

Worshiping a Sovereign God in a Sin-Sick World
Studies in the Book of Daniel
Cornerstone Church
Winter 2015

Serving a Sovereign God in a Sin-Sick World
Daniel Chapters 1-6

Today's Message: "What Will You Risk to Prove God is Dependable? Part 2

Daniel Chapter 1:9-21

(Daniel 1:8-9 ESV) But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs,

Daniel resolved . . .

- How often do we make New Year resolutions and break them within days or weeks? What does it take to keep a resolution even if it is costly?

. . . that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank.

- The #1 god in America today is SELF.
 - When a person gets a promotion, SELF gets the credit.
 - When a person gets a compliment, SELF accepts it and doesn't re-direct it.
 - When SELF is bored it needs it needs addictive and often immoral activity.
 - When SELF hasn't studied it will cheat to get an A.
 - When SELF is getting behind the lead salesperson at work, SELF starts cutting corners.
 - When SELF is interviewing for a job, it won't say grace before the interview dinner for fear of losing the job.

God gave Daniel favor . . .

- Do we trust that God can change people's hearts?
- Did Daniel's resolve trigger God's causing him to have favor?

(Daniel 1:10 ESV) and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king."

- King Neb. was known to put out eyes (Jeremiah 39:6-7), turn people's houses into manure piles (Daniel 2) roast officers over a fire (Jeremiah 29:22)

(Daniel 1:11-13 ESV) Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, "Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see."

- Some translations use the word “Melzar” for steward. It was not his name but the word for butler or steward over the dormitory.
- The Hebrew word for vegetables is literally anything that grows from a seed including vegetables, grains, fruits and nuts. Sounds healthy to me!
- Daniel proposed a test that would be small enough to not be risky for the butler and small enough in time so that God would get the glory.
 - Is it proper to test God? How about tithing? Can God manage your unseen expenses so that your step of faith can be a testimony for Him?
 - Why not let unbelievers know about this test?
 - How about prayer? If a wife is struggling with a husband's porn use, could she share with a non-Christian friend her prayer project and believe that God will change a habit and restore a marriage without a word spoken?

(Daniel 1:14-16 ESV) So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food. So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

- Steward could safely proceed without pretense and remove their uneaten leftovers.
- Would the other students have improved physically by eating the same foods as well? Or, was this a purely supernatural effect because God wanted all the credit to Himself.
- If so, does that make God seem prideful?

(Daniel 1:17-21 ESV) As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom. And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

- The postgraduate students grooming process is over and they pass their bar exams having the King himself be the examiner.
- Since their knowledge exceeded their classmates and even all the experienced “pros” by a factor of ten, they were fast-tracked to positions of authority within the kingdom.
- The magi (here listed as “magicians”) were a hereditary class of priests in Babylon and Persia (today the Kurds are their descendants¹) and were kingmakers and political advisors (our word magistrate comes from this ancient word). We will see Daniel become the head of this sect (and evidence shows he created a secret society within this sect that was privy to Messianic prophecies that caused them to journey to Bethlehem to honor the true Jewish King (perhaps in hopes of making him their own king in Persia during a time of political unrest).

¹ <http://www.ldolphin.org/magi.html>