

APPLICATION

Is there something that you are doing that is not pleasing to God? It may feel good. Everyone else may be doing it. It may help make you more popular. But is it what your loving Heavenly Father thinks is best for you?

Take time to pray and ask God if there is anything in your life that is not pleasing to Him. It may be a big thing or it may seem like a little thing. Daniel chose to obey God even in the little things and God greatly used his life.

God wants to use your life. He wants to give you a good life and to let you be an example to others.

Write down your thoughts and what you think God is saying to you.

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Men of Faith: DANIEL



Did Not Eat the King's Food

(Book of Daniel Chapter 1)

But Daniel made up his mind not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king.

Daniel 1: 8

Verses 1-2 *1 During the third year of King Jehoiakim's reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it with his armies. 2 The Lord gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah. When Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, he took with him some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God and placed them in the treasure-house of his god in the land of Babylonia.*

The children of Israel had disobeyed God and started worshiping idols. They did many evil acts. So, after many warnings, God sent a foreign king named Nebuchadnezzar with his army to capture the capital city, Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city and the temple (their place of worship) and took many of the sacred objects (items like cups, bowls, etc.) that were used to worship God with him back to his capital city Babylon.

Let's talk about this: Why did God send this foreign king and his army to Israel to conquer and to

destroy their capital city and the temple? Many people died and many were taken away as captives. Did God still love His people?

The Bible says: *"My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children."*

Hebrews 12:5-6

Discuss this, then write down your thoughts:

Verses 3-4 *3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, who was in charge of the palace officials, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah's royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives. 4 Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men,"he said. Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good sense, and have the poise needed to serve in the royal palace. Teach these young men the language and literature of the Babylonians."*

What did the king do with some of the young people from Israel?

How would you feel if you were one of these young people? Would you quit believing in God for letting

These young men had learned what the Bible said and they did it. How did God reward these young men for their faithfulness and obedience to Him?

18 When the three-year training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief official brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar. 19 The king talked with each of them, and none of them impressed him as much as Daniel, (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego). So they were appointed to his regular staff of advisers.

20 In all matters requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, the king found the advice of these young men to be ten times better than that of all the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom.

21 Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus's reign.

After the 3 year school, and 3 years of eating vegetables and water, what happened to Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?

How many times smarter did God make them than the magicians and enchanters?

Verses 14– 16 14 So the attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days. 15 At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. 16 So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the rich foods and wines.

This school that Daniel and his friends were in was a 3 year school. Every time Daniel and his friends Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego sat down to eat, they were served vegetables and water. The rest of the young people had the best foods in the land; today that would be like eating fried chicken, pork chops, cold drinks, wine, BBQ ribs, etc.

Do you think Daniel and his friends should change their minds and go back to eating the king's delicious foods? What would you do?

Does God reward us for obeying Him? The Bible says: *So, you see, it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that there is a God and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. Hebrews 11:6*

Verses 17 17 God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for learning the literature and science of the time. And God gave Daniel special ability in understanding the meanings of visions and dreams.

this happen to you? Would you be mad at God? Would you be mad at your parents?

Verses 5-7 5 The king assigned them a daily ration of the best food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for a three-year period, and then some of them would be made his advisers in the royal court. 6 Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah. 7 The chief official renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Belteshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego.

One of these young men that was taken captive was named Daniel. His three friends were given the names of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The King was going to feed them with the best food, send them to school and give them good jobs in his kingdom. There was only one small problem. God had told the Jewish people not to eat the kind of food that the king was feeding these young people. It was great tasting food, but God had said “don’t eat it”.

What would you do if you were in this situation? You are in a foreign land; your parents are not around. Who will know? The food looks and tastes great. Everyone else is doing it.

Verse 8 *But Daniel made up his mind not to defile himself (disobey God) by eating the food and wine given to them by the king.*

What did Daniel decide he was going to do?

After Daniel decided in his heart that he was going to obey God and not eat the king's food, what did he do to get out of this situation? Did he just say "I am not going to eat your food, and if you don't like it, tough." Or do you think he came up with a better plan? What would you do?

Verses 8-13 *He asked the chief official for permission to eat other things instead.*

9 Now God had given the chief official great respect for Daniel. 10 But he was alarmed by Daniel's suggestion. My lord the king has ordered that you eat this food and wine,"he said. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded for neglecting my duties."

11 Daniel talked it over with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief official to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

12 Test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and

water,"Daniel said. 13 At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's rich food. Then you can decide whether or not to let us continue eating our diet."

Does this sound like a good plan? Do you think it will work? Would you look good after eating only vegetables and water for 10 days?

Do you think it was important that Daniel chose some good friends like Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego to hang out with? Why is this important?

Even though the king's officers were asking Daniel and his friends to go against their religious beliefs, Daniel still showed respect to the authorities that God has placed over him.

God also tells us to: *Obey the government, for God is the one who put it there. All governments have been placed in power by God. Romans 13: 1*

Is God bigger than the king? Is he bigger than the government?

If we decide to obey God and put our trust in Him, can He and will He work things out for our good?
