

Chronological

Read the Bible in the chronological order in which its stories and events occurred.

Duration: 365 days

Evangelical Heritage Version (EHV) ▾

Daniel 1-3

Daniel Is Taken to Babylon

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. **2** The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, along with some of the vessels of the House of God, and he brought them to the land of Shinar,^[a] into the house of his god. He brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.

3 The king told Ashpenaz, the chief of his court officials,^[b] to bring some young Israelite men from the royal family or from the nobility. **4** He was to choose young men who had no blemish, who were good looking, who had insight into all kinds of wisdom, who possessed knowledge, understanding, and learning, and who were capable of serving in the king's palace, in order to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.^[c] **5** The king assigned them daily rations from the special royal food and from the king's own wine. He ordered that they should be trained for three years. At the end of training they were to serve the king. **6** In this group of young men were the Judeans Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. **7** The chief of the officials gave them new names. He gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar, Hananiah the name Shadrak, Mishael the name Meshak, and Azariah the name Abednego.

The Young Men Are Steadfast in Their Faith

8 Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the special food of the king or with the wine that he drank. So he sought permission from the chief official, so that he would not have to defile himself. **9** God made the chief of the officials favorable and sympathetic toward Daniel.

10 Then the chief of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink. Why should he see your faces looking less healthy than those of the other young men who are your age? You put my life at risk before the king."

11 Daniel said to the superintendent whom the chief of the officials had placed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, **12** "Please test your servants for ten days. Tell them to give us only vegetables, and we will eat them and drink water. **13** Observe our appearance and the appearance of the young men who eat the special royal food. Then deal with your servants based on what you see." **14** So he listened to what they said about this and tested them for ten days.

15 At the end of ten days, their appearance was noticeably better than that of the others. They were healthier than any of the young men who had been eating the special royal food. **16** So the superintendent permanently took away the special royal food and the wine they were to drink and gave them only vegetables. **17** As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and insight into all kinds of literature, as well as wisdom. In addition, Daniel also understood every kind of vision and dream.

18 At the end of the time which the king had set for them to be brought to him, the chief of the officials brought them before Nebuchadnezzar. **19** The king spoke with them, and none of the others were found to be comparable to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they served the king. **20** In every matter concerning wisdom and understanding that the king sought from them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians^[d] and spell casters in his entire kingdom. **21** So Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Nebuchadnezzar Challenges the Wise Men to Explain His Dream

2 In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. His spirit was troubled, but he fell back to sleep again. **2** The king gave orders to summon the magicians, the spell casters, the sorcerers, and the astrologers^[e] to relate the king's dream to him. So they came and stood before the king. **3** The king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit was troubled because I did not understand the dream."

4 The astrologers said to the king in Aramaic,^[f] "Your Majesty,^[g] may you live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will explain its meaning."

5 The king answered the astrologers, "My decision is final. If you do not tell me the dream and what it means, your body shall be cut to pieces, and your houses will be made into a pile of rubble.

6 However, if you explain the dream and its meaning, you will receive gifts, a reward, and great honor from me. So, explain to me the dream and its meaning!"

7 They responded a second time and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will explain its meaning."

8 The king answered, "Now I know for sure that you are buying time because you see that my decision is final. **9** If you do not make the dream known to me, there is only one decree for you. You have conspired to give me a lying and cheating response until the situation changes. So, tell me the dream, and I will know that you are also able to explain its meaning to me."

10 The astrologers responded to the king, "There is no person on earth who is able to reveal what the king wants. No great and powerful king has ever asked for a thing like this from any magician, spell caster, or astrologer. **11** The thing that the king is asking is difficult. There is no one who can reveal it to the king except the gods, who do not dwell with mortal flesh."

12 Because of this the king became very angry. He was enraged and gave orders to put the wise men of Babylon to death. **13** The decree was issued that all the wise men were to be executed. So executioners looked for Daniel and his companions to execute them.

God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream to Daniel

14 Then Daniel responded with good judgment and tact to Ariok, the chief of the king's executioners, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon. **15** He said to Ariok, the king's officer, "Why is the decree from the king so harsh?" So Ariok explained the situation to Daniel.

16 Daniel then entered the court and asked the king to give him time so that he could reveal the interpretation to the king.

17 Next, Daniel went to his house and explained the situation to Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, his companions. **18** They were to seek mercy from the God of Heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions would not be put to death with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

19 Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision at night, and Daniel blessed the God of Heaven.^[h] **20** Daniel said,

May the name of God be blessed forever and ever,
because wisdom and power are his.

21 He changes times and eras.

He removes kings,
and he brings kings to power.
He gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to those who have good judgment.

22 He reveals deep things and hidden things.

He knows what is in the dark,
and the light dwells with him.

23 To you, God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, because you have given me wisdom and power. Now you have made known to me what we requested from you, because you have made known to us the thing the king asked about.

Daniel Explains Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

24 As a result of this, Daniel went to Ariok, whom the king had assigned to put the wise men of Babylon to death. Daniel went and said this to him: "Do not put the wise men of Babylon to death. Bring me before the king, and I will explain the meaning to the king."

25 Then Ariok immediately brought Daniel before the king. This is what Ariok said to the king: "I have found a man from among the Judean exiles who will make the interpretation known to the king."

26 The king said to Daniel (whose name was Belteshazzar), "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I saw and its meaning?"

27 Daniel answered the king, "The mystery that the king is asking about, no wise men, spell casters, magicians, or diviners are able to explain it to the king. **28** However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the latter days. This is your dream; the visions in your head while you were on your bed were this:

29 For you, Your Majesty, while you were on your bed, thoughts arose about things that will come after this, and the Revealer of Mysteries made known to you what will happen. **30** But the reason that this mystery was revealed to me was not because I have more wisdom in me than any other living being. Rather, it was revealed to me so that the meaning could be made known to Your Majesty and so that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

31 You, Your Majesty, were looking, and there was a very great statue. That statue, which was large and extremely bright, was standing in front of you. Its appearance was frightening. **32** The statue looked like this: Its head was fine gold, its chest and its arms were silver, its abdomen and its thighs were bronze, **33** its shins were iron, and its feet were partly iron and partly fired clay. **34** You continued to watch until a stone was cut, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet that were iron and clay, and it smashed them. **35** Then all at once the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed and became like the chaff on the threshing floors of summer. The wind carried them away, and no trace of them could be found. However, the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the entire earth. **36** This is the dream.

So now we will interpret its meaning for Your Majesty. **37** You, Your Majesty, are the king of kings to whom the God of Heaven has given a kingdom, power, strength, and glory. **38** Wherever there are people, wild animals, and birds of the air, God has given them into your hand, and he has made you ruler over all of them. You are the head of gold.

39 After you another kingdom will arise that will be inferior to yours. Then another kingdom, a third kingdom of bronze will arise. This kingdom will rule the entire earth. **40** A fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron, since iron crushes and shatters everything. So, like iron that smashes, it will crush and smash all of these other kingdoms. **41** Because you saw feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, this will be a divided kingdom. It will have some of the hardness of iron, because you saw iron mixed with common clay.^[1] **42** What is more, the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay. This means that part of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. **43** You saw iron mixed with common clay. This means that the different parts of the kingdom will be a mixture of different races of people,^[1] and they will not remain united to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

44 In the days of those kings, the God of Heaven will establish a kingdom that will never be destroyed, and this kingdom will not be left to another race of people. It will crush and put an end to all of these kingdoms, but it will stand forever, **45** just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain, but not by human hands, and it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to Your Majesty what will happen after this. The dream is sure, and its interpretation is certain.

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell facedown and paid homage to^[k] Daniel. He commanded that a sacrificial gift and incense be offered to him. **47** The king said, "Truly your God is the God of Gods, the Lord of Kings, and the Revealer of Mysteries, because you were able to reveal this mystery."

48 Then the king promoted Daniel to a high position and gave him many valuable gifts. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.

49 When Daniel requested it, the king appointed Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego over the administration of the province of Babylon. Daniel remained in the royal court.

Nebuchadnezzar's Command to Worship His Idol

3 King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue. It was ninety feet tall and nine feet wide.^[l] He set it up in the plain of Dura^[m] in the province of Babylon. **2** King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to assemble the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all of the rulers of the provinces^[n] to come to the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. **3** Then the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all of the rulers of the provinces assembled for the dedication of King Nebuchadnezzar's statue. They stood in front of the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4 The herald called out loudly, "To you peoples, nations, and languages, this command is given:

5 When you hear the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the harp, the triangular harp, the drum,^[o] and all kinds of musical instruments,^[p] you will fall down and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar set up. **6** Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into the blazing fiery furnace."

7 Therefore, when all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the harp, the triangular harp, and all kinds of musical instruments, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshipped the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

The Young Men Remain Faithful

8 At that time, some Chaldeans approached the king and maliciously accused the Jews. **9** They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "Your Majesty,^[q] may you live forever! **10** You, Your Majesty, gave an order that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the harp, the triangular harp, the drum, and all kinds of musical instruments must fall down and worship the golden statue, **11** and

whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into the blazing fiery furnace. ¹² There are Jews whom you appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, namely, Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego. These men do not pay attention to you, Your Majesty. They do not serve your gods, and they do not worship the gold statue that you set up."

¹³ Then in a furious rage Nebuchadnezzar said to bring Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods and that you do not worship the golden statue that I set up? ¹⁵ Now, if you are ready, at the time when you hear the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the harp, the triangular harp, the drum, and all kinds of musical instruments, you must fall down and worship the statue I made. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be thrown into the blazing fiery furnace. What god will be able to save you from my hands?"

¹⁶ Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "We have no need to answer you about this matter. ¹⁷ Since our God, whom we serve, does exist, he is able to save us from the blazing fiery furnace. So, he may save us from your hand, Your Majesty.[□] ¹⁸ But if he does not, you should know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods, and we will not worship the golden statue that you set up."

The Young Men Are Miraculously Saved by God

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage, and the expression on his face changed against Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego. He said to heat the furnace seven times hotter than it was usually heated. ²⁰ He ordered some men, who were soldiers from his army, to bind Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego in order to throw them into the blazing fiery furnace. ²¹ So these men were bound in their coats, their pants, their turbans, and their other clothing, and they were thrown into the middle of the blazing fiery furnace. ²² Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace was extremely hot, those men who carried Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego were killed by the intense heat of the fire. ²³ But these three men, Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego, who had been tied up, fell into the blazing fiery furnace.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was startled and immediately stood up. He said to his advisors, "Didn't we throw three men, who had been tied up, into the middle of the fire?"

They answered the king, "Certainly, Your Majesty."

²⁵ He said, "Look! I see four men, who are untied and walking around in the middle of the fire, unharmed. What is more, the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the blazing fiery furnace. He said, "Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out!" Then Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego came out from the middle of the furnace. ²⁷ The satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the royal advisors gathered together and looked at these men. The fire had no power over their

bodies. Not a hair on their head was singed, their robes were not damaged, and the smell of fire had not stuck to them.

28 Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego, who sent his angel and saved his servants, who trusted in God and ignored the king's command. They gave up their bodies and did not pay homage or worship any god except their God. **29** So I have issued an order that every people, nation, and language that speaks any blasphemy against the God of Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego shall be cut to pieces, and his house shall be turned into a pile of rubble, because there is no other god who is able to save like this."

30 Then the king promoted Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Footnotes

- a. [Daniel 1:2](#) That is, Babylon
- b. [Daniel 1:3](#) The term may refer to eunuchs, but it is not limited to this meaning.
- c. [Daniel 1:4](#) The *Chaldeans* were the ethnic group ruling Babylon.
- d. [Daniel 1:20](#) The distinctions between the various kinds of occult practitioners are unclear.
- e. [Daniel 2:2](#) In the book of Daniel there are two homonyms, both pronounced *kasdim*. One word refers to a type of astronomer/astrologer. The other word refers to the Chaldeans, the ethnic group that ruled Babylon. In most cases the context indicates the correct meaning.
- f. [Daniel 2:4](#) The text of Daniel is written in Aramaic from this point through the end of chapter 7.
- g. [Daniel 2:4](#) Literally *O King*
- h. [Daniel 2:19](#) *The God of Heaven* is the common title for the LORD in Daniel.
- i. [Daniel 2:41](#) *Common clay* is literally *clay of clay*, with two different Aramaic words for clay.
- j. [Daniel 2:43](#) Literally *will be mixed among the seed of man*
- k. [Daniel 2:46](#) Or *worshipped*
- l. [Daniel 3:1](#) Literally *sixty cubits and six cubits*
- m. [Daniel 3:1](#) Or *in the niche in the city wall*
- n. [Daniel 3:2](#) The precise distinctions between these Aramaic and Persian titles for government officials are uncertain.
- o. [Daniel 3:5](#) Or a type of pipe or bagpipes
- p. [Daniel 3:5](#) The identification of some of these instruments is uncertain.
- q. [Daniel 3:9](#) Literally *O King*
- r. [Daniel 3:17](#) The translation of this verse is difficult.

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