

## **THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 3/27-28/2023 *Daniel 1:1-21***

**PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!**

**MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)**

**THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!! Beginning 4/10/23, will meet CC Living Word, 17101 Armstrong, Irvine, CA**

**MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484**

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

**Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763 - Passcode: 087484**

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,87858644763# US (San Jose) +13462487799,,87858644763# US (Houston)

**Dial by your location**

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose); +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston); +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma); +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C); +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago); +1 929 436 2866 US (New York);

**Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763**

**Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763>**

**TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).**

**THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE CCCM FAMILY ROOM, Beginning 4/11/23, will meet CC Living Word, 17101 Armstrong, Irvine, CA**

**MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340**

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746?pwd=TK5oVjN0TzdpWjE3UC9Oam05a21uQT09>

**Meeting ID: 853 0915 0746 - Passcode: 715340**

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,85309150746# US (San Jose) +12532158782,,85309150746# US (Tacoma)

**Dial by your location**

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose); +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma); +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston); +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C); +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago); +1 929 436 2866 US (New York);

**Meeting ID: 853 0915 0746**

**Find your local number:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746>**

**HAVING TROUBLE LOGGING INTO Zoom? <https://www.technipages.com/troubleshooting-zoom-login-errors>**

Phil Twente [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) cell 714 425 9221 [www.ptwente.com](http://www.ptwente.com) - Audio & notes from previous studies

### **OPENING PRAYER**

***Daniel - The Sovereignty of God – He Rules Over All; He Overrides All!***  
***Chapter 1 Daniel and his friends obey God! – vs. 1-21!***

#### **Introduction:**

- **The book of Daniel is one of the most exciting books of the Old Testament** to me. I love the book of Daniel. He is one of those that I am looking forward to meeting when I get to heaven. What were his feelings when he was in the lion's den. He is just an exciting, exciting man of God.

- **Purpose, prayer, and prophecy – Words which characterize Daniel’s life!** Also, without compromise; pride and arrogance!
- **We find three different times of difficulty in the Book of Daniel:** the testing of the four Hebrews when they arrived at Babylon (*Dan 1:1-21*); the fiery furnace (*Dan 3:1-30*); and the lions’ den (*Dan 6:1-28*). In each of these experiences, Daniel and his friends won the victory, but the very first victory was the foundation for the other victories. Because these Jewish boys were faithful, and remained so, God was faithful to them in the years that followed.
- **Because of the extraordinary accuracy of his prophetic future accounts,** the Book of Daniel has given tremendous fits to the critics of the Bible, criticizing and rejecting it more than any other Book, except Genesis. Daniel predicted events of the Greeks, Seleucids, the Ptolemies and all. They were so exact and so precise, speaking of Cleopatra and others, critics of the Bible and those who do not believe that the Bible is the inspired of God, have had great difficulty with Daniel. They came to their solution that Daniel was not written by Daniel, but by someone else, later on, after the events took place. To discredit the book of Daniel, they have the late date authorship theory, which has so many holes in that theory it is not even worthwhile looking at it.
- **Jesus ascribed the authorship to Daniel.** (*Mat 24:15*) *"Therefore when you see the 'ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand).* That should totally answer any criticism or any kind of a late date fraud kind of a thing that could have been going on, because Jesus would not have endorsed a fraud.
- **The Book of Daniel is the key to understanding other Scriptures.** In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus quotes only from the Book of Daniel. The Book of Revelation is largely a mystery without the Book of Daniel. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the “*man of Sin*” needs Daniel’s account for amplification and clarification.
- **Rather than drive out darkness, just turn on the light, and the light will dispel the darkness.** Not majoring in the negative, but just rejoicing in the glorious light that God has given to us!

### ***Daniel Taken to Babylon - A Difficult Trial (Dan 1:1-7)***

*[1] 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 gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god. [3] Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, [4] young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. [5] And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. [6] Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. [7] To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.*

***Dan 1:1*** *In the third year (about 605 BC) of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.*

- **Jehoiakim began to reign in about 607 BC.** The third year of his reign would be about 605 BC, by Babylonian dating, which did not count a king's initial (accession) year but began with the following year. So the "third year" is in harmony with the same year labeled as "fourth" by the Judean system of dating. (*2Ki 24:1-2*) *In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. [2] And the LORD sent against him raiding bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets. (Jer 25:1) The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the*

people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon),

- **Jehoiakim was basically set on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar**, (son of Nabopolassar), who ruled Babylon 605-562 BC). Jehoiakim was a vassal to Babylon, originally was set on the throne by Pharaoh Necho, but the Pharaoh was conquered by Babylon. In the third year Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, triggering Babylon's first invasion of Israel. There would be the second invasion in 597 BC and the final invasion and destruction of the temple in 586 BC.
- **We see the ironic judgment of God in that Israel, because of sin**, was being carried off captive to wicked Babylon. The first capture of Jerusalem and the first captives were the beginning of the end for Jerusalem, which had been made magnificent by David and Solomon. When the Word of God is ignored and violated, divine judgment, sooner or later is inevitable. The spiritual lessons embodied in the cold fact of Israel's captivity, may well be pondered by the church today, too often having a form of godliness but without knowing the power of it. Worldly saints do not capture the world but become instead the world's captives.

**Dan 1:2** *And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.*

- **The Babylonian Chronicle, a tablet now in the British museum**, tells us that Nebuchadnezzar did not then destroy the temple because his father, Nabopolassar died in August of 605 BC, forcing Nebuchadnezzar to return to Babylon in order to assume the throne ahead of anyone else. He became king the day he arrived in Babylon in September, 605 BC a month after his father's death. He had taken his armies, making the trek of six hundred miles in about a month! Wow!
- **(2Ch 36:7)** *Nebuchadnezzar also carried off some of the articles from the house of the LORD to Babylon and put them in his temple at Babylon.*
- **(Jer 27:19-20)** *"For thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, concerning the Sea, concerning the carts, and concerning the remainder of the vessels that remain in this city, [20] which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take, when he carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem—*

**Dan 1:3** *Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs (saris - court officer, castrated), to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles,*

- **They brought some of the choice young men.** At the time of near death to Hezekiah, Isaiah prophesied, **(Isa 39:7)** *'And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'* This prophecy, given one hundred years before, was being fulfilled when Daniel and other of the princes were taken to Babylon, shortly after the capture of Jerusalem in the summer of 605 B.C.
- **Reasons for bringing some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles.** Those carried away captive could well serve as hostages to help keep the royal family of the kingdom of Judah in line. Additionally, their presence in the king's court also would be a pleasant reminder to the Babylonian king of his conquest and success in battle. Further, their careful training and preparation to be his servants might well serve Nebuchadnezzar in later administration of Jewish affairs.

**Dan 1:4** *young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.*

- **These young men (yeled – youth, 13-18 years old) were taken as captives.** They were descendants of Hezekiah and thus they were of the royal seed, from the tribe of Judah, a descendant of David. Similar to Moses, **(Act 7:22)** *And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.*
- **The specifications for those carefully selected were to have no physical blemish.** To be good looking; to be *gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace.* In a word, their total physical, personal, and intellectual capacities as well as their cultural background were factors in the choice. Their training, however, was to separate

(indoctrinate) them from their previous Jewish culture and environment and teach them *the language and literature of the Chaldeans*.

**Dan 1:5** *And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies (rich food) and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.*

- **They were being groomed with Babylon's attempting to indoctrinating** away from Judaism, into the Chaldean culture. They were being taught in all of the learning of Babylon. Taught the Chaldean language. The provision of the king's fare, the king's meat and so forth was set before them. They were to be prepared to stand before the king as a counselor in the foreign affairs department, especially dealing with the nation of Judah.
- **Nebuchadnezzar was not interested in putting good Jews to work**; he wanted these Jews to be Babylonians! Christians today face the same trial: Satan wants us to become "conformed to this world" (*Rom 12:1-2*). They were given! A new home; new knowledge; new diets; new names.
- **Daniel is usually pictured as a very mature young fellow**, but he was probably only about fourteen to sixteen years old. Because he was taken in the third year of Jehoiakim as a captive, living through the seventy years of captivity in Babylon that was predicted by Jeremiah. He lived on into the reign of the Medo-Persian kings. When he was thrown into the lion's den, he was no longer a young man, probably in his ninety's.
- **The bountiful provision of the king was intended** to give them ample food supplies to enable them to pursue their education for a three-year period and to remind them of the better life in Babylon than back home in Israel. The expression *so nourish them three years* literally refers to training such as would be given a child. The goal was to bring them to intellectual maturity to "stand or *serve before the king*," equivalent to becoming his servant and thereby taking a place of responsibility.
- **In verse 6, Daniel and his three companions**—Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah—are mentioned as being children of Judah included among the captives. These only of the captives are to figure in the narrative following, and no other names are given. The corrupting influences of Babylon may have been too much for the others, and they were useless in God's hands.

**Dan 1:6** *Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.*

- **These four teenagers were taken during a time of spiritual decadence in Israel.** Josiah, the good king, had died, one of his sons, Jehoiakim, a wicked king, was reigning in his stead. The spiritual atmosphere in Jerusalem was not good. The prophet Jeremiah was speaking out against these things that were going on. It is probable that Daniel as a very young boy was impressed by this prophet Jeremiah, the man of God. His heart was open and sympathetic to the message of Jeremiah, even though the whole political scene was that of corruption. Yet, there were these four young men who were remaining committed to the Lord at an early age! They had beautiful Hebrew names, signifying the depth of spirituality, perhaps of their parents, as the boys were given these names that relate to the Lord.

**Dan 1:7** *To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.*

- **A key factor in the "brainwashing" process of the Babylonian training was a name switch.** This was to link the inductees with local gods rather than let them continue to support their former religious loyalty.
- **Daniel means "God is my judge," but became Belteshazzar,** or "Bel Protect the King."
- **Hananiah, "the Lord is Gracious," was changed to Shadrach,** "Command of Aku," another Babylonian god.
- **Mishael, meaning "Who is like the Lord?" was given the name Meshach,** "Who is what Aku Is?"
- **Azariah, "the Lord is my Helper," became Abed-Nego,** "Servant of Nego," also called Nebo, a god of vegetation (*Isa 46:1*) *Bel bows down, Nebo stoops; Their idols were on the beasts and on the cattle. Your carriages were heavily loaded, A burden to the weary beast.*
- **Daniel, in his later writing, generally prefers his own Hebrew name, (I, Daniel used 7x); but frequently uses the Babylonian names of his companions.** The fact that the Hebrew youths were

given heathen names, however, does not indicate that they departed from the Hebrew faith any more than in the case of Joseph, (*Gen 41:45a*) *And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah.*

### ***Daniel's Faithfulness – A Daring Test (Dan 1:8-16)***

*[8] But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore, he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. [9] Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. [10] And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king." [11] So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, [12] "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. [13] Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants." [14] So he consented with them in this matter and tested them ten days. [15] And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. [16] Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.*

***Dan 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.***

- ***But Daniel! He purposed in his heart not*** to defile himself! That is so important for people to establish in their hearts that kind of commitment and purpose that I am not going to defile my body!
- ***What a classic example this passage is to all of us!*** Daniel's determination was based on the laws of the Word of God. "***That he would not defile himself;***" referring to the dietary restrictions in God's Law. These young Jewish men were obedient to the law of God. They did what they did because they knew what defilement was all about. They followed what God said about the things they ate! It takes faith and obedience to overcome the temptations and pressures of the world.
- ***Another one of my favorite characters in the Old Testament is Joseph,*** and he at a tender young age had a very bitter experience. His brothers turned on him, selling him to slave traders who were going to Egypt. There, he was sold to Potiphar who was one of the chief guards to the Pharaoh. Potiphar's wife took a liking to him and sought to seduce him into a sexual relationship. But Joseph said (*Gen 39:9b*) *How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"* So, though a teenager, in a strange country where the influences of the home are gone, the opportunity is there, yet ***because of that purpose in his heart he remained true*** to the Lord!
- ***Moses took this stand (Heb 11:24-26) By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, [25] choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, [26] esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. As did the psalmist (Psa 119:115) Depart from me, you evildoers, For I will keep the commandments of my God, and Jesus (Heb 7:26) For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens.***
- ***A lot of times people when they are away from the influences and the environment*** of their home get into evil. They do things there that they would not do at home, because they think that nobody knows them there. But here were these young fellows, and they had purposed in their hearts to be pure, not to defile themselves. How important it is for us to make that kind of purpose and ***determination not to defile ourselves, but to live a pure and holy life before God.*** How God honors that! To not pollute our minds or defile our bodies.
- ***Daniel would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank*** Now the king's meat, usually was first of all sacrificed to their gods in pagan worship. It was then roasted and served at the king's table. Daniel purposed in his heart that he was not going to defile his body, with the king's meat or with the king's wine. He requested from the prince of the

eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Consider how often Christian young people change their behavior and beliefs in their college years!

- **Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love** with the prince of the eunuchs. He was a good looking, model kind of a young man. There was this special relationship. He liked Daniel very much. He said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king," and well might he. Nebuchadnezzar was a man who did not take no for an answer. He was a man who would order you executed for a trivial offense. Ashpenaz, like anyone else, served in great fear.

*Dan 1:9 Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.*

- **God honored Daniel's trust and allegiance by sovereignly working in a favorable manner** for him among the heathen leaders. Here, it prevented persecution and led to respect; whereas later on, God permitted opposition against Daniel, which also elevated him. (*Dan 6:10*) *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. One way or another, God honors those who honor Him! (2Ch 16:9) For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars."*

*Dan 1:10 And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed (ordered) your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger (chop off) my head before the king."*

- **Daniel and his companions were confronted with the problem of compromise** in the matter of eating food provided by the king. The problem was twofold. First, the food provided did not meet the requirements of the Mosaic law in that it was not prepared according to regulations and may have included meat from forbidden animals. Second, there was no complete prohibition in the matter of drinking wine in the Law; but here the problem was that the wine, as well as the meat, had been dedicated to idols as was customary in Babylon. To partake thereof would be to recognize the idols as deities.
- **The problem of whether Daniel and his companions should eat the food provided by the king** was a supreme test of their fidelity to the law and probably served the practical purpose of separating Daniel and his three companions from the other captives who apparently could compromise in this matter. His decision also demonstrates Daniel's understanding that God had brought Israel into captivity because of their failure to observe the law. **Daniel's handling of this problem sets the spiritual tone for the entire book.**
- **His handling of this difficult situation reflects his good judgment and common sense.** Instead of inviting punishment by rebellion, he courteously asks the prince of the eunuchs that he might be excused from eating food which would defile his conscience. Daniel handles the situation well, exercising a proper conscience in matters that were of real importance.
- **When Daniel brought his request to the prince of the eunuchs,** we are told that God had brought Daniel into favor and compassion with him. It is clear that God intervened on Daniel's part in preparing the way for his request!
- **The prince of eunuchs, however, was not speaking idly when he replied to Daniel,** "I fear my lord the king," for indeed it was not an overstatement that, if he did not fulfill his role well, he might lose his head. Although the prince could have peremptorily denied Daniel's request, Ashpenaz attempted to explain the problem, which opened the door for a counterproposal.

*Dan 1:11 So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,*

*Dan 1:12 "Please test your servants for ten days (give us a ten day test), and let them give us vegetables (probably, wheat or barley and fresh vegetables) to eat and water to drink.*

*Dan 1:13 Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants."*

*Dan 1:14 So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.*

- **Daniel's next step was to appeal to the steward** who had immediate charge of Daniel and his companions for a ten-day test. Having been refused permission for a permanent change in diet, Daniel naturally took the next course of attempting a brief trial.
- **The proposal was to give a ten-day trial, a reasonable length of time to test a diet** and yet one that would not entail too much risk of incurring the wrath of the king. The request to eat vegetables included a broad category of food. The steward granted their request, and the test began.

*Dan 1:15 And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh (great healthiness) than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies.*

*Dan 1:16 Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.*

- **At the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter** in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Thus, the steward took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them vegetables.
- **God's blessing was on them** was totally a supernatural act of God. The food they were eating was actually better for them. On the basis of the test their request was granted, and their vegetable diet continued.

### *Divine Triumph - (Dan 1:17-21)*

*As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. [18] Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. [19] Then the king interviewed them, and among them all, none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore, they served before the king. [20] And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. [21] Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.*

*Dan 1:17 As for these four young men, (the) God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.*

- **God gave them! Their knowledge and skill came from God! They were gifted by God.** It is fascinating to see how certain people are gifted in certain areas. Consider musicians. Most of us could practice the piano all their life, eight hours a day, but they will never be able to play like a professional pianist. It is a gift. There are people who are just gifted musically. It is just something in the genes. But it is God who places it in the genes. So, these gifts of abilities actually come from God. It is a wise person who recognizes that this is a gift from God, and then gives it back to God to glorify God with that gift that he has.
- **God gave to them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom,** which went way beyond just the knowledge and understanding of the sciences. God gave to Daniel the spiritual dimension. It was not due to their diet, but to the special intervention of the Lord! Surely the key was spiritual. There appears to be a direct relationship between that commitment towards purity and the gifts of the spirit and the discerning and the understanding of dreams and visions, that they are tied together with that kind of commitment unto the Lord!
- **Our gifts always find their highest use and expression when they are used** for the glory of God, then the purposes are being fulfilled! It is a tragic thing when people prostitute those gifts and use them for their own glory or for their own enrichment rather than for the glory of God! That is always a very sad and tragic thing, but it is such a common thing. People will take those natural abilities, capacities that God has given to them and then use them for themselves.
- **Understanding in all visions and dreams.** All four youths shared in wisdom and an intelligent understanding, but only *Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.* This was not a foolish boast but an actual fact necessary to understand Daniel's role as a prophet in the chapters which followed. In this, Daniel differed from his companions as a true prophet. His ability to discern and interpret visions and dreams primarily had in view the interpretation of the dreams and visions of others.

- **This shows that purity of heart and faithfulness to God come before enlightenment** in divine mysteries. Later, Daniel will receive even greater revelation, but now he simply shows himself a dedicated follower of God. However, this did not include the ability to know Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2, which Daniel received only after earnest prayer; and it did not necessarily as yet give Daniel the capacity to have visions and dreams himself as he did in chapter 7 and following.
- **Daniel's capacity included distinguishing a true dream from one that had no revelatory meaning** and also the power to interpret it correctly. God's hand was already on Daniel even as a young man much as it was on Samuel centuries before. It becomes clear as the book progresses that though Daniel differed somewhat from the major prophets, his contribution is just as important and in fact, more extensive than that of any other book of the Old Testament! To no other was the broad expanse of both Gentile and Hebrew future history revealed in the same precision!

**Dan 1:18** *Now at the end of the days (three years), when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.*

- **The conclusion of their three-year period of preparation.** Ashpenaz, the chief of the eunuchs, brought the four young men before Nebuchadnezzar for a personal interview before Nebuchadnezzar, and they were brought into his presence by the prince of eunuchs himself. Apparently all of the, young men in training were tested by the king.

**Dan 1:19** *Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king.*

- **None was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:** These very young Jewish men from Jerusalem were totally immersed in the study of Babylonian culture, literature and religion; yet they remained faithful to God! Like Joseph and Moses, before them, they did not turn away from their faith, which we see had been well-developed at an early age! They were *in* Babylon, but not *of* Babylon. So should we and our children be in the world but not of the world! (*Jer 15:19b*) *If you take out the precious from the vile, You shall be as My mouth. Let them return to you, But you must not return to them.*
- **We can assume that Daniel and his friends were well trained by in a godly way** by their parents. We must train our children and grandchildren this way! Are we?

**Dan 1:20** *And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.*

- **Ten times better!** Under Nebuchadnezzar's searching questions, Daniel and his three companions were found *ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.* By this is meant that they had high intelligence and keen discernment in the matters which they had studied. The statement that they were *ten times better*, at first glance sounds extravagant but signifies that they were outstandingly different. Even this praise, however, is mentioned in such a matter-of-fact way and so evidently due to the grace of God that Daniel is delivered from the charge of boasting.
- **Their straightforward character and honesty, as well as the deep insight** of these young men into the real meaning of their studies, must have stood in sharp contrast to the wise men of the king's court, who often were more sly and cunning than wise. Nebuchadnezzar, himself an extraordinarily intelligent man as manifested in his great exploits, was quick to respond to these bright young minds.
- **These guys were shining lights, just young boys, displaying incredible skill** in answering, beyond the performance of other men who spoke without God's help. It was because of the Spirit of God upon them, the anointing of God upon their lives! They were ten times better than all the rest, because of their hearts that were purposed that they were going to serve God. They were not going to defile themselves, but they were going to live a life of fellowship with God, pleasing unto God!
- **What a tremendous example to learn from these four young men** who stood fast in the face of temptation in a foreign land, where living there they had all the opportunities to avail themselves of the glamor and favors that they could obtain by being there in the king's court, and yet their hearts were committed to the Lord completely! God blessed them for it, even as God will bless you as you commit your heart completely over to Him!

**Dan 1:21** *Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.*

- **First year.** **Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon in 539 BC**, his third year. (*Dan 10:1*) *In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar.*



*The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.* This is the latest historical year that Daniel mentions.

- **Daniel serves consecutive opposing kings!** It is amazing to consider that the conquering king (Cyrus) would retain the defeated king's top officer in his new kingdom. That just wasn't done! The important point was that Daniel's ministry spanned the entire Babylonian empire of 70 years, and he was still alive when Cyrus came on the scene. The passage does not say nor necessarily imply that Daniel did not continue after the first year of Cyrus—which it is believed that he did. The seeds of his great success are evident in the very first chapter of the Book of Daniel.
- **Young men can stay true to their faith even in the most difficult circumstances.** Daniel and his friends show us that inner conviction can overcome *any* outer pressure, and that God-honoring convictions yield God-given rewards!
- **A beautiful narrative God's faithfulness and men's obedience, which stand beautifully complete!** An eloquent testimony to the power and grace of God in a dark hour of Israel's history when the faithfulness of Daniel and his companions shines all the brighter because it is in a context of Israel's captivity and apostasy.
- **In every age, God is looking for those whom He can use.** Here were four young men whose testimony has been a source of strength to every saint in temptation. Certainly, Daniel would not have been recognized as a prophet of God and the channel of divine revelation, if he had not been a man of prayer and of uncompromising moral character, whom God could honor fittingly. Daniel and his companions represent the godly remnant of Israel which preserved the testimony of God even in dark hours of apostasy and divine judgment. The noble example of these young men will serve to encourage Israel in their great trials in the time of the end! Will we remember Daniel's example in these last days?

#### **SUMMARY:**

- **Daniel purposed in his heart, without pride or arrogance, to put Christ first in everything!** Daniel lived to please the Lord, ignoring the faces and threats of people and did the thing God wanted him to do. What an example for us! How purposed for Christ am I?
- **Daniel makes a stand; then comes blessings.** Here, God gives better physical blessings; gives knowledge and wisdom; understanding of dreams to Daniel, following his obedience!
- **God put Daniel in the place He wants him, just as He does with each of us!** Consider the pressure of all the things of the pagan world, three years' preparation for the interview with the strongest man in the world, with your life on the line!
- **The place, chosen by God for each of us, that we are in, is to be used by Him, to do His perfect will! (Joh 14:23) Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.**
- **How much do I love Him? How obedient to Him am I?**

#### **CLOSING SONG:**

##### **I GIVE YOU MY HEART - (4:08/4 :11)**

This is my desire To honor You Lord, with all my heart I worship You All I have within me I give You praise All that I adore Is in You

Lord, I give You my heart I give You my soul I live for You alone Every breath that I take Every moment I'm awake Lord, have Your way in me (2X)

This is my desire To honor You Lord, with all my heart I worship You All I have within me I give You praise All that I adore Is in You

Lord, I give You my heart I give You my soul I live for You alone Every breath that I take Every moment I'm awake Lord, have Your way in me

Lord, I give You my heart I give You my soul And I live for You alone

Every breath that I take Every moment I'm awake Lord, have Your way in me

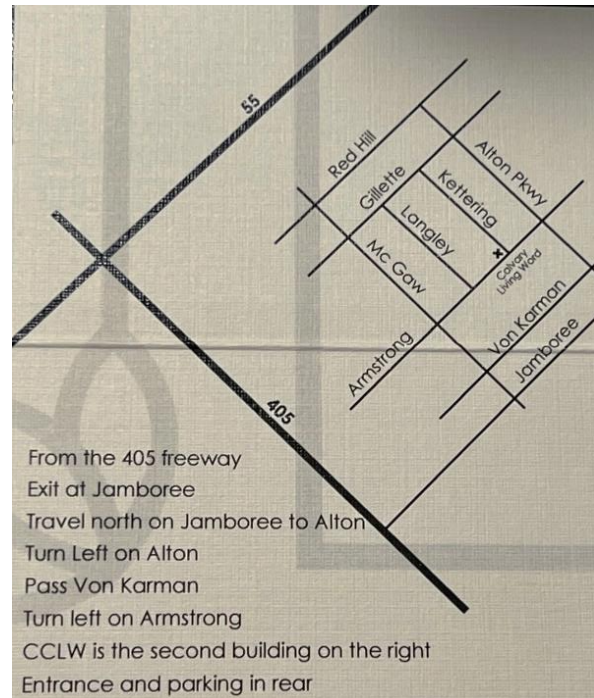
#### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

Read and meditate on *Daniel Chapter 2!*

Remember the upcoming change in the location of the classroom for both Monday night and Tuesday morning studies, **beginning the week after Resurrection Day!**

**MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)**  
**THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!! Beginning 4/10/23, will meet CC Living Word, 17101 Armstrong, Irvine, CA**

**TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).**  
**THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE CCCM FAMILY ROOM, Beginning 4/11/23, will meet CC Living Word, 17101 Armstrong, Irvine, CA**



Above: location of **CC Living Word**