take time **8 November** **Daniel 1:1-7** read

http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel%201:1-7&version=NKJV

Deported

study

Seventh century BC. Cruel wars shake the Middle East. Behind the scenes, God pulls the strings of world politics. The great Assyrian empire is declining. Medes, Chaldeans and Egyptians are ready to take over. Between the fronts is the small kingdom of Judah. The winners are the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. In 605BC, he has Jerusalem on his list of cities to be conquered. It will fall only 20 years later, but King Jehoiakim has to submit already now. God had predicted this judgment already a long time ago (Jeremiah 25:9).

At first Nebuchadnezzar has only some young men from the aristocracy deported, in order to have them trained as government officials in Babylon. Among them are Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. First act of re-education: They receive Chaldean names.

ans-wer

1. Which names do they get? What is the purpose, and what danger is there for their faith?
2. Why is Nebuchadnezzar so interested in these four?

in-form

The first of the four world empires is the empire of the Chaldeans. It is also called the new-babylonian empire. It took the position as the strongest power of the Orient from the Assyrian empire at the battle of Karkemish (609BC). The Chaldeans (v4) were one of its core nations. The capital Babylon was situated in the plain of Shinar (v2). The empire included Syria, parts of Arabia, Egypt and Iraq. It lasted for only 70 years.

think

Use your abilities for the service of God!

note down

1. Daniel – Belteshazzar, Hananiah – Shadrach, Mishael – Meshach, Azariah – Abednego. A name gives you an identity. The four Jews were in danger to not feel like part of the Jewish nation and for their relationship to God to be impaired. – Something else: If someone gives someone a new name he shows that he is in charge of the other person's life. In a positive sense, this is true of God: He did so with Jacob (Genesis 32:29), and He will also do it in the future (Revelation 2:17). 2. They are noble, healthy, good looking, educated and able to work (vv3-4). Nebuchadnezzar was therefore interested in having them work in his administration. – God gives you abilities, which can be enhanced through good training. You have to face the decision whether you want to use your abilities for God or for the world (of which Babylon is an illustration).