

1. God's Sovereignty

- a) Daniel 4:17
- b) Daniel 1:2
- c) Why did God allow the children of Israel to be taken into captivity?
 - i) 2 Kings 21:10-16, 2 Chronicles 36:11-12, 15-16
 - ii) Jeremiah 3:13-15, Jeremiah 29:11-14
- d) Why is it important to remember God's purposes will be fulfilled on earth in spite of human failures?

2. Pressure to conform

- a) Daniel 1:1-7 What indications do you see in the text that these prisoners of war were under extreme pressure to conform?
- b) How many prisoners of war were taken from Jerusalem to Babylon? Why were only four mentioned by name?
- c) Share a time when you felt pressure to conform to social expectations that were out of harmony with the Word of God.
- d) When is the best time to prepare for the challenges to conform that we will surely encounter? Why?

3. Firm resolution

- a) Daniel 1:8 What does it mean to "purpose in your heart"? (see also Psalm 119:11)
- b) Daniel 1:9-17 How did God honor Daniel for making a commitment to honor Him even in the small decisions of life?

- i) Exceptional physical wellbeing v.15
- ii) Wisdom v.17a
- iii) Spiritual gifts v.17b
- c) How significant was the support of Daniel's three friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah?
- d) What is the correlation between this decision about diet and the events recorded in Daniel 3?
- e) How did the firm resolution of Daniel and his three friends impact Ashpenaz, the chief of the eunuchs?
- f) What assurance do we find in the Scriptures that God will give us wisdom and strength when we determine to honor Him in every area of our lives?

4. The final exam

- a) Daniel 1:18-20 How did the king respond to the blessings of God bestowed upon Daniel and his three friends?
- b) Share a time when God honored you. How was the blessing of God a witness to those around you?
- c) Why is King Cyrus, a Persian monarch, mentioned at the conclusion of this narrative? Daniel 1:21
- d) How does the experience of Daniel and his three friends relate to your life today?

