names. With every tool in his ample arsenal,