

# **God Rewards Faithfulness**

*International Bible Lesson*

**Daniel 1:1-21**

**Sunday, February 1, 2015**

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*“Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs” (Daniel 1:9—KJV).*

*“Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master” (Daniel 1:9—NRSV).*

After the king of Babylon commanded Daniel and his three friends to eat the royal food, comprised of ritually unclean meat and wine, they resolved to obey God and not defile themselves. However, rather than directly confront the king, God showed them a wiser way. Daniel proposed to their guard that they be tested for ten days and given only vegetables to eat and water to drink. After ten days they looked better than the other exiles that the king wanted prepared to serve in his court. After three years of training, they demonstrated to the king that they were more gifted in knowledge and wisdom than everyone, even more than all the Babylonian magicians and enchanters in the whole kingdom. We do not know if King Nebuchadnezzar ever learned of their change of diet, but if they ever ate before the king there is no reason to believe that they would have eaten anything but vegetables or drank anything but water. Later, when necessary, after they had proven themselves wiser than everyone else in the king's court, they did indeed openly refuse to obey the king. When they openly obeyed God, God saved Daniel from death in the lion's den. God also saved Daniel's friends from perishing in the fiery furnace after they told the king, “If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up” (Daniel 3:17-18).

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## **Thinking Further**

1. What resulted from the four young men putting obedience to God first in their lives?
2. Can you name two prophets whose words might have encouraged Daniel as he was taken into exile in Babylon?
3. Can you think of one reason God might have wanted these four men to serve in the king's court? Do you think some might have thought they were traitors to their people?
4. Read Romans 8:28. Did God keep this promise to Daniel and his three friends? Explain your answer. Do you believe this promise applies to you too?
5. What are some of the tests or questions that Daniel and his friends faced when they were taken into the king's palace?