

## A PURE PROPHET FOR A PERILOUS TIME

Now that our overview of Daniel the Book is completed, we turn to the text.

Chapter 1 shall be studied under the title: A PURE PROPHET FOR A PERILOUS TIME.

I shall divide that study into three major sections.

- I. v. 1-4 THE TIME IN WHICH HE LIVED
- II. V. 3-14 THE TESTING THROUGH WHICH HE PASSED
- III. V. 15-21 THE TRIUMPH WITH WHICH HE STOOD

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### I. THE TIME IN WHICH HE LIVED

- Read v. 1-4
- 350 years (+) before Daniel's time (+ 950 BC), King Solomon had feared such a time that had now come to Judah.
- In his prayer at the dedication of the marvelous temple in Jerusalem, Solomon prayed.

*If your people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned against you; and shall return and confess your name, and pray and make supplication before you in this house; then hear thou from Heaven, and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them again unto the land which you gave to them and to their fathers.*

(2 Chron. 6:24-25)

- It was in response to that prayer that God said,

*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

(2 Chron. 7:14)

- And Israel did sin. Solomon married many

wives and had concubines. The people worshiped strange gods, they inter-married with pagans, they instilled idolatry and pagan worship, religious sexuality, sacrifice of children in flames of fire. In the words of their prophet Isaiah:

*They sought counsel but not of God.*

*They sought a covering but not of God's spirit*

—

*And they did that in order that they may add sin to sin.*

*They went to Egypt for counsel and to Pharaoh for strength. (Isa. 30:1-3)*

(See also Deut. 28; I Kings 14:15; Isa. 39; Jer. 13; Amos 7:7-9; Luke 21:24)

The consequence of this personal and national rebellion from God is where the Book of Daniel begins.

We need to look at five major facts about this time.

**1. Jerusalem – the city of God – had been besieged**

- read v. 1
- Its historical significance crushed under the feet of pagans.
- The hometown of Jewish significance now under the sarcasm of aliens.
- That which once spoke of national blessing now under the tongue of those who knew nothing but how to curse its heritage.
- Jerusalem, the capital city of God's only established earthly kingdom.
- Jerusalem, the royal city of Israel's kings.
- The city of prophets – the city of hope and encouragement and blessing
- Jerusalem, city of peace, sanctuary to its citizens, now besieged

But not only had Jerusalem – the City of God – been besieged...

## **2. The Temple – The House of God – had been pillaged.**

- read v. 2
- the sacred and the holy had not only been shamed but stolen and then profaned.
  - Nebuchadnezzar not only stole the vessels from the “house of God” – he actually put them “into the treasure house of his god.
  - Aliens to God had done this. There was no shame on their part.
  - The question may well be – Was there any real sorrow on the part of the Jew.
  - Times were so awful and people so wayward and truth so ignored that it is doubtful if many of any cared that the Temple – the house of God – had been so pillaged.
  - When the house of God is ignored by those who should love it, it will be abused by those who despise it.
- But not only had Jerusalem, the city of God, been besieged, and  
The Temple, the house of God pillaged, but...

## **3. The Israelites - The people of God – had been enslaved.**

- Read 1:3-4
- But God does not waste a crisis, and in this crisis He proved Himself and proved His man and His men. Through it all, God placed men He could trust in pagan places. There they would proclaim that “The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.”

But there is more to understanding this time in which Daniel lived –

### **For there is something yet more frightening than the fact that**

- Jerusalem, the city of God had been besieged, and
  - The temple, the house of God had been pillaged, and
    - The Israelites, the people of God, had been enslaved.
      - And it is this
- 4. Revival – The work of God – had been rejected.**

- This is a notable thing in understanding
  - Daniel the man
  - Daniel the Book
  - Daniel the times
- To see the role of this revival in both the man and the book - we go to Biblical history.
  - Read 2 Kings 22:1-
    - Josiah came to the throne of Judah in 641 BC. He followed the successive kingships of corrupt and ungodly men.
    - The Bible says of Josiah, in 2 Kings 22:2 that *He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.*
    - In the 18<sup>th</sup> year of King Josiah he started a religious reform in the land (2 Kings 22:3). The date was 623 B.C + This was the time of Daniel's birth.
  - From the time of Daniel's birth, until he was about 18 years of age, Josiah and the prophet Jeremiah teamed up to spread throughout the kingdom of Judah "the knowledge and worship of Jehovah." (Smith's Bible dictionary)
    - Here is something of a description of that revival.
    - Keeping in mind that these things were occurring during the first two decades of Daniel's life - They occurred during the two decades preceding Daniel 1:1-4
      - (1) The king restored the significance of the house of the Lord.
        - read 2 Kings 22:3-7
      - (2) He responded in humble repentance to the word of the Lord.
        - read 2 Kings 22:8-11
      - (3) The king urgently seeks, for himself, and for the people, and for all Judah, a word from the Lord about □the words of this book.□

(end here 10.18.98)

- read 2 Kings 22:12-13a
- (4) The king fears □the wrath of the Lord.
- read 2 Kings 22:13
- (5) The king summons a great host of people to the House of the Lord to hear the Word of the Lord.
- Read 2 Kings 23:1-2
- (6) The king made a public covenant before the Lord.
- read 2 Kings 23:3
- (7) The king cleaned up the mess of idolatry and materialism.
- read 2 Kings 23:4-6
- (8) The king acted decisively against the sodomites.
- Read 2 Kings 23:7
- (9) The king acted decisively against the priests and every form of perverted idolatry.
- 2 Kings 23:9-15
- (10) The king commanded the people to *Keep the Passover unto the Lord your God.*
- Read 2 Kings 23:21-23

#### Explain Passover

- Enslavement
- Blood sacrifice
- Personal application of the blood
- Judgment
- Deliverance
- Christ our Passover  
(And it was about this time that Daniel was born)

-- BUT THIS WAS REVIVAL REJECTED

-- Jeremiah the prophet was there at the time.  
(Jer. 1:1-3)

-- Here is what Jeremiah said:

Read Jeremiah 25:1-7

-- Note especially Jer. 25:3,4,7 -  
*But you have not hearkened.*

-- Now the Rejection of the Work of God by the people of God will invariably have an impact on the music of a nation. - We may discern the soul of a nation through the music of a nation.

-- And here it is, and by this time Daniel was a young man - probably around the age of a college freshman.

-- Ps. 137:1-4

-- Look at that music.

-- It was in Babylon - not in Jerusalem

-- It was weeping - not Jewish laughter and rejoicing.

-- It was by a river in a foreign land - not in the temple.

-- The harps were hanging on the willow tree - they were not giving the soothing comforting tones of the vibrancy of hope and rest.

-- And WHY? - Jerusalem was besieged.

-- The Temple was pillaged.

-- The People were enslaved.

-- David was rejected.

But there is yet one more major thing which must be said about these events which mark the time for which Daniel lived.

For not only had -

1. Jerusalem - the city of God - been besieged.
2. The Temple - the house of God - been pillaged -
3. The Israelites - the people of God - had been enslaved.
4. Revival - the work of God - been rejected -  
-- But we must note a more encouraging fact -  
and that is that
5. Prophecy - The Revelation of God - Had Been Affirmed.

Nearly 100 years before the events of Daniel 1, Isaiah the prophet said to Hezekiah the king:

*Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons, that shall issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget, shall they take away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.*                      Isaiah 39:6-7

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NOW, WHAT IS THE CONCLUSION OF THIS ANALYSIS OF THE TIME IN WHICH DANIEL LIVED?

- ◆ Daniel had seen in childhood a marvelous manifestation of **God's grace** to a nation.  
-- Such was the Revival of a worship opportunity under Josiah.
- ◆ Daniel had seen in childhood a marvelous manifestation of **youthful godliness and courage**.  
-- Josiah was only 26 years old at the pinnacle of his religious reform.

- ◆ Daniel had seen in early childhood a marvelous manifestation of the **Judgment Ability of God** against ungodliness in High places.

- And Daniel's future ministry would be to announce that Judgment against every major Gentile world power - including the Judgment of the tribulation such as never was since there was a nation. (Dan. 12:1)

Daniel now witnessed another great phenomena which was to prevail through the rest of history.

- THE PLACING OF GOD'S TESTIMONY AMONG THE GENTILES.
- Daniel was among Gentiles - and God would produce events that would force the Gentiles to take note ---

*THE MOST HIGH GOD RULES IN THE KINGDOM OF MEN.*

Ex. 5:21

## **DANIEL 1:3-7**

### A PURE PROPHET FOR A PERILOUS TIME (Part 2)

We come to the second portion of the making of this pure prophet for a perilous time.

Please recall that in our first study we looked at

#### **I. THE TIME IN WHICH HE LIVED.**

1. Jerusalem, the city of God, had been besieged.
2. The temple, the house of God, had been pillaged.
3. The Israelites, the people of God, had been enslaved.
4. Revival, the work of God, had been rejected.
5. Prophecy, the revelation of God, had been affirmed.

- The study now deals with

#### **II. THE TESTING THROUGH WHICH HE PASSED.**

- Satan has always challenged the calling and the called of God.
- He will test
  - the integrity of our profession
  - the endurance of our faith



- the strength of our character
- even the quality of our God.

Daniel was placed in this testing in five remarkable, but not uncommon, ways

1. REMOVAL - TO BREAK THE INFLUENCE OF HIS HERITAGE

- v. 3 *And the king spake 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:...*

- One of the most powerful influences of evil is to break a child from a godly heritage.
- With Daniel, the effect of evil was done through the force of military invasion and enslavement.
- Today it is done through divorce, the abandonment of parental responsibility, the societal influence of "free at 18."

That is why young people today face their most dangerous times

- when they are left at home by themselves,
- begin their teen-age employment,
- get their drivers licenses,
- go off to college,
- move out of the home before marriage or other forms of adulthood responsibility.
- Daniel's removal from Judah was designed by the enemy to break the influence of his Heritage.

That is a part of the testing through which he passed.

- But not only did he experience removal to break the influence of his heritage. He also experienced

2. FLATTERY - TO BREAK THE VIRTUE OF HIS HUMILITY

- He and his friends are described in v. 4 as

*Children in whom was no blemish, but well-favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace,...*

- How is that for "rubbing it on" and "rubbing it in."
- That flattery to break the virtue of humility is yet today one of the strongest weapons formed against our young people -
  - And such flattery does not stop in the high school or college years.  
  
There are today flattering Jezebels who do their number on 40 year old men, etc.
- It is a dangerous thing when the agents of Hell flatter our young men and women with seduction more than we flatter as parents and churches with the glory of a moral life.
- Such was THE TESTING THROUGH WHICH DANIEL PASSED.
  - But not only did he experience -
    - REMOVAL TO BREAK THE INFLUENCE OF HIS HERITAGE and
    - FLATTERY TO BREAK THE VIRTUE OF HIS HUMILITY. He also experienced

### 3. CONFORMITY TO BREAK THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF HIS DISCIPLINE

- In v. 4c -  
  
*It was the design of the pagans to teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.*
- And in v.5 - to conform them in appetite and drink.
  - *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.*
- In modern terminology we call that □A FINISHING SCHOOL□ experience.

- It was one of the early efforts at OUTCOME BASED EDUCATION.
- In its basest sense it was an effort to conform Daniel in order to break the distinctiveness of his discipline.
- Such was THE TESTING THROUGH WHICH DANIEL PASSED.
- But not only did Daniel experience
  - Removal** to break the influence of his heritage.
  - Flattery** to break the virtue of his humility.
  - Conformity** to break the distinctiveness of His discipline. He was also tested at the point of

#### 4. IDENTITY - TO BREAK THE REMINIDER OF HIS RELATIONSHIP.

- Such a testing is described in v.6-7 this testing of IDENTITY attacked the most common thing about Daniel - HIS NAME!
- *v. 6-7 Now among these (the captives) were of the children of Judah, Daniel (Whose name means - God is my judge) Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name Belteshazzar;... (which means, "May Bel, the Babylonian god, protect his life!")*
- One of the most dangerous times through which our young people, and all of us pass, is the time we questions and confuse our identity.
  - Here are the danger points:
    - When we begin to change our personal appearance - our clothing, jewelry, tattoos - body decorations, friends, habits, etc.
    - Such changes occur most consistently when we move to a new neighborhood, job, school, or even church.
    - when we begin to use such phrases as
      - "finding myself"
      - "learning my true identity"
      - "discovering who I am"

- All such gibberish used today by those who forfeit their heritage and sanity is just the same old stuff tried against Daniel to break his identity by changing his name.

Now the question -

## HOW DID DANIEL RESPOND TO THE TESTING?

\* \* \* \* \*

### Dan. 1:15-21

And that leads us to the third major section of our study in Chapter 1.

### III. THE TRIUMPH WITH WHICH HE STOOD. (v.8-21)

- Here is what we shall see of this TRIUMPH:

1. THE PURPOSE OF HIS HEART (His will) ("the immaterial function of man" his "immaterial personality") {TWOT 1071 STRNG-3820}

2. THE PLEASANTNESS OF HIS WAYS

- v. 9b-16

3. THE PROVISION OF HIS LORD

- v. 17-21

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1. THE PURPOSE OF HIS HEART

- v. 8a - *But David purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with his portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank...*

- Now Daniel had this purpose, this resolve, when he saw and understood the desire of the king to break him from his heritage, his character, his purity and his belief. The "purpose" of Daniel's heart was his response to what in our day is called "OUTCOME BASED EDUCATION."

- There are six things about the nature of that PURPOSE:

- (1) IT WAS PERSONAL

- *Daniel purposed in his heart...*

- It was not a dependent action. Daniel did not wait to see what others would do. He was not a poll watcher - a crowd follower.

(2) IT WAS PERVASIVE

- The KJV describes it as a heart purpose. The NIV as a **Resolve.**
- It was not a purpose prompted only by feeling or fancy. It was a PURPOSE that originated in the center of his being that controlled the totality of his being.

(3) IT WAS FOR PURITY

- *Daniel purposed that he would not defile himself.* (Defile = pollute, stain)
- Purity is not an optional issue for the people of God.
- Purity:
  - It is not optional
  - It is not relative.

(4) IT WAS PARTICULAR

- v. 8 - *He would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank...*
- But not only was the PUROSE OF DANIEL'S HEART -
  - (1) Personal
  - (2) Pervasive
  - (3) For Purity
  - (4) Particular - It was also

(5) PROTECTIVE

- Though not mentioned in the text - DANIEL'S PURPOSE PROTECTED HIM FROM THE DANGER OF RATIONALISM.
- Daniel knew that without a purposed heart he could be open to all forms of sin, corruption and deceptive thinking.
- Let me illustrate... Dr. Renald Showers has written about some of the ways Daniel and these young Hebrew friends

could have reasoned their way into a Babylonian experienced:

1. *They could have said, under normal circumstances God's law is to be obeyed, but we are in an abnormal circumstance. Surely God doesn't expect total obedience to every precept of His law in such a unique situation as ours.*
2. *They might have asserted: "God is to blame for this. If he had not put us in this awful predicament, it would not have been necessary for us to break the law.*
3. *They could have reasoned: "If we eat the king's food, we shall be placed in government posts. Think of the great impact we can have for Jehovah by being in such influential positions. Certainly God must regard this opportunity to serve Him in such a big way as being more important than obedience to His law."*
4. *Again, they could have said: "If we disobey the king, it may cost us our lives. Surely in God's value system the preservation of human life is of greater consequence than obedience to Him."*
5. *Finally, they could have contended: "If we refuse to eat the king's food, it may cost the life of the official who is responsible to see that we eat. Would not love dictate that we eat the food in order to preserve the official's life? Does not love overrule obedience to a divine command?"* (Showers, Renald; *The Most High God*. The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Bellmawr, N.J., 1982., p.6)

-- But not only was THE PURPOSE OF DANIEL'S HEART

- (1) Personal
- (2) Pervasive
- (3) For Purity
- (4) Particular and
- (5) Protective, it was also

(6) PREPARATORY

-- Daniel was soon to face many bone-chilling things. He would soon be pushed to the extremities of faith.

-- Now he was being prepared for his stance in those times. He must prove his heart.

He must prove the God of His heart. **He must be prepared.**

-- This was a matter of food and drink. Later it would be a matter of kings and kingdoms. His testing now was PREPARATORY for greater testing.

-- But not only is THE TRIUMPT WITH WHICH HE STOOD SEEN IN THE PURPOSE OF HIS HEART, it is also seen in

2. THE PLEASANTNESS OF HIS WAYS (v.8b-16)

-- And that PLEASANTNESS is seen immediately in a simple request made by Daniel.

-- *v. 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 (He sought permission) of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.*

-- According to human reason Daniel was in a tight place. He was being squeezed. His Purposed Heart was contrary to the pressure against that heart.

-- As a slave boy in a foreign land he was under the orders and desires of a pagan king.

-- As a godly young man he was subject to the ways and provisions of his holy and heavenly king.

-- What he does in a tight place is a lesson for our learning - for many of us live today in the tight places between the demands and pressures and temptations of an insane and ungodly system AND the love and provision and requirements of a Holy God.

-- Unfortunately there are those who quickly, readily and easily yield to the pressure of a sinful system. They quickly forsake

Holy convictions and Biblical instruction.

- Then there are those of us who act and react in violent and obnoxious fashion. We affirm our rights, we scream out our convictions. We are seen in a bad way not so much for our convictions for a Holy life, but we are seen in a bad light for our rude and obnoxious ways.
- The Bible shows us a better way in the person of Daniel and The Pleasantness of His Ways:

Now we must see the BIG PICTURE.

1. Daniel had already seen the destructive and devastating results of his people in Israel and in Judah violating the law of God.
2. Daniel had already - and unconditionally - "purposed in his heart" that he would not defile himself.
3. Daniel was strategically placed for a witness to pagan people.

-- This is an example of great - great significance for all of us.

For Daniel, when placed in the presence of pagans and under the pressure of paganism found great reason to keep himself pure.

-- And that raises a question of serious concern:

*Why is it that so often when Christians are placed among Pagans we use their presence and their pressure as an excuse for our sins RATHER THAN A REASON FOR OUR FAITHFULNESS?*

4. Daniel was one of those wise people who recognized that today's trials, difficulties and pressures are frequently designed to prepare us for tomorrow's opportunities, responsibilities and victories.

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And with that understanding, here is an overview of how he responded to this intense, difficult and different testing.

- (1) He Responded With CONFIDENT COURTESY AS A CHILD OF GOD.  
 v. 8B
- (2) He Responded with INFORMED AWARENESS OF THE WORK OF GOD.



-- v. 9 - READ

-- It is often in my life that I do not take time to learn of God's work as a part of the preparation for my witness to others.

-- You know, it is possible for God to do something very positive in the life of an unsaved person before we are faced with the responsibility of standing for our convictions in their presence.

(3) He Responded with UNDERSTANDING CONCERN FOR THOSE WHO KNEW NOT GOD.

-- Here is the problem the pagan prince expressed:

*V. 10 - And the prince of the Eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath 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.*

-- The "Prince of the eunuchs" stated **five problems** he was facing in dealing with Daniel.

**i. "I am Afraid"**

-- v. 10 *I fear my Lord the king...*

-- This is the fear of fright, not the fear of reverence.

-- It is the fear a man has when he realized that he has become a puppet of a cruel master.

-- It is the fear that strips a man of his freedom to do right.

-- It is the fear that strips a man of his sense of personal security.

-- This is the fear a man has when he

-- loves his moral freedom

-- loves his financial freedom

-- loves his political freedom

**ii. "I am not Responsible"**

v. 10 *I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and*

*your drink...*

-- That means, The king is to blame. I can do nothing about it.

-- To a degree the prince was correct. He was not responsible for the king's decision. And he wanted that clearly stated.

**iii. "I Do Not Have the Confidence You Have"**

-- v. 10 *Why should he (the king) see your faces worse liking....?*

-- Daniel, you think all will be well. I don't have that faith. I think all will be worse.

**iv. You Are Different Even From Your Own Kind**

-- v. 10 *Why should he (the king) see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort?*

Why can't you be like the rest of your crowd?

Why must you contend for this idea? The others of "your sort" are not making an issue.

But not only did the Prince of the Eunuchs say -

1. I am afraid
2. I am not responsible
3. I do not have the confidence you have, and
4. You are different, even from your own kind, he also said:

**v. "I See No Reason to Endanger Myself on Your Behalf"**

-- v.10 *then shall you make me endanger my head to the king*

-- This Prince of the Eunuchs had a problem.

-- Daniel did not threaten him. He understood his dilemma.

Now the Pleasantness of Daniel's ways are not only seen in his

(1) CONFIDENT COURTESY AS A CHILD OF GOD, and

- (2) HIS INFORMED AWARENESS OF THE WORK OF GOD, and
- (3) HIS UNDERSTANDING CONCERN FOR THOSE WHO KNEW NOT GOD, it is also seen in the fact that
- (4) HE RESPONDED WITH COUNSEL THAT WOULD PROVE THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

-- v. 11-13

-- There are at least three things about that counsel we should know:

**i. It Was Counsel That Would Not Violate His Responsibility To Human Authority**

-- v. 11-12 *Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, Prove thy servants...*

-- We may not always like the human authority, but within Biblical guidelines, we are expected to obey it. Daniel knew that bad government is better than no government.

-- This is a vital lesson for Christians in a pagan politic. We do not use our relationship to God to violate those in authority over us.

**ii. It Was Counsel That Would Not Violate His Faithfulness To Personal Purity**

-- v. 12 *Prove thy servants, I beseech you, ten days: and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.*

-- Daniel was willing to prove the superiority of God's provision through pulse and water over the finest offering that paganism could provide. And when we get to chapter 2 we will see the growing significance of such confidence in the ways of God.

-- The Christian should not be willing to violate personal purity - regardless of the pressure imposed.

-- When faced with the awful scenario, the Christian's first option is counsel that provides for different behavior.

--ILL (Steve Futrell's suggestion that he be given a check for the amount his company was planning to spend on lottery tickets instead of giving him the tickets. He ended up the big winner.)

- This is what Ps. 1 tells us (READ Psalm 1)
- This is what Romans 12:1,2 tells us (READ Rom 12:1,2)

**iii. Counsel that would not violate his dependence upon divine protection**

- v. 13 - *Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portions of the king's meet: and as you see, deal with thy servants.*
- Daniel was putting his life on the line for two reasons:
  - TO PROTECT HIS OWN PURITY
  - TO FORCE PAGANISM TO EXAMINE THE REALITY AND RELIABILITY OF HIS GOD.
  - One of the greatest losses we Christians have in life, and the reason for so many of our heartbreaks, is that we are so prone to take the path of human reason instead of DIVINE PROTECTION.
    - Abraham fell victim when he birthed Ishmael.
    - Jacob - when he gained the birthright by deceit.
    - The disciples "cast lots" for a replacement for Judas. They chose Mathias (Acts 1:23,26) of whom we hear not another word.
    - God obviously chose a man whose name was Saul - now Paul.
  - And so Daniel's counsel, and his dependence, was that which would PROVE THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.
  - And such describes THE PLEASANTNESS OF DANIEL'S WAYS.

Now, in our study of Daniel and the Triumph with which he stood - There is not only:

The Purpose of His heart and  
The Pleasantness of His ways. There is also

**3. THE PROVISION OF HIS LORD - v. 14-21**

- This study of THE PROVISION OF HIS LORD - and of OUR LORD - is foundational to the message of Daniel and to the prophetic message of the

later days.

- There are four elements of this PROVISION seen in seed form in these eight verses:

(1) THE SATISFACTION OF HIS PROVISION

- READ vv.14-16

- It is a simple fact - but it has a far-reaching word of encouragement for God's people who are willing to trust Him.

- It is a simple fact - but it has a far-reaching word of encouragement for those who do not trust Daniel's God.

- Jesus put this SATISFACTION issue this way:

*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (Jn. 10:10)*

- To understand the far reaching message of Daniel's prophecy we need to remember the SATISFACTION ISSUE OF GOD'S PROVISION.

- The message begins with the contrast of what God can do with pulse and water and what paganism cannot do with meat and wine.

- This is Psalm 1 again,

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly...his delight is in the law of the Lord. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

- This is the message of Psalm 103:1-5 (READ)

- This is the message of Psalm 107:8-9

*Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.*

-- The rejection of His SATISFYING provision of our Lord baffled the prophet Isaiah who asked his people -

*Why do you spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which does not satisfy? (55:2)*

-- Now I want you to hold on to this SATISFACTION OF OUR LORD'S PROVISION.

-- I may not remind you often enough, but when we contrast this satisfaction with that of the pagans' gods - you will see why this little story in ch. 1 is so significant to the BIGGNESS of the prophetic message of Daniel.

(2) THE SCOPE OF HIS PROVISION - v. 17

-- v. 17 *As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom in all visions and dreams.*

-- God does not design for us a life without wisdom and knowledge.

-- That is our message of Prov. 1:1-7

-- This is the message of Eph. 1:15-19

-- But not only is the Provision of Daniel's Lord seen in

(1) THE SATISFACTION OF HIS PROVISION and

(2) THE SCOPE OF HIS PROVISION, it is also seen in

(3) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS PROVISION

-- v. 18 - *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.*

-- For those who cannot see the trail of God's design in history, they will miss this significant event. What appears to some to be a crisis will appear to others to be a conquest.

-- For now, not only is Daniel the God-fearing Jew, in the land of pagan Gentiles, he is in the very presence

and the court of the pagan Gentile king.

- One of the great pieces of music the Jews would sing went like this:

*God be merciful unto us, and bless us;  
and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.  
That they way may be known upon Earth  
Thy saving health among all nations. (Ps 67:1-2)*

- And so through these intriguing events of Judah's enslavement, the messenger of the ways of God now stands in the presence of the most powerful pagan king upon the earth. And he is there to bear witness to the fact that *the most High rules in the kingdom of men. (V. 27)*

- Who can fathom the matchless ways of God with His people?

No wonder the New Testament teacher put it this way:

*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor? (Rom. 11:33-34)*

- We must never underestimate the wisdom and the knowledge of God in weaving together for eternal purpose the events and circumstances of our life.

- I must not lose sight of the significance of God's design.

- Who could miss the designing significance of Joseph being sold into Egyptian slavery - or Moses being plucked from among the bulrushes by non other than Pharaoh's daughter?

- Or the tax plan of Caesar Augustus that sent Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem at exactly the right time in history, or the commission that sent Philip to the Gaya desert.

- We cannot afford to miss the SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROVISION OF OUR LORD.

-- But not only is the Provision of Daniel's Lord seen in

(1) THE SATISFACTION OF HIS PROVISION (v. 14-16)

(2) THE SCOPE OF HIS PROVISION (v. 17) and

(3) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS PROVISION (v. 18) , it is also seen in

(4) THE SUPERIORITY OF HIS PROVISION v. 19-21

-- v. 19 - *Among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.*

-- *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.*

-- And furthermore, Daniel outlasted the king and the kingdom of the Babylonians.



## CONCLUSION -

### LESSONS TO LEARN:

1. **Do Not Fear the Trails of Life, But Rather Recognize That Trials Today Prepare Us for Victories Tomorrow.**

-- Illustration (Quote Bunyan)

2. **Make Sure That When Facing The Pressures Of Life, Your First Allegiance Is To The Pressure Of Godly Obedience, Not To Sinful Compromise.**

(We will never experience the Victory of Heaven if we forfeit our options in the huddle of Hell.)

-- Remember the three things about the pressures of life.

- (1) We are all under pressure.
- (2) To a large degree we may choose the pressures under which we live.
- (3) To a total degree we may choose the pressures to which we yield.

3. **Understand That When Faced With Sinful Pressure - You Do Not Have To Become Obnoxious - Either Through Arrogance Or Religious Snobbery.**

4. **Understand That God's Provisions Are Timely, Strategic, And Adequate.**