

DANIEL 1 CO-OPERATION, BUT NOT COMPROMISE

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Daniel is a book of **hope**, because it teaches that God is the sovereign ruler of this world. Israel achieved power and prosperity under Kings David and Solomon. But the divided kingdom which followed Solomon was pressured by apostasy and corruption from within and the growing power of Israel's neighbours from without. Both kingdoms were conquered and depopulated. Most of the Jews who were deported forgot their covenant identity and were absorbed into pagan populations, but some saw their trials as God's punishment and turned to Him in faith. How could a Jew live for God when he was held captive in a foreign land? How could he be *in* the world but not *of* the world, when he was not in a position to call all the shots?

CO-OPERATION WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Daniel and his three friends faced three questions:

1. Would they accept or reject three years of pagan studies followed by public service in a pagan empire?
2. Would they accept or reject their Jewish names being changed to pagan Babylonian names?
3. Would they accept or reject the King's rich food and his wine?

They accepted the first two, but rejected the third. Why?

1. On dietary grounds? No.
2. On ceremonial grounds? No.
3. On covenantal grounds? Yes.

