

Daniel 1

Verses 1 - 2

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² And the Lord handed Jehoiakim king of Judah over to him, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.

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

See chart 105

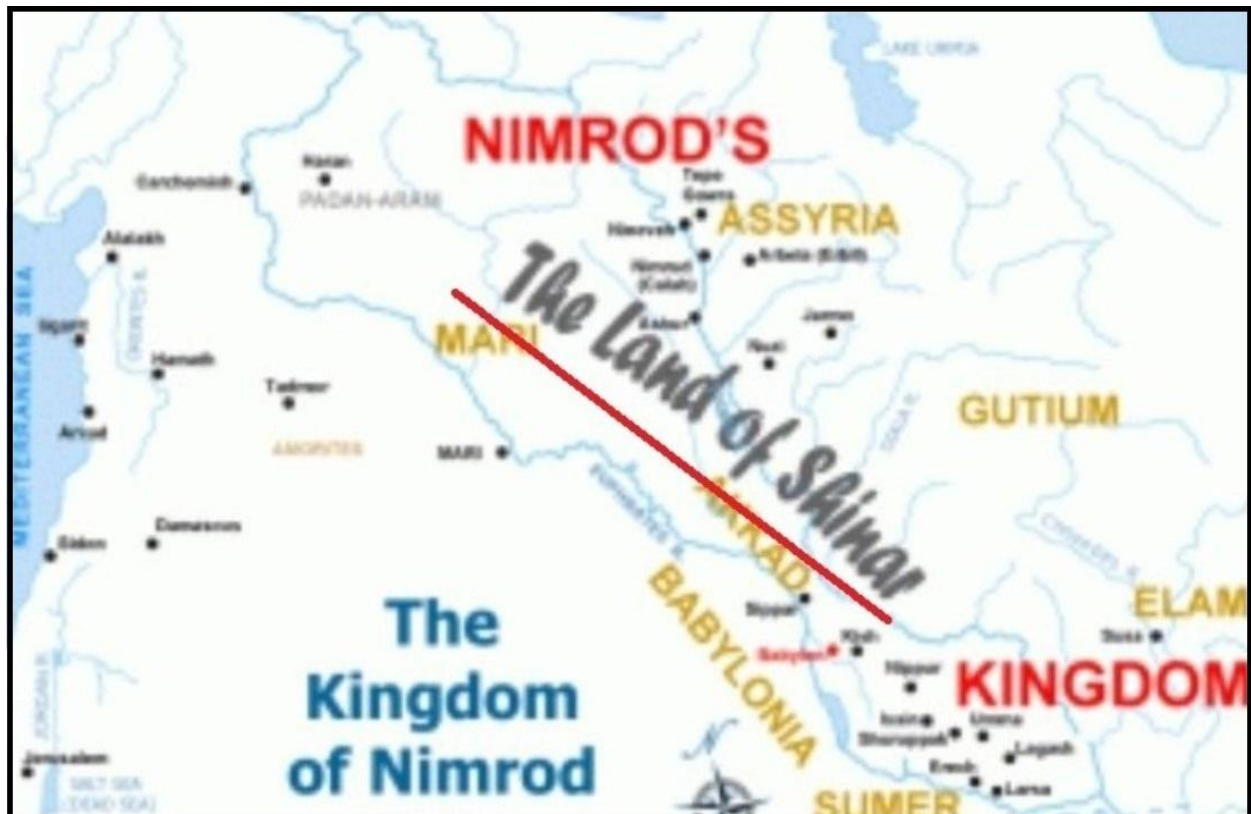
Southern Kings				
	King	Began	Ended	Years
10	Jotham	750/740	731	16
11	Ahaz	743/731	715	16
12	Hezekiah	728/715	686	29
13	Manasseh	696/686	642	55
14	Amon	642	640	2
15	Josiah	640	609	31
16	Jehoahaz	609	609	3 months
17	Jehoiakim	609	598	11
18	Jehoiachin	598	597	3 months
19	Zedekiah	597	586	11

The 3rd year of Jehoiakim was in 606 BC. This was the first of three deportations of Israel to Babylon.

See chart 110

Events		Year
Deportation to Babylon	1st	605
Deportation to Babylon	2nd	597
Deportation to Babylon	Final	586

See map 115



Shinar is an ancient name for Babylon.

See Genesis 10:10

¹⁰ And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

Verses 3 - 7

³ Then the king told Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles, ⁴ youths in whom there was no impairment, who were good-looking, suitable for instruction in every *kind of* expertise, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability to serve in the king's court; and *he ordered Ashpenaz* to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵ The king also allotted for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and *ordered* that they be educated for three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service. ⁶ Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷ Then the commander of the officials assigned *new* names to them; and to Daniel he assigned *the name* Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach, and to Azariah Abed-nego.

³ Then the king told Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles,

See 2 Kings 20:16 - 19

¹⁶ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord: ¹⁷ 'Behold, the days are coming when everything that is in your house, and what your fathers have stored up to this day, will be carried to Babylon; nothing will be left,' says the Lord. ¹⁸ 'And some of your sons who will come from you, whom you will father, will be taken away; and they will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" ¹⁹ Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the Lord which you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Is it not *good*, if there will be peace and security in my days?"

Some of these men were the "sons" of Hezekiah.

See chart 120

Southern Kingdom

	King	sons	5 Generations of Hezekiah
10	Jotham	Son	
11	Ahaz	Son	
12	Hezekiah	Son	
13	Manasseh	Son	Son
14	Amon	Son	Grandson of Hezekiah
15	Josiah	Son	Great Grandson of Hezekiah
16	Jehoahaz	Son of Josiah	4th generation of Hezekiah
17	Jehoiakim	Son of Josiah	4th generation of Hezekiah
18	Jehoiachin	Son	5th generation of Hezekiah
19	Zedekiah	Son of Josiah	4th generation of Hezekiah

The end of Hezekiah's reign was 715 BC and the time frame here in Daniel 1 is sometime after 606 BC so 109 plus years after the prophecy in 2 Kings 20:18. The term "sons" in 2 Kings 20 includes up to 5 generations of Hezekiah.

⁴ youths in whom there was no impairment, who were good-looking, suitable for instruction in every *kind of* expertise, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge

They had to be young, good-looking, and smart. The NIV and KJV has, they shall become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. The NAS that is used above does not include the statement that they would become eunuchs.

⁶ Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷ Then the commander of the officials assigned *new* names to them; and to Daniel he assigned *the name* Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach, and to Azariah Abed-nego.

1. Daniel means God is my judge.

Belshazzar means Bel (a pagan god) protects his life.

2. Hananiah means Yahweh has been gracious.

Shadrach means the command of Aku (the moon god).

3. Mishael means as God is.

Meshach means who is this.

4. Azariah means Yahweh has helped

Abednego means Servant of the god Nabu.

The Babylonians wanted to honor and promote their gods and they did this by getting rid of any mention of the only true God.

Verses 8 - 13

⁸ But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought *permission* from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. ⁹ Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials. ¹⁰ The commander of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has allotted your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking gaunt in comparison to the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king." ¹¹ But Daniel said to the overseer whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹² "Please put your servants to the test for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ Then let our appearance be examined in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king's choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see."

⁸ But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought *permission* from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

We can see in Daniel a man of character because he made up his mind to keep the Law of God even though he was in a hostile land. However, he had been chosen to be a servant of the king so this gave him some leeway that a common prisoner of war would probably not have even if he made the same choice. Daniel also approached the commander with humility and a well thought out plan to test his theory.

Daniel wanted to avoid two things in changing his diet; the king's food and wine. Most likely Daniel did this because the meats would have been sacrificed to idols, and/or not kosher. Wine was an acceptable part of the Jewish diet but it might have been refused on the grounds of it not being helpful because alcohol causes dehydration. This could have been an important factor in their overall health and appearance.

⁹ Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials.

God intervened to bring about a favorable decision.

¹⁰ The commander of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has allotted your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking gaunt in comparison to the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king."

The commander was right to be object at first because he was in charge and tempting fate is not advisable when it could cost one his life.

¹² "Please put your servants to the test for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink.

This was a great compromise. A 10 day trial would not have a long term effect on the 4 men so even if the effect was negative, it could be reversed rather quickly.

Verses 14 - 16

¹⁴ So he listened to them in this matter, and put them to the test for ten days.

¹⁵ And at the end of ten days their appearance seemed better, and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food. ¹⁶ So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables.

The NIV says, they looked "healthier and better nourished" but does not mention them looking "fatter". The Septuagint has the following:

¹⁵ And at the end of the ten days their countenances appeared fairer and stouter in flesh, than the children that fed at the king's table.

Verses 17 - 21

¹⁷ And as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every *kind of* literature and expertise; Daniel even understood all *kinds of* visions and dreams. ¹⁸ Then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them, the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ And the king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service. ²⁰ As for every matter of expertise and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the soothsayer priests *and* conjurers who *were* in all his realm. ²¹ And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king.

¹⁷ And as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every *kind of* literature and expertise; Daniel even understood all *kinds of* visions and dreams

These 4 young men had some natural ability that was superior to others but they were also men of faith and they had made a commitment to keep God's dietary laws so God rewarded them with some additional ability that made them stand out from all the others. This is how faith and works complement each other in the life of a believer.

¹⁹ And the king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service.

At the end of the 3 year training period all the candidates stood before the king and he used some kind of oral examination to test their abilities. The 4 who God had blessed passed the test with honors and the king found them 10 times better than all the soothsayer priests *and* conjurers. So they were appointed to begin their service in the palace of the king

²¹ And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king.

The 4 men were deported in 606 BC and Cyrus became king in 539 BC. If Daniel was 15 at the time of his deportation, he would be 82 in the 1st year of King Cyrus.

See chart 125

Time Line for the Book of Daniel

Chapter	Events	Reign	Year	Daniel's age
1	Jehoiakim	609 - 598		
1	Nebuchadnezzar is king	605 - 561		
1	Deportation to Babylon	1st of 3	606	15
1	Three years of training		603	18
2	One statue of 4 kingdoms			
3	A 90 foot statue of gold			
3	4 men in the furnace			
4	The great tree cut down			
4	The king is restored			
5	Belshazzar is king	556 - 539	539	65 - 82
5	Cyrus becomes King	539 - 530	539	82

This again shows the providence of God because Daniel and his 3 friends were near the throne during the 70 years the Jews were in captivity. God's people rightly suffered the loss of their homeland for 70 years but even when they were being punished for their sin God put people of faith in important positions within the government to protect the people of Israel.