

Character Studies from Daniel and Nehemiah.

This week – How blessed and protected are they who stay loyal to the one true God.

***“Blessed be the name of God for ever
and ever: For wisdom and might is His.”***
Daniel 2v20.

Bible Readings for this week:

(Choose a regular time each day to read the Bible and pray whether it be when you first wake up or just before you go to sleep)

Day	Bible Reading	Tick When Read
Sunday	2 Kings 21v1-16 (Manasseh's evil reign brings judgement)	
Monday	2 Kings 22v1-7 (Josiah's godly reign)	
Tuesday	2 Kings 22v8-20 (The finding of the Word of God)	
Wednesday	2 Kings 23v1-20 (Josiah's godly response to God's Word)	
Thursday	2 Kings 23v21-2 Kings 24v4 (God's judgement fulfilled)	
Friday	Daniel 1 (Daniel's loyalty to God in a foreign land)	
Saturday	Daniel 2v1-24 (Daniel's wisdom shown)	

Important Thought for us Today: How to stand when so few around us believe in God.

Daniel, as a young teenager, was taken from the comfort of a god-fearing home and culture to live in Babylon, where his God was scorned and belittled; where human supremacy and wisdom were worshipped. Yet Daniel upheld his faith sincerely, with quiet dignity and strength. He knew his Bible; he knew that God would keep His promise to bless all who loyally obeyed Him; and thus, was blessed by God's power and protection throughout his long life. We face a similar situation today where 'science' and man are revered; and faith in the one true God belittled. The world says, 'Belief in God is only for those who are weak and simple minded'. **Be loyal to God, like Daniel, and He will protect, use and bless you; even in the perilous and evil times in which we live today.**

Hymn 461 asks the Lord for help to live for Him and not for this world:

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| 1. Lord, in the fullness of my might
I would for Thee be strong,
Make Thy glad service my delight
Thy glory all my song. | 2. I would not give the world my heart,
And then profess thy love;
I would not see my strength depart;
And then Thy service prove. |
| 5. O grant me in my golden time,
A zealous servant's part;
For Thee the glory of my prime,
The fullness of my heart! | 6. I cannot, Lord, too early take,
The covenant divine;
That happy heart shall never break
Whose foremost love is Thine! |

EDT Bible/College Class Take Home Sheet

This sheet is given to remind you of the lesson and to encourage you to read your Bible.

Loyalty - Daniel Refuses the King's Food.

• Background to the lesson. – It is 606BC.

- Judah's Kings, in particular Manasseh, did such evil in God's sight that even godly Josiah's reign, which followed, could not remove it. God said Judah would be destroyed and, in 589BC, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, fulfilled this prophecy.

• Babylon was the mightiest, richest city of its day.

○ A Great City:

The riches that the Babylonians had taken from defeated enemies were used to decorate the city. The hanging gardens of Babylon (one of the 7 wonders of the world) and the breath-taking, ornately decorated, vibrant blue Ishtar gates, which allowed entry through the fortified double walls, spoke of its might and prowess.

○ A Great Opportunity:

This city offered the world's best of human success **without** God - from fitness, entertainment, cuisine, fashion to knowledge and wisdom. It was **'the place to be'**.

○ A Great Temptation:

The elite Jewish teenage captives were taken to be trained as Babylonian princes; brainwashed to forget their homeland, parents, and their God. Ambition to become a ruler in this great city was a real temptation, offering great wealth and power. They were fed from the king's own larders and cellars. **All looked temptingly good.**

• Daniel's Personal Crisis.

- **As a child** Daniel had been taught by godly parents to pray and trust only in the Lord God. He truly had sought and found the Lord as his Saviour; he was a true Christian. At home he found it easy to obey God when those around him were obeying Him too.
- **As a teenager** Daniel was removed from the safety of this godly home environment; to be trained as a prince in the godless, worldly, Babylon. **Would he stand for God?**
- **Alone, without his parent's support and wisdom**, he was faced with the dilemma, on the very first day, of breaking God's command to not eat food that had been offered to idols. What would he do? There was the real **danger of angering** his new masters; **fear of being mocked** by his peers, and **fear of not becoming a prince.**

• Daniel chose to stand faithfully for the Lord.

- No ambition, danger, or fear of others could persuade Daniel to disobey the Lord.
- He spoke openly to his master; **"I cannot take of the King's food and wine."** Daniel 1v12

• Daniel and his 3 friend's open loyalty was blessed openly by the Lord.

- They only ate pulses (vegetables), and drank water. **"As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom."** Daniel 1v17 and 20.
- Daniel continued in an important role for all his captive life, being used mightily for his God whilst rulers and empires came and went through to King Cyrus. **About 536 BC.**

Follow Daniel's example; earnestly seek the Lord early, so that your life will also be blessed and useful for the Lord; knowing safety even in perilous times.

The Apostles agreed with Daniel, saying that, **"We ought to obey God rather than men."** Acts 5:29.