



2020 1Q Daniel: Lesson 2 From Jerusalem to Babylon

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

What do you think of the title?

When you hear this do you think of Israel going into captivity in Babylon? In our modern mind we think of Jerusalem as the capital of the nation of Israel, yet after Solomon's death in 931 BCE, the kingdom split into the northern and southern kingdoms.

The northern kingdom (comprised of Asher, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Manasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun) was known as Israel and the southern kingdom, which included Jerusalem and which remained loyal to David's line, was comprised of Judah and Benjamin.

Israel was conquered and its 10 tribes absorbed by Assyria in 722 BCE. Babylon conquered Judah in 598 BCE.

Why did they go from Jerusalem to Babylon?

Is there a lesson for us today beyond the historical realities?

Do Jerusalem and Babylon provide not just historical facts but represent spiritual kingdoms? And how would you describe the differences between these two spiritual kingdoms?

Jerusalem (think New Jerusalem)

Holy
Unified
Practices God's law
Healing for people
Values truth, love freedom
Led by Jesus

Babylon

Unholy
Confused
Practices man's law
Destructive to people
Values, lies, selfishness, coercion
Led by Satan pretending to be Jesus

Is being a part of either God's kingdom represented by Jerusalem, or Satan's kingdom represented by Babylon, determined by genetics? Or denominational affiliation?

What determines whose kingdom one is a part of? Would it be the condition of the heart?

Does God have some of His people in systems that are part of the confused system that practices the methods of Babylon?



I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of Babylon, my people, so that you do not participate in her sins and suffer from any of her plagues. Revelation 18:4 God’s Word Translation

Can one change denominations and still be part of Babylon?

So how would you describe being part of Babylon? Is it primarily about denomination, or about the character, the heart, mind, motives and the methods one practices and picture of God one presents?

And is there a danger in people going from Jerusalem to Babylon spiritually today?

How did ancient Jerusalem get taken captive by Babylon? What was the cause?

They were unfaithful to God—they rejected His truth, they chose the methods, practices and beliefs of the world, and God set them free and they went into captivity.

What happens to our hearts, minds, and characters when we reject the truth of God’s kingdom, methods, principles and accept the world’s? Does God set us free to reap what we insist upon? And what happens to our hearts and minds if we choose the world over God? Does God use His power to inflict the damage upon us?

So what is Babylon actually today? Here is what one of the SDA founders wrote:

In Revelation 14 the first angel is followed by a second proclaiming: “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Revelation 14:8. **The term “Babylon” is derived from “Babel,” and signifies confusion. It is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion.** In Revelation 17 Babylon is represented as a woman—a figure which is used in the Bible as the **symbol of a church**, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church. GC 381.1

Do you agree that Babylon is the systems of false religions that misrepresent God and cause confusion and that any Christian group that embraces the lies about God and promotes them would be part of that confused system?

What is the cause of the confusion? What is the basis of the multitude of conflicting doctrines, beliefs and religious groups?

Because there is a root lie, a false premise that underpins the other lies—and the root lie upon which the false systems are all built is: God’s law functions like human law, imposed rules requiring imposed punishments, rather than worshiping the Creator whose laws are design laws.



How many human laws are there in force in this city, county, state and nation? How many more if we added up all the municipalities in this nation? How many more if we added all the countries of the world? And why are there so many? Because they are made up, imposed, not design laws. And do any of them disagree—oppose each other? Can the laws cause confusion? Is the human law system so convoluted, complicated and confusing that most people need lawyers—professionally trained law experts to navigate it—to tell them the rules and what is legal and not legal?

When we have theology built upon human law we have all kinds of made up beliefs that are not grounded in reality and are often contradictory and confusing. Have religions made things so complicated and confusing that many believers falsely believe they need a theologian, pastor, priest to study the Bible for them and tell them the rules, the requirements, what to do to avoid legal jeopardy?

But, if we think through design law is there confusion in the world, among different groups over:

- the benefits of clean air and clean water?
- the damaging effects of tobacco smoke?
- the results of jumping off buildings?

But is there still confusion over dietary practices? Why?

- Because in many religions dietary practices are not built on the laws of health, but religious rules or codes—such as not using the same utensils to cook food with milk and meat
- Because people misunderstand Scripture and apply instructions over ceremonial practices, which were all theater, to actual health practices. For instance, doing away with ceremonial laws after Christ's resurrection, some misunderstand forgetting the laws of health were not done away with, thus they eat without regard to health because they know they won't be condemned for breaking ceremony.

When we confuse God's law for man's law, a system of rules, what is often the result for religious people? They not only end up fragmented into many groups with contradictory rules, but seek to pass laws to enforce their rules upon others, for this is how they believe God functions.

From the same book quoted earlier:

Many of the Protestant churches are following **Rome's example of iniquitous connection with "the kings of the earth"**—the state churches, by their relation to secular governments; and **other denominations, by seeking the favor of the world.** And the term "Babylon"—confusion—may be appropriately applied to these bodies, **all professing to derive their doctrines from the Bible, yet divided into almost innumerable sects, with widely conflicting creeds and theories.** GC 383.1

What is it that moves people from God's kingdom to the Babylon? Rejecting God's design laws, accepting imposed law as God's law and thus practicing the methods of the confused world. This causes a multiplicity of different doctrines and religious laws or rules to be formed, and then uniting with human governments to pass these upon others.



From the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*:

In the professedly Christian world **many turn away from the plain teachings of the Bible and build up a creed from human speculations and pleasing fables**, and they point to their tower as a way to climb up to heaven. [Why? Because they have already accepted the lie about God's law and thus falsely believe they can create laws or religious rules or requirements] Men hang with admiration upon the lips of eloquence while it teaches that the transgressor shall not die, that salvation may be secured without obedience to the law of God. **If the professed followers of Christ would accept God's standard, it would bring them into unity; but so long as human wisdom is exalted above His Holy Word, there will be divisions and dissension.** [What is God's standard? His design laws, love, truth, freedom and others] **The existing confusion of conflicting creeds and sects is fitly represented by the term "Babylon,"** which prophecy (Revelation 14:8; 18:2) applies to the world-loving churches of the last days. PP 124.1

Revelation also calls the confused system of Babylon the harlot:

I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴ **The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold** and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. ⁵ And on her forehead a name *was* written:
MYSTERY,
BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Rev
17:1-5

The Harlot of Revelation is adorned in Purple, Scarlet and Gold. The Harlot is a counterfeit for Christ and God's people.

In the old Testament the High Priest, who represents Jesus wore four colors:

"They shall take the **gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread**, and the fine linen, and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, *and* scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, artistically worked. Exodus 28: 5,6

The harlot only has three colors, what color does the harlot **not** have? Blue—what does blue represent in this system and why does the harlot not have this color?

Blue represents the law of God, the harlot and those who identify with Babylon reject the law of God, which is design law, and embrace the imposed-type law of the world. (See Exodus 24, 9,10, 12, Numbers 15:37-39).

The High Priest wore a breast plate with 12 stones—what did that represent? The peoples of the earth tied to the High Priest's heart—and what was used to tie this symbol of the people of the earth to the High Priest's heart?



They shall bind the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod, **using a blue cord**, so that it is above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and so that the breastplate does not come loose from the ephod. Exodus 28:28

And what does the blue cord represent? **The law of love!** God's law of love is what binds us to Him, only His design does this.

From the book *Desire of Ages*:

The yoke that binds to service is the law of God. The great law of love revealed in Eden, **proclaimed upon Sinai**, and in the new covenant **written in the heart, is that which binds the human worker to the will of God.** {DA 329.3}

The false religions of the world, including false Christianity deny God's design law of love; they don't deny the 10 Commandments but they replace the 10 Commandments with an imposed view of the law—rules enacted and enforced by a ruling authority. Thus, they teach religious obligations, ceremonies, rituals, at the expense of loving people. Thus, they are represented by the Harlot with no blue thread.

Today, God is waiting for a group of people to take the true message of His character, law, and government to the world calling people back to worship Him who made the heavens, earth and waters.

SUNDAY

The title for the day is God's Sovereignty—what does this mean? Is God in control? Of what? God is in control of what God controls—and what does God control?

God controls Himself and His design laws.

Does God ever take control of people forcing their wills, making them puppets?

Why not? It would be a violation of the law of liberty—love only exists in an atmosphere of freedom. If God were to violate someone's freewill then they would have their individuality overwritten, their capacity to love destroyed and would become a robot. God will not do this.

Thus, God doesn't control people—this is why bad things happen in this world in “which God is in control.” Because God is not in control of what people choose; He is in control of Himself and His laws, and one of the laws He controls, by sustaining its existence and operation, is the law of liberty, which gives people freedom to act—including to act against God.



Thus, rightly understood, when we see someone choose evil, we realize they are only able to choose it because God is in control of the laws of the universe, including the law of liberty which allows this person to choose evil.

But, when people choose evil they choose to damage themselves—always—because sin is damaging to the sinner, because it violates the laws upon which life and health are built.

So, with this in mind, how do we understand the description in Scripture that “the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his (Nebuchadnezzar’s) hand?” (Daniel 1:2 NKJV).

We understand that God set the king free to reap what the king chose, to be free of God and God’s methods and ways. And when God set him free the king of Babylon did what selfish people naturally do, they seek to dominate others and Babylon invaded and took Judah captive.

The lesson asks, “Why does God give Judah and Jerusalem into the hands of the Babylonians?”

Was God punishing them? No!

What is the context of the Old Testament? Remember Genesis 3:15, God promised Adam and Eve a Savior was coming to crush the serpent and save humanity. The context of Scripture is the coming Messiah to save us and Satan working to obstruct that plan.

Remember the 10 tribes to the north have already been successfully erased, assimilated and no longer available to be a special people teaching the truth about God or be the avenue for the Messiah. Only two tribes remain and they were being infected with pagan worship practices that threatened to destroy them as a people also.

Did the Babylonian captivity destroy the last two tribes, or did it work to stop the slide into paganism and establish a remnant who retained a knowledge of Scripture and an avenue for the Messiah?

So, God’s permitting of this captivity was not for punishment of sin, but for the obstructing of Satan’s plan; it was to keep open the avenue for Messiah. It was therapeutic—though painful, it was an act of love and mercy.

Read the last paragraph, “As we face the challenges...” What do you think of the idea that God drives the forces of history through His sovereignty?

Does this mean God drove Judah into rebellion so that Babylon would take them captive?

No! In my view, to rightly understand these things we must realize there are two antagonistic systems fighting it out on planet earth—God and His kingdom of truth, love and freedom, against Satan and his kingdom of lies, selfishness and coercion. If we forget this, then we invariably end up attributing the evil originating with Satan to God.



MONDAY

Read first paragraph, “Upon arrival...” Tuesday’s lesson points out that the captives didn’t object to the name changes like they did the food—why?

Why did they draw the line of no compromise where they drew it? What is the underlying principle? What can we learn for application to us today?

Was it primarily about vegetarianism? Do we think Daniel and his three friends were vegetarians before being taken captive? Would they have celebrated Passover? Doesn’t the Passover celebration require eating the sacrificial lamb?

So, it doesn’t seem the issue is primarily one of a vegetarian diet—even though diet has a huge health impact and thus a mental wellness impact.

What was it about? It was about character, about choice. The line they drew was the line of their choices in governance of themselves.

The goal of a corrupting power is to get the person to **willfully choose to participate with the corruption**, even in small, seemingly insignificant ways. It isn’t initially about the potential damage of the initial choice, but to get them to choose to violate their standards, **because in choosing we change ourselves**.

The issue with the names was not what Daniel and his three friends chose, but what others chose to call them. The issue with the food however, was what they choose to do in governance of themselves. They didn’t seek to get others to conform to their way of living or practicing, but it was their choice not to cross lines they believed would violate their conscience, which was sensitive to God’s design.

This is why Satan had to get Adam and Eve to choose to take of the Tree of Knowledge—it wasn’t that the Tree of Knowledge was poisonous, but the choice of distrusting God is what changed them.

It is always Satan’s goal to get us to choose, even on something that seems in itself harmless—like a piece of non-poisonous fruit—the act of choosing changes us.

Brain science of those who become physically addicted to substances involuntarily, (i.e. they were given an IV infusion of the addicting meds) were compared with those who chose to take the opiates.

In the brain regions where we experience pleasure and reward both groups had the same negative brain changes. However, in the orbital pre-frontal cortex, where we experience a conviction of wrong-doing (i.e. our consciences) only those who chose to self-administer the drugs experienced negative brain changes here. (The Journal of Global Drug Policy and Practice:

<http://www.globaldrugpolicy.org/Issues/Vol%202%20Issue%202/Neurobiology%20of%20Addiction%20and%20the%20Adolescent%20Brain.pdf>



Surg Neurol Int. 2011; 2: 19. Published online 2011 Feb 21. doi: [10.4103/2152-7806.76977](https://doi.org/10.4103/2152-7806.76977))

The point, we must choose in order for our consciences to be seared and characters corrupted.

So the lines we draw are the lines in governance of self—we do not choose what other people do or what others call us.

TUESDAY

The lesson points out the conflict over diet and Daniel and friends challenge of a 10-day test. The concern of the overseer was that Daniel and his friends would become unhealthy—why did the Babylonian captain have this concern?

Because, being a product of his culture, he believed a lie about what was actually healthy.

Today, we see this all the time, where people are raised to believe a certain practice, idea, way of doing things and are resistant to change:

- Germ theory was resisted by physicians when proposed by Pasteur and Lister
- Hypertension as a medical problem that needed treatment also resisted
- The health damaging effects to most people of most animal products, is resisted (Why did I say to most people of most animal products, rather than all people of all animal products?)
- The rejection of the legal views of the plan of salvation and the embracing of design law—worshiping the Creator and His plan to heal His people.

Read last paragraph, “As we look into the interaction...” “After all, what could be a better diet than the one God originally gave us?”

Of course—there can be no better diet than the one God originally gave us—but what is the problem with this statement?

It assumes that we can have that diet today—we cannot—who has access to the Tree of Life? Who has access to any plant-based food that has not been tainted by genetic and environmental decay and corruption?

All nature groans under the weight of sin—plants are not as God created them. In Eden; there were no thorns, thistles, or toxic, poisonous plants in Eden. There was no poison ivy, no death angel mushrooms, no nightshade or hemlock. There was no genetically modified foods, which evidence suggests contribute to obesity and inflammatory diseases.

Despite the fact that we do not have access to the diet that God originally gave us, the evidence supports that plant-based whole food, organic, non-GMO diets are healthiest for MOST people. But



some people have genetic or other health issues that require them to eat various animal products to maintain their best health.

I will include only one quotation from one of the founders of the SDA church who initiated the entire SDA health practices:

Do not go to extremes in regard to the health reform. Some of our people are very careless in regard to health reform. But because some are far behind, **you must not, in order to be an example to them, be an extremist. You must not deprive yourself of that class of food which makes good blood.** Your devotion to true principles is leading you to submit yourself to a diet which is giving you an experience **that will not recommend health reform.** This is your danger. When you see that you are becoming weak physically, it is essential for you to make changes, and at once. **Put into your diet something you have left out. It is your duty to do this. Get eggs of healthy fowls. Use these eggs cooked or raw.** Drop them uncooked into the best unfermented wine you can find. This will supply that which is necessary to your system. Do not for a moment suppose that it will not be right to do this.... CD 204.1

This is what I love about this author—she always promotes principles of health, not conformity to rules.

The bottom green section asks what is it about Daniels' free choice that opens the way for God to act?

What do you think of this question? Why does Daniel need to choose if God is sovereign in working out His will?

Because God is sovereign over God and God's laws—and God's sovereignty is in running God's universe upon God's design laws, one of which is the law of liberty.

What God wants is our love, trust, loyalty, devotion and restoration to His perfect design. This is only possible in us by our choosing—it is our exercising our freewill choices to participate with God that we experience God's presence and healing power and are actually healed and transformed. thoughts?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, "Daniel and his companions..." Why do you think in the OT Levitical system people who served in the Temple could have no blemishes?

Because it was theater—it acted out or represented a larger reality—what?

It represented sinners restored to righteousness. Thus, within the theater, only the healthy, those without blemish, could represent those who have been healed from sin. If people had blemishes then it would send the false signal that God will take to heaven those who remained sinful in character.



Why don't we require this of all who hold church office today? Why don't we require all our pastors and church leaders to be without any blemishes, no skin cancers, no strokes, no vitiligo, no rosacea, no blindness or deafness—why not?

Because we are not acting out theater, we are living out reality and physical deformities or health problems were just symbolic of sickness of heart, mind and character, they are not actual character defects. Today it is about reality that matters. Today we should NOT allow people with untreated malignancy of character to be in leadership of our churches, only those who though infected with sinfulness, are actively partaking God's treatment and being healed should be permitted into leadership positions.

If we don't apply the OT rules prohibiting those with blemishes from being in leadership in the church, why do we apply the rules prohibiting women from being in leadership?

Read second paragraph, "God honors..." How do you read this? What does it mean?

Does it mean because they kept the rule God gave, God used His divine power to miraculously give them better health? Or, is this a result of living in harmony with God's design laws, which bring us ever closer to our Creator, which is always healing to us?

Why do the commandments say the sins pass down three and four generations—is God using His power to inflict suffering on our children and grandchildren for our sins—or is it describing design law—the law of genetics, epigenetics and the influences of parenting?

Is it just the physical laws of health—of eating nutritious foods that are at work with Daniel and his friends?

I would suggest no—it is even more about having a clear conscience, doing what they believe is right. When we violate our consciences, we make negative brain changes that impair pre-frontal cortex activity and critical reasoning skills. Further, we activate stress circuits which increase inflammatory stress on the body contributing to further negative brain changes which undermine thinking and learning. Further, stress impairs sleep, and memories consolidate in sleep, so clear conscience with sound sleep improves not only thinking, but memory retention.

Are such blessings only because God acts in a supernatural way to give abilities, or are they a result of living in harmony with God and His designs for life?

And when we live in harmony with God and His designs and seek Him with a sincere heart, do we place ourselves in a position to receive from God greater insights, wisdom, understanding, abilities, knowledge, than we would ever be able to learn on our own?



THURSDAY

The lesson points out that Daniel and his friends, in their education in Babylon, had to learn about the Babylonian gods, their mystical and pagan practices and become knowledge experts in these systems of thought.

What lessons do we learn from this?

Isn't it a law, that by beholding we are changed? (The law of worship) Why were Daniel and his friends not corrupted by studying these subjects?

Because Daniel and his friends made it their daily routine to submit themselves to God, open their minds to God, seek **FIRST** the truth about God and then filter all they learned in Babylon through the truth of God. Thus, anything in Babylon that was true they could believe and practice, and anything that was false they could understand but categorize as false and not practice.

In my residency, I had to read all the major psychiatric theorists (Freud, Jung, Adler and many others). Their writings are essentially godless and very intellectual. They absolutely have the ability to change a person and this is one of the reasons that the field of psychiatry has the highest percentage of physicians who do not believe in God than any other specialty.

I could feel the pull, the pressure, these writings were having on me, so during my residency for every hour I spent reading these theorists I spent two hours reading the Bible and other Christians writings. I worked to filter what I was reading through Scripture retaining that which was true and rejecting those parts which were not.

This was quite difficult, but doable with, deep study and continual mindset of prayer seeking the leading of the Spirit of Truth. My book *Could It Be This Simple?* was a result of these years of study.

I realized Freud was correct about the ID, the carnal nature, and its primary drives of pleasure-seeking and aggression that lead us to temptation. Sullivan was right that we have a primary drive to seek relationships—which I understand was built into us by God. Beck was right that our feelings follow what we choose to believe and thus by identifying unhealthy thoughts and replacing them with healthy thoughts we can experiencing healing.

I think Daniel and his friends did this, they studied these systems of the Babylon, but stayed grounded in the truth about God first and this is how they were blessed with wisdom to discern the truth from the error.

The last paragraph states the Cyrus was chosen by God to liberate God's people. What does this mean? Does it mean that God over-rod Cyrus's freewill?



Why was Cyrus chosen? Was it because God, in His foreknowledge, knew Cyrus would have a heart sensitive to the Holy Spirit and seek to do that which was right, in harmony with God's kingdom, and be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit?

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Class will NOT meet January 18 due to the Power of Love Training and Equipping Course. We will discuss lessons 4 and 5 on January 11. Lesson 4 will be discussed from 9:20 to 10:20 and lesson 5 from 10:30 to 11:30. We will resume meeting again at our regular time on January 25.

Questions: If you have questions please email them either at requests@comeandreason.com or topics@comeandreason.com. If you post on Facebook it is likely they will not be answered as I often miss questions posted on Facebook.

PODCAST: Come and Reason with Dr. Tim Jennings weekly Podcast is now broadcasting, please follow us.

REASONETTES: Recently I began drawing cartoons and have started a new section on our website entitled *Reasonettes*. They are illustrations designed to make a point inviting you to think and reason about an idea or issue. Be sure to visit our website or Facebook page each Tuesday for a new cartoon. I hope you enjoy them.

January 17-19, 2020: The Power of Love Training and Equipping Course. If you would like to be prepared to more effectively share this message then come to this course. More details will be forthcoming shortly. Allen Texas (30 miles north of DFW airport). See events.comeandreason.com for more details and to sign up.

February 8, 2020: Come and Reason Class will meet at Bake Crafters at 10673 S Lee Hwy, McDonald, TN 37353 for this Sabbath only. Class will start at our regular time.

March 27,28, 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at an AACC River Conference at Plano, TX. More info at <http://theriverconference.com/>

April 17,18, 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Lakewood SDA church in Lakewood OH.

September 17-19 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC National Conference in Dallas, TX

October 3, 2020: Come and Reason will have a one day seminar in Chattanooga TN on Healing the Mind, Recovering from Sexual Abuse, the Impact of Digital Media on Kids and more. Details coming soon.