

# Old Testament Survey

## *Daniel*



More Than A Lion Tamer

**In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.**

Daniel 1:1-2 NIV



**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 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. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.**

Daniel 1:3-4 NIV



**The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.**

Daniel 1:5 NIV



**Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.**

Daniel 1:6-7 NIV



## Backstory

- ❑ King of Babylon wants to control Jerusalem
- ❑ Took the best of the best men captive
- ❑ Wants them immersed in Babylonian culture
- ❑ The Godly men need to depend on God



## Main Point

Instead of independence focus your dependence IN God



**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. Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel,**

Daniel 1:8-9 NIV





**But the official told Daniel, “I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your[c] food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you.”**

Daniel 1:10 NIV



**Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, “Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink.**

Daniel 1:11-12 NIV



**Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see.” So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.**

Daniel 1:13-14 NIV



## Wisdom

- ❑ Daniel needs to make tough decisions
- ❑ Will not eat the King's food
- ❑ Daniel doesn't want to rely on the King
- ❑ Daniel proposes a test





Hmmmmmm



## Wisdom

**“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.” (James 3:13)**



# Wisdom

- ❑ Where do you need wisdom?
- ❑ “Do the right thing, for the right reason”
- ❑ What to do when there isn't a clear right or wrong



**At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.**

Daniel 1:15-16 NIV





## Health

- ❑ Daniel looks better than the rest of the men
- ❑ Guard won't force Daniel to eat the King's food
- ❑ God took care of Daniel's health





## Health

**“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)**



## Mental Health

- ❑ Involve God through prayer
- ❑ Look for God in a variety of ways
- ❑ He may speak through someone else



## Physical Health Goals

- ❑ Easy to separate this from God
- ❑ God gives grace - give yourself grace if you miss a goal
- ❑ God helps build discipline - just get started



**To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar.**

Daniel 1:17-18 NIV



**The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanterers in his whole kingdom. And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.**

Daniel 1:19-21 NIV



## Wins

- ❑ God gave abilities, gifts, and success
- ❑ Daniel was smart and able to understand many things





## Wins

- ❑ Do you connect successes to God?
- ❑ “Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans.” (Proverbs 16:3)
- ❑ You can be humbly awesome/successful
- ❑ “Get a small win today” (Eugene Johnson)



## Wrap Up

- ❑ Depending on God has a lot to do with keeping Him involved
- ❑ Don't separate parts of your life from God
- ❑ Keep your dependence **IN** God



## Audio file

[Daniel 1 Audio Only.mp3](#)

## Transcript

All right. We all have things. Maybe we want to be known for, or we might already be known for things we like or don't like. This also happens with. Think about actors or musicians, right? You hear an actor's name and you might think of a specific movie or a musician, and you think of a song, an athlete and a certain team. That kind of stuff, you just you hear a name. And they're known. For something and Bible characters are very similar to this as well. You know, for a lot of people, if you say no other think of the arc. I tried this with my kids and I said, Daniel, who's we're going to talk about today and naturally they. Went to the lion right? Daniel and the Lions, then. This is a very popular story. Many people are familiar with it, and that's where we go with Daniel. He either tamed the Lions, or he made it through the lions then, and that's totally true. That's something to know him by. But Daniel was known for so much more than that. In my mind, he's more than just a lion tamer, and that's kind of the the little title of our two week miniseries just two weeks with Daniel. Then we're going to jump into Jonah for a few weeks. But in these next two weeks, I want to look that Daniel was more than just the lion tamer. He was more than just the guy that made it through the Lions den. So that's what we're going to do. So to get ourselves started, we're going to look at the back story of how this book of Daniel, how we even get to where we're going. So we're going to look at Daniel chapter one. We'll be in the whole chapter today. It is marked on the Bibles in your table there. It also will be, as always, right up here behind me. We are going to start with Daniel one versus one through 7 to get a little bit of the back story on Daniel. So let me read that to you, Daniel. 1 verses one through 7, it says. This in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim King of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it, and the Lord delivered Jehovah Kim, King of Judah, into his hand, along with some of the articles from the Temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his God in Babylonia and put in the treasure house. Of his God. Then the king ordered Ashkenas, chief of his court officials, to bring into the King's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and noble. Study 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. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the King's table. They were to be trained for three years. And after that they were to enter the King's service. Among those who were chosen were some from Judah, Daniel, Hannah, Michelle, and Azariah. The chief gave them new names to Daniel Belshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach to Michael Mishak, and to Azariah Abednego. We will stop. All right, so what's the back story? What is going on? We have the King of Babylon. And he wants to besiege Jerusalem. Basically, he wants to control it without a full blown takeover. So he goes in and he basically takes stuff from it. He takes the. And then he also takes some of the items from the temple, brings him home, and then he actually takes some people. But this isn't, like, totally true. Prisoner of war taking people. He wants to use the guys he takes, he takes the good looking, intelligent, trained up, best of the best of the best. Right. Think of that as if you know Ryan, who's in Verona, wants to siege Sun Prairie. He's going to go over and take Chris and bring him to Verona to train him. I just caught Lindsay's face and it was. The best thing? Chris, I'm glad you didn't see your wives face on that, but that's kind of

the idea, right? He's going to go and he's going to take some men because he wants to weaken Jerusalem, but then he wants to bring these guys up to work for him. So he sees this kind of a win win. He's going to have them trained up in the Babylonian culture for three years. To make sure they are immersed in it, the language in Babylonia it's called Acadian. This is a difficult language, primarily in terms of writing it lots and lots of symbols and things like that. So we'll take some time. Then they're also going to be given food from the King's table. This is a huge honor because you're not just getting. Any old food? This is directly like this is the King's good stuff. Alright, so this is a big deal that's going to happen. And now we meet four men. Right. We meet our four guys and their names are changed and we're not totally sure why. Probably it kind of strips them a little bit of that Jerusalem heritage and also the new names may be referenced to some sort of Babylonian gods. But here's the idea of going on. They're taken from Jerusalem to Babylon to be fully immersed in the culture and the ways of Babylonia in order to serve that king. But these are godly men. They believe in the God same. God, we do. So what do they do? What I have to do? Do is they depend on God? Daniel is a man of dependence, and that's kind of our focus today more than a lion tamer. Daniel is a man of dependence. Now dependence is tricky because we're often taught to be independent people, right? We're supposed to do things on our own and take care of our own lives. We as parents, we teach our young kids to be independent. Put your shoes on by yourself. Go get your own water bottle. All this kind of stuff. And to a large degree, that's a good thing. But as Christians, we do have to remember that we aren't completely independent. We are dependent on God and he wants us to be dependent as his children think of. It God would. Want us to live in his basement till we're 35 and live from home? He wants to claim us on his taxes as dependents. He wants to help us tie our shoes. God wants us. To be dependent on them. So I want you to think about it this way instead of independence, focus your dependence in God instead of independence, focus your. Once in God and today, that's what we're going to look at. We're going to look at a few ways. Daniel was dependent on. God and then kind of. What happens? All right, so let's jump into that. We're going to look at Daniel one versus 8 through 14. So picking up where we left off. Let's see what happens here with Daniel. But Daniel resolved not to defile himself. With the Royal Food and wine, he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now gotta cause the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel. But the official told Daniel I'm afraid of my Lord, the King, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than these other young men your age? The king would then. Have my head be. Those of you, Daniel then said to the guard, whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel Hannah Michele, and has Araya. Please test your servants for 10 days. Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food and treat your servants in accordance with what you see. So he agreed. And tested him for 10 days. We'll stop there, alright? Daniel depends on God for wisdom. That's what I think this section is because Daniel has to make decisions. What should he do? What should he not do? And God gives him wisdom in this process, because what he does. Is he actually seems to be OK with taking on the new name he's given. He seems like he's going to go. Ahead and take in the learning and the education of the new culture. But where he draws the line is that. The food, he's not going to defile himself with the food. There's a number of theories and thoughts as to why this is, where Daniel drew the hard line. But what I tend to agree with is that what he's showing. Because I don't need to rely on the king, I don't need to depend on the king for my food and my health and and to be brought up, I can depend on God in that way, because if he takes all the food he's creating this reliance and devotion on the king. But he wants to keep that on God. So I think that's why the food maybe is where we draw the line. But the problem is if Daniel refuses the food and he

looks frail or weaker or not as big and strong as these other guys, the King's gonna know something's up. So Daniels to figure what am I? Well, God gives him wisdom. Again, he goes to the guard and proposes a test. He says give it. 10 days trial run. Right, this is your free 10 day trial of whatever plan you're getting on. Just give it 10 days and then let's see. Daniel is confident in the wisdom he's been given by God. I want to draw a little distinction here because what Daniel's getting is wisdom, not just knowledge, right? Knowledge versus wisdom. Knowledge would be grabbing a lot of things, Chris, you can. Throw up this next slide we have. All right, so think about like Jeremiah here, we have all these Legos. Jeremiah likes Legos. Have them here. Knowledge would be just acquiring a whole bunch of Legos. That's great. You can get them all. You have them all. What are you going to? Do with them. That's where the wisdom piece comes in, right? Because you want to get from there to these cool looking toys, right? Like these guys, right? These are fun. These are three and. Ones he's got a. Bunch of these. You got to get. Here's another one. He likes dinosaurs, right? You want to get from that giant thing of? Legos to that. It's what to do with the knowledge you have now. For Legos, we have instruction manuals, right? That's great. That sounds good as Christians. So do we. We have Bibles, we have God, we have that kind of instruction manual. How to go from all the knowledge we get, all the information about what's going on in our lives and then what to do with it. That's wisdom, James 3:13 says. Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility. That comes from wisdom. Think about where you'd need wisdom. Not just smarts and intelligence, but more of an understanding of what to do with that. One of the commentators named Wendy Witter, who I read for Daniel, describes Daniel's wisdom as doing the right thing for the right reason. Daniel does that. He honors a commitment, right? Daniel does the right thing by staying committed to God. He does it for the right reason. He didn't do it to be boastful and say I'm awesome. He didn't do it just to spite this guard from Babylonia and draw attention to himself. He does it to honor God. That's doing the right thing for the right reason. That might be a scenario you have. But also. What about a situation where maybe there's not that inherently, morally or godly right or wrong thing to do? You get a new job opportunity. Do you take it or not? Take it. You get invited to something to do it or not do it. This is where we need godly wisdom. We have we can take in all the information, all the knowledge, all the facts we got to make a. We have to figure out what to do. That's where God can provide us wisdom. We have the. Gift of the. Holy Spirit from God to give us that nudge, that guidance, that push into what we should do. So God will help us with wisdom. We just have to depend on God for that wisdom. So that's the first part. And you're dependent on God for wisdom. We're going to read just the next two verses to get the second one, Daniel one versus 15 through 16 at the end of the 10 days, they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice. Food and wine. They were to drink and gave them vegetables. We'll stop there. All right, this is the. Big reveal right? Your 10 day trial is up. Did it work? Did it do anything? And the answer is yes, it did. Daniel and his boys looked better than everybody else. Right, this would be it just doesn't make sense, right? Because if we're looking at people maybe today that come out of something and they look way better, they should be like, oh, that's a camera angle or a filter on that or some artificial enhancement. These guys didn't have that. They had a spiritual enhancement. They had God to help them look better and be healthier. To be better. So the guard assigned to them is probably like. This is great. It's very possible he's able now to actually keep the food he was supposed to give to them. He can't send it back because the King's going to know it's up. So the guards like this. Is great for all of us. Daniel depended on God and his health, and his Wellness was taken care of. This is one of those things. It shouldn't have worked like this, but it did. I pulled a few people and asked for some things that shouldn't work but do, and we

did this in food. Ryan responded that cold pizza with peanut butter is actually really good. That's the response I had. But apparently it works now. Here's the problem is I'm not a big peanut butter guy, so I probably won't do it. But he says that works. Julie said she's heard peanut butter on a burger. Brad, how is it? It was fine Brad a little like. I don't even say it totally works. But these are food, right? These shouldn't. Be if you look at. Them they should not go together. But they might, but they work. Daniel should not have looked as good and been as healthy as he was on only the water and vegetables in comparison to the best food possible from the King's table. But it worked. Why? Because he depended on God and God cared about his health. I want to talk about health just for a little bit today. And I'm not going to wanna like over spiritualize our health and Wellness. But I do want us to see how God is actually a part of it. I don't think we should separate God from any parts of our lives, even if you know it's not this super huge thing. Because I do think God cares about our whole health and Wellness, 1st Corinthians 6:19 through 20 says. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. Honor God with all parts of ourselves, all of us, and that also mean God cares about all of us, our whole selves. So we'll talk about mental health and physical health just for. A few minutes mental health this can come in a variety of ways. This can be depression and anxiety. This could just be stress or frustration or anything that's just got you worried. Basically when you're feeling. Your head is is kind of spinning any of that first way. Let's involve God by praying about it. God help me. God, take it away, right. We should absolutely start in prayer. But then I think we have to be open for how God wants to work. And this may not always be super direct, right? If I just say God take the stress away, it may not instantly go away, but that doesn't mean God's not doing something because God works in so many different avenues. I've been a Christian my whole life. His ministry for a number of years, a pastor for a few years, and what is still so super dope about God is that he works in different avenues all the time and I keep seeing it. And I like that he can always work in a different way, so don't assume because of the way you're expecting him to help you. Doesn't happen that he's not. I think oftentimes with stress and frustration. God might speak to you through another person. Right in the Bible, God speaks through people all the time. Now, a lot of times there are prophets and things like that in the Bible. Now you may not have a prophet speaking directly to you, but he might speak to you. 3 pastor. He might speak to you through a therapist or a counselor in a professional setting through a friend, a coworker, your small groups. God does work. Through other people, he can now we have to discern, hey, is this really from God or not? But he can. Absolutely work that way. God might also change your circumstances in a completely different way. If I'm stressed a lot about point A in my. Life maybe asking. To do something over here in area B that helps. We have to be willing to see it. Don't ignore mental health. Work on it. But pouring God into it and look for him variety of ways. Like God help you. Physical health. We can talk about physical health goals more so today, and I don't think we talked about this a lot in the church and that's OK. But I want to talk about a little bit today. What a lot of times we'll do is if people are sick or hurt or have injuries or surgeries, we pray for them and we absolutely should, right? And I fully understand there are illnesses that don't go away or injuries that are recurring or cause permanent effects, and those are super important. They matter. And I don't know. Why that stuff happens? I wish it didn't. I do believe that God cares about you and loves you. And is there if you're going through. But for today's purposes, we're going to put more of the focus in a little different direction. I'm more like health goals. Think of it like this. What is God's going to do with me if I want to build more muscle or get my weight under control or get better endurance, or fix my nutrition or all this kind of stuff and it's easy to separate this from God? Can we be like, well, that's not just going to do it. I

have to do that. So I don't even need God with this. I think that's where the mistake comes in. Is separating him from it. Now, we'll probably need to make changes in our lives too, to hit these types of goals, but don't exclude God and what he's taught from. Right. Think about goals. Maybe you've had in this and maybe you haven't hit them, or they've been really hard or you failed and we start to think I failed. I didn't stick to it. I can't do it. Hold that for a minute. Think about in your life when you've made mistakes in terms of sin and things that don't honor God. And you think, man, I failed. I screwed up. What does God give? Forgiveness and grace. In that, when you feel like we failed at something in our own health or in a goal we've had, give yourself that kind of grace that God has given you in other areas. Right. Try again. Get back up and keep going. We have this grace. From God. So you're not a failure. God would say the same thing. You didn't fail. Just keep going. Work again. That's from God, right? That's a principle we have from God that we can use. God also gives discipline. We've talked about the start of the year when Julie talked about doing quiet times, she said. Just start, make it small. Just get into your Bible, spend time with God just for a little bit and kind of build up that quiet time. That's discipline and spending time with God. God talks about spiritual disciplines in the Bible. Discipline is a thing. Just start and do a little bit at a time. God is a God of discipline, so we can use that also now. I'm not saying that your workouts, your activities, or your meal plans, whatever they are, are going to be these incredible, like spiritual, bright light experiences. But I don't think we should exclude God and who he is from these areas of our lives. I don't think we should do that. God cares about our whole health and Wellness. Because he cares about us. He cares about all of us. Alright, I think God is predictable in the sense that he's always going to care about us. He's always going to be. There's always going to love us, but he's not so methodical because he's going to do things in our lives in different ways all the time. We have to be willing to let him. Into that and to. Look at it. So I'd say don't give up on your health. Don't give up on God because he's not going to give. And you so health, Wellness your goals. Third one, let's look at the final piece, Daniel 117 through 21. This is the end of the chapter to these four young men. God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning, and Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The King talked with them and he found none equal to Daniel Hen and I and Michelle and Azariah. So they entered the King's service. In every manner of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them 10 times better than all the magicians and Enchanters in his whole Kingdom, and Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus. That is the end. Of chapter one, Daniel was dependent on God and God came through with abilities and gifts and success, and he gave Daniel a win in the situation. Now Daniel became smart and able to understand things. He was given this gift of interpretation. That's a huge deal. If you read the rest of Daniel Daniel being able to interpret dreams and things like that as a huge. And the king found favor with him. Big time favor better than his magicians and enchanters. And all these things. This level of success, this win that Daniel gets, would be enough to arouse jealousy and contempt from others. But God gave him. A win in this situation, he gave him his abilities and success. He helped him get there. We all have times when we just kind of need to feel like we get, we get a win, right? We feel like something is going well. Something something goes our way. And that's totally a good thing to want. That's fine. So I'll be happy and proud of throughout the week. Ryan, Eugene and I text each other about all kinds of stuff. Health and Wellness is some of it, and just life in general. And at one point this week, Eugene texted us and said, get a small win today. That's what I said. Get a small win today and for some reason I read that. I was sitting outside and it hit me and I was like. Oh, that's awesome. Like, I want that on my coffee cup, so I remember that because just get a small win. It's just get yourself something. To get

yourself on the right track, that's something to be proud of. That's something to boost you up. And think about connecting those wins for us to God. How can we bring God in as a part of that right? And it doesn't negate the effort we put in. If we're saying God, thank you for helping me there, being dependent on God to get us to that little win proverb 16 three says commit to the Lord. Whatever you do, he'll establish your plans. God's plans lead to his type of win when we commit to him, and we depend on him, he will get us there. Here's the thing. We can give God credit. And still get those wins and be awesome at the same time, right? Being humbly awesome is the thing I really believe that. Because we can give God credit. Say God help me get to that win. But it's still awesome that you were able to do that. It's OK to feel that way. So how can God help you get to? Those wins, your success is. See God in them. Has got to help you get. Across that line that you just you need that. Don't separate them from it. So this week, like Eugene said in our text, get that small win today. Do it for you and see God is a part of it. As we wrap it up, I think so I was thinking a lot about just depending. On God a. Lot of it just has to do with keeping God involved, keeping God in the loop, not separating God from any. Area of our life. Even if it's an area we think, well, that's not a place God would really impact my life too much. Don't separate God from any of those areas. When you need wisdom. Talk to God when it comes to your health. Keep God and what he's about as part of it. Your wins. How did God help you get there when you need one, ask God to help you get there for one. And remember that being independent. Isn't inherently bad, but as Christians, as children of God, as children of a father who loves us unconditionally, we should focus our dependence in him. Let's pray. Got to thank you for this morning and this first chapter of Daniel. God as we dive in just for a couple weeks with Daniel, I pray that you would continue to just teach us who Daniel was and what you meant in his life. And God, I thank you that you show. That he was dependent on you in all areas of his life. And God, I pray we would be that way, that we wouldn't separate you from any part of our lives that we would at least have you in our minds and talking to you about it and making you involved. And God, we thank you that you. Do care about us completely. It's not just our spiritual selves. God that you care about us that way, but in so many other ways, in all areas of our life. So I pray that we would remember to be dependent on you this week. We look for those wins. God, we need wisdom. We would come to you. We need health. God, we would bring you in. But mostly we would remember to be dependent on you. Your name.