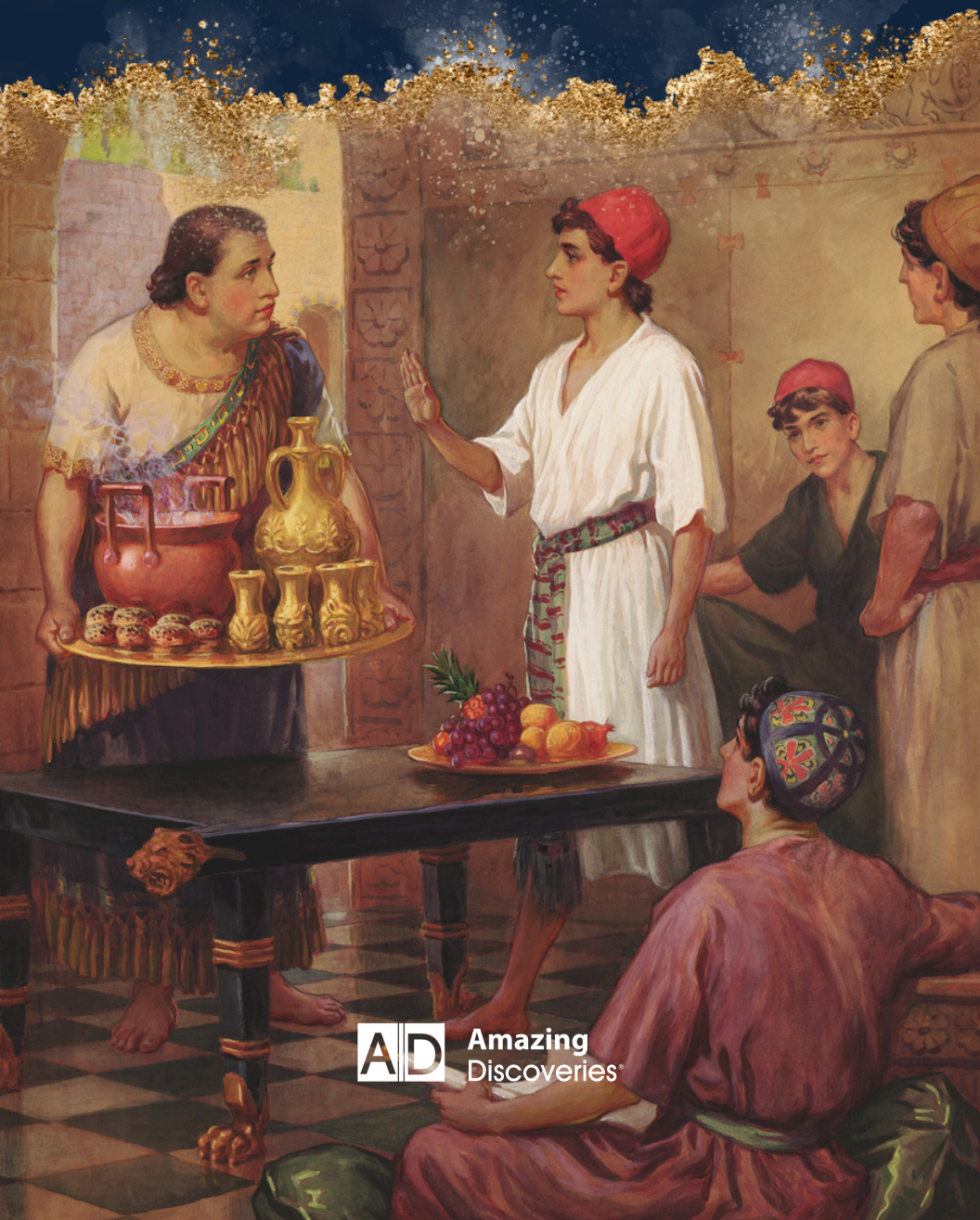


# DANIEL I

## STUDY GUIDE



Amazing  
Discoveries

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# DANIEL I STUDY GUIDE

Though some Christians avoid the books of Daniel and Revelation because of their cryptic content, we have important reasons for studying these prophetic books.

One reason we should study Daniel and Revelation is that these books are included in the canon of Scriptures. In fact, approximately one third of the Bible has to do with prophecy. The prophecies in Daniel and other prophetic books are inspired by the same Holy Spirit as the rest of the Bible. Because of this, the prophetic books, Daniel and Revelation included, have the same high and holy purpose as the other Scriptures, that is, to make us “wise unto salvation” (2 Tim 3:15).

An inspired 19th century Christian author wrote:

*When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart. (1)*

If ever we needed an exceptional spiritual experience, one that is entirely different than what we currently possess, it is now. The Bible reveals that the “time of trouble” (Dan 12:1, Mt 24, Lk 21) is soon to be upon us. Are we prepared for that time? Was Peter prepared for the night of Jesus’ arrest and trial? Though he thought he was ready, when the test came, he discovered his failure to prepare. (Mt 26:69-75) We cannot afford to make the same mistake.

In His parable of the 10 sleeping virgins, Jesus contrasted the wise with the foolish maidens. The wise had oil in their lamps, a Spirit-filled personal experience which they could not share with the foolish, who found themselves empty and unprepared when the trial came.

The study of prophecy can wake us up and reveal our shortcomings so that we see our need and reform before the crisis comes. God wants to reveal to us “things which must shortly come to pass” (Rev 1:1) Christ promised to send His Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth (John 16:13) and to bless those who apply themselves to the study of prophecy so that they may understand and do what they learn (Rev 1:3).

Though the study of the prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation may be challenging, it is God purpose to reveal His will and to bless us as we study and allow His word to change us.

### **Date of writing**

The book of Daniel was written 600 years before the time of Christ. Like Revelation, Daniel is an apocalyptic book containing prophecies about events at the end of time. Both books should be studied together because each book provides details for understanding the other. And though the main focus of Daniel and Revelation is events at the end of time, many prophecies in these books, though still future in the time they were written, have already been fulfilled and are part of history for us today.

Through the visions given to Daniel and the interpretations supplied by angel messengers, God communicates His messages of love to us. The prophecies of Daniel assure us of God’s sovereignty and the sure accomplishment of His purposes through human affairs.

The Bible tells us that:

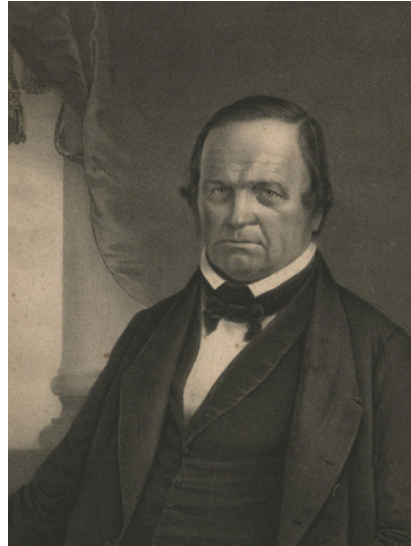
*Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. Amos 3:7*

The book of Daniel reveals the secrets of the future which were given through Daniel and his experiences. The entire book was written by Daniel, except for chapter 4, which was written by King Nebuchadnezzar himself.

### **An opened book**

The prophecies of Daniel have only recently begun to be understood by Bible students. That is because the angel who talked with Daniel in his visions told him the words of the book would be “closed up and sealed till the time of the end” (Dan 12:9). Though some 16th-century Reformers and others tried to understand it, it wasn’t until after 1798, the start of the time of the end, that the prophecies became unlocked to those studying the book.

In the 1800s, an American lay minister named William Miller did an exhaustive study of the Bible and was able to decipher Daniel with the help of God. A thorough Bible scholar, Miller developed a Biblically derived interpretive system based on the premise that the Bible itself supplied the tools needed for understanding the prophecies. We can now see how the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation have played out through history, the effect they have on the world today, and how they will impact us in the near future.



The book of Daniel, however, is not just a book of prophecies but also an inspiring story of the faithfulness of the author through his captivity in a foreign land. It is also a story of the kings of Babylon and Medo-Persia who had encounters with the God of Israel.

Daniel served king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Later Babylon was taken over by Medo-Persia and Daniel served under the Medo-Persian rulers. The last few chapters were written under Medo-Persian rule.

With this series of Bible study guides, we embark on an adventure into history, prophecy, and God’s loving kindness as He answers the questions of a king, and honors His own faithful servant serving in a heathen land. The story of Daniel is both inspiring and humbling.



### **The Organization of the Book**

The first six chapters of the book of Daniel are a record of the major events that occurred in Babylon during Daniel’s years of service.

The last six chapters of Daniel are a record of the prophetic visions he received from God during his lifetime.

The historical section of Daniel sets the stage for the prophetic portion. From the stories of God’s interaction with the rulers of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus), we discover a loving and sovereign God in a great controversy with evil, who works behind the scenes arranging events in the nations of the world to make “all things work together for good, to them that love God” (Romans 8:28). This pervasive theme continues throughout the prophetic section, culminating in a complete restoration of God’s kingdom and people in the earth made new.

**606 BC.** Capture and Education of Daniel



**01**

**02**

**603 BC.**  
Nebuchadnezzar's Image Dream

**03**

**593 BC.** Fiery Furnace

**04**

**569 BC.**  
Nebuchadnezzar's Tree Dream

**05**

**539 BC.** Fall of Babylon

**06**

**538 BC.**  
Lion's Den

**07**

**553 BC.** Four Great Beasts—Judgment



**08**

**551 BC.** Ram and Goat—The 2300 Day Prophecy

**09**

**538 BC.** 70 Weeks—The Messiah

**10 - 12**

**525 BC.** King of the North, King of the South—The Time of the End

## **Language of the Book**

From Daniel 2:4 to 7:28, the book is written in Aramaic, whereas the rest of the book is written in Hebrew. The reason for the switch is not certain, but it seems to coincide with the information in the sections. Daniel 2:4 to 7:28 discusses the succession of kingdoms which would have been of interest to surrounding nations, and perhaps Daniel wrote it in Aramaic so that others in Babylon and surrounding nations could understand it.

The first chapter of Daniel covers experiences of the four Hebrew youths taken as slaves to Babylon. From Daniel 8 and onward, the book relates prophecies pertaining to God's people, both literal and spiritual Israel, which includes Christianity.





Aramaic (often referred to as Syrian in the Bible) was the language generally used by all the Babylonian people. It was the language of diplomacy, and it was also the common language used in government and commerce (2 Kings 18:26) by surrounding nations. This is similar to how English is used in many countries around the world in certain industries even though it may not be the native language of that country.

Because of its unerring accuracy, some skeptics have said that it was not possible for the book of Daniel to have been written so early because the Aramaic was not eastern Aramaic. They claimed it had to have been written after some of the events took place, suggesting it was written in the 2nd century BC. But when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, the book of Daniel was verified as an authentic book and dated correctly. The Aramaic of Daniel is a form that existed before the language split into eastern and western forms, which happened in the 5th century BC. (2)

In addition, scholars have dated one of the copies of Daniel found in the caves at Qumran at about 60 BC. Such an early date for a copy, along with the fact that the book of Daniel was a much-copied favorite of the Qumran community, is a challenge to critics. They cannot satisfactorily explain how Daniel could have been so well-known and widely distributed that it was being copied at Qumran, about 25 miles (40 km) from Jerusalem, within a few decades of having been written in Babylon. The walking distance along ancient routes between Babylon and Jerusalem has been estimated to be 1700 miles (more than 2700 km). Given this distance, it's highly unlikely that the book of Daniel would have had time to have made its way into the life of the Qumran community by 60 BC if it had been written in the 2nd century BC as critics contend. The facts point to a much earlier writing of the book.

Critics can't accept the fact that God revealed the future to His servant Daniel. They won't believe that Daniel knew in accurate detail, events that would happen hundreds of years after his time. Nevertheless, the book of Daniel was written 400 years earlier than the critics admit, in the 6th century BC.

### **Historical Background**

Daniel was placed in the courts of Babylon by God in order to be a witness to the Babylonians of God's existence. Some accepted Him as the Ruler of heaven and earth. Others rejected Him.



God loved even these kings of Babylon and Medo-Persia and wanted them to come to a knowledge of Him. He allowed the captivity of Israel to happen in order to disperse the Israelites amongst the nations so that they could be a witness to the heathen nations of the true God. The purpose of Israel had never been to be insular and exclusive but rather to be a light to the surrounding nations of God's goodness and faithfulness. (3) But they had failed in their mission. Instead of being an example, they were leaders in apostasy.

Long ago, as the children of Israel were about to enter the promised land, after leaving Egypt and wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, Moses had taken them to the top of two mountains and reiterated the blessings and curses that could and would fall upon them depending on their choice to follow God or not.

*If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. ... And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, .... And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Lev 26: 3,4,14,15,28-35*

The “Curse of Moses” as it is sometimes called is mentioned four times in Leviticus 26. It is also known as the “seven times” because God says He will punish Israel for their sins “seven times.” God was serious when He wanted Israel to walk in His ways and be a witness for Him.

Unfortunately, Judah and Israel (the country split into two regions after King Solomon’s reign) chose to apostatize and, as a result, sometimes they became even more depraved than their surrounding heathen neighbors. For centuries prophets had warned about this, entreating the people to return to God, but the prophets were mocked and killed.

In 695 BC, Hezekiah rose to the throne of Judah, but about half-way through his reign he became so sick that God sent Isaiah to tell him to put his house in order because he was going to die. However, the Lord miraculously healed him at his request, granting him 15 more years of life. God turned the shadow on the sundial back 10° as a sign to Hezekiah that He would heal him. (Is 38:7-8)

The return of the shadow 10° on the sundial was noticed in Babylon. Emissaries of Babylon paid Hezekiah a visit to see what had caused it and to learn about his miraculous recovery. (2 Chron 32:31) Instead of giving praise to God, Hezekiah boasted of all his riches, and showed them all that he had, including the layout of Jerusalem. This information was later used to rob Judah of its treasures and to take its inhabitants captive. God was greatly displeased by what Hezekiah had done, and He predicted what would take place in 2 Kings 20:12-19. Hezekiah's children would become eunuchs in the courts of Babylon, and this indeed happened many years later when captives were taken from Jerusalem to Babylon, including Daniel and his friends.



Hezekiah's son Manasseh did not serve God but did evil. He was put in prison by the king of Babylon but after he repented, God restored him to the throne of Israel. When Manasseh's grandson Josiah rose to the throne he tried to eliminate pagan worship from Israel. (See 2 Kings 23:21-25.) As a result, God gave Israel a measure of peace during Josiah's reign but He sent Jeremiah the prophet to warn people that they were soon to be destroyed (Jer 5:15).

Unfortunately, Josiah did not raise his sons in the Lord. Two sons and two grandsons followed him to the throne but each of them turned from God and continued to do evil in God's sight.

Because of continued disobedience and perversion, the curses God had promised would come did come.

The northern kingdom of Israel was first to be taken into captivity in 723 BC. Forty-six years later in 677 BC, Judah became a vassal territory of Babylon and their king Manasseh was imprisoned. These two dates mark the beginning of Judah and Israel's scattering amongst the heathen that God had promised would happen to them in Leviticus 26.

*In his [Jehoiakim's] days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the prophets. **Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did. 2 Kings 24:1-3***

Through the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 25:6-9), God told the people of Israel that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, was His “servant” who would bring upon them the curses that had been promised because of their disobedience.

Jeremiah predicted that they would be in captivity in Babylon for 70 years (Jer 25:8-12).

*For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.*

*Jer 29:10*



*Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. Lev 26:34,35*

The land sabbath involved allowing the land to rest every seventh year, and also every fiftieth year on the jubilee. From the time of King Solomon, the Jews did not give the land her sabbaths - each sabbath missed added up to 70 and so for every sabbath that was missed, God applied a year of captivity. But this was only part of the curse.



### **Daniel taken captive**

The story of Daniel is the story of his witness in the courts of Babylon and Medo-Persia during those 70 years. Daniel was a part of the royal line of David. He and his friends were Jewish nobility, and related to the royal family.

It was during the reign of one of Josiah's sons, Jehoiakim, that Daniel and his friends were taken as captives, at the age of seventeen. Approximately 20 years later, under the rule of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, Jerusalem was destroyed. By then Daniel and his friends had already been in Babylon for seventeen or eighteen years.

Daniel's mother had been a godly woman, and had remembered the prophecy concerning the destruction of the city. She taught her son in the fear of the Lord, and prepared him for the possibility that some day he might stand in the heathen court at Babylon.

*Through the Hebrew captives the Lord was made known to the heathen in Babylon. This idolatrous nation was given a knowledge of the kingdom the Lord was to establish, and through His power maintain against all the power and craft of Satan. Daniel and his fellow companions, Ezra, Nehemiah, and many others, were witnesses for God in their captivity. The Lord scattered them among the kingdoms of the earth that their light might shine brightly amid the black darkness of heathenism and idolatry.*





*To Daniel God revealed the light of His purposes, which had been hidden for many generations. He chose that Daniel should see in vision the light of His truth, and reflect this light on the proud kingdom of Babylon. On the despot king was permitted to flash light from the throne of God. Nebuchadnezzar was shown that the God of heaven was Ruler over all the monarchs and kings of earth. His name was to go forth as the God over all gods. God desired Nebuchadnezzar to understand that the rulers of earthly kingdoms had a Ruler in the heavens. God's faithfulness in rescuing the three captives from the flames and vindicating their course of action showed His wonderful power.*

*Great light shone forth from Daniel and his companions. Glorious things were spoken of Zion, the city of the Lord. Thus the Lord designs that spiritual light shall shine from His faithful watchmen in these last days. If the saints in the Old Testament bore such a decided testimony of loyalty, how should God's people today, having the accumulated light of centuries, shine forth, when the prophecies of the Old Testament shed their veiled glory into the future. (4)*

While God used Babylon to scatter Israel for their apostasy, He had a few among the Hebrew captives who held the truth in their hearts and lived it. God used faithful Daniel and his three friends to dispel the Babylonian darkness with truth about the loving Creator whom Israel had long ago forgotten.

The truth about God had been preserved from the time of Creation through Seth's descendants. Noah was from this lineage (Gen 5) and passed on the knowledge of God to his family. Nevertheless, rebellion against God lived in the heart of his son Ham. And it was Ham's grandson Nimrod, who is first mentioned in association with the city of Babylon, one of the first cities to be built after the flood. (Gen 10:10)

## Babylon's rise to power

When God confused the languages and stopped the building of the tower of Babel (Gen 11), He only temporarily interrupted the plans of the Babylonians to rule the world. When Nimrod died, his wife Semiramis ruled in his stead. She claimed that the child she gave birth to after Nimrod's death was Nimrod deified. Her claims were the beginning of the mother/child worship that spread around the world. During her reign, Semiramis embarked on great building projects and Greek historians attribute the original construction of Babylon to her, though it's clear from the Bible that the city existed before the death of her husband, Nimrod. (See [Daniel 2 Study Guide](#) to learn more about Semiramis.)

Later, the Akkadian Empire unified competing Mesopotamian city states for a time, but later divided into the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. The Amorite dynasty (about 2000 to 1600 BC) further raised Babylon's importance in the ancient world, establishing the Old or First Babylonian



*Pieter Bruegel the Elder, The Tower of Babel, via Wikipedia.*

Empire. The most famous Amorite king, Hammurabi, enlarged the city of Babylon, making it the largest city in the world at the time. He also conquered Babylon's rivals to rule an empire that stretched across Mesopotamia from Mari to Ur. Today this region encompasses modern-day Syria to the Persian Gulf. Not long after Hammurabi's death, however, Babylon fell into decline.

It wasn't until nearly 1000 years later, during the time of Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar's father, that Babylon regained its power to become the Second or Neo-Babylonian Empire. Nabopolassar conquered Nineveh in 612 BC, marking the end of the Assyrian Empire.



After this time, Babylonian kings not only expanded the borders of the empire from the Persian Gulf to the borders of Egypt, but also began expansive construction projects at home, making Babylon famous for its architecture.

### **Babylon's religion**

Babylon was the seat of sun worship. The city streets were named after the gods of Babylon. The priests worshiped more than 4000 separate gods, each with a different function, but their main god was Marduk, the sun god, creator and ruler of Heaven and Earth. Marduk was also known as Baal or Dagon and goes by other names in different cultures. Marduk was associated with the planet Jupiter, and his symbol was the bull calf. He was considered to be the "immortal son of Utu"—Utu being sun god as well. As the king of the gods, 50 names and powers were attributed to him. A magnificent ziggurat crowned with the temple of Marduk was located near the city's center.

The Israelites were familiar with this form of sun worship, as they had themselves dishonored and disobeyed God by worshiping the sun god in Israel under the name of Baal.



*Relief associated with Marduk. Via Wikipedia.  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sirrush.jpg>*

This was the reason they were in captivity in Babylon in the first place—for worshiping other gods and forgetting the true God of the Universe. The sun worship of Marduk had similarities with the worship of the true God—the concept of a son of God, and ruler of Heaven and Earth, creator of all that was. The reason sun worship had been so abhorrent to God was because it mimicked the real thing, but with the worship focussed on an idol and not the real God.

A minority of Jerusalem’s inhabitants, however, clung to the truth about God and practiced the true religion, the system instituted by God Himself to teach the world about His plan of salvation. Daniel and his friends were among them. And though they suffered in the general punishment of Judah, God watched over these faithful ones as one who guards precious jewels because they would be His ambassadors to the Babylonians.

## First invasion

The Babylonian Chronicle records that Nebuchadnezzar commanded an army in the 19th regnal year of his father, Nabopolassar. Just two years later, Nabopolassar remained at Babylon while Nebuchadnezzar fought and defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish. From there, he stopped at Jerusalem, taking captives, among whom were Daniel and his friends.



*James Tissot, The Flight of the Prisoners. 1896. Jewish Museum, New York, via Wikipedia.*

Upon hearing of his father's death, Nebuchadnezzar hurried across the desert to secure the throne of Babylon, leaving the train of captives in the hands of his generals. From this time onward, Nebuchadnezzar fought constant battles in Syria or Palestine. The repeated invasions of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar demonstrate God's reluctance to give Judah up. Each time the Babylonians returned to Judah, they dealt more severely with the nation than before.

But though God repeatedly called the people to repent, sending messages of warning and rebuke through His prophets, eventually He removed His protective hand and allowed Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Judah completely.

### **Second invasion**

In 601 BC, the Babylonian army suffered significant losses in a battle against Egypt. Hoping this meant a resurgence of Egypt's power, Judah's King Jehoiakim refused to pay the annual tribute to Babylon (2 Kings 24:1). But Egypt, Judah's sometime-ally, could not defend Judah against Nebuchadnezzar. And when Nebuchadnezzar returned to Jerusalem in 597 BC, he took the king (Jehoiakim's son) captive along with 10 000 of the nation's most prominent citizens.

### **Third invasion**

Nebuchadnezzar's final attack on Jerusalem came during Zedekiah's reign. The horrific siege lasted over two years. Judah's weak-willed and fickle king stubbornly refused to surrender, though God pleaded with him through His prophet Jeremiah to do so. (Jer 34, 37-38)

Nebuchadnezzar was a brilliant and aggressive ruler. Over the course of 43 years he developed Babylon into one of the greatest empires ever built. After his death, a series of incompetent rulers openly defied God and so mismanaged Babylon that in 539 BC—just twenty-three years after Nebuchadnezzar's death—Babylon fell to the armies of the Medo-Persian empire. For about 70 years Daniel served in high positions in both of these empires.

**Before we begin**

As with all the Scriptures, the prophecies of Daniel can only be understood if we first humbly seek God's guidance, because "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor 2:11). We need God's wisdom to understand what He has revealed through prophecy and we're encouraged to ask for this heavenly wisdom:

*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.  
James 1:5*

The prophecies were given to Daniel as he was "moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). Therefore, we must ask God to give us the Holy Spirit to instruct and enlighten us as we open His word. Jesus said that God is more than willing to give His Spirit to those who ask (Lk 11:11-13).

We can pray a simple prayer like this:

*Dear Father in heaven, please fill me with Your Holy Spirit so that I can understand what You want to teach me now. Amen.*

**Please note:** The entire chapter is provided here below, but because the study refers frequently to specific verses, it will be easier to complete it using a Bible opened to the chapter we are studying. This will prevent having to flip back to the pages at the beginning of the lesson as you progress through the lesson. You may also want to add notes or mark passages directly in your Bible.

These studies use the King James Version. Please keep in mind that if you use a different version, Bible verse fill-in-the-blank questions will not be a perfect fit and will not yield results that match the answers given in the answer key.

## Daniel 1, KJV

1In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

2And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

3And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

4Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

5And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

6Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

7Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.

8But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.



10And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

11Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

16Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

17As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

20And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

21And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

## Daniel 1:1-5

**1) The book of Daniel was written while Daniel lived as a captive in Babylon. When was Daniel taken prisoner? (vs. 1)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The story of Daniel begins during Jehoiakim's reign. Jehoiakim was the second last king of Judah. He was 25 years old when he began to reign but "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God" (2 Chron 36:5). In the third year of his reign (606 BC), God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to take him captive along with many promising youth, including those of royal heritage.

King Nebuchadnezzar killed Zedekiah's sons before him and then put out his eyes. The Babylonians carried away all the treasures of the house of God, things made of gold, silver, and bronze, including the bronze pillars and sea, and many cups, candlesticks and a variety of utensils used by the priests.

Legend tells us that the ark of the covenant was hidden by the priests prior to Nebuchadnezzar's overthrow of Jerusalem, and it remains hidden to this day with some claiming to have found it in a cave under Mount Calvary where Christ died as the Lamb of God.

**2) How was the prophecy given to Hezekiah fulfilled in Daniel's day? (2 Kings 20:16-18, Dan 1:2-4)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

About 60 years after Hezekiah foolishly revealed the wealth of his kingdom to Babylon's ambassadors, the Babylonians came to Jerusalem and took away the treasures of God's temple. They also made eunuchs of Hezekiah's relatives and made them serve in Nebuchadnezzar's palace.

**3) What was Nebuchadnezzar's policy toward conquered peoples? (vs. 3-4)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_

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King Nebuchadnezzar chose the best and wisest young people with the most potential to serve in his court. These might have been young people of noble birth, good parentage, and potentially with royal connections as had been predicted to Hezekiah. (2 Kings 20:16-18). The Bible doesn't tell us who they all were or how many there were but the Bible does mention four outstanding young people: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. (see vs. 6) They were around seventeen or eighteen years old at the time. Daniel was one of those of the royal line. He had been taught by his godly mother of the history of his people, and of the laws of God.

In Babylon they learned the language of the Chaldeans as well as the Chaldean knowledge and culture. The term "Chaldeans" is not only an ethnic term, referring to a tribe of people to which Nebuchadnezzar's father Nabopolassar belonged, but to an elite class of scholars in the Babylonian court.

Daniel and his friends were enrolled in an advanced learning program, something like the post-graduate programs completed by university professors today. They were to be assimilated into the Babylonian religion and culture.

**4) What was the length of Daniel’s re-education program?  
(vs. 5)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_

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The captives from Israel were put in a three-year training school supervised by Ashpenaz, the prince of the eunuchs. These captives were also made eunuchs, as it was intended that they would be serving their entire lives in the courts of the king.



## Daniel 1:6-12

**5) What is significant about the name change the captives were subjected to? (Dan 1:7; 4:8)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Their original names had referred to the God of Israel. The new names that Daniel and his friends received were a nod to Babylon's gods.

Hebrew Name	Meaning	Babylonian Name	Meaning
Daniel	God is my judge	Belteshazzar	Baal protect the king
Hananiah	Yah has been gracious	Shadrach	Inspired or commanded by Aku (moon god)
Mishael	Who is what God is	Meshach	Belonging to Aku
Azariah	Yah has helped	Abednego	Servant of Nego (god of wisdom)

This change of names must have been an affront to the religious beliefs of the young captives. Forced name change was part of the assimilation process the captives were subjected to that was an attempt to strip them of their personal identities and especially, their connection and loyalty to God.

The pressure to assimilate and adopt the Babylonian culture and mindset was strong. On the one hand, the captives were brought into the court of the most powerful monarch in the world and were offered education and advancement. On the other hand, the cost of these benefits was that they were required to forget their spiritual roots and turn their backs on God.

**6. Why did Daniel choose to take issue with the food he and his captive friends were provided? (vs. 8)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Daniel knew that the assimilation program of Babylon was going to test his faith, and bring temptations to disobey God and let his personal religious convictions slide. But he “purposed in his heart” not to allow this to happen.

Imagine Daniel and his friends being taken from their home, their city, their loved ones, on the long journey from Jerusalem to Babylon. On the way they would be with many other captives, perhaps treated roughly. On the way, they would have had time to think. What would happen to them when they reached Babylon? Would they ever see their family, their home again? The captives would have been in great fear and distress. But Daniel and his friends made a pact with themselves and God.

They were determined to be faithful to God even if they were captives in a foreign land. Maybe they remembered the story of Joseph and how he was sold as a slave but remained faithful. They had heard the warnings of God that this captivity would take place, and now it was here. These four young people determined to stay faithful and honor their God, come what may.

Their first temptation came in regards to food. Would they disobey God and drink wine and eat food, possibly unclean meat, from the king's table? It would seem like they had no other option. After all, they were captives. We infer from vs. 10 that "others of your sort" who were also taken captive, had not taken a stand to be faithful to God's precepts.

*"Daniel and his companions knew not what would be the result of their decision; they knew not but that it would cost them their lives; but they determined to keep the straight path of strict temperance even when in the courts of licentious Babylon." (5)*

*"When Daniel was in Babylon, he was beset with temptations of which we have never dreamed, and he realized that he must keep his body under. He purposed in his heart that he would not drink of the king's wine or eat of his dainties. He knew that in order to come off a victor, he must have clear mental perceptions, that he might discern between right and wrong." (6)*

Daniel risked death by choosing to reject the king's food and drink, but he determined to be true to God and obey the dietary requirements set out in His law. See Leviticus 11; 17:12; Deuteronomy 14:3-21. Daniel knew that he had been brought to the king's court for a purpose - to serve God in Babylon and to be a witness.

Daniel also knew that the royal diet would not be good for his health. If he did not keep his body under subjection, if he allowed himself to indulge in unhealthful practices, his mental perceptions would be negatively affected, his senses confused, his powers of discernment would be weakened. He knew that in order to remain faithful to God and to succeed in the challenges before him in this new culture and country, he would have to be in top form mentally and physically. He needed to have keen perception to discern between good and evil and although God would help him, he would need to cooperate with God by following the laws of health.

**7) What was Daniel’s proposed diet plan? (Dan 1:12, last part)**

A \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pulse refers specifically to legumes. In other words, Daniel asked for a plant-based diet and water. Instead of “choice food” Daniel requested plant foods such as grains, fruits and vegetables and instead of wine he asked for plain water. He knew that ten days would be enough to prove the benefits of abstemiousness.





The ten-day test showed that Daniel and his friends were noticeably healthier than those who ate the king's rich foods. Modern science has shown that the best diet for optimal health is a plant-based, high fiber and low cholesterol diet. People who choose these foods tend to live longer, have more energy and be more mentally alert.

The reason Daniel didn't want to eat the king's food was primarily that he did not want to dishonor God by eating it. The key word in verse 8 is "defile," which in Hebrew means just that, to "pollute, defile." Thus, for these young men, the issue was not just healthful living or a mere personal preference, it was a moral issue as well. Daniel and his friends were willing to die rather than to be separated from God through disobedience to Him and His requirements.

The Bible states that God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with Melzar, meaning that Melzar liked Daniel probably because of his outstanding character. Because of this Melzar was inclined to agree to Daniel's request in spite of the potential risk he thought would come to him if Daniel and his friends weakened and became sickly. Melzar's job was to make sure these young people succeeded in their re-training in the school of Babylon.

**8) What might Daniel and his friends have experienced as they ate their simple meals while everyone else ate the king's fancy foods?**

A \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you've ever been in a situation where you chose to eat differently from those around you, you may have experienced some pressure to conform. It's likely that Daniel did, too. Daniel and his friends might have been questioned by the other youth. They might even have been mocked and teased. It would have taken a firm resolve on their part to eat their simple food with cheerfulness while those around them smugly indulged in the king's tasty delicacies. But Daniel and his friends weighed the consequences and chose to trust that God would use them to demonstrate the benefits of obedience to Him.

*“Daniel did not act rashly. He knew that by the time he was called to appear before the king, the advantage of healthful living would be apparent. Cause would be followed by effect... Daniel knew that ten days would be time enough to prove the benefit of abstemiousness... Daniel and his companions did still more. They did not choose as companions those who were agents of the prince of darkness. They did not go with the multitude to do evil. They secured Melzar as their friend, and there was no friction between him and them. They went to him for advice, and at the same time enlightened him by the wisdom of their deportment.” (7)*

God surely blessed Daniel and his friends through their obedience, so that after only ten days, they appeared to be healthier and stronger than the others.

## Daniel 1:13-21

**9) What was the immediate physical outcome of the 10-day experiment? (Dan 1:15-16)**

A \_\_\_\_\_

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Within just 10 short days, there was an observable improvement in the appearance of Daniel and his three friends compared with the other captive youths. Because of this, Melzar gave his official approval of their choice and allowed them to eat their simple food from that point onward without further questioning it.

**10) What was the spiritual outcome of the 10-day diet experiment? (Dan 1:17, 3:14-18)**

A \_\_\_\_\_

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The results of this little group's faithfulness to God in diet were far-reaching. Yes, they were physically blessed by eating simply, but, more significant was the effect their choice had on their character development and their relationship with God.

We're told in verse 17 that God endowed them with "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." In other words, because of their willingness to make sacrifices in order to be faithful to God, He blessed them. Daniel and his friends reasoned that to eat the king's food would be to sin against their conscience and against God and they were unwilling to do this.

Because they were willing to sacrifice sinful pleasures and their standing with their peers and supervisors to honor God, He blessed them with exceptional “knowledge and skill” in their educational program.

The diet test also strengthened their faith in God. They knew that God had specially blessed their efforts and promoted them to places of honor. (Dan 2:49) The diet test helped them learn to trust God, which prepared them for the fiery furnace trial of Daniel 3.

This verse also tells us that an additional outcome of passing the diet test was that God worked through Daniel to reveal His will through visions and dreams. The attainments of this little group were supernatural, bestowed upon them by God as an acknowledgment of their faithfulness to Him.

**11) How does the diet test in Daniel 1 apply to us today?  
(1 Cor 10:31)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_

Christians today are as much under the full authority of God as Daniel was in his day. God’s authority as King extends to how we speak, what we do (James 2:12), what we think (2 Cor 10:5), what we eat and drink (1 Cor 10:31), and even how we dress (1 Pet 3:3).

After all, we have been bought with a price, the precious blood of Christ. Therefore, we ought to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's. (1 Cor 6:20).



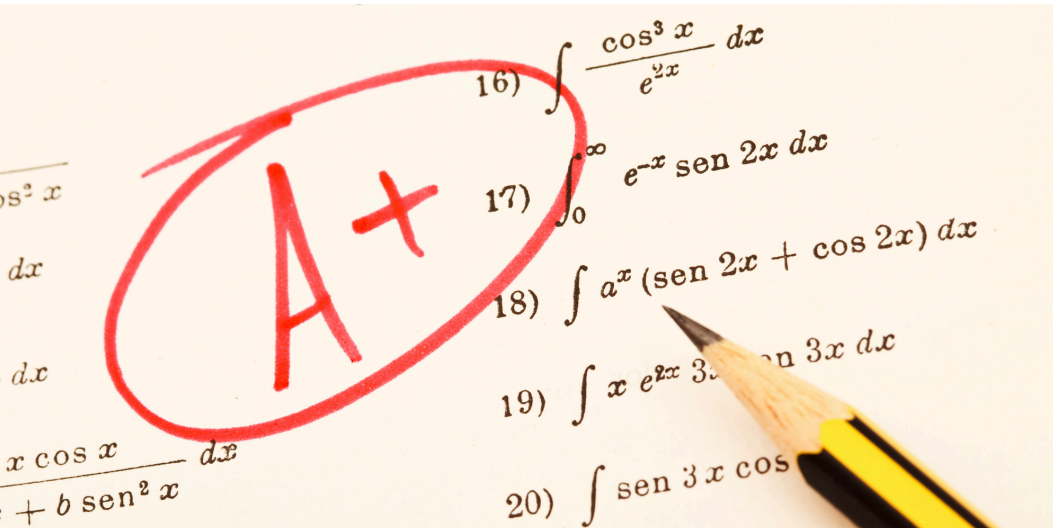
When human laws require the breaking of God's laws or interfere with our conscientious service to God, we must take a firm stand for God and do what we believe to be right regardless of what the consequences might be.

**12) What Scriptural principles assured Daniel and his friends of success in Babylon's court? (See Ex 15:26, Deut 6:3, 1 Sam 2:30.)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Daniel and his friends understood the necessity of faith and obedience. They knew that if they put their faith and trust in Him and would obey Him, God would help them. Because Daniel and his friends were faithful God blessed them with superior wisdom and intelligence and after three years when the test came, they proved to be wiser than all the other graduates - but not only the graduates, all the magicians and astrologers in all of Babylon.



Imagine the situation. These young captives of Israel prove themselves wiser than even the Babylonian magicians and astrologers that had been serving the king for years. There would have been jealousy and a competitive spirit amongst the heathen Babylonians that would have caused prejudice against these Hebrew captives. The story of Daniel shows that this animosity did indeed linger throughout his career in the court of Babylon.

*“The history of Daniel, if all was written, would open chapters before you that would show you the temptations he had to meet, of ridicule, envy, and hatred; but he learned to master the difficulties. He did not trust in his own strength; he laid his whole soul and all his difficulties open to his heavenly Father, and he believed God heard him, and he was comforted and blessed. He rose superior to ridicule; and so will every one who is an overcomer. Daniel acquired a serene and cheerful state of mind, because he believed God was his friend and helper. The taxing duties he had to perform were made light because he brought the light and love of God into his work. ‘All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth’ to such as walk in them.” (8)*

**13) How long did Daniel serve in Babylon? (vs. 21)**

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Daniel had a long career as counselor to the king. He not only served the king of Babylon, but he also was privileged to see the next kingdom come to power, and to serve in the courts of Medo-Persia. God had a plan for Daniel that would span the full 70 years of the captivity of Israel. God wanted Daniel to be a witness to the highest rulers of these kingdoms and he succeeded because of his unwavering devotion to his God.

#### **14) What was God's evaluation of Daniel? (Ezek 14:20)**

Ezekiel was a contemporary of Daniel's who prophesied during the captivity. In a message to His people through Ezekiel God acknowledged Daniel as one of his most outstanding ambassadors.

We read:

*Though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter: they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.  
Ezekiel 14:20*

Daniel's character is a representation of those who will live just before the second coming of Christ.

*People will be called to pass through experiences which require the keenest spiritual eyesight; therefore God asks them to give up all things which will in any way check the flow of the Holy Spirit through the mind. Herein lies the reason for strict adherence to the principles of health reform.*

*Daniel and his companions gained the victory on the point of appetite. This was the avenue, and the only one, through which Satan was permitted to tempt Adam; and had Adam proved true in the garden of Eden, and not eaten of the forbidden fruit, sin and suffering would never have been known. Appetite was the open door through which came all the results of sin, which, for six thousand years, have been so manifest in the human family. As Christ entered upon the work of His ministry, He began where Adam fell. ...*

*In the last days God will prove His people as He proved Daniel. A voluntary self-control of appetite lies at the foundation of every reform. It means much to be true to God. It embraces health reform. It means that the diet must be simple;...*



*Only those who have been trained in the fear and knowledge of God, and who are true to principle, are fitted to bear responsibilities in the closing work of the gospel. (9)*

### **Personal Reflection**

The first chapter of Daniel teaches us that if we want spiritual victory, we must get control over appetite. Ask God to make you willing to surrender not only diet, but every aspect of your life to His authority.

### **Prayer**

Loving Father, thank You for demonstrating the benefits of obedience to You through the lives of Daniel and his friends. I want to learn to trust you with every aspect of my life. Please increase my faith in You. Amen.

### **Further Reading**

The following articles and ebooks can be found at

<https://amazingdiscoveries.org/read>  
and <https://www.amazinghealth.com/>.

William Miller and the Great Disappointment;

<https://amazingdiscoveries.org/read/articles/william-miller-and-the-great-disappointment>.

William Miller's Rules;

<https://amazingdiscoveries.org/read/articles/william-miller-s-rules>.

Clean and Unclean in the Bible; <https://www.amazinghealth.com/8-laws/nutrition/clean-and-unclean-in-the-bible>.

Is Being Vegan Healthy?; <https://www.amazinghealth.com/8-laws/nutrition/is-being-vegan-healthy>.

Plant Based Food Guide; <https://www.amazinghealth.com/8-laws/nutrition/plant-based-food-guide>.

## Answer Key

1. Daniel was taken prisoner in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign during Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion.
2. In Daniel's day, the treasures of God house were carried away to Babylon and Hezekiah's offspring were made eunuchs and taken to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's palace.
3. Nebuchadnezzar's policy was to train the ablest young men of conquered nations for leadership positions.
4. Three years.
5. Their renaming was an attack on their religious beliefs.
6. He did not want to defile himself but wanted to maintain his purity.
7. Daniel asked for pulse and water, a simple plant-based diet.
8. Answers will vary, but Daniel and his friends may have experienced some pressure to conform.
9. There was a marked improvement in the physical appearance of Daniel and his friends after 10 days.
10. Spiritual outcomes included the development of stronger character and supernatural blessings of wisdom.
11. Christians today are as much under the full authority of God as Daniel was in his day.
12. Daniel and his friends had the assurance of God's word that if they trusted God and obeyed Him, He would bless them.
13. Daniel's career as a statesman in Babylon was about 70 years.
14. God used Daniel, along with Noah and Job, as an examples of a righteous man.

## References

1. Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, [TM 114.3](#).
2. For a summary of the debate, see Gerhard Hasel, “[Is the Aramaic of Daniel early or late?](#)” in *Ministry, International Journal for Pastors*, January, 1980, [ministrymagazine.org](#).
3. Consider the following passages: [Exodus 19:5-6](#), [Deuteronomy 4:5-7](#), [Genesis 12:2-3](#), [Galatians 3:7-9](#). Compare also [Genesis 1:16-17 with Revelation 12:1](#) which shows that all the sources of light for the world were bestowed upon God’s church, the woman who bore the Child, Jesus Christ.
4. Ellen White, *Letters and Manuscripts - Vol. 14 (1899), Lt 32, 1899*; [14LtMs, Lt 32, 1899, par. 6-7](#).
5. Ellen G. White, *Youth’s Instructor* (August 18, 1898).
6. Ellen G. White, [Review and Herald \(April 2, 1889\)](#), par. 7.
7. Ellen G. White, *Youth’s Instructor* (September 6, 1900).
8. Ellen G. White, *Youth’s Instructor*, (August 25, 1886).
9. Stephen N. Haskell, *The Story of Daniel the Prophet*, S.N. Haskell (Battle Creek, Michigan: Review and Herald Publishing Company, 1901), page 26-28.



[amazingdiscoveries.org](http://amazingdiscoveries.org)