



The destruction of the Southern Jewish Kingdom [Judah] at the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was the direct result of God's chastisement upon His wayward people. After a combined 490 years of rebellion in the wilderness

Babylon. Among the youth taken were Daniel, whose name was changed to Belteshazzar, Hananiah who became known as Shadrach, Mishael who became known as Meshach, and Azariah became known as Abed-Nego.

Q: For what purpose did the king seek to change the Hebrew youths' names, and to re-educate them?

A: The king sought to indoctrinate (brainwash) the Hebrew youth so that they would forsake their God and their culture for the Babylonian culture and its gods.

Part of the Babylonian re-training involved eating the Babylonian diet. The food and drink given to the youth were foods taken directly from the king's table.

Q: How did the four Hebrew youth respond when the king offered them his delicacies?

A: The four-youth refused to eat the king's food and drink, **purposing in their hearts** not to defile themselves.

Q: What would cause the youth to be defiled (v8)?

A: Read: Leviticus 11; Proverbs 20:1, 23:1-3, 29-35, 31:4-7; 1 Corinthians 10:19-21

Q: How important is it to purpose to obey God during your Christian walk? What do such efforts require?

A: Read Genesis 39:7-9; Joshua 24:14, 15; Luke 12:23-34; Philip 2:12, 13, 4:13; Jude 24; Heb 5:14, 10:5-9; Ps 17:1-3

The four Hebrew youth were hundreds of miles from their homes and their schools; the temple of their God was in ruins, and their former lives would remain a distant

memory. It would have been easy for them to **compromise** and adopt the Babylonian religion and culture.

Q: What motivated the four Hebrew youth to remain faithful to God and the truths taught from their childhood?

A: Read: 2 Peter 2:9; James 4:17; 1 Cor 10:13, 31; Job 23:12; Gen 39:9; 2 Tim 3:14



Q: How did God bless the Hebrew youths' faithfulness?

A: God allowed the Hebrew youth to find favor with the chief of the eunuchs in charge of their care. Read Daniel 1:9; Proverbs 16:7; 2 Chronicles 30:8, 9.

Q: Who determined whether a thing would be fit for human consumption? When was this prescription first given?

A: God declared humankind's original, ideal diet at the Creation, recorded in Genesis 1:29, 30. However, centuries later, after sin entered the world, the Lord God instructed Noah to fill the ark with seven of each clean animal, and only two of each unclean animal, male and female. God made provision for Noah and his family at the conclusion of the flood, when some of the clean animals would be used for food, as well as for an offering to the Lord, reconfirming the **Everlasting Covenant** (Genesis 3:15, 7:2, 3, 8:20, 9:3, 4).

Q: Does not this provision only relate to the Hebrews?

A: There were no Hebrews in the time of the flood. The flood predated Abraham, the Father of the Jews by over 500

years. Yet, God instructed Noah that there were clean animals, fit for food, and unclean animals, unfit for food.

Q: Do those Old Testament health principles still apply today?

A: God's counsels are timeless, applying to all people (Psalm 33:11). In fact, these health rules are not only to be practiced here on earth, but will be practiced once we arrive in heaven. Obedience and conformity to these health principles will assist us in our journey towards heaven! See Isaiah 66:15-17; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Rev 21:4, 8; Ex 15:26.

Q: Where can I find in the Bible that which has been prescribed as clean or unclean for human consumption?

A: The Bible contains two chapters describing in detail what God considers clean and unclean flesh, Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. See also Gen 6:19, 20, 7:2, 3; Acts 15:29.

Q: This sounds like legalism! Are not love for God and love for our fellow men the signs of truly converted Christians, and the things most required by God of those saved by grace?

A: Indeed, a *truly converted* Christian is one who loves God and his fellow man, as he loves himself. Love for God is demonstrated through obedience to Him and His commandments (John 14:15): "*The law of the LORD [is] perfect, converting the soul*" (Psalm 19:7). We cannot say we love God and yet willfully break His commandments that ensure our health, well-being, and happiness. Whatsoever we eat or drink, we are to do to God's glory, honoring Him through obedience, not disobedience. Read 1 John 2:3-7, 5:2, 3; Romans 8:1-4; 1 Corinthians 10:31-33.

Q: Why are unclean animals seen by God as unclean?

A: Animals created for the purpose of cleaning the earth and sea of waste are considered unclean. Whether farm raised or in the wild, these animals were by nature created by God for a purpose, and will always serve that purpose (Job 14:4). God would not have us consume things that would potentially be harmful to our health! Read 3 John 2; Exodus 15:26; 2 Peter 2:22



Q: How can we determine what are acceptable [clean] or unacceptable [unclean] flesh to eat?



A: God made it easy to know what is good for food or not. Of land dwelling animals, only those that have cloven hooves **and** chew the cud are clean. A pig has cloven hooves but does not chew the cud. A camel chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves. Therefore, neither a pig nor a camel is clean. However, the cow, sheep, bison, goat, and deer have cloven hooves **and** chew the cud and are, therefore, clean. Of water dwelling animals, only those **fish** that have both fins **and** scales are clean. Catfish have fins but no scales and are, therefore, unclean. Salmon have both fins **and** scales and are, therefore, clean.

The lobster, shrimp, crab, and crayfish are **not fish** at all, but rather crustaceans. The clam, squid, snail, and scallop are **not fish** either, they are mollusks.



Q: What was the diet requested by the four Hebrew youth of the chief of the eunuchs?

A: The Hebrew youth requested pulse, or legumes and their plants (peas, seeds, beans and grains). In other words, a plant-based diet. See Genesis 1:29, 30

Q: What did the king's guard observe in the four Hebrew youth after being placed on the diet of pulse for 10 days in comparison to the other Hebrew captives?

A: "...their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat" Daniel 1:15. The four-youth remained on the plant-based diet until the completion of the three years of training.

After proving the simple diet ordained by God, and remaining faithful to all of His commandments, even as captives in a foreign land, the four Hebrew boys excelled. At the conclusion of the three years of training in Babylonian culture "among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore, stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king (Nebuchadnezzar) inquired of them, he found them ten times



better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Daniel 1:19, 20. Indeed, God blesses and exalts those who keep His commandments, even in diet!

It is not coincidental that the Hebrew boys' first test of faithfulness would be on points of diet. It is on this point that Adam was first tested and failed, and upon which Christ too was first tested, and yet succeeded (Genesis 2:16, 17, 3:6; Matthew 4:1-4). The four faithful Hebrew youth in comparison to other Hebrew captives in Nebuchadnezzar's court form two classes, foreshadowing two distinct groups of people who profess to know and love the true God [consider the parable of the figs recorded in Jeremiah 24]. The one-class purposes to follow God wherever He leads by remaining faithful to Him, upholding His commandments regardless of the circumstances and therefore, are made ready for subsequent tests- these make up God's **remnant**. The other class **compromises** under pressure and blends in with popular norms during times of testing and trial.

Definition: **remnant** - a surviving trace or vestige, as of a former era, bearing the characteristics of the original.

In every generation, God has had a few faithful people who **purpose** to remain true to His words and commandments, even in matters as seemingly insignificant as diet. As we continue to study the book of Daniel, we will uncover more characteristics of God's **remnant** people.

Let us **purpose** to remain faithful to God in every aspect of our lives!

Faithfulness in Small Details

Daniel Chapter 1



Lesson 6