Daniel Lesson 1 Lecture

Daniel 1

Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Galatians 1:10a

- The book of Daniel teaches us repeatedly that, despite circumstances and even our own actions, God is in control. That is the overall theme of this book.
- Even though God said in Jeremiah 7:15, "I will thrust you from my presence", that did not mean that God would fail to protect his people in exile. God equipped his people, especially Daniel, to live and prosper in exile as well as to remain faithful to Him.
- The book of Daniel demonstrates several of God's attributes; 3 important attributes revealed are God's omniscience (all knowing), omnipresent (present anywhere and everywhere), and mercy.
- Daniel Chapter 1 is the fulfillment of several Old Testament prophecies. Examples include:
 - The LORD will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you or your ancestors. There you will worship other gods, gods of wood and stone. Deuteronomy 28:36
 - Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD Almighty: ⁶ The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. ⁷ And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." Isaiah 39:5-7
 - I will enslave you to your enemies in a land you do not know. Jeremiah 15:14
- What do we know about Daniel and Jehoiakim from Daniel 1 and 2 Chronicles 36?
 - Daniel was a young man.
 - \circ Daniel was from the royal family or the nobility.
 - Daniel was handsome and had no physical deformities.
 - Daniel had an aptitude for learning.

- Jehoiakim reigned 609-598 BC. The dating in Daniel uses the Babylonian dating system which counted the months between the king's accession and the new year as a complete year. Further, the New Year was celebrated in autumn.
 - Thus, 609 would be the accession year.
 - September 608 to September 607 would be Jehoiakim's first year.
 - September 607 to September 606 would be Jehoiakim's second year.
 - September 606 to September 605 would be Jehoiakim's third year and it was in this third year that Daniel was taken captive to Babylon.
- What do we know about Daniel from the entire book?
 - Daniel was a man of great faith.
 - Daniel, like David, was a man after God's own heart.
- Knowing these facts, what can we infer about Daniel?
 - The designation "young man" is imprecise, but Greek evidence about Persian education indicates it began at age 14 and concluded at age 17. Certainly Daniel could have been in this age range and was probably not much older than 20 or 21.
 - Since Daniel was taken to Babylon in 605 BC at age 14-21 and Jehoiakim had been ruling only 4 years on this date, under which king had Daniel been raised?
 - The immediate preceding kings of Judah were Jehoahaz and Josiah. Jehoahaz only reigned 3 months before being dethroned by Pharoah Necho.
 - So, Daniel grew up during the reign of Josiah, the last good king of Judah. Josiah cleansed Judah and Jerusalem of idol worship, repaired and purified the Temple, and renewed God's covenant within Judah.
 - It is clear that Josiah's rule greatly influenced Daniel's faith.
- There is some controversy regarding Daniel in the context of Isaiah 39:5-7.
 - Early rabbinic and Christian commentaries suggest that Daniel and his 3 friends were made eunuchs, based on the Isaiah passage. Further, the correct title for the Ashpenaz mentioned in Daniel 1:3 was "chief of the eunuchs."

- Scripture is not clear on this topic and other non-Scriptural writings tell us that not every male who served in the Babylonian king's court was a eunuch.
- I might also point out that Daniel, throughout his life, was careful to keep God's covenant and commands. We see this clearly in Daniel 1, as Daniel scrupulously works to avoid violating the dietary laws by avoiding the king's food and wine. Daniel 1:8 says, "Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine." The word for "defile" used here is "ga'al" and denotes religious defilement.
- Deuteronomy 23:1 specifically says, "No one who has been emasculated by crushing or cutting may enter the assembly of the LORD." This prohibition has led other scholars to conclude that Daniel and his 3 friends resisted becoming eunuchs.
- Why was Nebuchadnezzar so intent on training a group of Judean young men in Babylonian culture and language?
 - By 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar was in control of Babylon, Syria, Egypt, and the land of Israel and Judah. This was a large territory which he needed to control, and he needed capable administrators to do that. It is possible that Nebuchadnezzar had plans to place some of these young men back in Judah at some point in the future. Remember that Nebuchadnezzar did not order the destruction of Jerusalem until 586 BC.
 - Or, Nebuchadnezzar planned to use these young men to control the Judeans in exile. This turned out to be the case, as we see from Daniel 2: 48-49.
 - Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men. ⁴⁹ Moreover, at Daniel's request the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the royal court.
 - Not only were the 4 men in charge of Judeans, but they oversaw Babylonians and other foreigners within Babylon as well.

- What did the training in Babylonian culture and language include?
 - Ancient Hebrew was the language of the Judeans.
 - Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian tribe spoke Aramaic, but the native language of the Babylonians was Akkadian. Like Hebrew, Akkadian was a Semitic language, but it had a much more complex writing system using syllabic cuneiform and it often also utilized the ancient Sumerian language in some literature.
 - The training would also have included the arts of divination such as:
 - Interpreting terrestrial and celestial phenomena such as an eclipse or a shooting star
 - Astrology
 - Examining animal entrails
 - Reading reference books to help interpret someone's dreams
 - Magic incantations, prayers, and hymns
 - As a point of interest, Daniel 1: 20 says, "In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom."
 - The word "enchanter" used here has an Akkadian root which passed into the Syriac language and means "snake charmer."
- The training also included understanding the Babylonian polytheistic system, which included 20 gods who were personifications of aspects of nature, such as the moon and sun gods, Sin and Utu respectively.
- Daniel Chapter 1 then is the perfect set-up for the rest of the book.
 - God's gift to Daniel to understand visions and dreams of all kinds will be called to the test more than once, beginning with Daniel Chapter 2.
 - God will continue to exert his control over the Babylonians to protect Daniel, his 3 friends, and God's people in exile.

- We should not miss Daniel 1:21.
 - And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.
- The first year of Cyrus was 539-538 BC. Daniel, having been taken into exile in 605 BC, had been in exile 68 years at this point.
- Jeremiah 25:8-11 records:
 - Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words, ⁹ I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the LORD, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. ¹⁰ I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp.
 ¹¹ This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.
- Therefore, we should see Daniel clearly as THE prophet of the exile.
- We conclude with some pictures of the Jerusalem Temple and Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon.
 - Imagine Daniel and his friends' awe when they arrived in Babylon and compared the extent and lavishness of Babylon's temples as compared to Jerusalem's temple.
 - They had walked about 500 miles over the course of a month to arrive in Babylon.
 - They walked from Jerusalem to Syria and Syria to Babylon.

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Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Galatians 1:10a

- 1. Read Daniel 1:1-2, 2 Kings 23:36-37, and 2 Kings 24:1-6.
 - a. Who was ruling Judah?
 - b. Why did King Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, invade Judah?
 - c. Why did the Lord deliver the King of Judah into Nebuchadnezzar's hands?
 - d. Why would Nebuchadnezzar take articles from the Temple?
 - e. Why would Nebuchadnezzar put these articles in his god's treasure house?
 - f. What happened to the King of Judah?
 - g. Who succeeded him?
- 2. According to Deuteronomy 28:15 and 2 Chronicles 7:19-22, why were the people of Judah themselves responsible for this defeat?

- 3. Read Daniel 1:3-7 and 2 Kings 24: 8-17.
 - a. Who was ruling Judah when the events of Daniel 1:3-7 took place?
 - b. What kinds of people did King Nebuchadnezzar deport to Babylon?

c. What qualities did Nebuchadnezzar seek for the young men to be placed in his service?

d. Why do you think he selected young men with these qualities?

e. Fill in the following chart.

Hebrew Name	Hebrew Meaning	Babylonian Name	Babylonian Meaning
Daniel			
Hananiah			
Mishael			
Azariah			

- f. Why would the king rename the young men?
- g. What other strategies did the king use to indoctrinate the young men?

- h. What was the king's intent with these strategies?
- i. How would the king's requirements for the young men affect their faithfulness to God?
- 4. Read Daniel 1:8-14.
 - a. What did Daniel resolve to do?
 - b. How might Leviticus 3:17, Leviticus 11:1-47, and Proverbs 31:4-7 have influenced Daniel's decision?
 - c. What was Daniel's approach to solving his dilemma?
 - d. How did God play a part in this?
 - e. Who else did Daniel speak for, in addition to himself?
 - f. What do you think the other captive Judean young men (outside of these 4) were doing about the king's food and drink?
 - g. What does this say about these 4 men versus the others?

- 5. Read Daniel 1:15-16.
 - a. What was the result of the test?
 - b. What does this act by Daniel and his friends say about their faith?
- 6. According to Daniel 1:17, what did God do for these 4 young men?
- 7. What else did God do for Daniel?
- 8. Read Daniel 1:18-21.
 - a. After their 3 years of training, which men were placed in the king's service?
 - b. Why?
 - c. How do you think the other young men in training reacted to this?
 - d. According to Daniel 1:20, what did King Nebuchadnezzar really seek in those who were part of his service?
 - e. What does Leviticus 19:26b say about this?
 - f. How do you predict that Daniel will react to this if asked to perform these functions by the king? (Hint: Read Genesis 40:8 for context.)

9. Using 1:3-7,21 and 2 Kings 24: 8-17 determine how long Daniel remained in service to the kings of Babylon.

10. What does this chapter teach you about faith and culture?

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Daniel 1

Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Galatians 1:10a

- 1. Read Daniel 1:1-2, 2 Kings 23:36-37, and 2 Kings 24:1-6.
 - a. Who was ruling Judah? King Jehoiakim
 - b. Why did King Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, invade Judah?
 - Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah; she was from Rumah. ³⁷ And he did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his predecessors had done. 2 Kings 23:36-37
 - The LORD sent Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders against him to destroy Judah, in accordance with the word of the LORD proclaimed by his servants the prophets. ³ Surely these things happened to Judah according to the LORD's command, in order to remove them from his presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all he had done, ⁴ including the shedding of innocent blood. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive. 2 Kings 24:2-4
 - c. Why did the Lord deliver the King of Judah into Nebuchadnezzar's hands? Because of the evil done by the kings of Judah and the sins of the people of Judah.
 - d. Why would Nebuchadnezzar take articles from the Temple? Taking articles from the Temple would show the dominance of Nebuchadnezzar's gods over Yahweh, since the Temple was the house of God Almighty.
 - e. Why would Nebuchadnezzar put these articles in his god's treasure house? Presumably, these items were made of precious metals and thus, were of value. Further, this again reflects Nebuchadnezzar's statement to his people and the people of Judah that Nebuchadnezzar's god had triumphed over God Almighty and his house.
 - f. What happened to the King of Judah? Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years. But then he turned against Nebuchadnezzar and rebelled. 2 Kings 24:1

- g. Who succeeded him? After Jehoiakim died, he was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin.
- 2. According to Deuteronomy 28:15 and 2 Chronicles 7:19-22, why were the people of Judah themselves responsible for this defeat?
 - However, **if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees** I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you: Deuteronomy 28:15
 - "But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, ²⁰ then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. I will make it a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. ²¹ This temple will become a heap of rubble. All who pass by will be appalled and say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?' ²² People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who brought them out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them —that is why he brought all this disaster on them.''' 2 Chronicles 7:19-22
- 3. Read Daniel 1:3-7 and 2 Kings 24: 8-17.
 - a. Who was ruling Judah when the events of Daniel 1:3-7 took place? Jehoiakim was ruling Judah.
 - b. What kinds of people did King Nebuchadnezzar deport to Babylon?
 - Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility ⁴ young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. Daniel 1:3-4
 - In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. ¹³ As the LORD had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed the treasures from the temple of the LORD and from the royal palace, and cut up the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made for the temple of the LORD. ¹⁴ He carried all Jerusalem into exile: all the officers and fighting men, and all the skilled workers and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left. ¹⁵ Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the prominent people of the land. ¹⁶ The king of Babylon also deported to Babylon the entire force of seven thousand fighting men, strong and fit for war, and a thousand skilled workers and artisans. 2 Kings 24:12-16

c. What qualities did Nebuchadnezzar seek for the young men to be placed in his service?

The young men should be handsome, without physical defect, and should show an aptitude for learning.

- d. Why do you think he selected young men with these qualities?
 - He wanted malleable young men whom he could train in Babylonian culture and language.
 - He wanted people around him who were attractive.
 - Nebuchadnezzar may have planned to place the trained young men back in positions of authority in Judah, reporting to Nebuchadnezzar.

e.	Fill	in	the	fol	lowing	chart.
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Hebrew Name	Hebrew Meaning	Babylonian Name	Babylonian Meaning
Daniel	God is my judge	Belteshazzar	May Bel protect his life
Hananiah	The Lord shows grace	Shadrach	Servant of Sin (a god)
Mishael	Who is what God is	Meshach	Guest of a king
Azariah	The Lord helps	Abednego	Servant of Nebu/Nebo

f. Why would the king rename the young men?

- To further indoctrinate them into Babylonian culture
- To show the king's dominance over and control of the young men
- To destroy the young men's Jewish identities

g. What other strategies did the king use to indoctrinate the young men?

- They were to be taught the language and literature of the Babylonians.
- They were to be fed from the king's table.
- After 3 years, they were to enter the king's service.

h. What was the king's intent with these strategies?

- To separate the young men from their Jewish culture, religion, and other Jews taken into captivity in Babylon
- To fully immerse the young men into Babylonian culture
- i. How would the king's requirements for the young men affect their faithfulness to God?
 - The food from the king's table likely did not meet the dietary laws of the Old Testament. The men would be defiled by eating certain of the king's foods.
 - By drawing the young men into Babylonian culture, they could potentially be drawn into worshipping the Babylonian gods.

4. Read Daniel 1:8-14.

- a. What did Daniel resolve to do?
 - But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Daniel 1:8
 - Notice that Daniel did this privately and in a polite manner.
- b. How might Leviticus 3:17, Leviticus 11:1-47, and Proverbs 31:4-7 have influenced Daniel's decision?
 - "'This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live: You must not eat any fat or any blood. "' Leviticus 3:17
 - Leviticus 11:1-47 contains all the specific dietary laws for the Jews.
 - It is not for kings, Lemuel—it is not for kings to drink wine, not for rulers to crave beer, ⁵ lest they drink and forget what has been decreed, and deprive all the oppressed of their rights. ⁶ Let beer be for those who are perishing, wine for those who are in anguish! ⁷ Let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more. Proverbs 31:4-7
 - It is possible that the food served at the king's table had been previously offered to idols before being presented to the king. If that is the case, Daniel and his 3 friends might have eaten vegetables offered to idols. So, the underlying concern might have been that the king ate pork, horse, or meat with blood still in it.

c. What was Daniel's approach to solving his dilemma?

Daniel asked the chief official for permission not to eat the king's food and drink. He told the guard to test them for 10 days. They would eat only vegetables and drink only water. They were to be compared to the other young men who were eating the king's food and drink after 10 days.

d. How did God play a part in this?

Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel Daniel 1:9

- e. Who else did Daniel speak for, in addition to himself? Daniel also spoke for Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.
- f. What do you think the other captive Judean young men (outside of these 4) were doing about the king's food and drink?The other captive young men must have been enjoying the king's food and drink.
- g. What does this say about these 4 men versus the others? These 4 young men remained pure to their Jewish faith and were not tempted to deviate from it.
- 5. Read Daniel 1:15-16.
 - a. What was the result of the test? At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. Daniel 1:15
 - b. What does this act by Daniel and his friends say about their faith? Their faith was firm.
- According to Daniel 1:17, what did God do for these 4 young men? To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. Daniel 1:17
- What else did God do for Daniel? And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. Daniel 1:17
- 8. Read Daniel 1:18-21.
 - a. After their 3 years of training, which men were placed in the king's service? Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah
 - b. Why?

The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. ²⁰ In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. Daniel 1:19-20

c. How do you think the other young men in training reacted to this? I believe the other young men would have been jealous.

- d. According to Daniel 1:20, what did King Nebuchadnezzar really seek in those who were part of his service? The king was seeking magicians and enchanters who were wise.
- e. What does Leviticus 19:26b say about this? Do not practice divination or seek omens. Leviticus 19:26b
- f. How do you predict that Daniel will react to this if asked to perform these functions by the king? (Hint: Read Genesis 40:8 for context.)
 - "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams." Genesis 40:8
 - Daniel will tell the king that his ability to interpret dreams came from God, rather than any Babylonian reference book.
- 9. Using 1:3-7,21 and 2 Kings 24: 8-17 determine how long Daniel remained in service to the kings of Babylon.

Daniel was likely taken to Babylon about 605 BC. The first year of King Cyrus was 539-538 BC. So, Daniel was in service to the Babylonian kings for about 68 years.

10. What does this chapter teach you about faith and culture?

- This chapter teaches us that we can remain faithful to God, even amid a culture which is in opposition to God.
- God will remain faithful to us if we are faithful to Him.

Daniel 1

Theme/Attributes

- Despite Circumstances and Our Own Actions, God is in Control
- Despite God's Words in Jeremiah 7:15, God Equipped His People, Especially Daniel, To Live and Prosper in Exile
- They Were Able to Remain Faithful to Him
- Daniel Illustrates God's Attributes of Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Mercy

Prophecies Fulfilled in Daniel

- Deuteronomy 28:36
- Isaiah 39:5-7
- Jeremiah 15:14

Daniel 1 and 2 Chronicles 36

- Daniel Was a Young Man
- Daniel Was From the Royal Family or Nobility
- Daniel Was Handsome and Had No Physical Deformities
- Daniel Had an Aptitude For Learning

Daniel 1 and 2 Chronicles 36

- Jehoiakim Reigned 609-598 BC
- Daniel Uses the Babylonian Dating System
 - Months Between the King's Accession and the New Year (Autumn) Counted As a Complete Year

609 BC	Jehoiakim's Accession Year
Sept 608 – Sept 607	Jehoiakim's 1 st Year
Sept 607 – Sept 606	Jehoiakim's 2 nd Year
Sept 606 – Sept 605	Jehoiakim's 3 rd Year; Daniel Taken Captive to Babylon

What Does the Entire Book Tell Us About Daniel?

- Daniel Was a Man of Great Faith
- Daniel, Like David, Was a Man After God's Own Heart

What Can We Infer About Daniel?

- Designation of a "Young Man" Is Imprecise; Likely Age 14-21
- Jehoiakim Had Only Been Ruling 4 Years When Daniel Was Taken
- Under What King Had Daniel Been Raised?
 - Not Jehoahaz; Reigned Only 3 Months
 - It Was Josiah, the Last Good King of Judah!

Some Controversy About Daniel

- Isaiah 39:5-7 Suggests That Daniel and His 3 Friends Were Made Eunuchs
- Ashpenaz's Correct Title (Daniel 1:3) Was "Chief of the Eunuchs"
- Scripture Is Not Clear on This Topic
- Other Non-Scriptural Writings Tell Us That Not Every Male in the Babylonian King's Court Was a Eunuch
- Daniel Was Careful To Keep God's Covenant and Commands
- Daniel 1:8; Daniel Would Not Defile Himself
- Deuteronomy 23:1 Has Led Other Scholars to Conclude That Daniel and His 3 Friends Resisted Becoming Eunuchs

Why Nebuchadnezzar's Training?

- In 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar Controlled Babylon, Syria, Egypt, Israel and Judah; He Needed Administrators
- Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar Intended to Send the Trained Men Back to Judah in the Future
- Or Nebuchadnezzar Planned to Use These Young Men to Control the Judeans in Exile
 - Daniel 2:48-49 Tells Us This Became the Case
 - Daniel and His 3 Friends Oversaw Judeans, Babylonians, and Other Foreigners Within Babylon

What Did the Training Include?

- Aramaic and Akkadian
- The Arts of Divination
 - Interpreting Terrestrial and Celestial Phenomena
 - Astrology
 - Examining Animal Entrails
 - Reading Reference Books About Dream Interpretation
 - Magic Incantations, Prayers, and Hymns
- The Babylonian Polytheistic System, Including Gods Who Were Personifications of Nature (Sun; Moon)

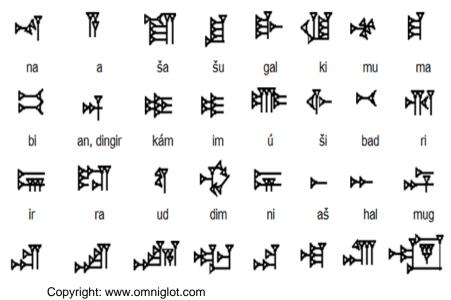
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Some Akkadian Cuneiform glyphs



Daniel Chapter 1

- A Perfect Set-Up For the Rest of the Book
- God's Gift to Daniel to Understand Visions and Dreams Will Be Called to the Test More Than Once, Beginning With Daniel 2
- God Will Continue to Exert His Control Over the Babylonians
- God Will Protect Daniel, His 3 Friends, and God's People in Exile

Daniel Chapter 1

- Don't Miss Daniel 1:21
- Daniel Had Been in Exile 68 Years By the First Year of King Cyrus
- Jeremiah 25:8-11 Records That the Babylonian Exile Will Last 70 Years
- We Should Clearly See Daniel as THE Prophet of the Exile



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