

## DANIEL CH 1

At this period in Jewish history, 600BC, the people have been subject to attack after attack; they have been defeated and are now in the minority and are not in control of their affairs; either secular or religious.

They have lost their land, Israel, their city, Jerusalem and the focal point of worship, their Temple.

Everything that they valued has been defiled and taken away from them because they failed to be faithful to the only true God, the Creator and their Redeemer despite His prolonged repeated pleas to repent and turn back to Him.

They are being punished and it is their fault.

Now they are in captivity in a foreign land subject to a cruel people.

**But God has not forgotten them.  
The remnant is there.**

This Czech nation and the older generation here this morning have memories of a recent occupation and cruel domination.

There will be parallels that will come to mind but I will be concentrating on the text.

What you recognise as applying to your own experience under communism is your legacy to pass on to the younger generation, both saved and unsaved.

As we read through Daniel chapter 1 we meet 4 prominent Jews amongst all those who have been taken into captivity by the conquering Babylonians.

**NKJ Daniel 1:7 To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel *the name* Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.**

Notice how their Hebrew names are changed to Babylonian ones.

<b>Names</b>	<b>Dani - el</b>	<b>Bel - teshazzar</b>
	<b>Hanan - iah</b>	<b>Shadr - ach</b>
	<b>Misha - el</b>	<b>Mesh - ach</b>
	<b>Azar - iah</b>	<b>Abed - nego</b>

Something very significant takes place.

Perhaps I can over emphasise this verbally and by splitting the names to draw attention to their endings.

**El = God.**

**Jah = Jehovah, Lord, often ends names as iah.**

Now notice the Babylonian endings:

Jah and El have disappeared and have been replaced by Babylonian gods.

Bel= Babylonian god, lord.

Nego : Nebo = Babylonian god; think of Nebu – chadnezzar.

Rach, ach = possible link to majesty, god in Babylonia but not mentioned in Bible.

Merodach = Marduk, another god of the Babylonians.

NKJ Daniel 1:4 young men in whom *there was* no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who *had* ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.

The Jews have to learn to speak and read the Babylonian language.

NKJ Daniel 1:5 And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of *that time* they might serve before the king.

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

The king has them eat the same food as the Babylonians.

To recap.

Names

Jewish to Babylonian

God is changed to their gods; Bel, Nebo, etc.

Ancestry

Customs

Meat

Drink

Clothes

Appearance

Language

Hebrew to Chaldee

**Final objective.**

**Get rid of** their God, the Lord, by changing their names.

**Change** their language so that they don't speak like Jews anymore.

(Just an additional comment: note how we expect the same principle at work but in a good sense when becoming Christians because we are taken out of the kingdom of darkness and placed into the kingdom of light.

As Christians in our own countries using our heart language; we do not speak the way we used to).

**Destroy** their Scripture so that they cannot read their Scriptures or read about their own history.

They don't eat Jewish food.

They don't look like Jews.

They don't worship the god of the Jews; Jehovah Elohim. He is not even part of their names.

**Therefore they no longer live or look like Jews.**

Given time they will forget their history, forget their Scriptures and the Lord God of Israel will become a distant memory or forgotten completely.

There is one more fact that I need to add.

It is not in this chapter but does appear later and many times throughout the rest of the Bible right up to the book of Revelation.

**In addition to all those attacks, just in case they fail: - then wipe out the people!**

In one sense that is easy to see; the differences are like black and white!

As I mentioned at the beginning many here will identify themselves with these events and see a parallel in their own situations or the memory of Nazi Germany.

**But we need to recognise that there is a greater picture and that these events recorded in Daniel are for all the generations of God's people because we live in a world that is hostile to God, to His revelation and to His people and that includes us today.**

So, how may we apply this to our own situations where we live?

When there is determined opposition by another faith or religion then the activities just mentioned may well take place.

**This is also true where there are strong “orthodox” churches that are bitterly opposed to Gospel preaching Evangelicals.**

**The removal of (any) god and (any) religion occurs against all forms of faith in an atheistic totalitarian state.**

**In the countries that embraced Reformation principles of personal salvation by faith in Jesus due to the preaching of the Word of God, Satan also uses a more subtle form of attack that we may recognise as happening today:-**

**Instead of removing essential words related to our Christian faith, what has happened is that prominent church leaders deny important historical events and doctrines.**

**Think of those doctrines that are absolutely essential to defining and recognising God and His revelation in Christ.**

**They do not recognise the Bible as the infallible inerrant word of God.**

**The Bible becomes an interesting book having only literary value.**

**Many church leaders in the UK deny the Incarnation and Deity of Christ, the atonement, the wrath of God and hell.**

**If there is no God, then how can the Bible claim to be inspired, how can there be an incarnation or a resurrection?**

**Academics twist words so that they lose their original clear meaning and people stop believing in God.**

**Or there may be only one god, but he has lots of different names, reveals himself in many different ways so that it does not matter which one you worship; you decide.**

**Change the God of the Bible to a little god and you can have as many gods as you wish.**

**Who cares?**

**Only the “owner” of his god!**

**We ought to make some application to very recent events.**

**The Olympic Games.**

**The initiating ceremony in Greece is a pagan ritual.**

**OK, we may ignore that in our countries and in our celebration of the wins.**

**But here is the type of comment I have heard on TV.**

**“Congratulations on your win. What now?”**

**I shall go home and get absolutely drunk and do something stupid!”**

**Sex scandals with popular leaders of countries.**

**Film stars and multiple marriages and or drug abuse.**

**The continual pressure through politics, films, plays and books undermining the sanctity of marriage and the importance of the family.**

**Need I continue with these people who are admired as role models?**

**If you have a religious leader, like a vicar on UK TV he is a foolish, indecisive wimp.**

**Where there is no god, human beings lose their dignity and life is “cheap”.**

**Obviously we could say a lot more now concerning the church and the whole concept of the conflict between the church and the world, ranging from intolerance to open persecution and martyrdom and the attack by Satan to destroy man because he is still made in the image of God, no matter how badly that may be distorted.**

**But not this morning; not enough time.**

**Then there is the immediate application and challenge for us:**

**Know our God; know our Bible; pray Godly, biblical prayers, to the Father, in the name of Jesus by the Holy Spirit.**

**Recognise and embrace church fellowship.**

**Admit that our hearts are cold and plead for the filling of the Holy Spirit.**

**Be honest and don't pretend.**

**Live in the world?**

**Definitely.**

**NKJ John 17:11 "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are."**

**Let your nation, town and neighbours benefit from your presence.**

**How?**

**In your integrity, have a loving concern for their immediate situation and their need of salvation.**

**We are the only people who can pray effectively.**

**NKJ John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."**

**NKJ 1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.**

**NKJ Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

**Now to Him who is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Saviour, Who alone is wise, glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and forever.  
Amen.**

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**A little note to support that the foreign names referred to gods.**

**NKJ Daniel 5:1 **Belshazzar** the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand.**

**Daniel's name was changed to **Beltshazzar**.**

**NKJ Jeremiah 50:2 "Declare among the nations, Proclaim, and set up a standard; Proclaim -- do not conceal *it* -- Say, 'Babylon is taken, **Bel** is shamed. **Merodach** is broken in pieces; Her idols are humiliated, Her images are broken in pieces.'**

**NKJ Isaiah 46:1 **Bel** bows down, **Nebo** stoops; Their idols were on the beasts and on the cattle.**