

OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 6, 2022

Daniel 1–6

“THERE IS NO OTHER GOD THAT CAN DELIVER”

Summary: *Daniel 1. Daniel and certain Hebrews are trained in the court of Nebuchadnezzar—They eat plain food and drink no wine—God gives them knowledge and wisdom beyond all others.*

Daniel 2. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is revealed to Daniel—The king saw a great image, a stone cut from the mountain without hands destroyed the image, and the stone grew and filled the whole earth—The stone is the latter-day kingdom of God.

Daniel 3. Nebuchadnezzar creates a golden image and commands all men to worship it—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refuse and are cast into the fiery furnace—They are preserved and come out unharmed.

Daniel 4. Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great tree, describing the king’s fall and madness—The king learns that the Most High rules and sets the basest of men over earthly kingdoms.

Daniel 5. Belshazzar and his revelers drink from the vessels of the temple—A hand writes upon the wall, telling of Belshazzar’s downfall—Daniel interprets the words and reproves the king for pride and idolatry—That night Babylon is conquered.

Daniel 6. Darius makes Daniel the first of his presidents—Daniel worships the Lord in defiance of a decree of Darius—He is cast into the den of lions—His faith saves him, and Darius decrees that all people are to revere the God of Daniel.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

Who wrote the Book of Daniel and what does it portray in its time?

“Although it is traditionally believed that the Book of

Daniel was written by Daniel himself, there are theories which ascribe the authorship of the book to four different authors, in an attempt to explain the wide span of years which the text covers. The majority of the book is written in Aramaic, which was the accepted language among the Jews during that era.” “Jewish settlements spread throughout the Persian empire. Jews rose to high positions and their communities were rich and powerful. The biblical books of Daniel and Esther give a vivid picture of Jewish life in Persia, and there are many references in the Prophets to Persian power.” “It is clear that the biblical account of Daniel shows his humble dedication to the Lord’s principles of proper living. His unswerving obedience to the “Word of Wisdom” is an example for many people today who are committed to observing their health code. “The trials and triumphs of Daniel are described in the Book of Daniel which is part of the third division of the Hebrew Bible, the Hagiographa. Although the Christian view lists Daniel among the prophets, the *Talmud* (Hebrew biblical

interpretations) does not consider him a prophet, but rather one of the wisest men of the world” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

What is, and when is Martyrdom acceptable?

“Jewish history is replete with examples of those willing to die for their faith from Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo, who in the Book of Daniel refused to worship an idol and thus endangered their lives, up to the present generation of Soviet Jews who suffer indescribable hardships rather than give up their Jewishness. Under Antiochus Epiphanes, Hellenizers applied violent methods toward the Jews. The Fourth Book of Maccabees is almost entirely a sermon on the meaning and glory of self-sacrifice. Whereas in Christian and Muslim thought martyrdom is chiefly regarded as the act of individuals warranting canonization as saints, in Judaism it remains a task for each and every Jew to fulfill if the appropriate moment should come.” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) In Jerusalem, at the Holocaust Memorial (*Yad Vashem*), a modern art wall sculpture by Holocaust survivor Naphtali Bezem expresses the Jewish idea of martyrdom. As the Jews are shown being led into annihilation chambers, a broken fish represents their spirits. Yet, the fish has wings, as if to say their suffering leads them to heaven.

This is a concept also stated in the Book of Mormon. “And when Amulek saw the pains of the women and children who were consuming in the fire, he also was pained; and he said unto Alma: How can we witness this awful scene? Therefore, let us stretch forth our hands, and exercise the power of God which is in us, and save them from the flames. But Alma said unto him: The Spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand; for behold the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory; and he doth suffer that they may do this thing, or that the people may do this thing unto them, according to the hardness of their hearts, that the judgments which he shall exercise upon them in his wrath may be just; and the blood of the innocent shall stand as a witness against them, yea, and cry mightily against them at the last day” (Alma 14:10-11)

How recent is the “Health Code,” nowadays called the “Word of Wisdom,” in true religion?

The Lord gave the children of Israel a law of health. It could be called a “Word of Wisdom” The Jews call it the correct, proper or fit way of living, the *Kashrut*, or being *kosher*. The word *kosher* is also used as meaning “correct.” The *Kashrut* has been modified throughout the ages, yet some basics still remain as were given on Mount Sinai. In this modern age, there are some Jews who will not eat meat because there are no sacrifices, and the meat cannot be prepared in the correct way. Others will only eat meat that is *kosher*, that is, slaughtered in the way sacrifices were originally done and only eating the parts of the animal as prescribed in the Law of Moses. It may be very enlightening to know the modern explanation of *Kashrut*, so it is included for your reference and comparison to the Word of Wisdom and better health practices. “The dietary laws affect a Jew every day of his life and aim to insure that the holiness of the Jewish nation will be preserved through the consumption of food which is fit and proper.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How was the ancient Health Code adjudicated?

“**Fruits and Vegetables:** From the point of view of the dietary laws, all fruits and vegetables are permitted. However, there are certain limitations on the drinking of wine, and in Erez Israel there

are restrictions applying to agricultural produce, such as the laws of tithes and Sabbatical years. However, the main concern of the dietary laws is which animals, birds and fish are fit to be eaten and how they must be prepared for consumption.”

“**Animals:** The Bible classifies those animals permitted to be eaten as *tahor* (“pure”) and those prohibited as *tamei* (“unclean”). Animals which are permissible must have two characteristics: they must chew the cud and have cloven hooves. Among these are cattle, sheep, goats and deer. Animals which have only one of the required characteristics are prohibited; for example, the camel and rabbit which chew their cud but do not have cloven hooves, and the pig which has cloven hooves but does not chew the cud. Altogether the Bible enumerates 42 unclean animals which are forbidden.”

“**Birds:** On the basis of the unclean birds mentioned in the Bible, the rabbis of the *Talmud* compiled a list of 24 birds which are forbidden, among them birds of prey such as the vulture, raven, eagle and hawk. Although the Bible does say which birds are not clean, it does not list the clean birds. The *Mishnah*, however, states their characteristics: they must have a crop, a gizzard which can be easily peeled off and an extra claw. Among these clean birds are domestic fowl, pigeon, and dove. Eggs from unclean birds are regarded as unclean and even the eggs of permitted birds are forbidden if they have been fertilized (usually indicated by the presence of a blood spot).”

“**Fish:** A fish is considered “clean” if it has fins and scales, which usually indicate a fish found in freshwater areas. Those without fins and scales usually live in the muddy, swampy areas and are considered unclean. In the category of unclean fish which are forbidden are shellfish such as lobster, clams, shrimp, and oysters.”

“**Insects:** Nearly all insects are considered unclean and may not be eaten. Some species of locusts are permitted as the *Talmud* gives a detailed description of them. Nowadays, however not enough is known about them and they are all forbidden. It is therefore important to carefully clean and examine vegetables where insects are apt to hide (such as cabbage, cauliflower, and romaine lettuce) in order to be sure that the insects will not be eaten with the

vegetable. Although the bee is a forbidden insect, its honey is permitted to be eaten.”

“Slaughtering: Dietary laws are more than mere enumerations of which animals, birds and fish may be eaten. Vital to the observance of *kashrut* are the laws regarding *shehitah* or ritual slaughter. The many complex and minute regulations about how an animal or bird may be slaughtered make it necessary that a carefully trained and licensed *shohet* perform the slaughter. It is his duty to carry out a careful examination of the animal after it has been slaughtered to make certain that there is no defect in any of its organs. Any defect that would have led to the animal’s death within a year makes the animal considered a terefah. It is absolutely prohibited for consumption. An animal which has died a natural death or was killed by any other means than *shehitah* (slaughtering) is called a *nevelah* (died—not slaughtered) and is forbidden to be eaten. None of the laws of *shehitah* apply to fish.”

“Forbidden Portions: After an animal has been ritually slaughtered there are certain unclean portions which must be removed before the animal may be prepared for eating. The sciatic nerve and the fatty portions (*helev*) attached to the stomach and intestines of the animal are among these parts which are forbidden to be eaten.”

“Koshering: After the *shehitah* and the removal of forbidden parts, the animal or bird must go through the process of “*koshering*” Based on the prohibition of eating blood, the purpose of *koshering* meat is to drain the meat and draw out the blood before it is cooked. This is accomplished by either soaking and salting the meat, or by broiling it over an open flame. If the salting-soaking process is used, the meat is soaked in clean cold water for 30 minutes, and then drained on a special grooved slanted board so that the blood may flow down. The meat is then sprinkled with salt (preferably coarse salt) which must be left on for one hour, and then it is rinsed in cold water two or three times. All the utensils for the procedure must be kept separately and used exclusively for the purpose of *koshering*. Such a procedure is not considered effective enough to kosher the liver which is full of blood. Therefore, liver may only be *koshered* over an open flame.”

“Milk and Meat: The koshering process completed, the meat is now ready to be cooked.

Here too, there are important dietary laws governing the preparation of meat. The *Torah* commands: “Thou shalt not cook a kid goat in its mother’s milk,” a command from which three distinct prohibitions are learned: cooking meat and milk together, eating meat and milk together, and deriving any benefit from their mixture. (Milk includes all dairy products such as butter, cheese, and cream). In order to insure that these prohibitions would be properly observed, the rabbis ordained that separate cooking utensils, dishes and cutlery be used for dairy and meat respectively. These must be washed separately and stored separately. According to the *Talmud*, one may not eat milk after meat in the same meal. From this prohibition, various customs about the waiting interval between meat and milk arose in different Jewish communities. The Eastern European Jews observe an interval of six hours between meat and milk, while Western Europeans wait three hours, and the Sephardim and the Dutch one hour. The necessity of a waiting interval between meat and milk is explained by the fact that meat takes longer to digest and has a tendency to become lodged between the teeth. However, owing to the fact that milk products are digested quickly, it is permissible to eat meat directly after dairy, provided the mouth is rinsed thoroughly first. After hard cheese, though, it is customary to wait a longer period, since hard cheese takes longer to digest. Imitation “milk” derived from coconuts and soybeans may be used with meat. Fruit, vegetables, eggs and fish are all “neutral” (*parve*) foods which may be eaten with milk or meat dishes. However, the rabbis prohibited eating fish and meat together on the grounds that such a combination is unhealthy.”

“Mixtures: If meat becomes mixed with dairy or if a forbidden food becomes mixed with a permitted food the ruling is as follows: If the quantity of the forbidden food is 1/60 or more of the mixture, it has “contaminated” the permitted food and the whole mixture is therefore forbidden. If the quantity of forbidden food is less than 1/60, the mixture is permitted provided that the forbidden food was not added intentionally for the purpose of affecting the taste. Many packaged foods sold on the market today contain such forbidden mixtures and therefore are not *kasher*. Among these are cookies, cakes and bread which contain animal

fats. In accordance with the prohibition of forbidden mixtures, the precaution that the milk of an unclean animal should not become mixed with the milk of a clean animal gave rise to the Jewish custom of drinking *halav Yisrael* (Israel milk), milk obtained and bottled under the supervision of a Jew. This ensures that no forbidden substances will be added to the milk. However, in modern times, since state laws prohibit such mixtures and since “unclean” milk is more expensive than “clean” milk and would probably not be mixed, many authorities permit the use of milk which has not been supervised by Jews. Nevertheless, the very pious still observe the custom of using *halav Yisrael*.”

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

Who would say, “I’d rather die than eat that!)?

“Throughout the ages Jews have endangered their lives and even died as martyrs to faithfully observe the dietary laws. During the period of the Greek rule of *Erez* (land of) Israel (second century B.C.E.) many Jews chose to die rather than eat the unclean foods which the Greeks forced upon them. In peril of their lives, Jews carried out the laws of ritual slaughter during the Crusades. The Marranos of the Inquisition, the Cantonists of Czarist Russia, and the inmates of Nazi concentration camps all remained steadfastly faithful to the laws of Kashrut, despite all threats.” “Attempts have been made to explain the dietary laws in various ways. Many thinkers (including Maimonides (1138-1204) have seen the dietary laws as hygienic precautions and have attempted to prove that all forbidden foods are unwholesome. Others have attempted to give the philosophical reasons for *Kashrut*. One such explanation is that Kashrut hallows the common act of eating and preserves the holiness of the soul through the cleanliness of the foods which the body consumes.

However, the observance of *Kashrut* is not dependent on any explanation since the *Torah* commands the dietary laws without giving a reason. Therefore, a *halakhic Midrash* (*Torah* expounded) states “Let not a man say, ‘I do not like the flesh of swine.’ On the contrary, he should say, ‘I like it but must not eat it since the *Torah* has forbidden it.”

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

What is a purpose of the constant conquering of the land of Israel?

One significant historical fact that recurs is the constant takeover of the little land of Israel. Archaeology shows close to thirty major different levels of conquering and habitation. The conqueror’s quest was to secure the “Crossroads of the East.” It reached from the north, sometimes governed by Assyrians, Babylonians and others and extended south to Egypt and the gateway to Africa. Babylon (today’s Iraq) was one of the major conquerors. “From more than two thousand years before the start of the Common Era, the Babylonian Empire went through many changes of rulers and dynasties. In 612 B.C.E. Nebuchadnezzar became the ruler of Babylonia and shortly afterwards, in 586 B.C.E., conquered Judea, destroying the Temple and exiling the Jews to Babylonia. These exiles formed a large Jewish community who yearned for their homeland; as we read in [Psalm 137](#): “By the rivers of Babylon we sat and cried, remembering Zion . . . How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.” “Babylon, the capital city of ancient Babylonia, is called by Isaiah “the glory of kingdoms.” Over the years the city was destroyed, rebuilt, then destroyed and rebuilt once again. When the Neo-Babylonian Empire was built at the expense of the Assyrian Empire, Babylon was made the capital of the new Empire, and underwent a vast program of public building and fortification. In excavations of Babylon, two palaces of King Nebuchadnezzar have been uncovered. One of them is assumed to be the location of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, considered in ancient times to have been amongst the Seven Wonders of the World.” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) In 586 B.C.E., Nebuchadnezzar captured the city of Jerusalem, and on the biblical date of *Tish’ah be-Av* (the 9th of the biblical month - Av) he had the temple destroyed, carried off a large part of the population into captivity, and put Zedekiah and other Judean notables to death. “Daniel and the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel were eyewitnesses to all these events and the biblical books bearing their names testify to the political and spiritual crises which confronted Judea during this period. According to the Book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar suffered greatly for

destroying the Temple. He was beset by dreams which he could not understand. One of them, a vision of a magnificent tree cut down in its prime was interpreted by Daniel for the king as a personal warning of many years of madness that were about to come upon him, during which time he would eat grass and live like an animal.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

What connection can be made between prayers, dreams, and images?

Prayer, alone as well as those who accompanied him, led Daniel through Nebuchadnezzar’s confusing dreams. The children of Israel have always thought and spoken in illustrative imagery. The Old Testament has less than 8,700 different words, the English Old Testament has about 14,000, so often, the illustrative capacity of the prophets is expressed through the images that are given. Hence, Daniel was able to interpret the king’s dreams using “the learning of the Jews” as well as being “highly favored of the Lord.” (See **1 Nephi 1:1-2**) “Dreams have fascinated people through the ages. The Biblical view was that dreams are divine communication—events transpiring on a supernatural plane. Thus, dreams were regarded as omens, which could be interpreted only by visionaries or prophets, who were in touch with this “divine dimension.” In the Bible, “dreamer,” “prophet,” and “magician” are related terms. Joseph was one such interpreter; he explained Pharaoh’s dreams of the fat and thin cows as symbolizing seven years of plenty followed by seven years of hunger. (**Genesis 41**) God’s promise to Abraham about the inheritance of the land of Israel came in a dream (**Genesis 15**) and Samuel’s first prophecies were stimulated by God’s calling to him in a dream (**Samuel 1:3**). (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) One of the often-used images in dreams, visions, and general instruction was of stone. Here are some examples affecting altars and temples: “And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.” (**Genesis 28:18**) “And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth.” (**Genesis 28:22**) “And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.” (**Genesis 31:45**) “Therefore thus saith the Lord

GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” (**Isaiah 28:16**) . . . made without hands . . . “And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.” (**Exodus 20:25**) “And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.” (**1 Kings 6:7**) Other images of the Lord: “But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel. . .” (**Genesis 49:24**) “Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.” (**Leviticus 26:1**) “And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.” (**Deuteronomy 4:28**) . . . his steadfastness . . . “His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.” (**Job 41:24**) . . . the “Chief Cornerstone” is rejected . . . “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.” (**Psalms 118:22**) “Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?” (**Matthew 21:42**) “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,” (**1 Peter 2:4-7**) The word of the Lord as an image: “And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.” (**Exodus 24:12**) The image of defender of Israel: “And David put his

hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.” (1 Samuel 17:49) The Prophets and Apostles – an image of the Lord: “And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.” (John 1:42) “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;” (Ephesians 2:20)

How much more imagery is connected to stone, rocks, and gems of the earth?

Stones or rocks are still placed on Jewish graves as reminders of the stone temple and an innate desire (expressed in the grave/burial prayer) to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Apparently, it was and will be made with stone - and the Rock of Salvation will come to that temple! Gold and silver represent the wealthy nation of Babylon and the term “gold and silver” is a commodity as well as a metaphor for wealth. When used properly, it is pleasing and used considerably in the temple construction. When misused, it represents a snare and detriment to a godly life. “Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.” (Exodus 20:23) “And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph’s hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;” (Genesis 41:42) “Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks’ mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord’s house silver or gold?” (Genesis 44:8) “And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.” (Numbers 22:18) “The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God.” (Deuteronomy 7:25) “But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living

. . . It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.” (Job 28:12-15) “Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.” (Psalms 119:127) “How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!” (Proverbs 16:16) “They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity.” (Ezekiel 7:19) “Awake, O kings of the earth! Come ye, O, come ye, with your gold and your silver, to the help of my people, to the house of the daughters of Zion.” (Doctrine & Covenants 124:11) “Behold, the great day of the Lord is at hand; and who can abide the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Let us, therefore, as a church and a people, and as Latter-day Saints, offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; and let us present in his holy temple, when it is finished, a book containing the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptation.” (Doctrine & Covenants 128:24)

How does an initial image of “softness” lead to a “solid” witness of the Lord?

Another metaphor used to denote hardness and obstinacy is brass and iron, yet in proper use they have a value of strength. “For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.” (Psalms 107:16) “I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.” (Isaiah 45:2) “Because I knew that thou [art] obstinate, and thy neck [is] an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;” (Isaiah 48:4) “Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.” (Micah 4:13) Clay usually indicates

the formation and shaping of God's people, even as a creative metaphor in that we are "formed out of clay" (**Job 33:6**). In this sense, some suggest the European nations were "formed" or "shaped" out of other ancient nations. "But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." (**Isaiah 64:8**) "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make

it." (**Jeremiah 18:4**) "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." (**Jeremiah 18:6**) Analyzing the various metaphors, we can also see that beyond the riches and apparent beauty of man's creations, what is more solid, prevailing and will continue to exist into eternity is our relationship to the "Rock" or "Stone," the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords!