

# The Book of Daniel

דְּבָרֵי דָנִיֵּאל

# The Book of Daniel

**Author:** Daniel, of the Tribe of Judah (1:6)

**Date:** 605-530 BC

**Languages:** Hebrew (1:1 to 2:4a; 8:1 to 12:13);  
Aramaic (2:4b to 7:28)

**Structure:** 6 narratives (Ch. 1-6), 4 visions (Ch. 7, 8, 9, 10-12)

**Setting:** Babylon (Israelites in exile)

# The Book of Daniel

Theme/Purpose: God is in control and will save His people.

1. How do God's people live in a society in which false gods are promoted?
2. How do God's people serve an idolatrous nation?

# The Book of Daniel

## Introductory Notes

The book of Daniel presents many problems for the reader. It has a great deal of “symbolic” material which is difficult to understand, unless you have an idea of the time and the circumstances under which the book was written. Chapter One will reveal to us what some of these situations were and how these conditions played into the form which Daniel used to write his book.

# The Book of Daniel

**The first issue which we must confront in studying Daniel is the time in which he lived. This issue continues to be debated in current studies of Daniel.**

**The point of argument is whether Daniel lived when the book says he did, or whether he lived at a much later time.**



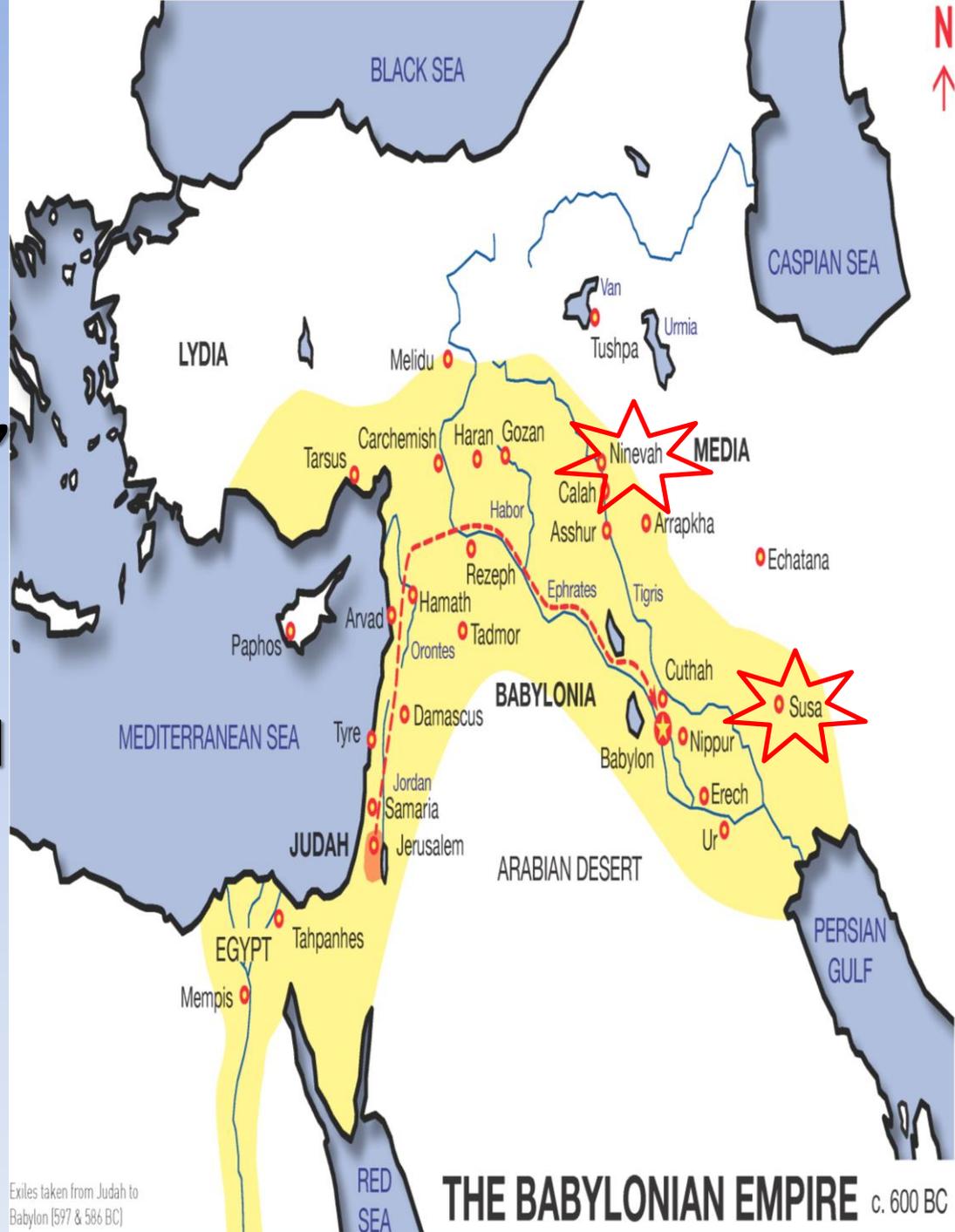
# THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE c. 600 BC

# The Book of Daniel

## (Introductory Notes)

**The Assyrian Empire had been an empire that was based upon brutality; an empire that loved to slaughter for slaughter's sake. They had taken the Northern Kingdom, Israel, into captivity some 100 years before the time we now discuss. The Assyrian Empire was one which had many internal problems, which led to the empire completely falling in 605 BC to Nebuchadnezzar I (Nabopolassar).**

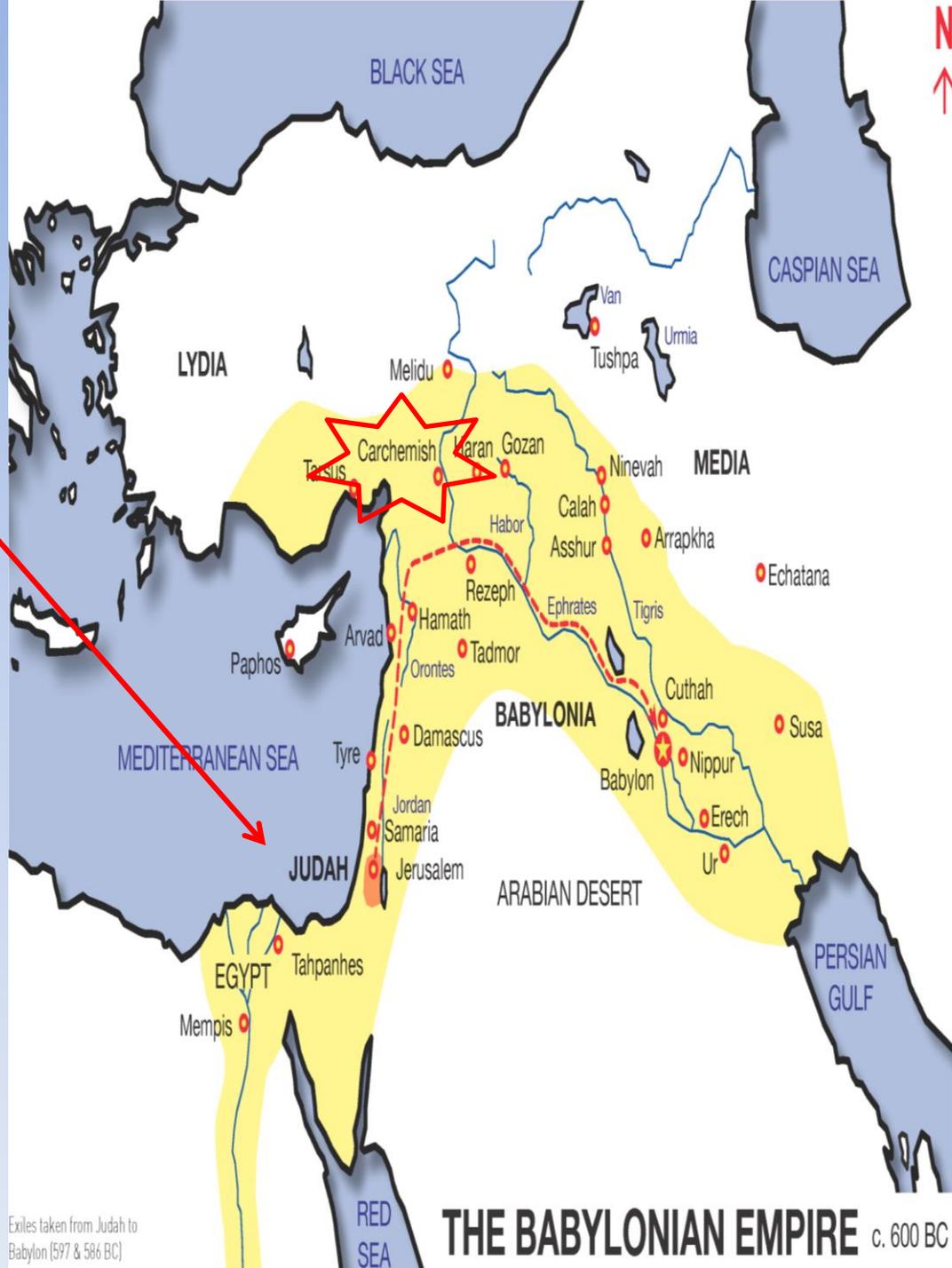
**The Babylonian empire replaced the Assyrians as the world power at Daniel's time. In 612 BC, Nebuchadnezzar I entered the capital of Assyria (Nineveh) and destroyed it. He chased the escapees from that capital to their other capital and destroyed that capital as well.**



Exiles taken from Judah to Babylon (597 & 586 BC)

**THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE** c. 600 BC

**Nebuchadnezzar II then had to deal with the Egyptians, whom He defeated at the battle of Carchemish in 605 BC. The people of Judah attempted a revolt about 606 BC and were crushed; thus the story of Daniel unfolds. This is the first position. It is the position we will adopt in this class.**



Exiles taken from Judah to Babylon (597 & 586 BC)

**THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE** c. 600 BC

**The other position concerning the time of Daniel tells us that Daniel lived much later. According to this position, Daniel lived about 100 BC. This era was also one of political upheaval and it was known as the period of the Maccabees who ruled in Palestine. The rule of the Maccabees was anything but pleasing to the Jews. Thus, a group of self-exiled Jews went to the wilderness and lived in the area of the Dead Sea. Their writings included much of an apocalyptic character. Since Daniel is so closely paralleled in this type of literature, they assume that Daniel lived at that time. Daniel became an apocalyptic legend, set in Babylon, to answer the purposes of the people who lived about 100 BC. This position is held by many liberal scholars today and it's very untenable!**

# The Book of Daniel

## OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

- I. **TRAINING & TESTING THE REMNANT (Chapter 1)**
  - A. **Captivity of the hostages by Nebuchadnezzar (1-2)**
  - B. **Training of the Jewish youth for the King's service (3-7)**
  - C. **Daniel's first test of obedience, his challenge of faith (8-16)**
  - D. **Resultant reward: attainment in wisdom, promotion (17-21)**

# Daniel 1

(The Setting)

(Vv. 1-2)

The first verse of Daniel tells of the siege of Jerusalem. This siege took place in 606 BC, Jehoiakim was crowned king in 609 BC thus his “third year” would be 606 BC.

The person who laid siege to Jerusalem was Nebuchadnezzar II.



# Daniel 1

(The Setting)

(Vv. 1-2)

**Nebuchadnezzar was a great Babylonian general whose father was the first king of Babylon. He had been on campaigns since 612 BC and returned to claim the throne in 605 BC. He was one of the greatest kings in the ancient world. He finished the building of Babylon during his reign and He was the sole force that held the Babylonian Empire together; hence, following his death, Babylon fell apart rapidly.**



# Daniel 1

(The Setting)

(Vv. 1-2)

**The siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar resulted in the pillaging of the Temple and the carting away of its contents to Babylon. Jehoiakim was also taken prisoner and later died in Babylon some years later.**



# Daniel 1

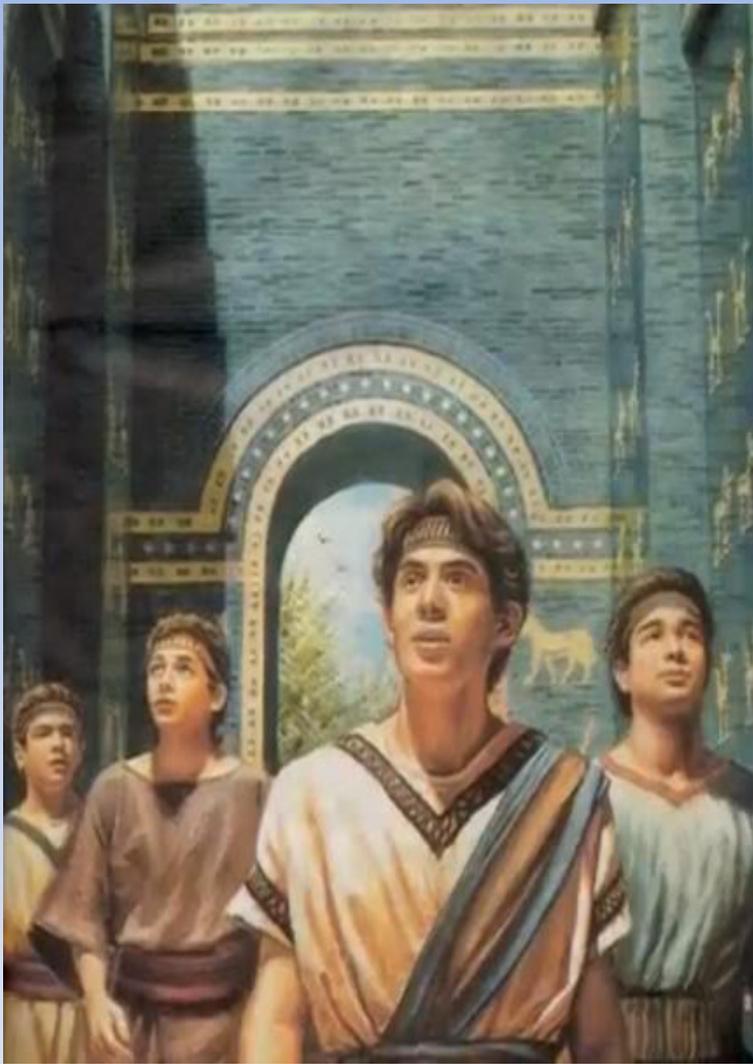
(The Training)

(Vv. 3-5)

**Nebuchadnezzar was a wise king. He ordered the cream of the young men of Judah brought to Babylon. This was a wise decision for two reasons:**

- + First, removing of the young men would weaken Judah by removing its future leaders; and,**
- + Second, by making these young men loyal to Nebuchadnezzar, the king would take away one of the greatest future sources for rebellion in Judah.**

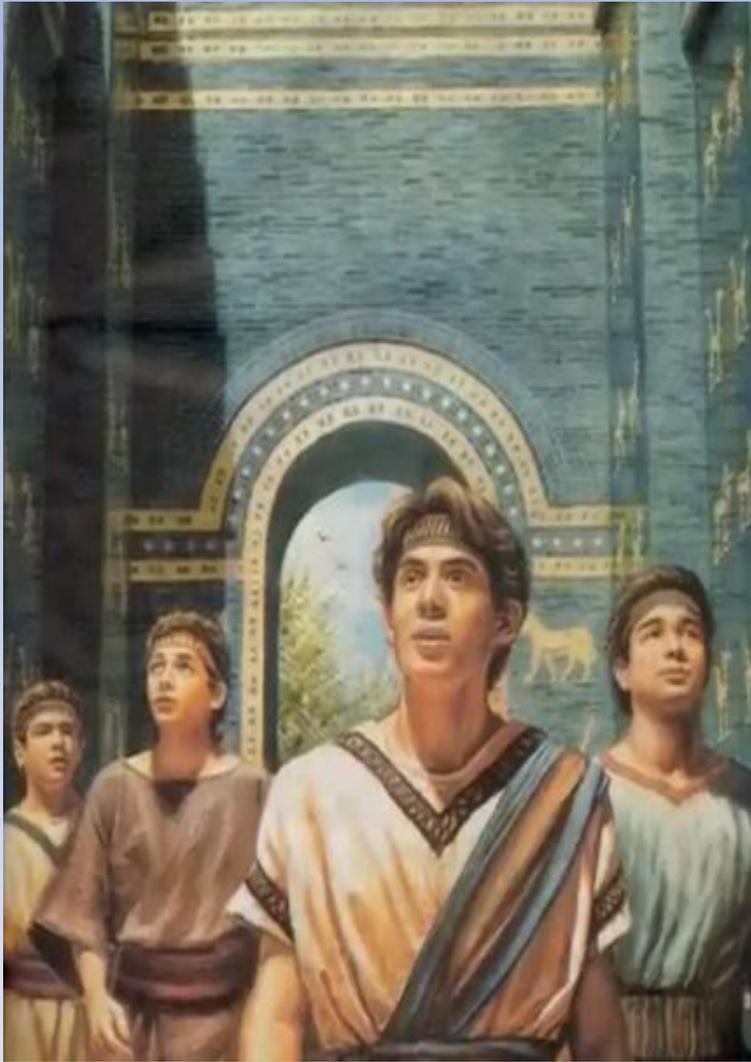
**The man entrusted with this job was the chief court official of Babylon, Ashpenaz.**



**Once brought to Babylon, the Judean young men lost their cultural identity. They were to be trained in the Babylonian culture and religion and ordered to accept it as their own.**

**The training also included a daily allotment from the rich food of the King's table. Again, this would divest the men of their own culture in which some foods were prohibited.**

# Verses 6 and 7



These verses set the scene for the later events of the book and introduce the major characters. Note that among the men selected, there are four that stand out: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

Their names reflect the name of YHWH:

Daniel means “God is my judge”

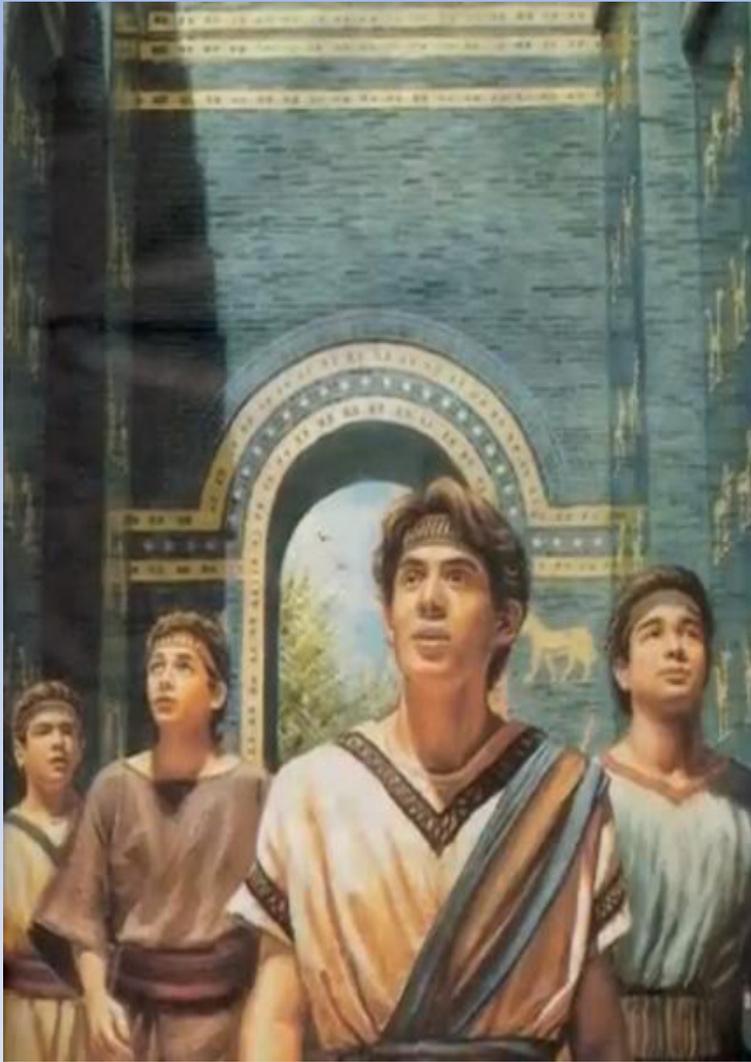
Hananiah – “YHWH shows grace”

Mishael – “Who is like YHWH”

Azariah – “YHWH helps”

Their names had to be changed if their new culture was to have any effect on them. Thus, their names were changed to reflect the Babylonian gods. These gods were some of the most popular gods in Babylon.

## Verses 6 and 7

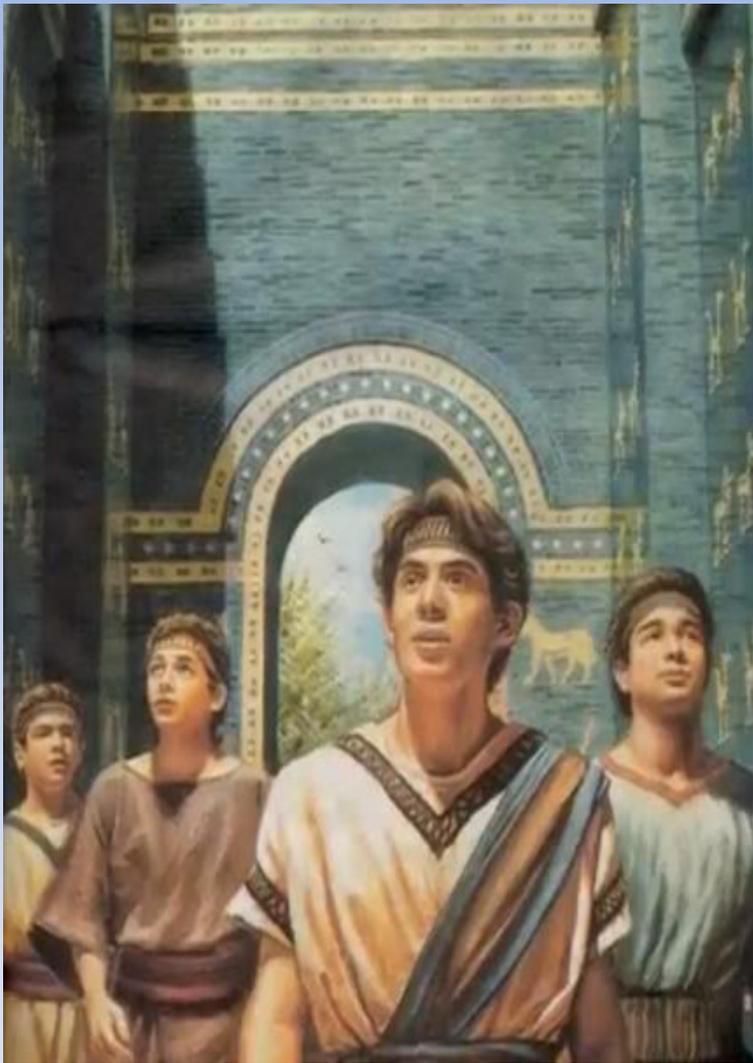


**Daniel's new name, Belteshazzar, means "Marduk protect his life."**

**Hananiah was renamed Shadrach – "The command of Aku."**

**Mishael became Meshach, which is a take-off on his Hebrew name and means "Who is like Aku?"**

**Azariah's new name was Abed-nego, which means, "Servant of Nego." Nego was a corruption of the god Nebo which also appears in the name Nebuchadnezzar.**



**Next Week:**

**We will complete Chapter One  
and take a look at some very  
important historical facts that  
are pertinent to Daniel!**