



DANIEL PURPOSED IN HIS HEART

Daniel 1:8-21—Pulse and Water

- Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, *were* in it, *as* I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall *but* deliver their own souls by their righteousness. (Ezekiel 14:20)
- Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart *is* lifted up, and thou hast said, I *am* a God, I sit *in* the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou *art* a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: Behold, thou *art* wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: (Ezekiel 28:2–3)

- When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)
(Matthew 24:15)

DANIEL 1

PULSE

Daniel was but eighteen years old when brought into a
heathen court in service to the king of Babylon . . . (*4T 570*)

- Defile—to make impure or pollute
- There are several reasons why Daniel would want to avoid eating of the royal food: the Babylonians ate unclean meats, the beasts had not been properly killed according to Levitical law, a portion of the animals eaten was first offered as a sacrifice to pagan gods, and the use of luxurious and unhealthful food and drink was contrary to principles of temperance

The fact that these men, worshipers of Jehovah, were captives in Babylon, and that the vessels of God's house had been placed in the Temple of the Babylonish gods, was boastfully cited by the victors as **evidence that their religion and customs were superior** to the religion and customs of the Hebrews.

(CSA 53.1)

When Daniel was in Babylon, **he was beset with temptations of which we have never dreamed**, and he realized that he must keep his body under. He purposed in his heart that he would not drink of the **king's wine or eat of his dainties**. He knew that in order to come off a victor, he must have clear mental perceptions, that he might discern between right and wrong. (*The Review and Herald*, April 2, 1889).

(4BC 1166.6)

If the Christian thrives and progresses at all, **he must do so amid strangers to God, amid scoffing, subject to ridicule.** He must stand upright like the palm tree in the desert. The sky may be as brass, the desert sand may beat about the palm tree's roots, and pile itself in heaps about its trunk. Yet the tree lives as an evergreen, fresh and vigorous amid the burning desert sands. Remove the sand till you reach the rootlets of the palm tree, and you discover the secret of its life; it strikes down deep beneath the surface, to the secret waters hidden in the earth. Christians indeed may be fitly represented by the palm tree. (*3BC 1151.4*)

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 be-cloud 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. (*4BC* 1166.7)

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.

- The portion of the king's meat—a portion of food for the king, i.e. delicacies, fine food, choice food, dainties

- Eunuch—a high official, head official, or chief official; castrated
- 1 Kings 22:9
- Genesis 37:36; 40:2

At the court of Babylon were gathered representatives from all lands, men of the highest talent, men the most richly endowed with natural gifts, and possessed of the broadest culture that the world could bestow; yet among them all, the Hebrew youth were without a peer. In physical strength and beauty, in mental vigor and literary attainment, they stood unrivaled. The erect form, the firm, elastic step, the fair countenance, the undimmed senses, the untainted breath—all were so many certificates of good habits, insignia of the nobility with which nature honors those who are obedient to her laws. (CSA 55.4)

Among those who maintained their allegiance to God were Daniel and his three companions—illustrious examples of what men may become who unite with the God of wisdom and power. From the comparative simplicity of their Jewish home, these youth **of royal line** were taken to the most magnificent of cities and into the court of the world's greatest monarch. (*CSA 53.2*)

Seeing in these youth the promise of remarkable ability, Nebuchadnezzar determined that they should be trained to fill important positions in his kingdom. That they might be fully qualified for their lifework, he arranged for them to learn the language of the Chaldeans and for three years to be granted **the unusual educational advantages afforded princes of the realm.**

(CSA 53.3)

The king worked insidiously. In him was vested absolute authority, as ruler of a kingdom of surpassing grandeur, yet he did not seek to influence these young men standing before him—men of perfect form and fine mental qualities—by an imposing display of the greatness of his power; he did not try to compel them to renounce their faith in favor of idolatry. He sought to bring this about gradually, by **having them sit at a table with idolaters for three years**, where they would become familiar with idolatrous customs. He hoped that by giving these youth opportunity of observing daily the display connected with the charming, seductive rites of heathen worship, he would induce them fully to apostatize and become one with the Babylonians in matters of religion. (19LtMs, *Ms 110, 1904*, par. 7)

One objectionable feature of the proposed plan to eat at this table was the fact that here the youth would be expected to partake of **wine and luxuries** that they had not had in their Judean homes. Heretofore their habits had been **temperate**.

(19LtMs, Ms 110, 1904, par. 9)

The Hebrew captives feared that should they sit at the king's table and partake of his **luxuries**, they would lose their keenness of perception. They realized that indulgence of appetite is destructive of brainpower; and they feared that should they yield, they would lose their high sense of the peculiarity of their religion—the religion of the Bible. They were fully convinced that they had gained a knowledge of the truths of God; for they had studied the Sacred Records of the creation and of God's dealings with His people from age to age. (19LtMs, Ms 110, 1904, par. 10)

He asked that the matter be tested by a ten days' trial, the Hebrew youth during this time being supplied with **simple food**, while their companions ate of the king's dainties. (*CSA 54.7*)

In personal appearance the Hebrew youth showed a marked superiority over their companions. As a result, Daniel and his associates were permitted to continue their **simple diet** during their entire course of training. (*CSA 54.8*)

A second consideration with these youthful captives was the fact that the king, before eating, always asked the **blessing of his gods** upon the food. A portion of the food, and also of the wine, from his table was set apart as an **offering to the false gods** whom he worshiped. According to the religious ideas of the day, this act consecrated the whole to the heathen gods. Daniel and his three brethren thought that even if they should not actually partake of the king's bounties, a mere pretense of eating the food or drinking the wine, where such idolatry was practiced, would be a **denial of their faith**. To do this would indeed be to implicate themselves with heathenism and to dishonor the principles of the law of God. They decided to stand firm in their integrity, let the result be what it might. (19LtMs, Ms 110, 1904, par. 41)

The Lord regarded with approval the firmness and self-denial of the Hebrew youth, and their purity of motive; and His blessing attended them. He “gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” The promise was fulfilled, “Them that honor Me I will honor.” 1 Samuel 2:30. As Daniel clung to God with unwavering trust, the spirit of prophetic power came upon him. **While receiving instruction from man in the duties of court life, he was being taught by God to read the mysteries of the future and to record for coming generations, through figures and symbols, events covering the history of this world till the close of time. (CSA 55.2)**

In this our day, the Lord would be pleased to have those who are **preparing for the future**, immortal life follow the example of Daniel and his companions in seeking to maintain strength of body and clearness of mind. The more careful we learn to be in treating our bodies, the more readily shall we be able to escape the evils that are in the world through lust.

(24LtMs, Ms 33, 1909, par. 9)

They followed the rules of life that could not fail to give them strength of intellect. They sought to acquire knowledge for one purpose—that they might honor God. They realized that in order to stand as representatives of true religion amid the false religions of heathenism they must have clearness of intellect and must perfect a Christian character. And God Himself was their teacher. Constantly praying, conscientiously studying, keeping in touch with the Unseen, **they walked with God as did Enoch.** (*CSA 55.5*)

That God who walked with Enoch was our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He was the light of the world then just as He is now. (*CCh 90.3*)

Enoch had temptations as well as we. He was surrounded with society no more friendly to righteousness than is that which surrounds us. The atmosphere he breathed was tainted with sin and corruption, the same as ours; yet he lived a life of holiness. He was unsullied with the prevailing sins of the age in which he lived. So may we remain pure and uncorrupted. **He was a representative of the saints who live amid the perils and corruptions of the last days.** For his faithful obedience to God he was translated. So, also, the faithful, who are alive and remain, will be translated. They will be removed from a sinful and corrupt world to the pure joys of heaven. (2T 121.1)

They are like Enoch; although surrounded by corrupting influences, their faith takes hold of the Unseen. They walk with God, deriving strength and grace from Him to withstand the moral pollution surrounding them. Like Daniel in the courts of Babylon, they stand pure and uncontaminated; their life is hid with Christ in God. They are virtuous in spirit amid depravity; they are true and loyal, fervent and zealous, while surrounded by infidels, hypocritical professors, godless and worldly men. Their faith and life are hid with Christ in God. Jesus is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Faith, like the rootlets of the palm tree, penetrates beneath the things which are seen, drawing spiritual nourishment from the Fountain of life (*The Signs of the Times*, July 8, 1886). (3BC 1151.4)

While God was working in Daniel and his companions “to will and to do of His good pleasure,” they were working out their own salvation. Philippians 2:13. Herein is revealed the outworking of **the divine principle of co-operation**, without which no true success can be attained. Human effort avails nothing without divine power; and without human endeavor, divine effort is with many of no avail. To make God’s grace our own, we must act our part. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, **but never as a substitute for our effort.** (CSA 56.2)

The body is a most important medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the **upbuilding of character**. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here often means the surrender of the whole being to evil. The tendencies of the physical nature, unless under the dominion of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death. The body is to be brought into subjection to the higher powers of the being.

(CSA 56.4)

God's Character

Moses prayed “Show me thy glory.” [Exodus 33:18.]

“**What is this glory?—The character of God.** This is what he proclaimed to Moses” (*GW92* 237.1).

He held up before Felix and Drusilla **the character of God**—His righteousness, justice, and equity, and the nature of His law. He clearly showed that it is man's duty to live a life of sobriety and temperance, keeping the passions under the control of reason, in conformity to God's law, and preserving the physical and mental powers in a healthy condition. He declared that there would surely come a day of judgment when all would be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body, and when it would be plainly revealed that wealth, position, or titles are powerless to gain for man the favor of God or to deliver him from the results of sin. He showed that this life is man's time of preparation for the future life. Should he neglect present privileges and opportunities he would suffer an eternal loss; no new probation would be given him.

(AA 423.3)

Paul dwelt especially upon **the far-reaching claims of God's law**. He showed how it extends to the deep secrets of man's moral nature and throws a flood of light upon that which has been concealed from the sight and knowledge of men. What the hands may do or the tongue may utter—what the outer life reveals—but imperfectly shows man's moral character. The law searches his thoughts, motives, and purposes. The dark passions that lie hidden from the sight of men, the jealousy, hatred, lust, and ambition, the evil deeds meditated upon in the dark recesses of the soul, yet never executed for want of opportunity—all these God's law condemns. (AA 424.1)

The law of God, being a revelation of His will, a transcript of His character . . . (*CIHS* 165.1)

In acquiring the wisdom of the Babylonians, Daniel and his companions were far more successful than their fellow students; but their learning did not come by chance. They obtained their knowledge by the faithful use of their powers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom, making the knowledge of God the foundation of their education. In faith they prayed for wisdom, and they lived their prayers. They placed themselves where God could bless them. They avoided that which would weaken their powers, and improved every opportunity to become intelligent in all lines of learning. (CSA 55.5)

He had requested that he be excused from sitting at the king's table. You may regard this as a foolish request. Some would reason that Daniel might have exerted an influence for good by associating with idolaters. But the influence exerted by his wicked associates would have been liable to lead him astray. (19LtMs, Ms 110, 1904, par. 40)

The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass
(Letter 57, 1896). (*4BC* 1166.5)

Parents, these youthful captives in Babylon had made the Bible the study of their lives. And why?—Their parents feared God and taught them to prize His precepts. If every child in every family should have the attention that these Hebrew youth had in early life, what might we not expect from the youth that are trained in this day? If parents fail of doing their duty, and neglect their children, **the sins of the sons and daughters whose characters are defective will be charged to the parents as well as to the actual transgressors**; for fathers and mothers are the guardians of their little ones. (19LtMs, Ms 110, 1904, par. 11)