

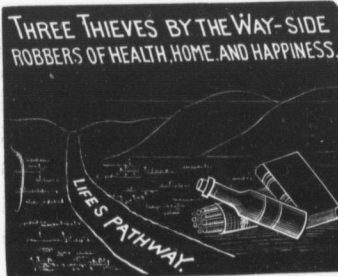
Prove. Test. Pulse. Vegetable food in general. They chose vegetables rather than meat, because the former were seldom offered in the way described in the note on verse 8, and hence might be used without depletion of conscience. **Ten days.** Not an unreasonably brief length of time. Longer would doubtless have been preferable both for the Melzar and for Daniel, but the experiment was a dangerous one at the best, and Daniel had sufficient faith in God to be willing to make a test which would otherwise have been hazardous.

13. As thou seest, deal. That is, according to the result of thine observations. **The children that eat.** Those who partook of the luxurious food and drink set apart for them by the king were very apt to indulge in excess, and when at the end of ten days the physical condition of Daniel and his three friends was examined by the Melzar, it was probably in comparison with self-indulgent youths who were glad to make up for the severities of their captivity by revelry in delicious indigestibles.

15, 16. Their countenances appeared fairer and fatter. It is of no consequence whether this was miraculous or not. **Melzar took away the portion.** He was justified in doing so now, for if any question were asked, it would be, What is the matter with the well-fed ones that they look so sickly?

17. God gave them knowledge. Exod. 31. 2, 3; 1 Kings 3. 12; Job 32. 8; Jas. 1. 5, 17. **Learning, wisdom, understanding....in dreams.** Daniel eclipsed the Chaldean sages, for God had given him supernatural wisdom, and in thus speaking of it he does not sound his own praise, but gives the credit directly to God. As to this "knowledge," "skill," "learning," and "wisdom," it is to be remembered that while God gave them all, he gave them on the conditions that such things always hang upon. God had no unique methods with these young Hebrews. No doubt they studied with untiring diligence. See the second Practical Teaching. They would have received no love from the prince if they had not been lovable, nor could they have acquired any learning without study, and yet it was God who gave the results.

Blackboard.



This is a temperance blackboard lesson, and in reviewing it refer to the lesson of the good Samaritan. Tell how the robbers waylaid one going from Jerusalem to Jericho. Picture in words how they concealed themselves, and then fell upon the victim and robbed and wounded him. Turn to the board, and point to the design. See, here are three robbers concealed by the wayside. What are their names? "Cigarettes," "Intoxicating Liquor," and "Bad Books." Always waiting and

watching for the youth of the land, and many are their victims. They conceal themselves behind great rocks, and what are the names of these rocks? They are known as Public Indifference, Parental Carelessness, and Bad Laws. Tear these away, and the robbers would have no place behind which to hide. Let us warn the boys and girls, set up the sign of danger, keep hard at it and always at it to save them from these robbers.

Berean Methods. The Teachers' Meeting.

Materials for splendid word-pictures....1) Make the historic incident vivid and real; 2) Define and analyze Daniel's noble character; 3) Show how similar characteristics are needed in temperance reform; 4) Incidental teachings of the lesson....Advantages of decision of character. [See Thoughts for Young People]....Daniel's temptations similar to those of modern young men: 1) Young; 2) Far from home; 3) Associated with those who do wrong; 4) In a demoralizing atmosphere.... His character: 1) Independent; 2) Decided; 3) God-fearing; 4) Courteous; 5) Trustful.... The severest tests of character are found in the little things of life. It is often as hard to refuse a glass of liquor as to sign a Declaration of Independence, and as indicative of lofty moral resolve.... Daniel's choice was based on common sense. He had the laws of hygiene on his side. So have the total abstainers.... Daniel fought three fights: 1) With his physical appetite; 2) Mentally; 3) Spiritually. On each field he received the victor's reward: 1) Physical health and strength; 2) Clearness of thought and great intellectual force; 3) Knowledge of the deep things of God as the result of communion with God.... In every struggle one man is leader.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

"Have the Courage of your Convictions."

1. *Decision of character is the condition on which all worldly success depends.* "Unstable as water," said Jacob to his first-born, "unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." And a namesake of Jacob's wrote centuries afterward, "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed."
2. *Decision of character is the condition of success in all spiritual exercises and growth in grace.* "Let not that (double-minded) man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."
3. *Decision of character should be based on right principles.* If Daniel had been an idolater or without religious convictions, his splendid strength of purpose would have wrought deplorable harm.
4. *There are more people with right sentiments and wrong actions than with wrong sentiments and right actions.* Thousands of Hebrew youths, captive in Babylon, thought exactly as Daniel did, but only four, so far as we know, acted as he did. The sin of sins is moral cowardice.
5. *Decision of character is the most "criying need" for the great temperance reform.* For lack of it drunkards repeatedly break their pledges, temperance advocates lag in their efforts, and in some places worthy men annually vote to perpetuate the rankest of evils.
6. *Decision of character is the gift of God.* Some men have more of it at the outset of life than others; but the surest basis of moral bravery is faith in God. Like wisdom and pardoning grace, it can be had for the asking. The youth who knows he is right, who knows God is on his side, who knows God never slumbers and never forgets and never weakens, will not show "the white feather."

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