



# Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



## Episode 098 - Let Me Make One Thing Perfectly Clear (Daniel)

The ancient world measured the power of a nation's gods by the outcome of that nation's military activities. Which raises the question, how could Yahweh keep His Name holy and protect His reputation while His chosen people were living as captives in Babylon? The book of Daniel answers that question. Chapter one describes how God put Daniel and his friends in influential positions in the government of Babylon, and the following chapters show how He worked through them to reveal His true power and glory to the Babylonian and Persian kings they served.

Read how God demonstrated His power over King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 3:13-30. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down to his image, Nebuchadnezzar revealed his contempt toward Israel's God and all gods in verse 15.

- God's captive people were feeling lost and forsaken by Yahweh. What impact would it make on them to learn that God stepped in and miraculously saved His three servants?

Back in Moses' day, when Israel was living in Egypt as slaves (Exodus 1-12), God demonstrated His power over Egypt's gods and king through ten plagues. God built His reputation—a reputation that brought fear to Egypt and all the surrounding nations.

- How would His miraculous intervention in the fiery furnace and the lion's den serve that same purpose for Babylon, Persia and the surrounding nations?

The second half of Daniel is meant to encourage and strengthen God's people through the chaotic period between the Old and New Testaments. They already saw the Babylonian Empire fall to the Medes and Persians. They will soon see Persia fall to the Greeks. Daniel 8 describes that conquest and the tumultuous events that will follow for Judah.

Read Daniel 8:1-26. Daniel records the destruction of the Persian Empire at the hand of Alexander the Great, which was to happen more than a hundred years in the future. Verse 22 predicts Alexander's death and the dividing of his kingdom between four of his generals. Two of these kingdoms would cause terrible chaos for Judah between the Old and New Testaments. The southern kingdom was based in Egypt, the northern in Asia Minor. With Judah in the middle, the struggles between these two kingdoms are recorded in Daniel 11. Daniel's final chapters are written to a people filled with great anxiety, living in chaos. But Daniel reveals that God will be with His people, controlling everything and guiding all that is about to happen for the salvation of His chosen nation.

- Describe the chaos existing in your community and country at this time.
- Why is it so easy to reach the false conclusion that God is not in control?
- What passages or events from Scripture give you peace and confidence in such times?

To learn more about the Bible's apocalyptic literature, watch the **Men's NetWork** Bible study *Explaining All the Scary Stuff in Revelation*. You can find it at [www.lhmmen.com](http://www.lhmmen.com).