

Daniel 1:1-2 - Our God Reigns



Introduction:

Read Psalm 137 - This Psalm records God's people being taken captive to Babylon - how would you sum up how God's people are feeling from this Psalm?

What questions must they have had in their minds?

CONTEXT:

Watch Carl and Lizzie's excellent introductory overview of Daniel and where it fits in the Bible Story: <https://gracechurchwp.org/news/introducing-daniel>

*"From that point onwards, we see two important ideas: God would **establish** a kingdom for himself, and God would call a people to live under his rule. By doing so, they would be different from the nations around them, and they would both show what God the King is like and be part of how he grows his kingdom.*

And there are some stories where we get to see that happening. But, for the most part, the story from Judges through to Chronicles is of the Israelites' failure to live under God as King and their failure to be different from the nations around them.

So God sent messengers called prophets to them, to warn them that God was going to use other nations to judge and defeat Israel and Judah, taking many people away into exile.

*The Prophet Jeremiah, for example, **foretold** both Judah's defeat by Babylon and Babylon's eventual fall. God also revealed that their **exile** would last for 70 years and promised to watch over the **exiles** and bring them back. Through Jeremiah, God commanded his faithful people to pray and do good for the city where they would go into **exile** while they waited for God to deliver them from it."*

Read Daniel 1:1-2

If v1 is a straightforward record of what happened in history - how is v2 a theological commentary on what was going on?

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Why has God put his people into exile? (cf Jer 25:1-14)

What is the significance of the articles from the temple being taken from Jerusalem to Babylon?

OPTIONAL EXTRA - How are Jerusalem and Babylon used throughout the Bible Story?

	Verses	What do they stand for/characterise them? What are their ultimate destinies?
Jerusalem (Zion in the Psalms...)	Gen 14:18 (formerly called Salem) Heb 12:22 Rev 21 and 22	
Babylon	Gen 10:9-12 - and 11:1-9 1 Pet 5:13 Rev 17 and 18	

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Back to Daniel 1:1-2 - What do these verses teach show us about the Lord's...

(1) Humble Sovereignty -

(2) Complete Faithfulness - keeps his promises - (cf Jer 25:8-11 - Jer 29:10-14)

Do we tend to think of God's judgement in terms of him being faithful to his word? Why? Why Not?

Can you think of other examples of God being willing to suffer shame for the good of his people?

Apply

In what ways do you feel like exiles in a strange land today?

What encouragements are there for us from this passage?

For Daniel and friends - they are actively trusting in the hidden realities - the profound truths about God that don't change even when circumstances do.

What makes it hard for us to trust the hidden realities?

What can help us trust them more?