

God's People in Exile

What Should I Do?

What did God do? What did the individuals do?

Daniel 1

Who is Daniel? Describe his circumstances (where is he? how did he come to be there? who else is there? when did this happen? etc.). [1-7]

How did Daniel distinguish himself among his peers? How was his request received? [8-14] What was the result of the test? Who or what was responsible for that outcome? [15-17]

What motivated Daniel's request? What did God do? [2, 9, 17] Were any of God's actions done in response to Daniel's behavior, or was He acting purely according to His own plan?

Daniel 3

2:48 Then the king elevated Daniel to high position and bestowed on him many marvelous gifts. He granted him authority over the entire province of Babylon and made him the main prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. 2:49 And at Daniel's request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the administration of the province of Babylon. Daniel himself served in the king's court.

Who was invited to the big celebration? Who wasn't there? [1-3] What is “you must bow down and pay homage” all about? Why might it cause problems? [4-7] (There is a clue in Deuteronomy 6:13-15.)

According to verse 7 “all the peoples, nations, and language groups began bowing down and paying homage”. What problem is described in verses 8-12?

What was Nebuchadnezzar's initial response to the act of defiance? Why? [13-15] Wouldn't it be prudent for the Jewish men to “go along to get along”? What effect does their continued defiance have? [19-23] What did God do?

Who witnessed the redemption of the three Jewish men? [24-27] How did the enraged king respond to the frustration of his efforts to destroy the three rebels? [28-30] Note well the outcome for the Jewish men who maintained their personal righteousness and integrity.

Daniel 6

The events of chapter 1 took place about 605 BC, and in chapter 6 about 536 BC, 69 years later. Nebuchadnezzar was replaced as king by several other Babylonians successively until his son Belshazzar became king, who was then conquered by the Persian king. Daniel apparently continued to serve faithfully in high-ranking positions in the government throughout all this time.

What was Daniel's relationship like with the Persian king? [3, 14, 18-20, 23]

What role does God play in the events described in verses 1-9? What was Daniel's role? Where does the blame lie for the problems Daniel encounters?

We are told explicitly that David knew about the order the king had signed, and that he deliberately decided to disobey it. [10] What could he possibly hope to gain by this act of civil disobedience? What harm did he cause anyone?

In verse 23 "He had no injury of any kind, because" _____.
Was is it something he did? or something God did?

In these chapters we've read, what did God do? He allowed, sometimes even actively caused, his people to endure various forms of danger and distress, sometimes including very real, serious, and permanent physical harm. He also rewarded individual faithfulness, righteousness, and integrity.

What did He not do? He did not shield people from the consequences of their errors.

Next week: What comes after? Ezekiel chapters 2 and 3

Deuteronomy 6:13-15: You must revere the Lord your God, serve him, and take oaths using only his name. You must not go after other gods, those of the surrounding peoples, for the Lord your God, who is present among you, is a jealous God and his anger will erupt against you and remove you from the land.