

Don't Eat Meat
Daniel 1:1-21
The Laurel Center
November

Main Idea: God uses us to show his glory even in the greatest of trials.

Introduction

it's nice to be here today. My name is Daniel and I want to tell you about how God used me to show his glory to an empire that focused on glory and perception. Everything about the Babylonian empire screamed wealth and glory. They thought they were the best of the best in the world and in most ways they work. But they were unaware of the God of the universe. They worshiped idols but did not know Yahweh. God is not just the God of Israel but the God of the whole world. And he was going to show them that he is the true God and their idols are false gods. And he used me and my friends to do it. Let me tell you about the beginning of our time in a new place as captives in Babylon.

Text – Daniel 1:8 – 9

8 But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. **9** And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs,

I. God is with us during trials (vv. 1 – 7).

A God is still in control of everything.

- 1 No matter what happens in our lives or what we must suffer through, in a trial that may befall us, God is with us until the end. He orchestrated events behind the scenes.
- 2 God has our back in the midst of the worst of it. He decides what happens whenever we are faithful to him in a trial. In Daniel's case, the trials caused by Israel's unfaithfulness to God.
- 3 Despite prophetic warnings, the people still stiffened their necks before the Lord and paid the price that God had already told them they would pay. They lost the land that was their inheritance from the Lord.

B No matter the situation, God gives us wisdom.

- 1 Wisdom is the most important tool to be used in a time of trial. Especially James mentions that wisdom is most important in the midst of being a stranger in the land.

- 2 Wisdom gives us the ability to have skill to make success whenever we are in a place that is not friendly territory. Despite the dangers all around us wisdom helps us to win the day.

II. God gives favor to faithful servants (vv. 8 – 16).

A We must set up goals to be faithful to God.

- 1 Daniel specifically avoided having the king's food whenever he went to the land of Babylon. There are several reasons why he would have done this:
- 2 Reason #1: some of the king's food would have contained meat that was either from the wrong animals or improperly trained of its blood. Moses' law specifically described the proper way to handle certain meats in Israel.
- 3 Reason #2: going along with taking everything from the king's hand would have demonstrated an impurity by enjoying what the world has to offer rather than God's desire for Daniel.
- 4 Reason #3: Daniel attempted to live a simplistic lifestyle in which having such delicacies and pleasures of the world did not line up with the lifestyle God desires for his people. Luxury is an excess that God does not condone. Such access demonstrates that God's people are more interested in the here and now rather than eternal principles.
- 5 Reason #4: especially the meat parts of this meal might have been sacrificed to idols and part of the ceremony, either the need or the blood.
- 6 Reason #5: Daniel did not wish to be part of the world system. When the king gave people food from his table, it was the equivalent of programs like Social Security and the welfare system today. Daniel and his friends were well capable of providing for their own needs if necessary.

B God sees our faithfulness and grants us favor in trials.

- 1 When we are willing to commit to a set of standards that God has given us to follow, and then we are able to follow through and obey that standard,
- 2 In Daniel's case, and in many of our cases, this turns out to be God's favor with others that we have to deal with. His favorite gives us a kinder person that may be above us.
- 3 They take into account our character in person as they make decisions that affect us. They listen to what we have to say more readily than ever before. They more openly consider our ideas and may be willing to use them in endeavors.

III. God blesses those who trust in him (vv. 17 – 21).

A God's blessings come in many ways.

B God prepares us for the things that are coming.

Conclusion

so you see how God used us to show that he is greater than the wisdom and false gods of Babylon and of any place. No matter where you go on this planet God is always watching over you. You may be like us where God warned us in Israel for many years and we did not listen and found ourselves being disciplined because we did not listen to God. But no matter how your trial begins, God works through you to show others his own glory. No matter what the wisdom of this age tells us, God knows better. His ways and thoughts are higher than our. We must trust God to take us through the trial and teach us much about him as well as teaching others around us that when we remain faithful to him he blesses us beyond measure no matter where we are and what our circumstances. Remain faithful to him and he will see you through any trial!