



Black History School

God's Glory...Our Story

Biblically based • Culturally relevant • Education as liberation

BHS Overview

Black History School (BHS) relates powerful stories from the past to our present. By studying the similarities between selected passages from the Book of Daniel with certain aspects of Black History, we will discover the transformative influence we can have in the world today.

Lesson Aim:

To highlight how God leads and guides God's people – even through traumatic transitions.

Carried Away

Daniel 1:1-7

¹ In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² The Lord gave King Jehoiakim of Judah into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar, and he placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods. ³ Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility: ⁴ young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵ The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court. ⁶ Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah. ⁷ The palace master gave them other names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

Discussion:

In Daniel 1:1-7, the narrative provides a glimpse into the experiences of Daniel and his companions during Babylonian captivity, a period marked by colonization, indoctrination, and assimilation. The Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Jerusalem and exiled many Israelites to Babylon. This act of colonization stripped them of their homeland, forcing them into a foreign culture and environment. The displacement was not merely geographical; it was a profound disruption of their cultural identity.

Definitions¹

colonization: the act of taking control of an area or a country that is not your own, especially using force, and sending people from your own country to live there.

indoctrination: the act or process of forcing somebody to accept a particular belief or set of beliefs and not allowing them to consider any others.

assimilation: the process of making an idea, a person's attitude, etc. fit into something or be acceptable

¹<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/colonization>

The Babylonians sought to impose their way of life on the captives, initiating a process of indoctrination designed to reshape their beliefs, practices, and allegiances. Assimilation is evident as the Babylonians attempted to integrate the captives into their society by renaming them and instructing them in the language and literature of Babylon.

Daniel and his friends faced the challenge of navigating this complex cultural landscape while maintaining their faith and identity. Despite external pressure to conform, they remained steadfast in their commitment to their religious principles and cultural heritage. The passage serves as a powerful example of how individuals confronted with colonization and indoctrination can resist assimilation and maintain their distinct identity through unwavering conviction and resilience.

Exile:

From Egyptian Occupation to Babylonian Exile



Enslavement:

Transatlantic Slave Trade



Black History Parallel - *The Transatlantic Slave Trade:*

While seemingly disparate at first glance, the transatlantic slave trade and Daniel 1:1-7 share striking similarities in themes of displacement, forced migration, and resilience. In both instances, individuals experienced the traumatic upheaval of being uprooted from familiar surroundings. Daniel and his friends faced forced relocation to Babylon, leaving behind their homeland and cultural context. Similarly, during the transatlantic slave trade, millions of Africans were forcibly taken from their homes, transported across the Atlantic Ocean, and subjected to a life of servitude in a foreign land.

Colonization, indoctrination, assimilation, family separation, and the challenges of adaptation to a new environment were common threads in both narratives. Furthermore, the individuals in both situations demonstrated remarkable resilience and strength, whether it was Daniel maintaining his faith and cultural identity in Babylon or the enslaved Africans finding ways to preserve their heritage and resist dehumanization in the face of oppression. Exploring these parallels helps deepen our understanding of the human experience in times of immense adversity and underscores the importance of acknowledging historical injustices to foster empathy and promote justice in the present day.

Acts 17:26 reminds us that God created one human race, emphasizing our shared ancestry and interconnectedness. The unfortunate reality is that the transatlantic slave trade was fueled by greed, with capitalists attempting to justify their brutal actions through the creation of "race science." This pseudoscience aimed to categorize and "other" people of a darker hue, falsely asserting that they belonged to a different, inferior race. Such ideologies were propagated to legitimize the subjugation and dehumanization of African people for the economic gains of the colonizers. Understanding this historical context is crucial in acknowledging the role of greed and systemic exploitation in perpetuating racial injustices and serves as a call to dismantle these unjust systems in the pursuit of a more just and equitable world.

Showcase Your Skills

Make the Match:

ANSWERS

1. Nebuchadnezzar
2. People/Israelites
3. To be allowed to eat vegetables and drink water.
4. The brutal sea journey from Africa to the Americas for enslaved Africans.
5. Enslaved individuals

DIRECTIONS: Write the number of the answer next to the corresponding question.

QUESTIONS:

- Who was the king of Babylon mentioned in Daniel 1:1?
- What was the Middle Passage?
- What did the Babylonians take from Jerusalem to Babylon?
- Who resisted the assimilation and dehumanization during slavery?
- What did Daniel propose to the chief official regarding the food?