

A SUNDAY SERMON BY PASTOR RUSSELL

Text of the Lesson, Dan. i, 8-20—Memory Verse, 15—Golden Text, I Cor. xvi,

13—Commentary Prepared by Rev.
D. M. Starns.

I am very glad to have the privilege of writing a lesson on Daniel, even though it be what is called a temperance lesson, for we shall find much more in it than appears on the surface. He is mentioned in Ezek. xiv, 14, 20, with Noah and Job as noted for their righteousness. He is mentioned by the Lord Jesus in Matt. xxiv, 15, in connection with the great tribulation at the end of this age immediately preceding the return of the Lord in

His glory, to which Daniel also refers in chapters 1, 2; xii, 1. We recently saw a little captive maid glorifying the God of Israel under very trying circumstances, and in this lesson we see four captive young men glorifying the God of Israel under difficulties. The Lord permitted this oppressor and captivity because of the sin of Judah and gave Jehoiakim and some of his people and some of the vessels of the house of God into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and among the captives were these four young men of royal blood, who were

They were to have a three years' course of preparation for their calling, and as to their food they were nourished from the king's table daily the same meat and wine which he ate and drank. At least that was the provision made for them. It was humiliating to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans that they might stand before the king (verses 2-5).

They were to have a three years' course of preparation for their calling, and as to their food they were nourished from the king's table daily the same meat and wine which he ate and drank. At least that was the provision made for them. It was humiliating to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans that they might stand before the king (verses 2-5). It was humiliating to have their beautiful Jewish names, each of which had in them a suggestion of the true God of Jehovah, changed to names suggestive of idols (verses 6, 7). But this they could bear without any sin on their part. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself as taken prisoner, bound and led by His captors as they pleased.

They also called for the new king, and he was beside himself. So in these two particulars they were foreshadowing the sufferings of Christ.

When we suffer in these ways we have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. When it came to eating and drinking that which had been offered to idols Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself, and we do not doubt he had prayed to his God for the removal of the temptation. The presence of the eunuchs that he and his friends might be excused from receiving the food from the king's table and be given very plain fare, which had not so assuaged that way, asking that they might be proved for ten days. The name God who permitted them thus to suffer for His sake now gave them favor in the sight of the king, and they were promoted to high offices.

the end of ten days they were fairer and fatter in flesh than those who did not eat the portion of the king's meat, so was kept from them, and they were given the plain fare, which had not been offered to idols. See Deut. xxxii, 17, 28. If this is a temperance lesson the same principle applies to food as to drink.

But my mind it is a lesson on the necessity of keeping one's self wholly for God in every particular and of being willing to submit cheerfully to difficult circumstances for His sake. In chapter x, 2, 3, Daniel says that for three weeks he did without pleasant food or flesh or wine, while he mourned and waited upon God for a special purpose, implying that he did not abstain from the necessities of life. He ate food that had been the blessing of Israel. As to the sign of temperance

self indulgence in any matter, the
aching of scripture is very plain, and
filithiness and beastliness of strong
link could scarcely be more vividly
scribed or commended than in Isa. v.
12, 22, 23; xxviii, 7, 8. The only
medy is in Christ Jesus, who alone
forgive sin and cleanse the heart
of a w nature and such a purpose to
step one's self wholly for Him as
aniel had.

Though he stood before the earthly
king in a place of honor, he stood more
unobscuredly before the King of kings,
for whose sake he in his old age went
the lion den rather than dishonor
him by any fear of man, for whose
cause he his three friends went to the fiery
furnace rather than bow down to any
image which man might set up. No
Darius was there to condemn him
and his faithful, diligent in their obedien-

des, but God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom. If He gave Daniel understanding in visions and dreams, so that these young men were ten times better than the magicians and astrologers in the whole realm (verses 17, 20). On one different occasion related in this book, when all the wisdom of Babylon's wise men failed, Daniel did not fail, because his God never failed him. Any believer who is willing to give up the pride of his own intelligence to what others say, thinks of him and a purpose of heart to see that, but Jesus only and cover only His approval may know the power of God's others cannot. The whole cost of salvation fell upon Jesus Christ, and we receive freely what He so fully provided and paid for. But to be His faithful

nesses we must have the devotion,
of denial and continuance of Daniel.

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