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Daniel's Training in Babylon - Daniel 1:1-21

Topics: Abilities, Accomplishments, Beliefs, Character, Circumstances, Courage, Culture, Dedication, Follow-through, God, Health, Loyalty, Testing, Wisdom

Open It

1. How many glasses of water do you usually drink each day?
2. What are your favorite healthy foods?
- * 3. If you wanted to adopt a healthier eating plan for yourself, what foods would you give up or cut back on and what foods would you eat more often?

Explore It

4. When did Nebuchadnezzar go to Jerusalem? (1:1)
5. When the king came to Jerusalem, what happened? (1:1-2)
6. What were the characteristics of the captives? (1:3-4)
- * 7. What did the king order Ashpenaz to do? (1:3-5)
8. What new names did the chief court official give four of the men? (1:7)
- * 9. What was Daniel's resolve? (1:8)
10. How did the chief official respond to Daniel's request? (1:9-10)
11. What did Daniel say to the guard? (1:11-13)
12. What did the guard do about Daniel's request? (1:14)
- * 13. What was the result of the test? (1:15-16)
14. What did God give to the four men? (1:17)
15. In evaluating the four men at the end of their training, what did Nebuchadnezzar conclude concerning them? (1:18-20)
16. How long did Daniel remain in the king's court? (1:21)

Get It

- * 17. When have you taken a Christian stand in a non-Christian setting?
18. How do you think Daniel felt as he became steeped in Babylonian culture?
19. In what ways did Daniel's commitment to God clash with the Babylonian culture?
20. In what ways do your Christian beliefs clash with the culture around you?
21. In what ways do your Christian beliefs affect your view of people of other cultures?
22. If you were a missionary overseas, what strengths and abilities would you bring to your calling?
23. How can food and drink affect your spiritual life?
24. How did Daniel demonstrate both flexibility and strength in an unfamiliar setting?
- * 25. What sacrifices have you made that reflect your dedication to the Lord?
26. How would a non-Christian acquaintance describe you?

Apply It

- * 27. Starting this week, what is one change you can make in your personal habits to show commitment to the Lord?
28. In what setting do you want to remember to stand up for your Christian convictions?
29. What can you do this week to develop a God-given talent or strength for the sake of God's kingdom?

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream - Daniel 2:1-49

Topics: Anger, Courage, Decisions, Expectations, God, Honor, Interpretation, Power, Praise, Prayer, Rewards, Thankfulness, Trust, Wisdom, World

Open It

- * 1. What has been your happiest dream or your strangest nightmare?
- 2. If you knew that our nation would come under the control of another world power within a week, what would you do?

Explore It

- 3. What did Nebuchadnezzar do about his troubling dreams? (2:1-6)
- 4. What did the king expect from his wise men? (2:8-9)
- 5. Why was the task assigned by the king too difficult for the astrologers to do? (2:10-11)
- * 6. What did the king decree? (2:12-13)
- 7. What was Daniel's course of action in the face of the king's order? (2:14-16)
- * 8. What did Daniel and his friends ask of God in the midst of a desperate situation? (2:17-18)
- * 9. How did Daniel respond to answered prayer? (2:19-23)
- 10. What transpired between Daniel and Arioch? (2:24-25)
- 11. What did Daniel say in response to the king's question? (2:26-30)
- 12. What was the king's dream? (2:31-35)
- 13. What was the interpretation of the dream? (2:36-45)
- 14. What did the king do in response to Daniel's interpretation? (2:46-49)

Get It

- 15. How do you usually deal with unreasonable or demanding people?
- 16. When you become angry, how do you handle it?
- 17. What significance do your dreams have in the way you live your daily life?
- * 18. How can we demonstrate in our life the importance of prayer?
- * 19. When you clearly recognize God's hand in your life, how do you need to respond to Him?
- 20. How does this passage show God's involvement in the political process?
- 21. Why is it better to be wise than powerful?
- 22. How do you think Daniel felt when he was heaped with honors by the king?
- 23. How do you accept compliments and recognition?

Apply It

- * 24. How can your prayer life include an appropriate measure of praise and thanksgiving?
- 25. How can you trust God with an unreasonable or difficult person in your life?

The Image of Gold and the Fiery Furnace - Daniel 3:1-30

Topics: Authority, Awe, Choices, Courage, Emotions, Endurance, God, Idolatry, Image, Integrity, Judgment, People, Persecution, Position, Power, Praise, Punishment, Rewards, Suffering, Trust, Victory

Open It

1. If an artist were to sculpt a representation of you, what special instructions would you give him or her?
2. What spectacular fireworks display stands out in your memory?
- * 3. If a fire were to start in your home, what would be your plan of action?

Explore It

4. What did King Nebuchadnezzar make? (3:1)
5. Whom did he invite to the dedication ceremony? (3:2-3)
- * 6. What were the people commanded to do? (3:4-5)
7. What warning did the herald give? (3:6)
8. What happened when the music began? (3:7)
9. Why did the astrologers complain to the king about the Jews? (3:12)
10. What did the king do about the complaint? (3:13-15)
- * 11. How did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego respond to the king? (3:16-18)
12. What did the king order his men to do? (3:19-21)
13. What happened to the king's soldiers? (3:22)
14. What happened to the three men? (3:23)
15. Why was the king amazed? (3:24-25)
16. What did the crowd observe when the men came out of the fire? (3:26-27)
- * 17. How did the king respond to God's deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? (3:28-30)

Get It

18. How are we tempted to glorify national symbols?
- * 19. If someone in authority over you told you to do something wrong, how would you respond?
20. How do you distinguish God's authority from those in authority around you?
21. If you had a great deal of power over others, how might you be tempted to abuse it?
22. What would make you confident or afraid if your safety were threatened because of your faith in God?
23. If God chose not to rescue you from intense personal suffering, how would this affect your faith?
- * 24. In what area of your life is it most difficult for you to stand by your Christian beliefs?
25. How has hardship strengthened your walk with the Lord?

Apply It

- * 26. What are you willing to risk in order to obey God's clear commands?
27. How can you help someone in your community of faith who is going through difficult circumstances?

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree - Daniel 4:1-37

Topics: Fear, God, Greatness, Honor, Insight, Interpretation, Miracles, People, Power, Praise, Prayer, Pride, Rewards, Sin, Warning

Open It

- * 1. What is a dream that you vividly remember?
- 2. What would you say if someone asked you to describe your accomplishments?
- 3. What does the term “temporary insanity” mean to you?

Explore It

- 4. What were King Nebuchadnezzar's opening comments in his public decree? (4:1-3)
- 5. Why did the king request a visit from the wise men? (4:4-6)
- 6. What did the wise men fail to do? (4:7)
- 7. Why did the king think that Daniel would be able to help him? (4:8-9)
- 8. What were the visions that the king related to Daniel? (4:10-18)
- 9. How did Daniel respond to the king's dream? (4:19)
- * 10. What was the meaning of the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream? (4:20-26)
- 11. How did Daniel conclude his exhortation? (4:27)
- * 12. What happened to the king twelve months after the dream? (4:28-33)
- * 13. What happened at the end of the king's illness? (4:34-37)

Get It

- 14. When was the last time you talked about your faith with an unbelieving neighbor or coworker?
- 15. How has God most recently revealed Himself to you?
- 16. If you had to share some bad news with a friend, how would you do it?
- 17. What unique image or symbol, like King Nebuchadnezzar's tree, has great importance to you in your walk with God?
- 18. If someone in your family was diagnosed with a mental illness, how would you pray for him or her?
- 19. In what ways can our view of ourselves hinder our spiritual growth?
- * 20. When have you ignored what you felt was a warning from God about specific sinful behavior?
- 21. What recent insight about God has given your faith a boost?
- 22. How is God blessing you right now?
- * 23. What particular area of your life do you need to start giving over to God's power and control?

Apply It

- 24. To whom will you turn the next time you need wisdom from someone who knows and loves God?
- 25. What first step can you take to help someone you know who is in deep mental distress?
- * 26. With what prayer do you want to submit every area of your life to God?

The Writing on the Wall - Daniel 5:1-31

Topics: Accomplishments, Advice, Death, Discernment, Fear, God, Insight, Interpretation, Judgment, People, Pleasure, Pride, Rewards, Wisdom

Open It

1. What would constitute a perfect party for you?
- * 2. What kinds of puzzles or riddles do you like to solve?
3. What are three of your best qualities?

Explore It

4. What did King Belshazzar do? (5:1)
- * 5. While drinking wine, what orders did Belshazzar give? (5:2-3)
6. To whom did the king and his court give praise? (5:4)
7. What happened while the people were feasting? (5:5)
8. How did the king react to the handwriting on the wall? (5:6-7)
9. What happened when the wise men came to the king? (5:8-9)
10. What was the queen's counsel to Belshazzar? (5:10-12)
11. When Daniel was brought before the king, what did Belshazzar say to him? (5:13-16)
12. How did Daniel respond to the king's words? (5:17)
- * 13. In his reply to the king, what did Daniel say about God and His dealings with Nebuchadnezzar? (5:18-21)
14. How did Daniel confront Belshazzar's pride? (5:22-24)
- * 15. What did Daniel say about the judgment of God? (5:25-28)
16. How did the king reward Daniel for his words? (5:29)
17. How was Daniel's revelation fulfilled? (5:30)
18. Who became the new ruler of Babylon? (5:31)

Get It

19. Why was Belshazzar proud?
20. What makes people proud nowadays?
21. What can we do to keep pride from clouding our perspective and respect for God?
22. How do you make festive and celebratory events part of your life?
23. What makes you fearful and anxious?
24. If you were struggling with a difficult personal problem, whose counsel would you seek? Why?
25. When someone asks for your opinion or advice, how honest are you in sharing what you think?
26. What strengths and gifts do you have that can be used to help God's people?
27. When a leader in the church confronts us about sin in our life, how should we respond?
- * 28. How does God and His judgment affect you?
- * 29. How have you benefited from the lessons learned by others' life experiences?

Apply It

- * 30. How can you begin this week to act on a piece of good advice you have recently been given?
31. What concrete action can you take to deal with an area of chronic sin in your life?
32. What do you want to remember the next time you are rebuked or criticized?

Daniel in the Den of Lions - Daniel 6:1-28

Topics: Accomplishments, Accusation, Angels, Courage, God, Jealousy, Judgment, Law, Leadership, People, Praise, Prayer, Protection, Punishment, Rewards

Open It

1. Under what conditions would you consider stepping into a lion's cage?
2. What makes you envious of others?
- * 3. What would you do if your right to pray in any public setting was legally taken away?

Explore It

4. How did Darius rule his kingdom? (6:1-2)
5. Why did Daniel's colleagues plot against him? (6:3-4)
6. How did the administrators and satraps plan to discredit Daniel? (6:5)
7. When the leaders went to the king, what did they say? (6:6-8)
- * 8. How did Daniel respond to the king's decree? (6:9-10)
9. Who found Daniel praying to God? (6:11)
10. Why was Daniel prosecuted? (6:12-15)
11. What was the king's hope for Daniel? (6:16)
- * 12. How was Daniel punished? (6:16-17)
- * 13. What happened during the night? (6:19-22)
14. What did Daniel say to the king? (6:21-22)
15. Why did God protect Daniel? (6:23)
16. What happened to Daniel's accusers and their families? (6:24)
17. What was the king's pronouncement? (6:25-28)

Get It

- * 18. If you were attending a public event at which you felt that your Christian values were being compromised, what would you do?
19. How do you forgive someone who has betrayed you?
20. When have you chosen to submit to God's authority over you rather than obeying the laws of the land?
- * 21. What qualities in Daniel do you most admire?
22. How do you feel toward God when innocent people are hurt or destroyed?
23. When have you seen the Lord do something surprising or miraculous?
24. How is the Lord your lifeline in difficult circumstances?
25. If you consistently show trust in the Lord, how do you think He will reward you?

Apply It

26. What steps can you take to trust God to resolve whatever difficult circumstances you face?
27. How do you need God's wisdom and help in forgiving someone who has betrayed you?
- * 28. What can you do to become a stronger, more courageous Christian?

Daniel's Dream of Four Beasts - Daniel 7:1-28

Topics: Authority, Fear, Glory, God, Heaven, Interpretation, Jesus Christ, Judgment, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Obedience, Oppressed, People, Persecution, Power, Sovereignty

Open It

- * 1. If you were to draw an imaginary ferocious animal, what would it look like?
- 2. What is your favorite nation or country (from the present or the past)? your least favorite? Why?
- 3. What sort of monsters did you imagine when you were a child?

Explore It

- 4. When was Daniel's vision revealed to him? (7:1)
- * 5. What was the substance of Daniel's vision? (7:2-3)
- 6. What did three of the beasts look like? (7:4-6)
- 7. How was the fourth beast different from the rest? (7:7-8)
- 8. How did Daniel describe the scene with the thrones? (7:9-10)
- 9. As Daniel watched, what happened to the fourth beast? (7:11)
- 10. What had become of the other three beasts? (7:12)
- 11. What occurred when the "son of man" was before the Ancient of Days? (7:13-14)
- 12. How did Daniel respond to his dream? (7:15)
- 13. Who explained the vision to Daniel? (7:16)
- * 14. What did the four beasts represent? (7:17-18)
- * 15. What was the true meaning of the fourth beast? (7:19-27)
- 16. How was Daniel affected by all that was revealed to him? (7:28)

Get It

- 17. God revealed Himself to Daniel through dreams and visions. How does God usually speak to us today?
- 18. What are some of the negative, ungodly forces in our society today?
- * 19. How are some troubled nations dishonoring God?
- * 20. How does Daniel's vision portray God's control in the affairs of the world?
 - 21. To whom does God hand over the dominion of the world?
 - 22. In what ways are some Christians persecuted in our country?
 - 23. When have you felt defeated as a Christian?
 - 24. What does it mean to you to be part of the kingdom of God?
 - 25. How does the Lord come to your rescue when you are down?

Apply It

- * 26. How can the nations of the world become a part of your daily prayer life?
- 27. What steps can you take to hand over your fears to the Lord?

Daniel's Vision of a Ram and a Goat - Daniel 8:1-27

Topics: Angels, Confusion, Earth, Fear, Future, Heaven, Interpretation, Intimidation, People, Power, Prophecy, Rebellion, Sacrifice, Truth, War

Open It

1. Of all the current, violent world affairs, which one troubles you most?
2. What recurring dream have you had?
- * 3. If you had the ability to see into the future, what would you not want to know about?

Explore It

4. When and where did Daniel's vision occur? (8:1-2)
5. What was the description of the ram in Daniel's dream? (8:3-4)
- * 6. What did the goat do to the ram? (8:5-7)
7. What happened to the goat at the height of his power? (8:8)
8. How did the little horn grow in importance? (8:9-12)
9. What did the angel—the "holy one"—reveal? (8:13-14)
10. What was Gabriel sent to do? (8:16)
11. How did Daniel respond to the heavenly messenger? (8:17)
- * 12. When would the events of the vision take place? (8:17-19)
13. Who was represented in the fight between the two-horned ram and the goat? (8:20-22)
- * 14. How did Gabriel describe the role of the little horn? (8:23-25)
15. What was Daniel told to do? (8:26)
16. How was Daniel affected by the interpretation of the vision? (8:27)

Get It

17. What atrocities are part of our culture's history?
18. In what ways does our society disregard God?
- * 19. Why do you think God sometimes allows ruthless national leaders to prosper?
- * 20. How have power and arrogance crept into the Christian church?
21. When God clearly reveals His truth to you, how do you feel?
22. When has God seemed inscrutable to you?
23. God enabled Daniel to prophesy. What special gift has God given you so you can serve Him?
24. When has spiritual truth been hard for you to bear?

Apply It

25. When you next feel powerless or inadequate, how can you entrust yourself to the Lord?
- * 26. In your prayers today, what specific national sins do you want to ask God to correct?

Daniel's Prayer - Daniel 9:1-27

Topics: Angels, Confession, Consequences, Disobedience, God, Interpretation, Judgment, Mercy, People, Prayer, Punishment, Restoration, Sin, Timing

Open It

- * 1. When is it most difficult for you to own up to wrongdoing?
- 2. If God would grant you one request, what would it be?

Explore It

- 3. What did Daniel come to understand in the first year of the reign of Darius? (9:1-2)
- 4. What did Daniel's study of the Scripture lead him to do? (9:3)
- 5. What was the nature of Daniel's confession? (9:4-6)
- 6. How did Daniel expect that God in His righteousness would punish an unfaithful Israel? (9:7-11)
- 7. Because of her rebellion and disobedience, what did Israel experience? (9:11-14)
- * 8. What was the substance of Daniel's petition? (9:15-19)
- 9. Who came to Daniel while he was praying? (9:20-21)
- * 10. What was Gabriel's purpose in visiting Daniel? (9:22)
- 11. Why did Daniel receive such a prompt answer to his prayer? (9:23)
- * 12. What did God decree for Israel? (9:24-27)

Get It

- 13. How is your spiritual life affected by momentous world events?
- 14. Why did Daniel confess his sins?
- * 15. Why is confession of sin important?
- 16. When should we confess our sins to God?
- 17. In what ways do you feel implicated when sin is uncovered in the life of your church?
- 18. In your experience, what are the benefits of obedience to God?
- 19. On what basis do you make requests of the Lord?
- 20. When has God given an especially quick answer to your prayers?
- 21. When have you been confused by the Lord's response to your prayers?
- 22. When has the passage of time played an important part in an answer to your prayers?
- * 23. How can you become more confessional in your everyday life with the Lord?

Apply It

- * 24. When can you take some time this week to confess sin and thank God for His forgiveness?
- 25. For what needs in your church and community do you want to pray this week?
- 26. In what specific ways do you need God's grace and mercy in your life right now?

Daniel's Vision of a Man - Daniel 10:1-12:13

Topics: Affirmation, Angels, Character, Conflict, Courage, Encouragement, Enemies, Faith, Fear, God, Grief, History, Interpretation, Judgment, Justice, Knowledge, Peace, People, Persecution, Power, Prayer, Promises, Prophecy, Punishment, Reputation, Rewards, Sin, Strength, War, Wisdom, World

Open It

- * 1. When have you been intimidated or frightened by an encounter with another person?
- 2. What period of history interests you most?
- 3. Which do you prefer: the process of working on a project or actually completing the task?

Explore It

- 4. What was the occasion of Daniel's final vision? (10:1-3)
- * 5. Who visited Daniel as the prophet was standing by the Tigris River? (10:4-11)
- 6. What did the heavenly being explain to Daniel? (10:12-14)
- 7. What was the significance of Daniel's strengthening? (10:15-11:1)
- 8. What details were given concerning Israel's history under Persia? (11:2)
- 9. What was the importance of the emergence of "a mighty king"? (11:3-4)
- 10. What would take place between the king of the South and the king of the North? (11:5-20)
- 11. What was revealed about the "contemptible person"? (11:21-35)
- 12. How would the evil king meet his demise? (11:36-45)
- * 13. What would be the destiny of Daniel's people (the Jewish nation)? (12:1-3)
- 14. Why was Daniel told to "seal the words of the scroll"? (12:4)
- 15. How did the man clothed in linen respond to the angel's question? (12:5-7)
- * 16. How did the angel respond to Daniel's concern? (12:8-13)

Get It

- 17. When have you been afraid of God?
- 18. How does bad news affect your prayer life?
- 19. What does the strength of the Lord mean to you personally?
- * 20. How have you most recently been encouraged in your spiritual life?
- 21. Why should we pray for the political leaders of the world?
- 22. Why is it particularly important to pray for Christians who are involved in political leadership?
- 23. If you were suddenly elevated to a social position of great power, what personal pitfalls would you be careful to avoid?
- 24. If Daniel were given a vision of our society, what major weaknesses and strengths might he identify?
- 25. If you were faced with persecution because of your faith, how would you count on the Lord to protect you?
- * 26. What rewards are promised to the faithful and the wise?

Apply It

- * 27. This week how will you persevere in your faith when you face opposition?
- 28. For what group of people that suffers under an inhumane political system can you pray?
- 29. In what area of your life do you need to start seeking the Lord for wisdom?