

DANIEL - Chapter 1- The Deportation of Daniel (& Friends) to Babylon

DN-02

CARRIED AWAY INTO CAPTIVITY

It is hard to imagine in true living color the events as King Nebuchadnezzar came to besiege the city carry away the remnant of Judah to Babylon. King Zedekiah had failed to remain true to his trust, but more than that he “rebelled against the prophets, against his benefactor (Nebuchadnezzar) and against his God.” Notice the following statement from Prophets and Kings page 450-51:

Foremost among those who were rapidly leading the nation to ruin was Zedekiah their king. Forsaking utterly the counsels of the Lord as given through the prophets, forgetting the debt of gratitude he owed Nebuchadnezzar, violating his solemn oath of allegiance taken in the name of the Lord God of Israel, Judah's king rebelled against the prophets, against his benefactor, and against his God. In the vanity of his own wisdom he turned for help to the ancient enemy of Israel's prosperity, "sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people."

Though the Egyptians endeavored to come and rescue Judah, the word of the Lord had gone forth and the impending fate of the nation was certain. But God would not forsake His people in their captivity.

DANIEL PROPOSED IN HIS HEART

There are many lessons we can learn from the book of Daniel, even from the first chapter. The day may come when we might be carried away to a distant land. One thing is for sure, if we fail as a people to learn the lessons God designed for us to learn, we will learn them under unfavorable circumstances.

The remnant of Judah were to go into captivity, to learn through adversity the lessons they had refused to learn under circumstances more favorable. From this decree of the holy Watcher there could be no appeal. {PK 453.1}

Oh, the need for young people to stay true to their trust in this our day, for as in the time of Daniel, when it was “the hope of the nation” to remain faithful to God, so it will be again for young people and old alike to “preserve their integrity” when the crisis hits not only our church, but the world.

*When the Jews were dispersed from Jerusalem, there were among them young men and women who were firm as a rock to principle, men and women who had not pursued a course to make the Lord ashamed to call them His people. These were sad at heart for the backsliding which they could not prevent. These innocent ones must suffer with the guilty; but God would give them strength sufficient for their day. It was to them that the message of encouragement was sent. **The hope of the nation lay in those young men and maidens who would preserve their integrity.** And in their captivity these obedient ones had an influence over their idolatrous companions. Had all who were taken captive held firmly to correct principles, they would have imparted light in every place where they were scattered. But they remained impenitent, and still heavier punishment came upon them. Their calamities were sent for their purification. **God would bring them to the place where they would be instructed (MS 151, 1899).***

Daniel 1:8

As we come to the highlight verse of the chapter we find that Daniel and his three friends were given a test, back in verse 5. So after carefully considering the matter, Daniel “purposed” in his heart, i.e. set, determined, made up his mind.

“But Daniel purposed in his heart that *he would not defile himself* with the portion of the *king’s meat*, nor with *the wine* which he drank: therefor he requested of the prince of the eunuchs *that he might not defile himself.*”

Notice the focal point of this chiasitic structure (Hebraic style of writing)

Daniel purposed in his heart:

- a That he would not defile himself
- b King’s meat
- b King’s wine
- a That he might not defile himself

Reason for
Health msg



Why did Daniel and his companions refuse to eat at the king's table? Why did they refuse his meats and wines? -- Because they had been taught that this class of food would not keep the mind or the physical structure in the very best condition of health to do God's service. These youth urged most earnestly that the one who had charge of their food should not compel them to partake of the king's luxuries, or drink of his wine. They begged him to try them ten days only, and then examine them, and decide by their physical appearance whether their abstemious diet would be to their disadvantage. When they came in for examination, the result was decidedly in their favor.
– RC 143.2 {SpTA09 60.1}

It was otherwise with the youth who had eaten of the luxuries of the king's table, and drank of his wine. The clear sparkle of the eye was gone, the ruddy, healthful glow had disappeared from the countenance. The four Hebrew captives were thereafter permitted to have the diet they had chosen. What effect did it have upon mind and character? They had conscientiously refused the stimulus of flesh and of wine. They obeyed God's will in self-denial, and he showed his approval. He desired his servants to honor him by their adherence to steadfast principle in all their habits of life. Their countenances would be a certificate of physical soundness and moral purity. {SpTA09 60.2}

In verses 12-21, we have similar pattern. As we’ve learned this is how the Bible authors wrote. The style is very much Hebrew.

- A – Daniel and three friends -vs.11
 - B – Prove thy servants -vs.12
 - C – At the end of ten days (countenance examined-‘fairer and fatter’) -vs.15
 - D – **God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning** -vs.17
 - D – **Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams** -vs.17
 - C – At the end of the days (king examines at end of collegiate studies) -vs.18
 - B – Found ten times better -vs.20
- A – Daniel and three friends -vs.21

This request they did not prefer in a defiant spirit, but as if soliciting a great favor. The appearance of Daniel and his companions was like what every youth's should be. They were courteous, kind, respectful, possessing the grace of meekness and modesty. And the good behavior of these youth obtained favor for them. Of Daniel we read, "God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs." And now as Daniel and his fellows were brought to the test, they placed themselves fully on the side of righteousness and truth. They did not move capriciously, but intelligently. They decided that as flesh-meat had not composed their diet in the past, it should not come into their diet in the future, and as wine had been prohibited to all who should engage in the service of God, they determined that they would not partake of it. The fate of the sons of Aaron had been presented before them, and they knew that the use of wine would confuse their senses, that the indulgence of appetite would becloud their powers of discernment. These particulars were placed on record in the history of the children of Israel as a warning to every youth to avoid all customs and practises and indulgences that would in any way dishonor God. {YI, August 18, 1898 par. 9}

The history of Daniel and his youthful companions has been recorded on the pages of the inspired word for the benefit of the youth of all succeeding ages. Through the record of their fidelity to the principles of temperance, God is speaking today to young men and young women, bidding them gather up the precious rays of light He has given on the subject of Christian temperance, and place themselves in right relation to the laws of health. {MYP 243.2}

Next Week....Chapter two—The First Death Decree! Are you Ready?