

FOUR BRAVE BOYS WHO STOOD BEFORE A KING

Daniel 1:1-21.

LESSON 137 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "He shall lift you up" (James 4:10).

BIBLE TEXT

Daniel 1:1-21

1 ¶ In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

4 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Beltshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.

8 ¶ 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: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

17 ¶ As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all

the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

21 And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus

Jerusalem Captured

One day, long ago, a great conqueror, King Nebuchad-nezzar of Babylon, came with an army and took the City of Jerusalem. He took thousands and thousands of the Jews captive — all the princes and the strongest and best of the people. He carried away with him also the gold and silver vessels from the Temple of God that King Solomon had built, and put them in his own temple at Babylon.

It was a long journey from Jerusalem to Babylon. No doubt most of the people walked; and as they travelled for days and day, their hearts must have been sad. They were leaving their homes and the beautiful Temple of God in Jerusalem, and they did not know whether the king and the people of Babylon would be good to them or not.

When they came to Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar told the chief officer, who had charge of his palace, to choose certain of the children who looked well, were of noble rank, and were quick to learn. These young boys were to go to school, and the wise men of Babylon would teach them to speak the language of the Chaldeans, and perhaps show them all the things that they themselves knew. These boys must be wise, because the king wanted them to help him rule his great kingdom of Babylon.

Perhaps the word went from one to another: Some of us are going to be sent to school to learn how to help the king. Finally, Daniel and his friends — Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego — were chosen along with others of those who looked the brightest and the best.

Daniel's Purpose

The king knew that the boys must be strong and healthy, so he sent them meat and wine from his own table. This would seem very fine to some boys. But Daniel had been taught at home that it was wrong to eat certain foods; and although he was far away from his home, and perhaps his mother and father were not with him, he made up his mind he would not do those things that he knew were wrong and sinful.

No doubt Daniel and his friends wondered what they could do. Of course, they would rather eat plain food and drink water than to be like the people of Babylon and do sinful things, but they were just servants in the palace of the great King Nebuchadnezzar. The chief officer might be angry and hurt them if they did not eat the food that was given to them. They loved God and wanted more than anything in the world to do what was right. We are certain that they prayed, and God helped Daniel to know just what to do.

Daniel told the chief officers that he did not want to eat the king's food and drink the king's wine. The officer, seeing that Daniel was a good boy, wanted to be kind to him. But the officer was afraid that the king might be angry with him if he did not give the boys the food that was prepared for them. Then Daniel said something like this: "Let us have vegetables and cereals, and water to drink, and try us ten days, and see if we are not as healthy as the others." So the officer agreed.

After ten days he looked at Daniel and his three friends. He saw that their faces were fairer, and they were fatter than all the children who ate the food from the king's table.

God's Blessing

God blessed Daniel and his friends, making them wise and helping them to learn. They studied and worked hard for three years. One day, perhaps as they sat in school, word came that the king was ready to see them. How excited they must have been! Daniel and his friends knew the chief officer loved them, but would the king be pleased with them? Would they be able to answer the questions he might ask?

Finally, the moment came — now it was Daniel's turn. The king asked them questions about the things they had studied in school, and they were able to answer him well in the

Chaldean language. No doubt as this powerful king looked into the shining faces of these lads, it made his heart glad. There is something about the happy face of a Christian that is good to look upon. The king found that these boys were not only wiser than all the other chosen ones but they were even wiser than the magicians and wise men of his own kingdom.

Loved and Honoured

God honoured Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego by making them favourites in the kingdom of Babylon. He gave them great wisdom so they could help the king, and the king loved them because they were true and faithful. They were saved and had God in their heart, and that made them good-natured and kind. We have read about a young man named Joseph who was sold as a slave and taken to the country of Egypt. He also was loved by the officers of the land because he, like Daniel and his friends, had a good spirit — the Spirit of God living in his heart — and God helped him to do the right things.

Good and True

Every boy who has truly been born again has the Spirit of Jesus in his heart. Because Jesus lives in him, he has gentle manners; he is obedient; and he is kind to everyone. He loves to hear the Bible read, and to read it himself when he is old enough.

Daniel and his friends dared to be true to God in a strange land among a strange people.

**“Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose firm!
Dare to make it known!”**

If God should permit us to be away from home among sinful people, would we be true to what we know is right, as Daniel was? Let us ask Jesus to help us to stand true as Daniel did, even among our playmates and the boys and girls at school who do not know and love Jesus. If we are true to our loving Saviour, we may live with Him forever and ever in one of the beautiful mansions He is getting ready for us.

QUESTIONS

1. What four boys were taken captives from Jerusalem? Daniel 1:7.
2. What did Daniel ask that he be given to eat? Daniel 1:12.
3. Why did many of the people of Babylon like Daniel? Daniel 1:9.
4. How many days were the four boys to eat pulse, or vegetables, and have water to drink?
Daniel 1:12.
5. What children were found to have greater wisdom than all the others? Daniel 1:19, 20,

LESSON RESOURCES

TOPIC

FOUR BRAVE BOYS WHO STOOD BEFORE A KING

Lesson 137

Daniel 1:1-21

MUSIC

I'm Gonna Work

WATCH & PRAY 57

2
4↓

s. s, s, s. s. l. s. s: d` . d` , d` , d` . d` . r` . d` . d` :

t. t, t, t. t. t. s. l. t. d` : l: s:-

s. s, s, s. s. l. s. s: d` . d` , d` , d` , d` , r` . d` . d` :

t. t, t, t. s. l. t. r` :- d` :-

SONG

I'm Gonna Work

I'm gonna work and watch and pray

I'm gonna serve Him ev'ry day,

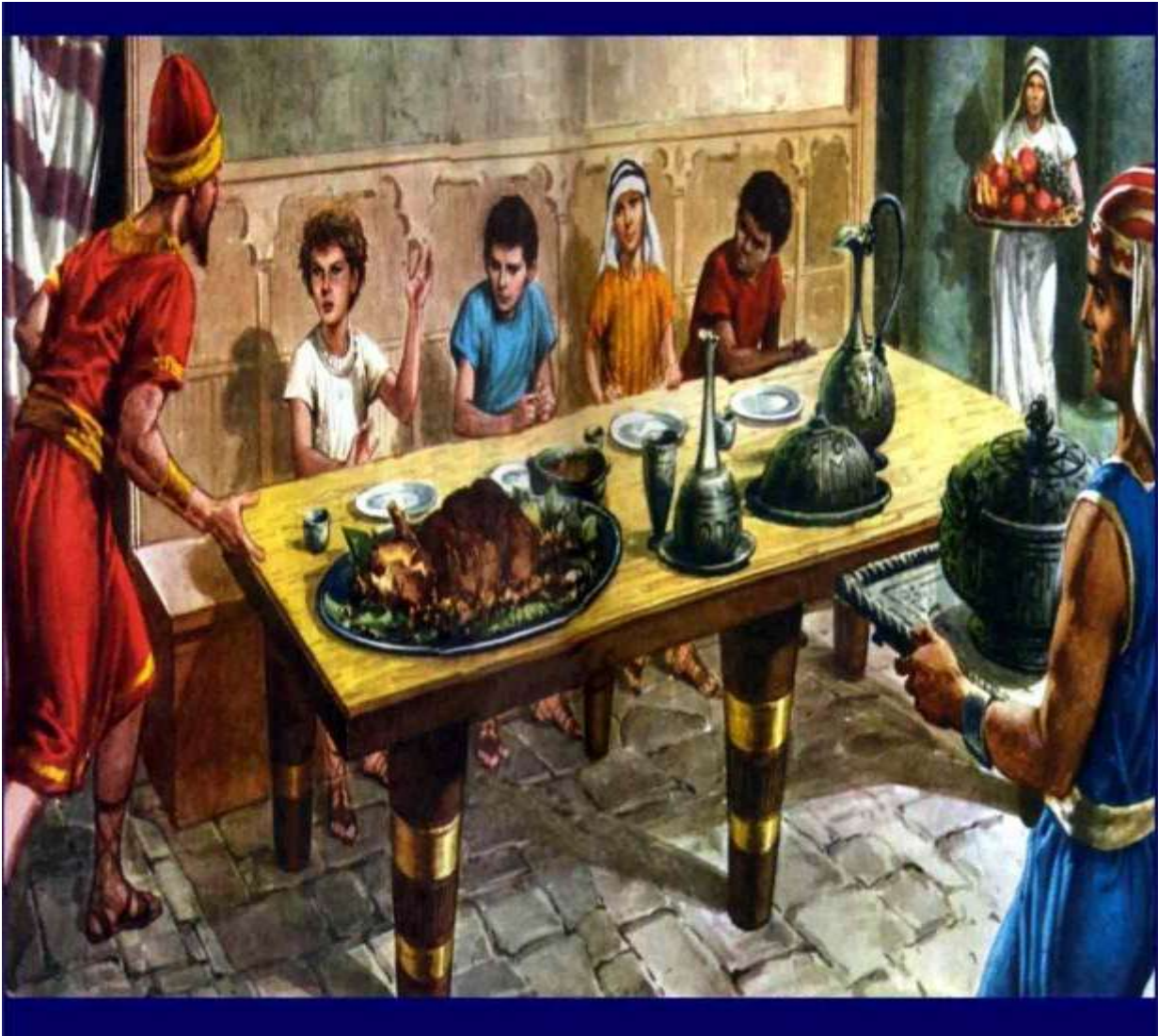
I'm gonna see His face in glory by and by

I'm gonna listen to His voice

I'm gonna make His will my choice

I'm gonna rise to meet Him in the morning

PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2

