

## **Daniel 1d – The Chapter**

### **Introduction**

Daniel 1:1-2 *“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.”*

Jehoiakim reigned from 609-598 B.C. and *“did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord”* 2 Chronicles 36:5. It was in his 3rd year, 606 B.C. that Nebuchadnezzar came and besieged Jerusalem, in which time Nebuchadnezzar took some of the vessels of the temple of the Lord and some of the inhabitants, Daniel and his three friends included.

King Nebuchadnezzar put the vessels from the temple of God into the temple of Marduk (formally named Bel) the god of the Babylonians, Jeremiah 50:2.

All of this came to pass according to the word of the Lord through Isaiah the prophet. (2 Kings 20:16-17)

***Note: Jerusalem was besieged 2 more times, once under the reign of Jehoiachin 597 B.C. and secondly under the reign of Zedekiah in 586 B.C. in the which, Jerusalem’s walls were pulled down also the temple, and the city was burned only leaving husbandmen to tend to crops. (2 Kings 24 & 25; 2 Chronicles 36)***

Daniel 1:3-5 *“And the king spoke unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; 4 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. 5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.”*

Isaiah prophesied of the fact that king Hezekiah’s sons, or the kings seed, would be taken captive by the Babylonians, and made eunuchs (in a physical sense of the word), in the palace of the king of Babylon. (Isaiah 39:7)

Nebuchadnezzar told Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs, to choose out children of the kings seed (which can be read as youth as Daniel was 18 years of age), that had no blemish, or physical defects, (Leviticus 24:19-20) but well-favoured or good looking in appearance. Skilful in all wisdom, cunning in knowledge, understanding science, and have the ability to be able to stand or hold a position in the king’s palace. Those that were chosen had to be able to be taught in the schools and tongue of the Chaldeans.

It is obvious that those who were chosen were well educated, which is another reason why they were not just children. What should make the reader sit back and look at what has just been read is this; an idolatrous king demanded perfection in those who were chosen. And he was so concerned in their well being, that he would not allow ordinary food to be fed to them. Nebuchadnezzar wanted them to be fed with what he regarded as the best, which is the food from his own table. If this is expected by an idolatrous king, how much more is expected by the King of kings, Jesus Christ.

The question must be asked, why did Nebuchadnezzar not wipe out the opposing kings seed, but wish to educate them in the affairs of his kingdom so that they could stand in his palace? The answer is rather a simple one. Nebuchadnezzar was a very wise king, and by doing this he would guarantee, more fully, the loyalty of the captive nation to his own kingdom.

At the end of three years they were to stand before the king, obviously to be tested by him to see how they have faired, verses 18-20.

Daniel 1:6-7 *“Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.”*

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were a part of the captivity. The prince of the eunuchs gave them new names as listed below;

<b>The Pagan name change</b>	
Daniel; God is my judge -	Belteshazzar; Keeper of the hide treasures of Bel
Hananiah; Yahweh is God -	Shadrach; Inspiration of the sun (worship of Sun)
Mishael; Who belongs to God -	Meshach; Of the goddess Shaca (worship of Venus)
Azariah; Yahweh helps -	Abednego; Servant of the shining fire

The change of names was customary of this time, but why to names of pagan deities? This was to encourage them, or influence them, to compromise, (conform to), and take up the idolatrous religion and practices that encompassed them in the Babylonian nation.

Daniel 1:8 *“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: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.”*

The first test that these young men were faced with was the test of appetite. This seems to be rather an insignificant matter. But if we look to history we find that Adam and Eve's first test was upon appetite. (Genesis 3:1-3) Christ's first test in the wilderness, in reclaiming what man had lost, was appetite. (Matthew 4:3) This should be a warning sign to us today that appetite has a direct link to our spiritual life, for it shows that when the appetite is ruling sin is lying at the door. And when it is not ruling but under the control of reason, it is harder for sin to take hold upon us. So what we eat and drink can either hinder or promote our relationship with God.

Obviously a portion of the food and wine was unfit to eat and drink according to the laws of health. (Leviticus 11; Proverbs 20:1) Why Daniel and his friends purposed/determined in their hearts not to eat or drink of the king's food is because the "*law of his God was in their hearts*" Psalms 37:31, so "*they inclined in their hearts to perform God's statutes always*" Psalms 119:112, and to "*not do any evil thing*" Psalms 141:4, in "*defiling the temple of God*" 1 Corinthians 3:16-7. So Daniel requested of Melzar that he might not defile himself.

Their parents did a good job in instructing them as children in the way that they should go, Proverbs 22:6. What about us? How are we guiding and instructing them?

Daniel 1:9-10 "*Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. 10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall you make me endanger my head to the king.*"

Why was Daniel brought into favour with the prince of the eunuchs? Because Daniel and his friends would not compromise but stood fast to the principles of God. And why did they stand fast? Because they had committed their ways unto the Lord; and also trusted in Him to bring it to pass. (Psalms 37:5) Their obedience to Gods ways pleased the Lord and God could make their enemies to be at peace with them, Proverbs 16:7. So God can bless faithfulness to him.

But the prince of the eunuchs feared the king, for it was the king himself that had appointed their meat and drink, and if the king should see them looking worse than the other Jews he would endanger his head. So he went to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had placed in charge of them, and requested of him the same thing. Daniel was persistent. This shows 2 points;

- 1) *That the king and those under him honestly thought that this type of diet was the best for building muscle and mind.*
- 2) *Not all the Jews stood to the principles of God but compromised. So Melzar feared the result but Daniel knew better as we will find out.*

Daniel 1:11-14 "*Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 12 Prove your servants, I beseech you, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. 13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before you, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as you seest, deal with your servants. 14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.*"

Daniel set his face like a flint and believed that the Lord would help him (Isaiah 50:7) and asked Melzar to go against the kings orders. This is a lesson for us in trusting the promises of the Lord, for Daniel had an incredible amount of trust in God in saying "*prove us 10 days...then compare us with the others.*" But he had a good reason to and so do we. See Psalms 56:11; 125:1.

What is pulse and why 10 days? There are varying answers to what pulse is, but the most sensible is this; a diet of a variety of vegetables, dates, and berries.

Daniel was very wise in choosing 10 days, because he knew that they had only just marched from Jerusalem, which would take its toll on the health and vitality of the body. So the best food is needed to help the body recover; food that is highly nutritious to aid the body to quickly repair itself, light and easily digested by the stomach, and food that would keep the mind clear and sharp to be able to discern the guiding of the Lord and not effect their spiritual perception. But most importantly food that the Lord could bless and strengthen them with, (as ultimately it was the Lord that blessed them with the result that was gained, because Daniel's faith was a faith that had corresponding works out of his love for God, James 2:17-20, Galatians 5:6), unlike the food from the king's table.

So Melzar agreed to ten days.

*Daniel 1:15-17 “And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. 16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. 17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”*

The results were remarkably in favour of Daniel and his friends, for the Lord blessed them with fairer and fatter countenances. So the portion of the king's food was taken away completely and they were feed pulse and water. Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. (Psalms 34:8)

God blessed them with wisdom and knowledge in learning, as He is the author of these. (Proverbs 2:6, James 1:5) Also to Daniel, He gave the understanding in visions and dreams as we will see in future chapters.

This shows to us that the Lord is willing to bless those that put their faith and trust in Him, but that also we need to not just sit back and wait for the Lord to bless. As Daniel made every effort to have their diet changed, having faith in God to open the door of opportunity, so too are we to move forward by faith.

*Daniel 1:18-21 “Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. 20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm. 21 And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.”*

At the end of 3 years the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before king Nebuchadnezzar. The king questioned them and found that none were of the capabilities of Daniel and his friends, for they were 10 times wiser. This shows that the king must have been a very wise man himself to be able to question them in such matters. Why were they wiser? Because the Lord blessed them with wisdom and this wisdom was a reward for their faithfulness/obedience to God. (Proverbs 2:7; 10:31)

Daniel continued until the 1st year of Cyrus the Persian king.

Friends, they stood the test of appetite. They didn't compromise when everyone else was. They stood true to God come what may and because of this God could bless them. The question is, can the same be said about us today? Are we indulging appetite? And are we compromising the truths of God? Are we standing true to God come what may, and teaching and instructing our children to do the same? For if we aren't, God cannot bless us like he did Daniel and his friends. May we be inspired by this chapter to make a more earnest effort to serve the Lord so we too can have the peace and blessings of God bestowed upon us.

## **SN HASKELL: THE STORY OF DANIEL THE PROPHET**

### **DANIEL AND HIS FOLLOWERS TESTED**

Although Daniel lived twenty-five hundred years ago, he is a latter-day prophet. His character should be studied, for its development reveals the secret of God's preparation of those who will welcome Christ at his appearing. His prophecies should be understood, for in them is the key which unlocks history to the end of time. The Saviour himself bore witness to this. When the disciples asked, "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" he said, "When ye see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet . . . whoso readeth, let him understand." In this we have the divine permission to read and understand the prophecies of Daniel. These prophecies are intended, therefore, to warn a people of the coming of Christ. {1901 SNH, SDP 13.1}

True, it was once a sealed book, for the prophet was told to shut up the words, and seal the book "to the time of the end," "for at the time of the end shall be the vision." And again, "The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." But the time of the end has come. It began in 1798, and though "none of the wicked shall understand," yet "the wise shall understand." With the book of Daniel in hand, and a heart open to hear the voice of God, man may come in touch with the Father of light. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith." {1901 SNH, SDP 13.2}

Daniel begins the book with the simple statement that in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, 607 b. c., Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came unto Jerusalem and besieged it; that in the siege, Jehoiakim was given by the Lord into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, but allowed to remain on the throne in Jerusalem, yet Nebuchadnezzar carried with him to Babylon, as tribute, a part of the vessels of the house of God, and, as hostages, some of the members of the royal household. {1901 SNH, SDP 14.1}

This act, with similar ones which followed in swift succession, was but the culmination of events which began years before. In order to appreciate this climax, it is essential that we study the causes which led to it. Since the captivity of Judah is an object lesson to people of the last generation, it is doubly necessary that we trace the relationship between certain causes and results. {1901 SNH, SDP 14.2}

## HISTORY IN BRIEF

God had an object in calling the Jewish nation to separate themselves from other nations of the world. It was that his people might stand before the world as light-bearers. As a beacon set on a hill, Israel was to send beams of 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 God-given plan was neglected, the light, as a candle deprived of the life-giving oxygen, burned dim. Then it was that the nation was pressed upon all sides by the foe. There is a Hebrew maxim which says that "Jerusalem was destroyed because the education of her children was neglected." The prophecies of Daniel and the connected history prove the truth of this maxim. It may be added that the Jews were restored to Jerusalem as the result of the proper education of a few Hebrew boys. {1901 SNH, SDP 14.3}

Just about one hundred years before the days of Daniel, Hezekiah was king of Judah. After a reign of thirteen years, he was on his deathbed, but he pleaded with God to lengthen his life. This was done, and fifteen years were added. On the king's recovery he was visited by ambassadors from Babylon, to whom he showed all his treasures. 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. Then came a message from God by the hand of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, the days shall come, that all that is in thine house . . . shall be carried into Babylon; nothing shall be left." He was also at the same time told that his descendants should be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. {1901 SNH, SDP 15.1}

Here was portrayed the future captivity of the Hebrew race. The prophecy was placed on record, and repeated again and again by Jewish mothers as they taught their children. "Must my son be a captive in the court of a heathen king? Then let me so train him that he will be true to the God of his fathers." There were other mothers who lightly let pass the thought, and the history of their sons' lives is recorded for our instruction. {1901 SNH, SDP 15.2}

Three years after his life had been saved, a son was born to Hezekiah. Notwithstanding the recent prophecy, Hezekiah and his wife, Hephzibah, failed to teach the young Manasseh in the way of truth. He was but twelve years of age when he came to the throne, but if he had been trained in the fear of God, he would not have chosen the worship of the heathen. {1901 SNH, SDP 16.1}

The youthful Christ at the same age settled not only his own destiny, but the destiny of the universe. When twelve years of age, standing by the temple in Jerusalem, his future work opened before him, and he accepted his appointed mission. Why? Because Mary, his mother, had taught him that heart service to God was his highest pleasure. Manasseh decided in favor of the heathen deities; did evil in the sight of God; and "for the sins of Manasseh" came the captivity of Judah. {1901 SNH, SDP 16.2}

At the age of twelve years, Christ made a decision which saved the world; at the same age Manasseh chose a course which brought ruin to the nation. In the training of your child, are you Hephzibah or Mary? {1901 SNH, SDP 16.3}

The long reign of Manasseh passed, and the prophecy sent to Hezekiah was not yet fulfilled. Men began to wonder if it ever would come to pass. "Since the fathers fell asleep," said they, "all things continue as they were." {1901 SNH, SDP 16.4}

It was in the days of Josiah, the grandson of Manasseh, that Jeremiah prophesied. Through this prophet, God pleaded with Jerusalem to return to him. "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." Thus was Babylon described, and Jerusalem's impending doom portrayed. {1901 SNH, SDP 16.5}

Josiah was spared the sight of the complete destruction of Jerusalem because of the reforms which he attempted. In his days there was kept by Judah, and by Israel also, the greatest Passover feast in the history of the nation. "Because thine heart was tender and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, . . . behold I will gather thee unto thy fathers . . . and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place." In a peculiar way God gave Josiah an opportunity to avert the impending calamity. It was not yet too late to change the course of events. This opportunity was through the gifts of his sons. Josiah had three sons and one grandson, who were in turn seated on the throne at Jerusalem. Each, because of wrong training in youth, refused to take God at his word, and failing, hastened the final overthrow. {1901 SNH, SDP 17.1}

The three sons were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. The grandson was Johoiachin, who preceded his uncle, Zedekiah. The fate of each is a solemn warning to people living at the end of time. He who might have been the light of heathen nations was swallowed up by Egyptian darkness. Jehoiakim, the second, who, properly trained, would have been so charged with the power of God that the heathen king would either have united his forces with the king of Judah, or, opposing, would have been smitten as by a thunder-bolt, failing, paid tribute to Babylon. His capital was entered. Treasures from the house of God were ruthlessly torn from their place and dedicated to heathen worship. Youth,-bright, promising youth,-were taken from the royal family to serve the king of Babylon. Jehoiakim beheld this, but was powerless to interfere. His life was gone; he was not connected with the throne of God. His mother and his father made a fatal mistake, for they did not give him the training which God had commanded them to give. Neither did he profit by these mistakes, but educated his son in courtly manners and in the philosophy of the world; and, as a result, his son Jehoiachin languished nearly thirty-seven years in a prison in Babylon. This was another lamp without the oil; another soul without the heavenly food; another son improperly trained to add to the disgrace of Judah. "Jerusalem was destroyed, because the education of her children was neglected." {1901 SNH, SDP 17.2}

Zedekiah, the third son of Josiah, had still an opportunity to save Jerusalem. Part of the treasures of this city were already in Babylon. Daniel and his companions had been in the court seventeen or 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." In this time of peril, how did Zedekiah act? Did he deliver himself unto the Babylonians? God had commanded it; the city would have been saved by it; his own soul would have been saved. Zedekiah pleaded a most human excuse, saying, "I am afraid." {1901 SNH, SDP 18.1}

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. {1901 SNH, SDP 19.1}

## A TRUE EDUCATION

Living at the same time and in the same city with the princes already named, were others which the Scripture mentions by name. These were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, children of Judah, of the royal family-relatives of Jehohaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. {1901 SNH, SDP 19.2}

At the first siege of Jerusalem, 607 b. c., Daniel was not over eighteen years of age; about the age of the prince Zedekiah, who afterward ruled in Jerusalem. Daniel had a godly mother who knew of the prophecy concerning the destruction of their city. She repeated to her son the words of God, that some day 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. {1901 SNH, SDP 19.3}

The songs which these Hebrew children sang told the story of God's dealings with his people. It was in this manner that the image of God was engraven on their hearts. This 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 everlasting Father, led their children by precept and example, by word and song, to form characters that would stand the test. {1901 SNH, SDP 19.4}

It 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. {1901 SNH, SDP 20.1}

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. {1901 SNH, 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?" {1901 SNH, SDP 20.3}

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. {1901 SNH, 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. {1901 SNH, 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. {1901 SNH, 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. {1901 SNH, 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. {1901 SNH, SDP 23.1}

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. {1901 SNH, SDP 23.2}

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. {1901 SNH, SDP 24.1}

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. {1901 SNH, 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 acquit themselves so creditably, that the Israelites, their downtrodden people, might be honored, and that God's name might be glorified. {1901 SNH, SDP 24.3}

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. {1901 SNH, SDP 24.4}

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." {1901 SNH, 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." 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. {1901 SNH, SDP 25.2}

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. {1901 SNH, 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? {1901 SNH, 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. Margin {1901 SNH, SDP 27.1}

## **BLESSINGS**