



BIBLE
EXPOSITOR
AND
ILLUMINATOR

Fall Quarter
September | October
November 2024

Bible Expositor and Illuminator

FALL QUARTER

September, October, November 2024

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Two Prophets of God

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LOOKING AHEAD

This quarter we will look at two prophets, Daniel and Jonah, and note how Jesus spoke about them. Daniel demonstrates how to live amid an unbelieving society, faithfully serving and honoring God for decades. Jonah is less exemplary, as he initially ran from God's calling to preach to Israel's enemies. In both their lives, however, we see God display His love.

In lesson 1, Daniel and his friends resist pressure to conform to the Babylonian diet and customs in what may have appeared to be a low-stakes situation. This prepared them for when it would be more difficult later in life.

In lessons 2 and 3, Daniel's friends refuse to bow to the king's golden image, even under the threat of death. God miraculously preserved them in the fiery furnace, revealing His power and presence.

God gave Daniel a vision of the heavenly Son of Man (lesson 4) and visions of future kingdoms that proved stunningly accurate (lesson 5). This accuracy gives us confidence in Daniel's prophecies that have not yet come to pass.

Daniel's prayer in lesson 6 is a tremendous model. He confessed sins—both his and those of the nation—and God answered his prayer, sending an angelic messenger. We see another angel coming to Daniel in lesson 7, strengthening him and delivering a message about future events.

Jesus applied Daniel's vision of the Son of Man coming on the clouds to Himself (lesson 8). This clearly shows that Jesus knew He was the Messiah and not merely a good teacher, as some falsely claim.

As we turn to Jonah in lesson 9, we find God's resistant prophet fleeing in the opposite direction from God's call, refusing to preach to Israel's enemies. After God sent a violent storm at sea and a giant fish to swallow the prophet, Jonah finally repented (lesson 10).

Jonah obeyed God's call to preach to Nineveh (lesson 11), but when they repented, he grew angry (lesson 12); he did not want them to receive God's mercy. God gently rebuked him, and the book ends by challenging our attitudes toward our enemies. Jesus referred to Jonah's time in the belly of the fish (lesson 13) and compared it to the time He would spend in the grave before His resurrection.

—Tom Greene

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Daniel's Vision of the Son of Man

BRIAN BURKE

Jesus referred to both Jonah and Daniel in the Gospels (Matt. 12:39-41; 24:15; Luke 11:29-32), but these two men were very different prophets in very different situations. While Jonah was sent from his homeland to proclaim judgment against a hostile, foreign nation, Daniel ministered to his own people while living in a pagan land. Consider Daniel's vision of the Son of Man highlighted in lesson 4.

Daniel's firm stand against taking the king's food and wine, along with his God-given wisdom and understanding, enabled him to stand before the king of Babylon (lesson 1; Dan. 1:8, 19-20). His prophetic dreams, visions, and interpretations of the king's dreams were devices God used to inform Israel of their future and the coming of a worldwide kingdom of God. That kingdom would replace all of the expansive but temporary human kingdoms referenced in Daniel's interpretations (lessons 4-5).

Daniel 2, though not one of our lesson texts for this quarter, provides an interpretive key for the rest of Daniel's visions, dreams, and dream interpretations: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (vs. 44).

Our Daniel 7 passage (lesson 4) is a more elaborate description of the establishment of the kingdom described in chapter 2. Here, Daniel sees another vision: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought

him near before him" (vs. 13). This "Son of man" is given dominion over an eternal kingdom, and all people will serve Him (vs. 14).

The Jews of Jesus' day believed Daniel's vision of the Son of Man referred to the Messiah, but they did not think Jesus was it. Instead, first-century Jews expected the Messiah to be a fierce warrior who would conquer Rome and reclaim Israel's political autonomy. While Jesus did not lead a military campaign against Rome, He fought a much larger battle.

The Messiah did not merely conquer a finite empire; He defeated sin and death. By suffering and dying on behalf of humankind, Jesus defeated these powers. Isaiah anticipated this dimension of the Messiah's mission in chapter 53: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (vs. 5). We have confidence in Jesus' victory through the resurrection, which showed that He truly had defeated the powers of sin and death.

Had Israel recognized this characteristic of the Messiah, they might have recognized its fulfillment in Jesus. As it was, they stumbled over the fact that He did not come as an already-crowned king, not realizing that His exaltation would only come after His humiliation (cf. Phil. 2:6-11).

In the Old Testament, "son of man" usually refers simply to a human. For example, The Lord often addressed the prophet Ezekiel as "son of man" (cf.

(Editorials continued on page 186)

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

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

9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which *are* of your sort? then shall ye make *me* endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And 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.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in all matters of wisdom *and* understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers that *were* in all his realm.

21 And Daniel continued *even* unto the first year of king Cyrus.

NOTES

Daniel Honors God's Law

Lesson Text: Daniel 1:8-21

Related Scriptures: II Chronicles 36:5-8; Psalm 119:105-112; Daniel 1:1-7

TIME: 605 B.C.

PLACE: Babylon

GOLDEN TEXT—"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat" (Daniel 1:8).

Introduction

In the year 722 B.C., Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and took tens of thousands into exile. We never read about any return of the people from that captivity to their own land. The kingdom of Judah, however, went into captivity in three separate deportations and eventually came back in three returns.

The deportations, each under King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, are summarized in II Chronicles 36. The first occurred in 605 B.C. (vs. 7); Daniel was taken to Babylon then. The second occurred in 597 B.C., during which Ezekiel was taken (vs. 10). The third deportation occurred in 586 B.C., when Babylon razed the city of Jerusalem and

destroyed homes, palaces, walls, and the temple (vs. 17).

The book of Daniel opens with Daniel and his three friends in Babylon. The palace master gave them Babylonian names (Dan. 1:7), though they were not concerned about them. Instead, they had another issue to face.

LESSON OUTLINE

- I. **CONVICTIONS TESTED**—
Dan. 1:8-10
- II. **CONVICTIONS MAINTAINED**—
Dan. 1:11-16
- III. **CONVICTIONS REWARDED**—
Dan. 1:17-21

Exposition: Verse by Verse

CONVICTIONS TESTED

DAN. 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he

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10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your