

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, October 28, 2014

Daniel's Decision

Daniel 1:1-16

Major Segments:

- Nebuchadnezzar conquers Jerusalem
- Daniel (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) is selected for training in the royal court
- Daniel refuses to defile the Lord and eat and drink the food provided
- God is with Daniel (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) and his counsel is awarded by the king, as he sees it is of higher value

Segment Questions:

- Why did the foreign king request young men for the training? Do religions today ever use a similar type of indoctrination? How about the Christian church?
- What do we learn about the relationship between Daniel and the overseer from this exchange?
- Why did Daniel ask for such a restrictive diet? Was meat considered unclean? Based on this story, should we all be vegetarians in order to honor God?
- What is unique about how Daniel addressed not accepting all of the overseer's requests? Did he find a way to honor the overseer as well? Is this important?
- The story ends with what initially may appear as a kind of "innocuous" phrase – "Daniel continued to serve in the court through the reign of many kings." If you really think about that it is kind of a "wow" statement. What does that simple phrase say about Daniel?

Action Questions:

- If you were Daniel, what resource would you have appreciated the most in captivity? (helpful official, three friends, God's influence, etc). When do you feel that "resource" in your life?
- What often keeps you from taking a stand against the world? What can we learn from Daniel's example when a time comes for us to take a stand or separate ourselves from the world?
- What is your greatest resource for taking a stand? Have you ever experience a similar situation to Daniel's?
- What are some lessons on leadership that you glean from this story? Think in terms of how Nebuchadnezzar approached these new captives, how the overseer interacted with Daniel and how the whole thing played out for generations.

Daniel 1:1-16

From: www.btstories.com

Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon. He conquered Jerusalem and took the people captive. He then ordered his officials to select the best young men and train them to serve in the royal court. They were to be given the best instruction in language, literature, and wisdom. This training would last three years, and during that time, the king would provide them the best food and wine.

Four of the young men selected were Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men determined before the Lord that they wouldn't defile themselves by eating and drinking those things that were against God's Law. Daniel asked the overseer to leave those things out of their daily diet.

"Oh no. I couldn't let you do that! A day is coming when you'll stand before the king. He'll see that you're more skinny than the others, and then he'll have me killed!"

At this point, Daniel chose his words carefully. "Please, before you decide, do a test. Allow the four of us to eat vegetables and drink water for 10 days. Then see how we look in comparison to the others."

The overseer highly respected Daniel, so he agreed to this test. At the end of 10 days, Daniel and his friends looked better and healthier than all those who had been eating the king's food and wine. So the overseer allowed the four of them to continue eating only vegetables and drinking water.

God was with Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He gave them knowledge, and allowed them to understand wisdom. Daniel also understood visions and dreams.

At the end of three years, Nebuchadnezzar interviewed all of the young men who had gone through his training program. None of the others ranked as high as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. So they began serving in the king's court. He consulted them in every matter concerning wisdom and understanding.

In time, the king valued their counsel ten times higher than his other counselors. Daniel continued to serve in the court through the reign of many kings.