

Lesson 2 Daniel 1

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[0 : 00] So Daniel chapter 1, before we start reading it, I want to kind of give you the lay of the land. And I'm sorry, this room is kind of big and so this ends up being kind of small.

So I don't know how much of this you can see. Let's get a little bit closer. So you may just want to come up later and I'll keep this up at the end.

But this is a timeline of the Old Testament, okay? And if you look over here, this box here is creation, fall, flood, power, and battle. And that happens here.

And it's not on the timeline because we don't know the actual dates of when those things took place. Probably anywhere between 7,000 to 10,000 years ago. It has to be free motion. So I'm going to hurry up.

I'm trying. That's what I get this question. Have you ever thought about finishing your 12th? What? Scary. I'm going to pause. I'm going to comment. It doesn't want to participate with you, does it?

[1 : 02] No, it doesn't. There you go. Got it. There you go. Sorry. It's okay. That happens. It happens to all of us. All right.

So creation, fall, flood, tower, battle. And when you get to the very beginning of the timeline, that's about Abraham. Most people put Abraham in about 2000 B.C.

You get Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Jacob had how many sons? Twelve. He had 12 sons. Okay.

That's because he had two wives and each of them had a maid. So he ended up with a compromise. So he, in effect, had four wives. Okay. Which was a complete violation of God's commands.

But he had 12 sons. From these 12 sons come the 12 tribes of Israel. If you've ever heard anything about the 12 tribes of Israel. Now, if I'm going too fast for you, just pause me.

[1 : 59] I'm just trying to get you a feel of the flow of the history to kind of see where Daniel is. Okay. So Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Jacob's 12 sons.

They go down into Egypt. They come back out of Egypt in the Exodus, being led by Moses. They come into the promised land eventually. They're kind of led by a bunch of different judges in the different regions until they consolidate under the very first king of Israel, king of all of them, Saul. Saul was the first king. The second king was David. The third king was Solomon. And it's under these three kings that the 12 tribes of Israel stayed together as one nation.

But Solomon's son was not very wise. And he did some things that made the northern tribes angry. And so the kingdom split in half. So 10 tribes went to the north. And they are called Israel. Their capital was Damascus.

[3 : 08] That kind of thing. The southern kingdom had two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. And it's the line of Judah that David is the king.

And that's the line that Jesus comes from, right? It's the line of Judah. So the northern kingdom comes to an end because of the nation of Assyria.

Assyria, being led by Sennacherib, comes in and basically destroys them and carts them off and scatters them among the nations.

Israel, the ten tribes, they never come back. Okay? They never come back. The southern kingdom, the two tribes, they go through this period where they've got a bunch of kings.

And by the way, if you want to read about this history, you start here with 1 and 2 Samuel. And then you can read 1 and 2 Kings, which is about both kingdoms.

[4 : 05] And then 1 and 2 Chronicles is just about the southern kingdom. Okay? So that's what those books are about. Anyway, so the southern kingdom, their nation comes to an end because of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar, he comes in and he takes people off. And they have what's called the 70 year of exile. Okay? They were gone from their land for 70 years.

Now, once the 70 years is over, then they come back to the land under Cyrus II. They start rebuilding Jerusalem. They start rebuilding the wall.

And eventually they come down here to the very end of the very last prophet of the Old Testament, the Italian prophet, Malachi. Okay, that was a joke. That was the last.

Okay. Malachi is the prophet, right? Well, once that Old Testament is closed off and there's no more writing, before the New Testament starts, there's 400 years of what's called 400 years of silence, or it's the intertestamental period.

[5 : 12] There's a lot of history happening, but there's nothing in terms of God giving Scripture to His people that's happening during that time period. So you'll see, this is where Daniel is.

Okay? He's kind of at this end, and it's in this exile because he's taken off to Babylon. Okay, does that make sense, just the flow of that? This, I, my professor in college, this was his timeline, and it has stuck with me ever since, you know, 1990.

1990. Yeah, there we go. Anyway. So we're going to look at chapter 1 today of Daniel, and what we're going to do is we're going to break it up into three big parts.

We're going to look at, it's kind of interesting. If you read through Daniel, you're going to look at the story.

God will do, or God did. But the narrator who wrote this only ever says God did something three times, and all three times happened in the very first chapter.

[6 : 18] It's kind of interesting that the narrator does not say that God did something later. And I think part of that has to do with, like, you ever read the book of Esther, and how if you read the book of Esther, you don't see God doing anything.

I mean, you just don't see it being said God did something. That doesn't mean God's not active. It just means that they're kind of quiet about it.

Like, he's behind the scenes, and he's doing things. And so that's sort of what we get. So as we look at chapter 1, we're going to look at the three things that God does related to Daniel and what Daniel does, and try to understand what we're seeing here.

But that's how we'll divide it. And so the first section is about God's faithfulness and judgment. And we're going to read Daniel chapter 1, verse 1 through 7. And just so that you don't get tired of my voice, I'm going to see if somebody wants to volunteer and read verses 1 through 7.

But if nobody wants to, I'll do it. I'll do it. All right. Thank you, Shirley. Nebuchadnezzar, the supreme leader of Babylon, was feared throughout the world.

[7 : 27] When he invaded a country, defeat was searched. After the victory, the Babylonians usually took the most talented and useful people back to Babylon and left only the poor behind to take whatever land they wanted and to live peacefully there.

This system costed great loyalty from conquered lands and ensured a steady supply of wise and talented people for civil service. At certain times, God allows his work to suffer.

In this instance, the Babylonians raided the temple of God and took the worship articles to the temple of a god in Babylon. This god may have been, well, also called Marduk, the chief god of the Babylonians.

Those who love the Lord must have felt disheartened and discouraged. We feel greatly disappointed when our church suffers.

I lost my place. I lost my place. Okay.

[8 : 38] Your translation is different from mine. Those who love the Lord must have felt disheartened and discouraged. It's different than yours. We feel greatly disappointed when our church has suffered this damage, split, closed down for financial reasons, or are backed by scandals.

We do not know why God allows his church to experience these calamities. But like the people who witnessed the plundering of the temple by the Babylonians, we must trust that God is in control and is watching over all who trust in him.

Do you not want me to continue? Do you think you're going to keep going? Do you think you're going to keep going? The common language of Babylonians.

No, I think that will help us. I think that will be good. So as we look at those verses, 1 through 7, there's a couple of things that we see.

The first thing we see is there's a promised judgment. And verse 1 says that in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it.

[9 : 45] Now that's got some history to it. There's some background to that. And I'll give you a couple of things. Number one, in the book of Leviticus, when Moses is leading the people and they're there at Sinai and they're on the mountain and they're getting along, he gives them blessings and curses and he gives them warnings and this kind of a thing.

And in Leviticus chapter 26, he gives them this warning that if they do not obey him, God says, if you don't obey me, I'm going to scatter you to the nations and you're going to rot in exile. Now, so you have this warning that's in the time of Moses, right? So if we go back to our timeline, we're talking about back here. It's a warning here.

Well, then there's a very specific warning that happens somewhere about here and it's to the king Hezekiah. Okay? Now you've got Daniel, Jehoiakim.

Now all these names can get a little confusing, right? So let's just think here. Jehoiakim is here. Jehoiakim's father is Josiah. Josiah's father is Manasseh.

[10 : 55] Manasseh's father is Hezekiah. Okay? And in 2 Kings, let's see, yep, 2 Kings chapter 20, Isaiah is talking to Hezekiah.

And he says this, Isaiah, the word of the Lord which you have spoken is good.

And then he thought, okay? Now this sentence is a little weird, but let me see if I can help you with it. Is it not so good if there will be peace and truth in my days?

That's what he's saying. In other words, what Hezekiah is saying is, okay, so God's going to do something and he's going to like, you know, send Babylon here and they're going to take everything captive.

Well, just so long as it doesn't happen in my lifetime, we're good. That's what Hezekiah is saying, okay? But notice that God says that Babylon is going to take both your riches and your sons.

[12 : 22] Okay? So we've got this promise from God. There was a warning and now a promise, another warning that they're going to be carried off in Babylon.

And Daniel chapter 1 verse 1 says, Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and besieged it. So what we get then is we get the fulfilled judgment of this.

That's our second blank to fill in is the fulfilled judgment. Because when the king comes, when Nebuchadnezzar comes, he does besiege and he does take it.

And verse 2, verse 2 of Daniel chapter 1 says, the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand. And that's the thing I want to focus in on is that God has promised and God has delivered.

God has promised and God has fulfilled. He warned them in Leviticus. He gave them a very specific warning and promise in Kings to Hezekiah.

[13 : 28] And now he's bringing that about. Because He is a sovereign God who does what He says He's going to do.

He's warned them and there's nothing that they can do to change this. This is what's going to happen. And one of the things that this brings out to us is that God is in charge of all things.

There's two truths in the Bible that always need to be held in tension. The first truth, Paul talks about in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 11, where he describes God as being the one who works all things after the counsel of His will.

God does everything after the counsel of His will. In other words, what this means is that God doesn't look to us to decide what to do. God's got a plan and His plan cannot be thwarted.

He does what He pleases in all things. But the flip side of that, because there's some implications of that that some people are uncomfortable with. So you have to go to the other truth that's also true.

[14 : 36] And this is just an example passage. It's in the Ten Commandments. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

In other words, God is fully sovereign and does all that He pleases, and we're held accountable and responsible for our actions. Those two truths always have to be held together, because they're both true.

So we've got the judgment was promised, and we've got the fulfillment of this judgment. Now the judgment gets executed. And what I mean by that is we're going to look and see just what kinds of things happen very specifically to Israel or to Judah during this time.

In chapter 1, verse 2, we see that Nebuchadnezzar is taking their wealth. Then when we come to verse 3, we see that he's taking their future.

So he's taking their wealth. He's taking their future. Right? In verse 3 it says, The king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family of the nobles.

[15 : 50] So he doesn't want to just bring any of the children from Israel in. He wants people who are of the royal family, who are of the lineage of Judah. Potential future kings, future advisors to kings, royalty.

He wants them. And he wants those who are not just royalty, but excellent. Yet if you read verse 4 here, it talks about that they can't have any defect, who were good looking.

I don't know why they had to be good looking. It's like, what about the ugly kids? Like you just don't like the ugly kids? Nebuchadnezzar? I don't know. They had to show intelligence in every branch of wisdom. They were endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge.

They had ability for serving in the king's court. And then he ordered them to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans. So he's taking from them, not only their wealth, but he's taking from Israel their future.

Taking their kids and re-educating them for Babylon. I mean, that kind of puts an end to Israel, doesn't it? At least that's the way it feels.

[17 : 01] God's promised them, hey, this is the judgment that's going to happen. And this is the judgment that's happening. And when we... The other thing about this is, not only is he taking their wealth and he's taking their future, he is taking from them their very identity.

Their very identity. When they have to learn the literature and language of the Chaldeans, right there, right? They've got to learn the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

This literature, it's not just like some fiction books, but this literature contains all that they believe about the world.

So they learn about the gods of Babylon. They have to learn about El and Marduk and Aku and Nebo and all these other gods because they were polytheistic, right?

So here's Daniel and his three friends having to learn these things because Nebuchadnezzar, and God's allowing this judgment, he is re-educating and trying to take their identity from them.

[18 : 12] They're going to have to take his religion. Verse 5, they're going to have to take the king's food, right? He appointed a daily ration for the king's food from the wine which they drank and appointed that they should be educated for three years.

He's going to take from them their religion as well. I'm going to show you this. It's kind of interesting. You ever notice our four guys, Daniel, Hananiah, Meshach, and Azariah, okay?

You see their names here? Now what are the names, let me ask you this, what are the three names of the three who were in the fiery furnace? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, right?

Okay, so those names were given to them in Babylon. You can see in verse 7, Daniel is assigned the name Belteshazzar, Hananiah is Shadrach, Meshach is Meshach, and Azariah is Abednego. Now here's what this means. Daniel, Daniel meant, My judge is God. Talking about Yahweh. So his name is changed to Belteshazzar, and this means Belatu, protect the king.

[19 : 30] That's one of their gods, Belatu. So he's now getting a foreign god's name added to him. Meshach, or Meshach, his name means, who is what God is?

Who is what God is? But Meshach means, who is what Aku is? Aku is the Sumerian moon god. Okay?

So they're giving them these polytheistic, pagan, idol, god names. Hananiah means Yahweh is gracious, and so his name becomes Shadrach, which means the command of Aku.

Azariah's name means Yahweh is my help, and he's the one who gets the name Abednego. And here's what's fascinating about this. Okay? We see the Abednego. They don't have a god named Nego, but they have a god named Nebo.

And so Daniel's probably changing it so he doesn't have to write the name of that other god. Right? But that's the whole point. This judgment that was promised is now being fulfilled, and as it gets fulfilled, he's taking their wealth, he's taking their future, he's taking their identity, and in taking their identity, he's forcing them to try to adopt a whole new religion.

[20 : 51] And when you look at this, and you step back for just a second, and you try to think to yourself, what lessons do we learn just from these first seven verses? You get this glimpse of God

as someone who is not to be trifled with, that he is sovereign over all things, but one of the things he's also sovereign in is he's sovereign in the fact that he gives us warning about how we ought to live, and he promises judgment when we don't live as he says we ought to live.

He promises that judgment. And even though that's a little bit on the scary side, one of the things about it is that it shows just how dependable God is.

He does what he says. He lays out a boundary so we know exactly. I mean, you know, we know from Scripture right now that if we do not trust Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, then that means that we do not have eternal life with him until we do.

He's dependable in his word. He does what he says he's going to do, and being sovereign over all things means that he provides and protects us as well as disciplines us. And that ought to put us in a place of trusting him.

We know that he will be there for us. It reminds me a little bit of when Michelle and I were first married. We were freshmen in college together.

[22 : 22] We met. We ended up getting married, and we ended up finishing college our sophomore, junior, and senior year together, married. And we had enough money to be able to pay for our housing and our schooling, but when it came to food, we were struggling quite a bit.

And one of the things about God's sovereignty that we don't always understand is that sometimes it's working behind the scenes and we don't even see it. Sometimes it happens and we don't notice it.

But when we were first married and we didn't have the money for food, we literally saw gallons of milk that were two to three weeks past date that were still good, that we were still able to use.

And why is that? Because I believe God sustained it in order for us to use it to help our dollars stretch. You know, it's nothing overt, nothing big, but just kind of a small thing that you might not have noticed if you didn't pay attention.

And so, what that means, I think, is just like Daniel and his friends, and we're going to see, it means we need to trust God. that in the things of life, as he is sovereign over all things, you can depend upon his word, we need to trust him.

[23 : 37] And that's a hard thing to say to people because we all struggle with, well, how do I do that? What does it look like, actually, for me to trust God in this situation?

And I would say that the best thing I know to do is if you're in this situation that's really hard and difficult and you're trying to figure out how to trust God here, look back in your life at all the times that God has been faithful to you, all the times that he has brought you through difficulty, and look at his character in that and let that help inform you today.

It doesn't mean that you're going to be, you know, riding on top of the wave, but you just need to trust him. Just need to trust him. Well, let's take a look at the second big idea.

And that's, okay. Okay. Sorry about that. Thank you. I'm sorry. There's a bone in it. Yeah. The second thing is God's compassion in persecution.

And here, we're in Daniel chapter 1, verse 8 through 16. And listen to the word of the Lord. It says, 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.

[24 : 57] So he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. Now, God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of my lord, the king.

Nope. In the sight of the commander of the officials. And the commander of the officials said to Daniel, I'm afraid of my lord, the king, who's appointed your food and your drink. For why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths your own age?

And then he would make me forfeit my head to the king. But Daniel said to the overseer, whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, please test your servants for ten days and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink.

Then let our parents be observed in your presence and in the presence of the youths who were eating the king's choice food and deal with your servants according to what you see.

So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days. 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.

[26 : 05] So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink and kept them eating or kept giving them vegetables.

So the first thing we see here is Daniel's commitment. Daniel's commitment in verse 8 and 9 he did not and of course this goes for his three friends as well he was not going to defile himself.

Okay? Now we have to pause right here and say what does he mean by defile himself? And what is this about vegetables? And what is this about the king's food?

Now I don't know about you but I was taught a lot of things growing up about this whole thing and even at one point there began to be some people who began to think about the food that Daniel was eating as though it was a God-ordained diet that you should go on.

But that is not why this is written there. Okay? This is not a diet to follow. Okay? There was a problem with this food and Daniel did not want to be defiled with it.

[27 : 13] So let's talk for a second about what we understand from the Old Testament about clean and unclean. Because primarily most people will say that Daniel could not eat this food because it was unclean.

Now when I say clean and unclean out of like Leviticus how many of you know the kinds of things I'm talking about? Have you ever heard of the clean and unclean laws? Okay.

Well then let me give you a little brief understanding of this. In Leviticus they have the tabernacle set up right? So you got the court you got the altar you got the holy place you got the holy of holies only Jews could come into the courtyard only priests could go into the holy place only the high priests could go into the holy of holies right?

Well you also could not come if you were unclean and a lot of things could make you unclean if a catfish was unclean a pig was unclean taking two different kinds of fabric and sewing together was unclean having a spot on your arm that looked maybe leprosy or it was like white had a hair sticking out of it was possibly unclean and you had to be examined to see if it was unclean if you went through the normal operations of the different how can I say this in a very tender way all the different fluids of the body many of these fluids and functions of the human body would make you unclean if you touched a dead body it would make you unclean now to be unclean didn't mean that you were sinful it just meant that you were unclean and you couldn't come into the courtyard to be able to worship you had to be cleansed first the key difference is something that was unclean was something that was kind of not normal think of it this way if you're going to a wedding and at that wedding it's a formal evening wedding and the family of the bride shows up in Bermuda shorts that's very unexpected right that's the kind of thing that this was for this culture these unclean laws God put in place not because these things are necessarily bad but because he wanted them to understand that there was a standard by which they needed to live and so a lot of people have said Daniel didn't want to eat this food because it was pigs and catfish you know that it was unclean but that's not that's not the word defiled that Daniel uses the word that Daniel uses defiled means hands stained with blood it's a moral word and here's what's interesting in this culture the food and the meat that they have was meat that had been first sacrificed to their gods and while you and I as Christians know there are no other gods but God these other cultures would have these gods and they would worship them and the thing is what's behind that god what's behind that idol and in many cases it was a demonic power in the city of Corinth they had the same problem they had meat being sacrificed to idols and Paul the apostle tells them he says no but I say that the things which the

[31 : 17] Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God and I do not want you to become sharers in demons you cannot drink the cup of the lord of the cup of demons you cannot partake of the table of the lord of the table of demons so this food Daniel knows there is no god but one god and so if there is any kind of power to their gods it's demonic power and he will not eat that food and defile himself with it but the other thing is that all the other kings that were before Jehoiakim they were depending upon the other nations to protect them from enemies instead of relying upon god and so Daniel as he goes into this kingdom he doesn't want to rely on this king and this nation to sustain him he wants to rely on god so he eats vegetables he drinks water and that's the bargain that he makes right the bargain that he makes is that listen let's just do this and test us for ten days and it says to us that god granted him favor for this that god let him have this and how is it that vegetables sustained him because there's other nutrients you need besides that and it can do well but

I think one of the reasons that they were fatter so they were fatter I mean that's not the typical thing we think vegetables we're going to do that so we can lose some weight but they were better off than all the others how is that possible because god sustained them that's why um daniel didn't want to

eat the tainted food but he had a soft spot for his captors because he even says to them do what seems best to us see this right here he says deal with your servants according to what you see so he he's so devoted and committed to the lord that he does not want to defile himself so he makes this bargain the progress is seen by he's given this commander the permission to do with me what you think if I'm not any better than the other youth do with me what you want he's almost basically saying if we're skinnier and we're not strong like the others then you're probably going to need to get rid of us he was so devoted to the lord that's that's the thing that I think about is his devotion to the lord he would not defile himself with the king's food at all and in the middle of this god granted him favor to be able to accomplish what it was that he wanted to do

I mean think about this you're you're captained by people who hate your god they want you to worship their god you refuse to worship their god and so you put yourself in harm's way to be persecuted tortured and maybe even executed there's a lot of people who would kind of back up and say you know what if I don't think it in my head then it's really not real right I can do the external but maybe not internally and so we might compromise and not be devoted to the Lord and then we hear stories like this and we think to ourselves God granted him favor you know I mean like so if I just hold out and I'm devoted to the Lord is God going to deliver me every time like he did Daniel and it's like no but he did grant Daniel favor and one of the things I thought about is I thought about the story of brother Andrew I don't know if you've heard the story of brother

Andrew it's in a book called the God Smuggler this is during like the 70s and 80s where you've still got a pretty strong maybe even 60s and 70s a real strong hold in the communist bloc countries and they outlawed Christianity and many Christians are put into prison as a matter of fact you can read the book called Tortured for Christ by Richard Warmbrand who documents his own journey in persecution and prison and torture because he wouldn't give up his faith and brother Andrew knew that there were Christians in Russia he wanted to take to them Bibles but he was devoted to the Lord committed to the Lord to not lie to not be deceitful so he had his car and he would load Bibles up in open boxes and set them on the back seat of his car and he would drive up to the border cross the border!

to go deliver the Bibles and not once did he get stopped and have the Bibles taken he devoted himself to do it and God gave him favor and allowed him to go do that God doesn't do that all the time it's not a thing where you know we put the Lord to the test in that but it is interesting how God protects his people because he's got a plan to go for and our job is to be devoted to him no matter what and we're going to see that when we come to the fiery furnace and the answer that the three children give they say the Lord can deliver us from your hand but even if he does not we will still be devoted to him generosity and the blessing verses 17 through 21 yeah Daniel chapter 1 verse 17 says as for these four hues

[37 : 27] God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom and Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar the king talked with them and out of them all not one was found like Daniel Hananiah Mishel Azariah so they entered the king's personal service asked for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them he found them ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in his realm and Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king so what we see under this heading here is that there's this test before the king in verse 18 and 19 the time comes to end it's been three years now and so that time is over and now they're being presented before the king and he wants to talk with them he wants to have conversation with them to sort of test them to see if they can serve in his court

I think that's pretty interesting because how many of us are good conversationalists to the degree that we could stand there and converse with a king of another country I mean you got to have all kinds of stuff about you to keep your wits about you in that I am not sure that I can do it I am kind of a social weirdo sometimes and so I have a tendency to just say my mind and that's not always the best thing to do but then we see the excellence of these men before the king verse 19 through 20 no one was found that matched their excellence as a matter of fact he talks about in verse 20 that they are ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers now I really want to make this point because I think it's something we need to kind of get a grip on when we say the word magician we tend to think of someone who's doing an illusion someone who's got some deceit some sleight of hand they're not really doing something right but in the

Bible that's not what a magician is as a matter of fact this word magician here is the same word that's found in the book of Exodus and you remember Moses had to go before Pharaoh and give him the sign of his staff now what did he do with that staff Moses before Pharaoh with his staff what did he do he threw it down and it became a serpent right well here's what we Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers and they also the magicians of Egypt did the same with their secret arts for each threw down his staff and they turned into serpents but Aaron's staff swallowed their staffs what we don't see is God telling Moses or Moses telling the people of Israel but don't worry about it theirs were just little wooden snakes on sticks they were real snakes how did these magicians do this it says in the same chapter the magicians of

Egypt did the same with their secret arts in this verse they turned part of the Nile into blood just like Moses did he's not saying listen they don't have any power so what we're saying then is that if the gods of Babylon really are just demons in disguise then these magicians who seem to have power are being powered by demons now to be that place you had to both learn and practice as a matter of fact the word conjurers now some of your translation might not use the word conjurer we found as I was looking at this that you had conjurer astrologers enchanter and all kinds of words like that but the basic meaning that I'm seeing in all the different Hebrew dictionaries is that these people were necromancers they talked to the dead okay here's my point as the king comes to examine Daniel and his three friends they could converse and talk about all manner of wisdom and they were better than these magicians and conjurers In other words the wisdom that they had was of greater significance value whatever than what it was that these men had had and it's not that Daniel and them were unfamiliar with what this was they had been taught these things but they didn't practice these things but the wisdom they had because of their trust in God was greater in other words their wisdom dumbfounded the world he was stumped how could these ragamuffins from this little bitty country outdo all of my magicians and conjurers well it's because they trust the Lord and because they think the way God thinks and so the last thing is we see this season before the king and Daniel because of this wisdom stays in service to the king even though the kingdoms change all the way until

[43 : 09] Cyrus the great because of their excellence their devotion to the Lord and I just want to end by thinking about the application of what we just said and it has to do with the idea that there is no wisdom and knowledge outside of Christ there's no wisdom and knowledge outside of Christ the world can be dumbfounded by the wisdom of Christians you can see that Peter and John they were before the Sanhedrin and they were answering for healing this lame man and what we see is that the Sanhedrin observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated untrained men and yet they were amazed at them because they began to recognize them as having been with Jesus Peter and John were with Jesus for three years so they knew how to think like a Christian they knew how to answer they knew the scriptures so as they stood there and they gave the answers that they gave the Sanhedrin is surprised you've got a similar thing that happens in chapter 6 but some of the men from what was called the synagogue of the freed men including both

Cyrenians and Alexandrians and some from Sicilia and Asia rose up and argued with Stephen but they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the spirit with which he was speaking the point is that there is a wisdom if we devote ourselves to the Lord and we devote ourselves to his word and we do everything we can to consume his word and understand it rightly there is a wisdom that we have that will dumbfound and confound the world this is why sometimes you will see a Christian who's trying to have a conversation or a debate with somebody who's not a Christian and that person who's not a Christian will end up in a place where they use what's called an ad hominem attack in other words they will attack the person if you've ever said anything about you know God is the only way to salvation or Jesus

Christ is the only way to be saved the retort you get back is like well that's pretty narrow-minded but that's not answering the question that's attacking the person and what happens is that sometimes we don't think Christian enough and we don't see that problem and what I'm saying is that there is no wisdom outside of Christ Paul says this in Colossians you see Colossians 2 verse 1 2 and 3 and verse 1 and 2 is he's kind of talking about you know these things about who God is and who Christ is and how all these things come together right at the end he says Christ himself and then he has this phrase in verse 3 that's almost parenthetical where he says in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ that's the who right in Christ are hidden all the

treasures everything that's of value everything that's worthwhile in all wisdom and all knowledge is hidden in Christ and what that means is that if you do not have Christ then you cannot know anything truly if you don't have Christ you cannot know anything truly now that's a very bold claim and I'm not saying people can't know anything I'm saying they can't know it truly one of the examples that I was thinking about and I you know I'm not a I'm not a math person but let's just see if this works math and just think about math and think about what math is math is not a neutral thing because part of what I'm saying here is that there's no raw facts out there apart from God there's no raw data out there apart from God right and so math math is not a neutral thing math this is the way I would describe math my definition okay math is our attempt to describe the properties actions and shape of reality in repeatable measurable ways math is our attempt to describe the properties actions and shapes of reality in repeatable and measurable ways you know these men who develop these different branches of mathematics you know calculus and all these things they were looking at reality and trying to understand how does this work how fast is the earth turning what if something you know what about the sun going down why does the horizon look like it's got an arc to it you know all of these things math is used to try to describe but also to do in such a way that's repeatable because we've found that you can do this math here about this thing and this person can too and it's the same answer because it's repeatable because there's something about this world that's not random well if somebody who is a Darwinian evolutionist comes in they'll go and they'll learn math and they'll do the math and they'll get the right answers but what they cannot tell you is why does it work why do you expect it to work a Darwinian evolutionist thinks that everything came about by random chance and time well if that's your world view then you can't have math do you understand what I'm saying all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ now that doesn't mean they can't use it but it does mean that we as Christians we've got to know the word of God I cannot stress that enough there's so much that goes on in the church in America where we we we emote and feel our way towards God rather than looking at his word and hearing what his word says and I would say to you get into the word read it find you a good translation you can use like you can get several get a word for word like a

[49 : 58] King James New American Standard get a phrase by phrase like the NIV and the ESV get a paraphrase right there's some paraphrase bibles out there summarized bibles right like the living bible the message those are you know these paraphrase bibles read them all not just read one but read them all and they'll help you understand his word because the more you understand his word the more you think like Jesus thinks and the more that this is true of you that what's hidden in him is something that you can have and now here's the thing the last little thing I'll say the Daniel is being written to people who are under oppression they're in captivity and you look at his life and you look at the truths that are brought out here and what you have is you have an encouragement that says God's in charge stay devoted think like a Christian God's in charge be devoted think like a Christian