

EPISODE NO. 204

Dan. 1:8-21

Daniel and the Others Obeyed Their Consciences

8 Daniel decided NOT to consume the king's food or wine because doing so would make Daniel ritually "unclean." So, Daniel asked permission from Ashpenaz for Daniel NOT to make himself ritually "unclean." 9 And, the one true God caused Ashpenaz to appreciate and be sympathetic toward Daniel. 10 But Ashpenaz said to Daniel, "I'm afraid of my master, the king. HE ordered me to give you boys this food and drink. If you do not eat this food, then you will begin to look worse than the other boys your age. The king will see this. And, he will cut off MY head because of you!"

11 Ashpenaz had ordered a guard to watch Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Daniel said to the guard, 12 "Please test us for ten days: Don't give us anything but vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then, after ten days, compare us with the other boys who are eating from the king's food. See for yourself who looks healthier! Then you judge for yourself how you want to treat us, your servants." 14 So, the guard agreed to test them for ten days.

15 After ten days, they did look very healthy. They looked better than all of the boys who had been eating the king's prescribed diet. 16 So, from then on, the guard removed the king's rich food and the wine. Instead, he gave vegetables to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

17 The one true God gave these four boys wisdom and the ability to learn. They learned many kinds of things that people had written and studied. Daniel could also understand all kinds of visions and dreams.

18 The end of the three years came. So, on the king's orders, Ashpenaz brought all of the boys into the presence of King Nebuchadnezzar. 19 The king talked to all of them. He found that none of the boys were as good as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, or Azariah. So, those four Jewish boys became the king's personal servants. 20 Every time the king asked them about something important, they showed much wisdom and understanding. He found that they were ten times better than all the fortune-tellers and the magicians in his entire kingdom.

21 So, Daniel continued to be the king's personal servant until the 1st year that Cyrus was king.

A COMMENT: Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were the Hebrew names of the three Jewish boys. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were their Babylonian names.