

DIAMONDS FROM DANIEL

by

William G. Heslop, D.D., Litt., S.D.

Copyright @ 1937

CHAPTER ONE

THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF DANIEL

The book of Daniel naturally falls into two parts. The first six chapters are historic and the last six are prophetic. All history is simply prophecy fulfilled and all prophecy is simply history pre-written. The book of Daniel is a “**lamp shining in a dark place.**” It sets forth in unmistakable terms the presence and power of the Lord God in the government of the world to the end of time. It reveals God as moving steadily forward to the fulfillment of all His gracious and glorious plans and purposes despite the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Nebuchadnezzar

The word Nebuchadnezzar means “*Nebo protects*” or “*The protection of Nebo*” or “*Prince of Nebo.*”

Nebo was the chief god of many heathen worshippers including the king of Babylon. Bel and Nebo were his chief gods. NEBO was the supposed “prince of the gods” and a god of fire. The word Nebuchadnezzar “prince and lord of Nebo” is thus pregnant with meaning. He was named in honor of the heathen god NEBO. *Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon*—was God’s chosen servant to punish Israel for her sins (Jeremiah 27:6).

Jerusalem had been unconquerable because it was the city and the glory of the Lord. All enemies had been held in check by the power of Israel’s God, but when the cup of Jerusalem’s iniquity was full, Nebuchadnezzar was chosen by God to become the first world ruler of Gentile times.

Both Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus were God’s servants sent to punish Israel because of their sins. The Lord gave Jehoiakim into his hand. The wages of sin is bondage and death. Over a hundred years previous to its fall, the prophet Isaiah had foretold the coming of the Babylonians to spoil Jerusalem (Isaiah 38:4-7). Jehoiakim was carried into captivity by the act of the Lord God.

Nebuchadnezzar was God’s instrument, God’s rod, God’s whip to chastise the apostate prince and people. Three times Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem:

- (1) 606 B.C.
- (2) 598 B.C.
- (3) 587 B.C.

In the first onslaught he carried off Daniel and his three companions. In the second attack he carried off Ezekiel and in the third and devastating holocaust he burned the city and temple.

Jehoiakim

The word Jehoiakim means “*The Lord will set up,*” “*The Lord will establish.*” There are sermons in Bible names.

The Cross and the Crown may be traced through the scriptures from Genesis to Malachi and from Matthew to Revelation. There is a red line of blood running from Eden in Genesis to the Lamb as it had been slain, of Revelation. Side by side with this red line of redeeming blood is a purple line of royalty beginning with the first Adam in Genesis and concluding with the last Adam (Christ of Revelation 21 and 22).

This crimson stream (Cross) together with the purple stream (crown) occupies the bulk of Biblical history and prophecy.

The name Jehoiakim assures us that God will set up and establish His Kingdom. The words “**Thy kingdom come**” are more than pious words. They are to be literally fulfilled in a day which is yet to dawn.

The Land of Shinar:

“**And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel [Babylon] . . . in the land of Shinar**” (Genesis 10:10, See also Genesis 11:2, Isaiah 11:11). Amraphel was king of Shinar (Babylon) during the days of Abraham (Genesis 14:1). The land of Shinar thus stands for Babylon.

The Treasure House:

All spoils of war were taken into the treasure house. Nebuchadnezzar was an idolater and the treasure house of his god was a place appropriated for the reception of war trophies which were thus consecrated to the deity to which the temple belonged.

Of the King’s Seed:

Daniel was evidently of the seed royal. Descended from royalty he was now a slave. Behold what sin hath wrought. Sin means slavery.

The learning of the Chaldeans:

Babylon was the capital of ancient learning. “Here were the great libraries of the Semitic race. Here were the scholars who copied so painstakingly every little omen or legend that had come down to them out of the hoary past. Here were the men who had calculated eclipses, watched the moon’s changes, and looked nightly from observatories upon the stately march of constellations over the sky.”

Now among these were Daniel

Daniel and his companions were taken captive in the summer of B.C. 606.

Daniel suffered because of the sins of others. His fathers had sinned and instead of being a prince he was now a slave. Sin makes paupers out of princes whereas grace and holiness makes princes out of paupers. Through all the trying and changing scenes of his everyday life, however, Daniel kept his conscience clear and clean. His all was consecrated to God and God's will.

Daniel the prophet, like his fellow prisoner-prophet Ezekiel, was a Jewish exile in Babylon. His rank and comeliness commended him to the prince of the eunuchs, and he was specially trained for service in the palace of the king. In the polluted atmosphere of the oriental court, Daniel lived a life of exemplary piety and purity. God honored him by bringing him into favor and tender love with those in authority over him. God honored him still more by making him the prophet of the "**times of the Gentiles**" not only dealing with the awful apostasy of God's people Israel, but prophesying in clear terms the rise and fall of Gentile kingdoms, the future apocalypse of "**the man of sin,**" the great tribulation, the return of the Messiah, the resurrections, and judgments.

The visions and prophecies of Daniel sweep the whole course of Gentile world rule until the Messiah ends it all by one sudden crushing blow after which He sets up his own mighty and glorious millennial kingdom.

Daniel

The word Daniel means "*The judge of God*" or "*God is my judge.*" We may learn two lessons from his name.

(1) Daniel was God's REPRESENTATIVE on earth. He was God's mouthpiece and representative in the midst of heathendom. He was one of God's representative saints.

(2) It is an encouragement to know that MAN is not our judge. "**God is my judge.**" The final word is not with man but with God.

According to Daniel 1:3 and 1 Chronicles 3:1 it is more than likely that Daniel was of royal blood and therefore a type of Christ. His name was changed to Belteshazzar ("*Prince of Bel*").

The change of name from "*Judge of God*" to "*Prince of Bel*" did not however, change either his heart or his life.

Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah:

The word Daniel means "*God is my judge,*" Hananiah means "*Beloved of the Lord,*" Mishael means "*Who is like God,*" and Azariah means "*The Lord is my help.*"

Let us remember these cheering lessons.

- (1) God is my judge (not man).
- (2) The grace of God is more than sufficient for every need and in any or every emergency.
- (3) Holiness is Godlikeness or godliness.
- (4) Help is nigh when God is nigh. In times of testing and trial, in days of darkness and distress, sorrow or sickness, God is a very present help. There are sermons in each of these names.

He gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar

Daniel means “*God is my Judge;*” Hananiah means “*Beloved of the Lord;*” Mishael means “*Godlike*” or “*who is like God.*” Azariah means “*The Lord is my help.*” These meaningful Hebrew names were changed to Belteshazzar (*prince of Bel*) Shadrach (*the sun god*) Meshach (*like Shack*) Abednego (*servant of Nego*). Nebuchadnezzar attempted to blot out the name and memory of the Lord God of hosts and God of the Hebrews.

Belteshazzar:

The name Belteshazzar was given to Daniel in honor of Bel the god of Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar thus made a desperate but vain attempt to obliterate the name of the Lord and all remembrance of Him.

Not once does God or the Holy Spirit, the angels, or the prophet himself use the word Belteshazzar. The word itself was intended to be a flattering title, for it means “*The prince of Bel.*” Satan’s idea was to get rid of the God of Abraham, Isaac; Jacob and Israel!

1. Daniel “*God is my judge*” was changed to Belteshazzar “*Prince of Bel.*”
2. Hananiah “*The Lord favors*” was changed to Shadrach “*Inspired or illumined by the Sun-god.*”
3. Mishael “*Who is like God or Godlike*” was changed to Meshach “*Who is like Shak*” one of the Babylonian idols.
4. Azariah “*The Lord helps*” was changed to Abednego “*Servant of Nego.*”

Thus honor was paid to four of the gods of Babylon and a subtle satanic attempt was made to get rid of the God of the Hebrews. The chief god was Bel and hence “*Belteshazzar,*” then came the “*Sun-god*” Shadrach, the “*Earth-god*” Meshach and the “*Fire-god,*” Abednego.

But Daniel purposed in his heart

Daniel could not avoid being captured by the Chaldean army, he could not prevent the Gentile king changing his name, he could neither hinder his own confinement, nor the confinement of his companions in the court of the Chaldeans, he could not prevent the King from dictating certain foods and drink—BUT he could refuse to change his life and he could refuse to eat THE FORBIDDEN FOOD.

Daniel determined to be true to God whatever the cost or consequences. Where Adam and Eve failed, Daniel, under Divine grace, succeeded.

Daniel purposed . . . that he would not:

There are certain things which a child of God cannot and will not do.

- (1) He will not act contrary to God's will as revealed in His Word.
- (2) He will not go contrary to His God.
- (3) He will not violate his own enlightened conscience. "Daniel would not."

He would not defile himself

Had Daniel compromised with the Word of God, trifled with his convictions and tinkered with his conscience, either for personal safety or for political preferment, pomp or power he never could have been the channel through whom God poured forth his truth to kings and kingdoms both past and present. God was preparing this youth for future revelations of his word and will.

Not only were pork, bacon and wine forbidden in the Deuteronomic law but the food placed before Daniel and his three Hebrew friends may have been sacrificed to idols and hence a second good reason why Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself.

"Be not conformed" to Babylon, Chicago, Paris, New York, or Kansas City. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

- To be conformed means to run parallel with.
- To be transformed means to go across.

Daniel refused to run parallel with Babylon. Are we running parallel with or across? How about the card table? Theater? Talkies? The dance? The cigarette? Wine glass? dress? worldly sports? Divorce? Birth control? Parallel with or across? Which? Conformed or transformed? which? Daniel would not defile himself. How about you?

Whether defilement to which allusion is here made arose:

- (1) from certain food being prohibited by the law of Moses as unclean or
- (2) because of the custom of offering food to idols or
- (3) food which had been dedicated to an idol (See I Corinthians 8:10).

Daniel would not defile himself. Do not defile yourself. Do not defile your MIND, your EYES, your BODY, your LIPS, your TONGUE, your FINGERS, or your SOUL, do not defile yourself.

Daniel purposed . . . requested:

Daniel's conduct in our day would be dubbed as "narrow-mindedness and puritanical bigotry."

Daniel however was more concerned about the smile of God than the handclaps of the giddy and godless crowd. Daniel kept a conscience void of offence toward God and man and God honored his holy servant.

Therefore he requested:

The humble attitude and petition of Daniel was the direct consequence of a high purpose not to defile himself. We have:

- (1) High Purpose as THE ROOT “**Daniel purposed in his heart**”
- (2) Holy Practice as THE FRUIT “**He would not,**”
- (3) Happy Privilege “**Therefore he requested.**”

That he might not defile himself:

Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not and then made a courteous request that he might not defile himself. Temptations are to be fairly met and firmly resisted. Temptations are to be resisted in a right and proper way. The heart must be holy, the will must be set, the life must be winning, the protest must be courteously borne, and then the results awaited with faith and patience.

Daniel first purposed, and then requested. He was wise. He did not purpose and then rudely refuse. He purposed, for that was right and then he requested for that was the part of wisdom. As a rule we are persecuted more for our foolishness, rashness, stubbornness, and rudeness rather than for righteousness sake.

Melzar:

Melzar was the STEWARD or college DEAN under Ashpenaz the chief of the eunuchs.

Pulse to eat

Pulse or cereal, as we would express it, was the food of the laboring classes. The “pulse” of verses 12 and 16 included barley, wheat, rye and probably peas and beans.

Their countenance appeared fairer and fatter

Godliness is profitable. Profitable for time and eternity. Profitable for body, mind and soul. Faithfulness to God and consecration to his will always react on the face of the faithful.

A little with God is better than much without God. The presence and blessing of God are more important than fatted hogs and boiled beans.

~ end of chapter 1 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
