



Daniel:

The Key to Victorious Living in a Hostile Culture

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Schedule

February 16

Introduction

February 23

Daniel 1

March 2

Daniel 2

March 9

Daniel 3

March 16

Daniel 4

March 23

Daniel 5

March 30

Daniel 6

April 6

Daniel 7

April 13

OFF (Palm Sunday)

April 20

OFF (Easter)

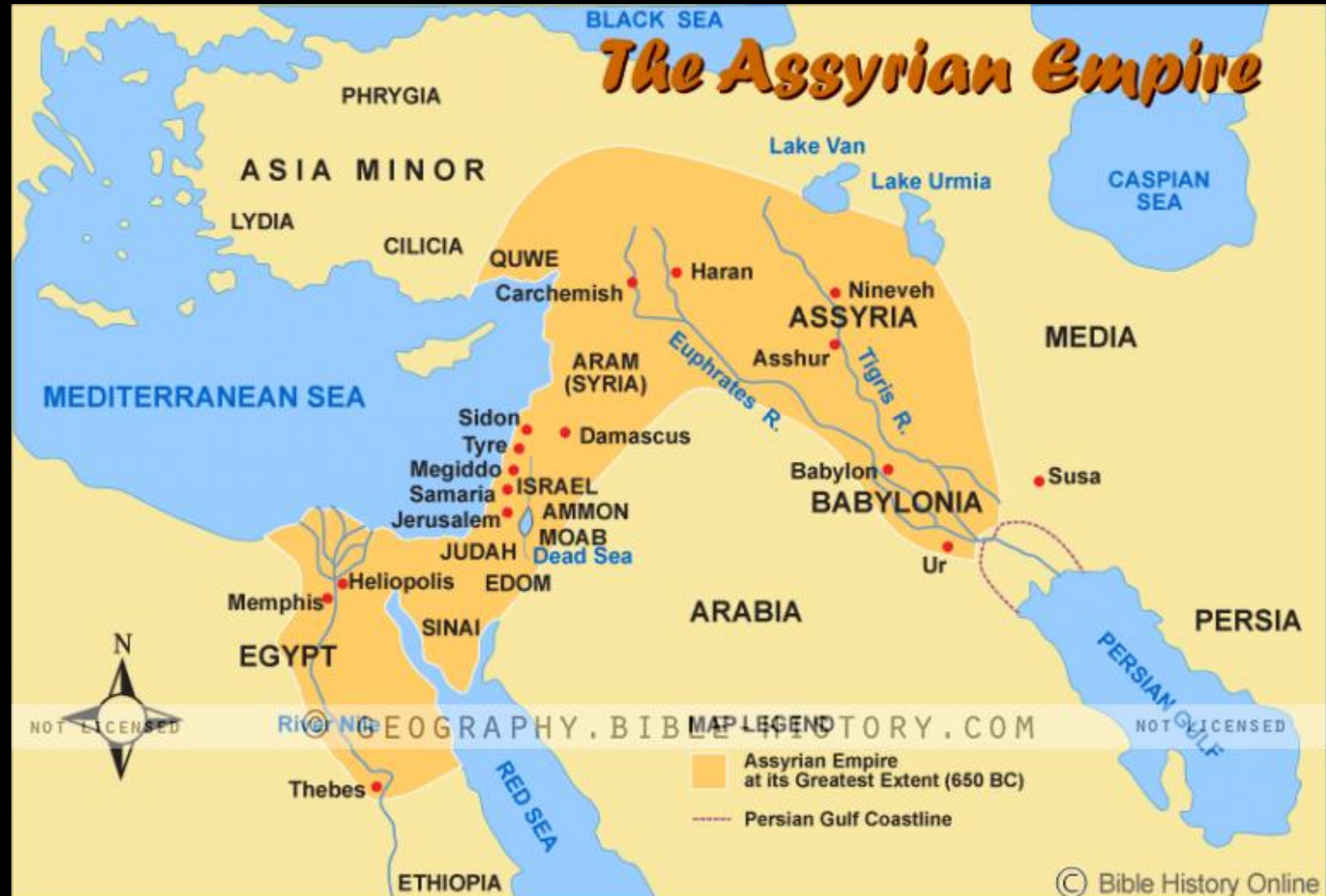
April 27

Daniel 8



Brief Historical Snapshots

Assyria, Nineveh



Brief Historical Snapshots

Babylon



Brief Historical Snapshots

Babylon



Brief Historical Snapshots

Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:1; Jer 21:7, 22:25; Daniel 1-5)



Brief Historical Snapshots

Josiah, King of Judah (see 2 Kings 22:1 – 23:32)

Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. His mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah; she was from Bozkath. 2 He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left. (2 Kings 22:1-2)



Brief Historical Snapshots

Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:36, 24:1-15)

Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah; she was from Rumah. And he did evil in the eyes of the Lord, just as his predecessors had done. (2 Kings 23:36)

At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it, and Nebuchadnezzar himself came up to the city while his officers were besieging it. Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him. (2 Kings 24:10-12)

Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) (2 Kings 24:6-15; 25:27-30)

Brief Historical Snapshots

Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:17-25:7)

Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the prominent people of the land. The king of Babylon also deported to Babylon the entire force of seven thousand fighting men, strong and fit for war, and a thousand skilled workers and artisans. He made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place and changed his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, just as Jehoiakim had done. It was because of the Lord's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence. Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. (2 Kings 24:15-20)

The Captivity

However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you... The LORD will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you or your ancestors. There you will worship other gods, gods of wood and stone. You will become a thing of horror, a byword and an object of ridicule among all the peoples where the LORD will drive you. (Deut 28:15, 36-37)



Daniel 1:

God honors our commitment through the boundaries we set to remain morally separate from culture

Step 1 in cultural assimilation: Physical (political) control.

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god. (Dan 1:1-2)



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Step 2 in cultural assimilation: Reeducation.

Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility—young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service. (Dan 1:3-5)



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Step 3 in cultural assimilation: Redefined identity (self-reference).

Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego. (Dan 1:6-7)



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Daniel's response: Resolution (thought/will) and practical (strategic) opposition.

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. (Dan 1:8-14)

Daniel 1:

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Outcome of the undivided heart: Physical and spiritual blessings. God honors their commitment.

At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. (Dan 1:15-17)



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Outcome of the undivided heart: Physical and spiritual blessings. God honors their commitment.

At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanterers in his whole kingdom.

And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus. (Dan 1:18-21)

