

Daniel Chapter 1: Faithfulness Rewarded

The Basics of Chapter 1

- Begins with defeat (1).
- The Name of God is blasphemed (2).
- Some of the people of God are exiled, with particular boys targeted for the king’s court (3-7).
 - Royal family and nobility (3)
 - Good looking (4)
 - Knowledgeable and able to learn quickly (4)
 - Poise (4)
- These boys were told what to eat and drink (5).
- They underwent a probation period of 3 years (5).
- Among the many exiles were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.
- They were given Babylonian names.

Name Game

- Nebuchadnezzar had the Hebrew boys’ names changed. Why? He wanted the Hebrews to become Babylonians.

Hebrew Name	Meaning	Babylonian Name	Meaning
Daniel	God is my judge	Belteshazzar	Bel protects
Hananiah	LORD shows grace	Shadrach	Command of Aku (moon god)
Mishael	Who is what God is?	Meshach	Who is what Aku is?
Azariah	LORD helps	Abednego	Servant of Nebo

- How would you like to have your name changed so that its meaning announces that you honor something that you don’t?

The King's Food

- The food was the best of the best – “the king’s food.”
- Theories I’ve heard concerning why the boys refused to eat or drink “the king’s food.”
 - The food presented violated the Mosaic dietary laws (Leviticus 11).
 - The Hebrew boys were declaring their dependence on God & not the king.
- The reason they did not eat, however, is clear: they did not want to sanction idolatry.
 - At ancient feasts, participants would “offer” the meal to their god before consuming it.
 - Numbers 25:1-2
 - Judges 9:27
 - Besides the rank idolatry, the real problem lay behind the false gods.
 - Leviticus 17:7
 - Deuteronomy 32:16-17
 - Psalm 106:37
- The reason the Daniel and his friends refused to eat “the king’s meat” was so they would not be guilty of demon worship. See also 1 Corinthians 8 and 10.
- What’s even more impressive: they were under a lot of pressure to comply (10)!

Faithfulness Vindicated

- Daniel and his friends were healthy at the end of the 10 day trial.
- This is evidence of God’s faithfulness. There is no sensible reason that consuming vegetables and water alone should have led to significantly better health. God rewarded their faithfulness!

Application for Us

- How are you tempted to blend in with the culture?
 - What are obvious ways?
 - Some subtle, not so obvious ways?
- Have you experienced God’s faithfulness when you refused to go along with the culture?