

## *Daniel 1:8-21 - A Miracle with Vegetables*

Intro - There are no wasted words in the Bible...Rom. 15:4. The account before us today is of four young teenage boys that grew up in privilege...royals. But they were taken captive and carried away into exile to serve a foreign nation. Their lives and plans were upended when they ended up in Babylon. We might be tempted to think that what happened to these boys far from home 2600 years ago is far from relevant to us today. From these teenagers we learn about conviction and courage and how to resist when the culture is trying to conform you to its image. These boys demonstrated excellent character when they were young in a small matter that fortified them to exhibit that same character when they were older in greater matters. We get prepared for the big battles by fighting smaller battles. *The Problem. The Plan. The Payoff*

### *THE PROBLEM*

1. They were in captivity, but their conscience was not chained Daniel 1:8
  - a. Their conscience was pricked over a seemingly small thing.....food - Dan 1:5
    - i. Small but basic. Adam, Israel and Jesus were all tested with food
  - b. They were captives/slaves...but they were well cared for with abundant food
  - c. They were concerned with how to glorify God with food. 1 Cor. 10:31
2. I am impressed that such a young man had such strong convictions
  - a. He was far from home and far from any positive peer pressure
  - b. Life turned upside down (captive/made a eunuch) why not enjoy foreign food?
  - c. Daniel didn't subscribe to situational ethics "when in Rome.../Babylon/Vegas"
    - i. His circumstances didn't alter his convictions
  - d. His new masters tried to assimilate...get to conform and compromise.
  - e. They had given him a new name (new god) and new location, new circumstances but it didn't change his new nature. Rom 12:2 2 Cor. 6:17
3. Does our faith stay the same when our location changes?
  - a. Church/home/work/vacation/recreation/ family /friends/ school
  - b. In our own day some 80% of kids from Christian homes leave the faith in college
  - c. Do we have convictions or are we chameleons?

### *THE PLAN*

- Daniel was not content to let the issue lie. He courageously addressed it.
  - Daniel 1:8b 1 Cor. 16:13-14
  - A lesson in civil disobedience done right. How to righteously resist
- Daniel asked for a favor, but he needed God's favor
  - Daniel 1:9
  - Proverbs 16:7
  - Daniel grew in favor with God and man and God gave him favor with man
  - We are dependent upon God for every aspect of life.

- The commander liked Daniel, but he liked his life/head more
  - Daniel 1:10
  - God's favor doesn't mean a smooth path and no setbacks      John 16:33      1 John 5:4
- Daniel is persistent and doesn't give up when things don't go his way
  - Dan. 1:11 - Now Daniel addresses a lower ranking official
  - It could be the overseer was just a go-between in the request (mediator)
- Daniel doesn't feel intitled, but he proposes a test
  - Dan. 1:12-13      a meager diet of "sown things"(vegetables/seeds) and water
  - It was a reasonable request that addressed the objections of the commander
    - *"Give us less and let's see if it will turn out more"*
- Their faith was put to the test, and they were willing to have their faith tested
  - They believed that honoring God with food...that God would give good health
  - The unbelieving world will test our faith and convictions
  - We should be willing to let our faith be put to a test and trust God for results

### *THE PAYOFF*

- Daniel 1:14-16
  - I classify this as a miracle      a miracle with vegetables
  - Human perspective - a cafeteria smorgasbord - vs - bird food/rabbit food
    - Which one will normally make you fatter?
    - When *the meager* makes you fatter...that is a miracle
- Proverbs 15:16-17
  - God can make a little be better for us than a lot
  - A little manna can be more nourishing than a lot of meat
  - A meager meal with the fear of God and love for God is a good meal
- Their test with this little thing prepared them for the bigger things to come
  - A test with food prepared them for the fiery furnace
  - Honoring God with lunch equipped for honoring God when it meant lions
    - If we won't stand for the small things we will cave on the big things
  - Their tests would continue with honoring God in their education
- They were given a three-year education at the university of Babylon
  - Studied - language, mathematics, astrology, sorcery....etc.
  - But these boys prospered in a pagan environment...didn't lose their faith
  - They excelled in their studies - Dan. 1:20 - All truth is God's truth
- What are some lessons we can learn from these 4 teenagers?
  - God uses the young.      Don't despise someone's youth      1 Tim. 4:12
  - God will test our faith and convictions
    - We will be tempted to compromise and be defiled by world (conformed)
  - Tests with little things prepare us for bigger things
  - Little (with obedience) can be better than a lot (with rebellion)
  - Our faith should be able to endure outside scrutiny
  - Do our convictions change with the culture and circumstances?
  - We can prosper in a pagan environment