



International Bible Lesson
Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series
L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Thinking Further

God's Plans for Our Future

January 7, 2018

Daniel 1:1-21

“The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service” (Daniel 1:19).

Jeremiah 29:11 gives hope to all God's people: “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Unknown to the Judeans when the LORD sent most of them into exile in 587 BC, He had prearranged to meet their spiritual and physical needs in Babylon. Before 587 BC, the LORD sent the prophet Ezekiel into exile so he would be in Babylon when they arrived. Ezekiel would explain the reasons for their exile, call them to repentance and faith, and give them a realistic hope of returning to Jerusalem after their punishment. Before 587 BC, the LORD sent Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah into exile so they could receive three years of training in the language and literature of Babylonia and be prepared to enter the service of King Nebuchadnezzar. In Daniel 1:20, we learn, “In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.” As the king's best and wisest advisors, most of the time they were able to influence all the king's decisions to the benefit of God's people. When Ezekiel, Daniel, and Daniel's friends were taken into captivity with the disobedient Judeans, they probably did not know in advance the plans the LORD had for them. But they were the kind of men who would remain faithful to and trust the LORD no matter what happened; therefore, God could use them to care for His people.

1. What resulted when the four young men put obedience to God first in their lives?
2. Can you name two prophets whose words might have encouraged Daniel as he and his friends were taken into exile?
3. Can you think of one reason God might have wanted these four young men to serve in the king's court?
4. Read the Romans 8:28. Did God keep this promise to Daniel and his three friends? Explain your answer.
5. What tests did Daniel and his three friends face?

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