

downtrodden people, might be honored, and that God's name might be glorified. These children had the Lord as their educator. They were connected with the Fountainhead of wisdom, by the golden channel, the Holy Spirit. They kept continually a living connection with God, walking with him as did Enoch. They were determined to gain a true education; and, in consequence of their copartnership with the divine nature, they became in every sense complete men in Christ Jesus. While diligently applying themselves to gain a knowledge of the languages and sciences, they also received light direct from Heaven's throne, and read God's mysteries for future ages. (SDP 24.4).

### THE EXAMINATION

When, at the end of three years, King Nebuchadnezzar tested the ability and acquirements of the royal princes from nations whom he had been educating, none were found equal to the Hebrew youth, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. They surpassed their associates tenfold in their keen apprehension, their choice and correct language, and their extensive and varied knowledge. The vigor and strength of their mental powers were unimpaired. Hence they stood before the king. "And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." (SDP 25.1).

These youth respected their own manhood, and their intrusted talents had not been enfeebled or perverted by indulgence of appetite. The good they wished to accomplish was ever in mind. They were faithful in the little things. God honored them; for they honored him. God always honors adherence to principle. Among all the most promising youth gathered from the lands subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, the Hebrew captives stood unrivaled. Their regard for nature's laws and the God of nature was revealed in the erect form, the elastic step, the fair countenance, the untainted breath, the undimmed senses. It was not by chance that they attained to their marvelous wisdom. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10).

The foundation of the highest education is religious principle. Faith had been developed in childhood; and when these youth had to act for themselves, they depended upon God for strength and efficiency in their labors, and they were richly rewarded. 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? Our youth are daily meeting allurements to gratify appetite. Every form of indulgence is made easy and inviting, especially in our large cities. Those who steadfastly refuse to defile themselves will

be rewarded as was Daniel. The youth of today may bear a weighty testimony in favor of true temperance. (SDP 26.1).

These principles, cherished, would fit young men who are rooted and grounded in the Scriptures, to enter worldly universities, and, while taking a course of study, disseminate the truths of the gospel, and at the end of their course, come forth unsullied. There were consecrated youth among the Waldenses who entered worldly universities, and, while gaining their education, scattered the seeds of the Reformation. The papal authorities could not, by the most careful inquiries, find out who had introduced the so-called heresy; and yet the work had been accomplished, bearing fruit in the conversion of many who became leaders in the cause of Protestantism. Were these principles practiced, more young persons could be trusted as missionaries in responsible positions and in institutions of learning. Many will yet be called to stand before judges and kings. How are the children being educated? (SDP 26.2).

The last words of the first chapter of Daniel are truly significant: "Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus." In other words, Daniel lived all the days of the Babylonish captivity, -over seventy years, -and had the pleasure of knowing that Cyrus whose name the prophet Isaiah had mentioned nearly two hundred years before he had issued his wonderful decree for the deliverance of God's people. (SDP 27.1).

#### *References*

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# Temperance

## A Safeguard

Daniel 1: 1-21

**I**t was the age when most of the young men in the capital of Judah were wild and reckless. They were excusing themselves because of their youth. But God chose from their midst certain ones whom he could trust in a foreign land. Daniel and his three companions were snatched from the shelter of home, and with others were placed under the charge of Ashpenaz, master of the eunuchs in Babylon. (SDP 20.1).

### A CALL TO MOTHERS

Now can be seen the results of the home training. Pure food, clean thoughts, and physical exercise placed them on the list of "children in whom was no blemish, but well-favored." But what of their intellectual ability? They had not been educated in the schools of Jerusalem, much less in those of Babylon. Was there not great danger that they lacked in the sciences or the essential branches? On examination, these four passed as "skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science," and able to learn a difficult, foreign language. God had fulfilled his promise in these children of the home school. (SDP 20.2).

The crucial moment came when "the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat and of the wine which he drank." Daniel had unbounded confidence in the principles of temperance, not alone because he knew them to be scientifically true, but because they were God-given, and, in his case, had been put into practice. His education had a Biblical foundation, and he knew that it was in harmony with true science. It was a life and death question; but the principles were divine, and he would obey, walk by faith, and leave the results with his Maker.

"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 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?" (SDP 20.3).

### TEMPERANCE A SAFEGUARD

Daniel and his companions, after considering their dangerous and difficult position, took this matter to the Lord in prayer, and decided to be true to principle. Much was involved in this decision. If they sat at the king's table, they would partake of food which had been consecrated to idols; and the Hebrew children would thus dishonor God, and ruin

their own characters by removing the safeguard of temperance, and allowing themselves to be influenced by corrupt associations. Even at the cost of appearing singular, they decided not to sit at the table of the king. They might have reasoned that at the king's command they were compelled to partake of the food at the royal table which had been dedicated to an idol. But they determined not to implicate themselves with heathenism, and not to dishonor the principles of their national religion and their God. Surrounded by perils, after having made a most determined effort to resist temptation, they must trust the results with God. (SDP 21.1).

With true courage and Christian courtesy, Daniel said to the officers who had charge over them: "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenances of the children that eat the portion of the king's meat; and, as thou seest, deal with thy servants." It was no experiment with them; for they foresaw the result. (SDP 22.1).

The officer hesitated. He feared that the rigid abstinence they proposed would have an unfavorable effect upon their personal appearance, and that, in consequence, they would lose favor with the king. The Hebrew children explained to the officer the effect of food upon the body; that overeating and the use of rich foods benumbed the sensibilities, unfitting mind and body for hard, stern labor. They urged most earnestly that they be allowed the simple diet, and begged that they be given a ten-days' trial, that they might demonstrate by their own physical appearance at the end of that time the advantages of plain, nutritious food. The request was granted; for they had obtained favor with God and with men. It was an act of faith; there was no feeling of envy toward those who were eating of the king's meat. The minds of the four were filled with thoughts of love and peace, and they actually grew during those ten days. (SDP 22.2).

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. (SDP 22.3).

The pulse and water which they then desired was not always the exclusive diet of Daniel; for, on another occasion in his later life, he said, "I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth." But when entering upon

the king's course of study and becoming connected with the royal court, he and his brethren voluntarily chose this simple, nourishing food. Likewise, 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. (SDP 23.1).

### SIN CAME THROUGH INTEMPERANCE

The character of Daniel is referred to by Ezekiel, who was a contemporaneous prophet, as representing those who will live just before the second coming of Christ. People will be called to pass through experiences which require the keenest spiritual eyesight; therefore God asks them to give up all things which will in any way check the flow of the Holy Spirit through the mind. Herein lies the reason for strict adherence to the principles of health reform. Daniel and his companions gained the victory on the point of appetite. This was the avenue, and the only one, through which Satan was permitted to tempt Adam; and, had Adam proved true in the garden of Eden, and not eaten of the forbidden fruit, sin and suffering would never have been known. 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. (SDP 23.2).

### CHRIST BEGAN WHERE ADAM FAILED

As Christ entered upon the work of his ministry, he began where Adam fell. The first temptation in the wilderness was on the point of appetite. Here the Saviour bridged the gulf which sin had made. He redeemed the whole family of Adam, and wrought out a victory for the benefit of all who are thus tempted. In the last days God will prove his people as he proved Daniel. A voluntary self-control of appetite lies at the foundation of every reform. 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. Too great a variety of food taken at the same meal is highly injurious; and yet, how often this is forgotten. 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. (SDP 24.2).

Daniel and his companions passed through a strange school in which to become fitted for lives of sobriety, industry, and faithfulness. Surrounded with courtly grandeur, hypocrisy, and paganism, they exercised self-denial, and sought to acquire themselves so creditably, that the Israelites, their