

Daniel Refusing the King's Meat and Wine

Daniel 1

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. Daniel 1:8

After King Nebuchadnezzar had captured Jerusalem and brought many captives back to Babylon, he ordered that some of the captive children be brought to the palace to be trained in the language and customs of his land. He wanted young people who were handsome and wise and who understood science and other subjects. The king ordered his servant to give these youth his best food and wine. Then, after teaching and nourishing these children for three years, the servant was to bring them before the king. (See Daniel 1:1–5.)

Among these youth of Judah were four young men named Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Daniel and his friends did not want to eat the king's food nor drink his wine because they knew it would not be good for them. When they told this to the servant, he was afraid. He thought the king would kill him if Daniel and his friends did not look as healthy as the other young men their age. (See Daniel 1:6–10.)

Daniel pleaded with the servant to allow him and his three friends to eat only grains and

vegetables and drink water for 10 days. At the end of the 10 days, the servant could decide whether these four boys looked less healthy than the children who ate the king's food. The servant agreed to try this. (See Daniel 1:12–14.)

After 10 days the servant could see that these four young men looked healthier than all the others. He started feeding all the youth the type of food that Daniel had requested. (See Daniel 1:15–16.)

Daniel and his friends grew in wisdom and knowledge, and the Lord also blessed Daniel to be able to understand the meanings of visions and dreams (see Daniel 1:17).

At the end of the three years, when all the young people were taken before King Nebuchadnezzar, none could compare with Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. The king found them to be 10 times wiser and more knowledgeable than all the magicians and astrologers in the land. (See Daniel 1:18–20.)

Summary

After King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, he ordered that certain Israelite children live in his palace to study the language and learning of Babylon. They were to be given the king's food and wine. Four of these young people, Daniel and his friends, would not eat such foods because they knew they shouldn't. Daniel

asked the king's servant to let him and his friends eat only grains and vegetables and drink water. They grew more healthy than the children who ate the king's food. When Daniel and his friends stood before the king, he found them 10 times wiser than all the wise men in the land.

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