

tion and heart service, God chose Daniel and his friends to represent Him in a foreign land. They were snatched from the shelter of home, and with others were placed under the charge of Ashpenaz, master of the eunuchs in Babylon. In these Hebrew boys, can be seen the results of true home training. Pure food, clean thoughts, and physical exercise which placed them on the list of “children in whom was no blemish, but well-favored.”

A CRUCIAL MOMENT

In the life of every Christian, a time of test will come as it came to the three Hebrew boys. A true Christian will be tested at eight levels (2 Peter 1:5-7). These tests relate to (1) unflinching faith, (2) virtue or faultless in thinking, speaking, actions, (3) increase in divine knowledge, (4) temperate in all things, (5) patience, (6) godliness, (7) brotherly kindness and (8) charity. Having unflinching faith in God, being virtuous and having the knowledge of the true God, the next test that awaited them in the King’s palace was temperance. For Daniel and his friends, the crucial moment came “the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat and of the wine which he drank.” (*Dan. 1:5*). If there is anyone who doubt the link between temperance and salvation, let Daniel and his friends silence this hypocritical stance. “Daniel refused to defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank. The language of the prince of the eunuchs shows that there were other Hebrew youth who were selected, who did not make this request; “For,” said the prince of the eunuchs, “why should he [the king] see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort?”

A DIVINE PRINCIPLE

Temperance is a divine principle and every Christian before being spotless and deserving immortality, has to pass all the eight steps including temperance. Daniel and his friends chose to obey God, walk by faith and leave the consequences with their Maker. The king’s meat, before placed on the table, were consecrated to idols and partaking in it would dishonor God. Daniel and his friends decided not to defile themselves nor be involved with heathenism. With true courage and Christian courtesy, they urged most earnestly that they be allowed the simple diet, and begged that they be given a ten-days’

trial after which they would demonstrate their own physical appearance and the advantages of plain, nutritious food. They had obtained favour with God and through His providence, they obtained favour with man and their request was granted. God approved of their course; for, “at the end of ten days, their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat of the portion of the king's meat.” The clear sparkle of the eye, the ruddy, healthy glow of the countenance, bespoke physical soundness and moral purity. The Hebrew captives were thereafter allowed to have their chosen food. When brought face to face with any difficult problem, or when desiring especially to know the mind of God, the record speaks of Daniel's abstinence from flesh food, wine, and foods which tempt the appetite for it is stated “I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth.” (*Dan. 10:3*).

A DIVINE SCHOOL

Daniel and his friends represent those who will live just before the second coming of Jesus Christ. They will be called to pass through experiences which require the keenest spiritual eyesight and unflinching faith to God. Appetite was the open door through which came all the results of sin, which, for six thousand years, have been so manifest in the human family. It means much to be true to God. It embraces health reform. It means that the diet must be simple; it calls for the exercise of temperance in all things. Mind and body are to be preserved in the best condition of health. Only those who have been trained in the fear and knowledge of God, and who are true to principle, are fitted to bear responsibilities in the closing work of the gospel. Where are the parents who to-day are teaching their children to control appetite, and to look to God as the Source of all wisdom?

A Christian Home

The foundation of true religion

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The book of Daniel reveals God's preparation for those who will welcome Christ at His appearing. The prophecy of Daniel should be understood for in them is the key which unlocks Bible history to the end of time.

A CALL TO STUDY

The prophecy of Daniel was once sealed, as foretold, "Go thy way...for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (*Dan. 12:9*). Yet, he was given a promise, "...thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (*Dan. 12:13*). These words were fulfilled in the "the revelation of Jesus Christ" (*Rev. 1:1*). In examining this book, let us take off our garments of prejudice, take the position that we're standing on holy ground and before God. The object lessons of examining this book is to acquaint ourselves with the secrets of our Lord who does nothing but reveals them to His prophets (*Amos 3:7*) and draw important lessons relative to our practical Christian duties so as to make our election sure (*2 Peter 1:10*).

With the book of Daniel in hand, and a heart open to hear the voice of God, let us come in touch with the Father of light. Daniel begins the book with the simple statement, "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it" (*Dan. 1:1*). This year was in 607 B.C. Long before, Isaiah foretold this event. "Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." (*Isa. 39:6, 7*).

THE ROADSIGNS

God's purpose of calling the Jewish nation to separate themselves from other nations of the world, was that they might stand before the world as light-bearers and as a beacon set on a hill, beaming the light to the world. The plan of education made known to Israel through her prophets was the means of keeping that light burning. When this education was neglected, the light, as a can-

dle deprived of the life-giving oxygen, burned dim. Then it was that the nation was pressed upon all sides by its foes. A clear and humble understanding of the visions of Daniel followed by their strict compliance, shall surely make every seeker of truth wiser (*Dan. 12:10*). With this humble position, the Bible student is invited to examine the first chapter of the book of Daniel.

DEPARTURE FROM GOD

In Daniel we meet individual character whose development is traced back to home education. In it we obtain object lessons on how God prepares those who will welcome Christ at His second coming. God gave Israel the recipe for true Christianity-the unadulterated education-the schools of the prophets. Some Jewish mothers fully understood their role in the education of their children. The education of complete heart service to God falls primarily on the shoulders of God-fearing parents. Character is formed in a home under the tutelage of spirit filled mothers and fathers. The character we meet in Daniel was not formed in the courts of Babylon, but within the confines of his home. This is a lifelong work of mothers and fathers which brings a reward as we see it in Daniel.

BRIEF HISTORY

About 100 years before Daniel, Hezekiah was king of Judah. On the king's recovery from his illness, he was visited by ambassadors from Babylon, to whom he showed all his treasures (*Isa. 39:1, 2*). They came to hear of the mighty God, that could heal the sick; but he showed them only earthly treasure. He lost the opportunity to give them of the treasure of heaven. This is a lesson for every God-fearing parent that those who come to our homes must first and foremost, be given the treasures of heaven and not engage them in common talk. Then came a message from God by prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, the days shall come, that all that is in thine house . . . shall be carried into Babylon; nothing shall be left." (*Isa. 39:6, 7*). Here was portrayed the future captivity of the Hebrew race. Hezekiah and his wife Hephzibah, failed to teach their son Manasseh the knowledge of the true God of creation. He was twelve years when he (Manasseh) came to the throne and he followed in his father's footsteps. It was in the days of Josiah, the

grandson of Manasseh, that Jeremiah prophesied. "Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from afar, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not." (*Jer. 5:15*). Thus was Babylon described, and Jerusalem's impending doom portrayed.

Josiah had three sons, they were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. His grandson was Johoiachin who preceded his uncle Zedekiah, but because of wrong education, they refused to take God at His word and this hastened the final overthrow of Israel. In these three sons is revealed the weakness, the cowardice, the wickedness, and the final ruin of those trained for the service of the world and not for the service of God. Daniel and his companions had been in the court about eighteen years when Jeremiah came to Zedekiah with the words: "If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire. . . . Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live." (*Jer. 38:20*).

TRUE EDUCATION

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were of a royal family, relatives of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. Daniel had God fearing parents who knew the prophecy concerning the destruction of their city as prophesied by Isaiah and Jeremiah that the Hebrew children must stand in the heathen court at Babylon. Carefully did this mother teach her son to read the parchment scrolls of the prophets. The history of Israel was studied; the story of Nadab and Abihu was told and retold. The effect of strong drink was impressed upon the mind. The laws of his own being were studied. He knew that excess in eating and drinking would so dull the mind that the voice of God could not be heard. It was in this manner that the image of God was engraven in the minds of these Hebrew boys. Their education was not gained in the schools of the time, for they had departed from the plan of God; but holy mothers, living close to the Father, led their children by precept and example, by word and song, to form characters that would stand the test. These Hebrew boys, were at the age when most youths of their age were wild and reckless and excused themselves because of their youthfulness. But, because of their educa-