

Chapter 2 — "An Offer Too Good to Refuse" (Daniel 1:1-21)

"But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine..." — Daniel 1:8

PART I: UNDERSTANDING THE CONTENT

1. The Three Waves of Exile

The text outlines three separate Babylonian deportations from Jerusalem (605 B.C., 597 B.C., and 586 B.C.). Which key biblical figures were carried away during each wave, and what covenant violations ultimately brought this tragic judgment upon Judah?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

2. Groomed for the King's Service

King Nebuchadnezzar didn't select just anyone—he instructed Ashpenaz to recruit a very specific demographic of young men from Judah. What physical, intellectual, and social qualifications were required for entry into this three-year Babylonian training program?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

3. A Battle Over Identity

The Babylonians gave Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah new pagan names: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. How did their original Hebrew names point to the true God, and how were their new names designed to erase their godly heritage?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

4. The Problem with the King's Table

On the surface, eating from the royal table appeared to be a lavish honor, yet Daniel saw it as a spiritual trap. How did partaking of the king's food and wine violate God's law and defile Daniel's commitment to the Lord?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

5. Daniel's Plan of Action

Resolving in his heart was only the first step—Daniel also needed a practical, gracious strategy. How did Daniel demonstrate respect and tact when approaching the Babylonian officials, and what was the ten-day test he proposed?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

PART II: APPLYING THE MATERIAL

6. Living in Today's "Babylon"

The conflict between Babylon and Jerusalem represents the age-old conflict between the world and God's people.. In what specific areas of your life—at work, in the culture, or through media—do you feel the strongest pressure to blend in and compromise?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

7. Focusing on What You Can Control

Daniel couldn't halt the exile, change the curriculum, or stop them from renaming him—but he *could* decide what went into his body. How can you shift your energy away from criticizing culture toward making personal choices that honor God?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

8. Putting Muscle to Your Resolve

Daniel didn't attempt to stand alone; he immediately involved his three faithful friends in his plan. Who is a trusted Christian brother or sister in your life that you can lean on for prayer, encouragement, and accountability when facing worldly pressure?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

9. Evaluating Tempting Offers

Satan rarely presents temptation in obvious, ugly packages—he usually wraps compromise inside attractive, status-filled offers. What practical, biblical filter can you use to carefully evaluate career, financial, or personal opportunities before accepting them?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

10. Taking the Risk and Trusting God

Daniel resolved in his heart long before he knew how the official would react or how the test would turn out. Is God prompting you to take a courageous, principled stand right now, and how does knowing "God honors those who honor Him" give you courage?

NOTES & REFLECTIONS