

119

GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The Exiled Prophet, Part 2: Life in Babylon (Daniel 1)

TEACHING SUMMARY

Daniel and other young men from Judah are taken to Babylon and trained for royal service. The teaching first places their captivity within Israel's history. The prophets had warned that disobedience, especially idolatry, would lead to exile from the promised land.

The captives receive new names, a Babylonian education, and portions of the king's food and wine. Daniel resolves not to defile himself. The teaching evaluates several explanations for his refusal and favors the connection between the royal meal and idol worship.

According to the historical practice described, food and drink presented to an image were afterward consumed by the king and honored guests. The teaching therefore understands Daniel's refusal as avoiding participation in that ritual, rather than a general rejection of meat, wine, or expensive food.

Daniel communicates his convictions respectfully and asks for accommodation. The official fears that a change in diet will damage the young men's health and endanger his own position. Daniel responds to that concern by proposing a ten-day trial of vegetables and water.

The trial succeeds, and the young men continue without the royal food. God grants them learning and wisdom, with Daniel also understanding visions and dreams. Their conduct and success demonstrate God's blessing to the people responsible for their training.

The application emphasizes firm convictions joined with courtesy and practical concern for others. Daniel seeks an arrangement that preserves obedience while addressing his steward's responsibilities. The teaching applies this approach to respectfully requesting Sabbath accommodation and offering workable alternatives.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The captivity is connected with covenant disobedience and idolatry.
- Daniel and his companions enter training for Babylonian royal service.
- Their new surroundings immediately test their obedience.
- Daniel refuses both the king's food and wine.
- The teaching favors an idol-ritual explanation for this refusal.
- It does not present the passage as a general ban on meat or wine.
- Daniel respectfully addresses the official's concerns.
- A ten-day trial provides a practical way forward.
- God grants the young men learning, skill, and wisdom.
- The application combines faithfulness with considerate negotiation.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. Daniel is taken captive to _____.
2. The teaching identifies _____ as a major reason for Judah's exile.
3. The young men are assigned _____ years of education.
4. Daniel asks for vegetables and _____ instead of the royal meal.
5. The proposed trial lasts _____ days.
6. God gives Daniel understanding in visions and _____.

Challenging

1. Daniel receives the Babylonian name _____.
2. Hananiah receives the name _____.
3. Mishael receives the name _____.
4. Azariah receives the name _____.
5. The chief eunuch named in Daniel 1 is _____.
6. The teaching's workplace application concerns requesting accommodation for the _____.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does the teaching explain the causes of exile before discussing Daniel's choices?
2. Why does it favor the idol-ritual explanation for refusing both food and wine?
3. How does Daniel show concern for the official's responsibilities without abandoning his conviction?
4. What makes the ten-day proposal a useful response to the official's fears?
5. How does the outcome become a witness to those around Daniel and his friends?
6. How does the Sabbath example apply Daniel's combination of courtesy, clarity, and practical alternatives?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. Babylon
2. idolatry
3. three
4. water
5. ten
6. dreams

Challenging

1. Belteshazzar
2. Shadrach
3. Meshach
4. Abednego
5. Ashpenaz
6. sabbath