

THE SUPERNATURAL DIET



(Daniel 1)

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it... and the king told Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring in some of the children of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility... Among these were of the children of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Dan. 1:1,3,6).

King Nebuchadnezzar offered these young men the opportunity to be educated in the Babylon's culture and language for three years to serve in the king's palace. Their diet was to be daily from the portion of the king's own rich and dainty food and of the wine which he drank (vs. 4-5). That probably would have been very

attractive and an adventurous experience to the eyes of some other young men who had been taken captive, considering the treatment they were going to have as slaves. But not in the eyes of these young men. Their determination to follow God and His laws in that strange land of cultural differences, stood firm before all. When approached by the chief eunuch with the idea, Daniel courageously spoke for the four of them expressing their heart's determination not to defile themselves by eating the portion of the king's rich foods. He requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might [be allowed] not to defile himself (Daniel 1:8). Meanwhile, God was working in the heart of the eunuch to show favor toward them. Although, he expressed fear in the outcome of Daniel's decision, he gave him permission to try the diet of vegetables and water for ten days. At the end of that period of time, the chief of eunuchs perceived that they looked better and had taken more flesh than all the youths who ate of the king's rich dainties (Vs. 15). The supernatural happened, because of their choice to obey God and not to depart from His laws. God then came to their aid and proved to all that He is the sustainer of life. It was not the vegetables and the water that sustained them, but it was God's doing. The result was obvious and no one could deny the fact. Although their identities were lost in the change of their names, seemingly their faith was challenged when brain washed in that period of three years, still they held on to the things they had learned back in their country and nothing would erase that from them.

These young men understood the king's schemes and turned down the offer of eating from the king's diet and drinking from his wine. In this case they chose to disobey the king's order to please their God. Since the king's idea was contrary to God's, they preferred to put their lives on the line. A sacrifice of devotion to their true and only God has not been overlooked. Instead, it has been registered in the world's most valuable book, reaching all nations, tongues and cultures over the years expressing their love and faithfulness to their God. King Nebuchadnezzar's plan to turn the Hebrew young men into what he wanted them to be to serve him, worked in part because God had a plan for that nation and kingdom through the lives of these young men.

When the term of three years had come, the chief of eunuchs presented them to the king. He found that among all the young men brought to him, none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah...in all the matters of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king asked them, he found them ten times

better than all the magicians and enchanters who were in his whole realm (vs. 18-20). Imagine just from eating vegetables and water! The secret of their success was not found in the diet, but in their faithfulness to God's law. These young men took the stand to choose to do rightly in God's sight amidst the consequential results of their decision. That decision required faith to be executed successfully, as in other times when they did not bow down to worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up and were thrown into the fiery furnace (Dan. 3); and when Daniel was thrown into the lion's den for not praying to King Darius for thirty days as it was commanded to be done. In the case of the fiery furnace, King Nebuchadnezzar, filled with fury, commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than it was usually heated. These three friends of Daniel were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their turbans, and their other clothing and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace (Dan. 3). No one expected to see them alive. But God, more powerful than the heat of that furnace, sent His angel to deliver them. In return, King Nebuchadnezzar praised God saying: Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who believed on Him. Therefore, I make a decree that any people, nation, and language that speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut to pieces and their houses be made a dunghill, for there is no other God who can deliver in this way! So the king promoted them in the province of Babylon (Da. 3: 28-29).

In the case of Daniel defying the command to pray only to King Darius, he was thrown to the lion's den and a stone was laid upon the mouth of the den and sealed with the king's own signet and with the signet of his lords, that there might be no change or purpose concerning Daniel (Dan. 6:16-17). That did not matter to God, Whom Daniel served. And again, He came to Daniel's aid by sending His angel to shut the mouths of the lions. He could have been the same angel that delivered Daniel's friends. King Darius, like the previous king acknowledged God as the only true and Living God by writing to all peoples, nations, and languages that dwelt in all the earth: I make a decree that in all my royal dominion men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for He is the living God, enduring and steadfast forever and His kingdom shall not be destroyed and His dominion shall be even to the end ; He is a Savior and Deliverer and He works signs and wonders in the heaven and on the earth- He Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian (Dan. 6:25-28).

It all began with the young men's determination not to share from the king's delicacies. They preferred a simple diet of water and vegetables so as not to defile themselves with the worldly things represented by the king's diet. Food has always been the meaning to celebrate success and the means to entertain. It seems that the heart's joy is shared through the stomach. Their determination did not go unnoticed by their God; they were rewarded by Him and were found in favor with all the kings they served. Our God is never aloof to the faithfulness of His children. YAHSHUA said he who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much...No servant is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (Luke 16:10a, 13). Daniel and his friends chose to serve God. The supernatural was visible in their lives because of their choice to follow God and not the world they lived in. Paul says not to conform our lifestyles to that of the world, but to renew our minds in order to know the will of God (Rom. 12:1-2). Our body should be presented daily to God as a living sacrifice to experience the gift of the supernatural, as in miracles and wonders which are the manifestations of God's pleasures towards us. A diet that is ordained by God will supernaturally bring forth miracles of healing and of well-being. Oppose the diet of junk foods which are contrary to God's plan to make us healthy. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Araziah left a legacy to all who love the Lord and follow Him: Obedience should be the priority in every sector of one's life; it is the behavior that pleases God, for it is faith in action.