

## LESSON TEN

# DANIEL

### **A. DANIEL, THE MAN:**

Daniel was born into an unidentified family of Judean nobility at the time of Josiah's reformation. His lineage was of the tribe of Judah and one could probably trace his ancestry back to King David. A noble birth and an educated background are seen in his being chosen in the first deportation.

Josephus, the historian, wrote that Daniel and his three friends were related to King Zedekiah.

He was a handsome, brilliant young man of strong convictions. He was absolutely unswerving in his own religious convictions and refused to compromise even to save his own life. He was honest and truthful at all times.

Since he was both a statesman and a prophet, his life could be compared to Moses. The fact that he kept his life untarnished while a captive in a heathen country would remind us of Joseph.

His name means "God will judge." "Dan" mean "to judge" and "el" means "God."

Daniel lived until he was at least ninety years of age and lived throughout the seventy years of captivity.

### **B. DANIEL, THE PROPHET:**

Scriptural Reference:

*"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken by Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24: 15).*

Jesus called Daniel "the prophet." To deny this would be to deny our Lord. Daniel was one of the greatest prophets. He predicted many future events, which have already become history.

Sir Isaac Newton said, "To reject Daniel is to reject the Christian religion."

Josephus wrote that when Alexander the Great came to Jerusalem in the year 332 BC, he was shown the prophecies of Daniel in which he was described. Alexander was impressed with it.

Daniel prophesied of the times of the Gentiles. Without the prophecy of Daniel, certain passages in the New Testament could not be understood; such as, our Lord's Olivet Discourse and the Book of Revelation.

### **C. DANIEL, THE CAPTIVE:**

Daniel and his three friends were among the select youthful hostages taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC, the third year of King Jehoakim (Daniel 1:1, 3).

For three years Daniel was trained in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans (Daniel 1:4-5). He was given a new name, Belteshazzar. The names of his three friends were also changed.

1. DANIEL (God will judge or God is my judge) was changed to BELTESHAZZAR (Whom Bel favors).
2. HANANIAH (Beloved of the Lord) was changed to SHADRACH (Illumined by the Sun-god).
3. MISHAEL (Who is as God) to MESHACH (Who is like Venus).
4. AZARIAH (The Lord is my help) to ABEDNEGO (The servant of Nego).

The purpose of this was to wean them away from their native land and religion. However, changing a man's name does not change his character and these young men were loyal to God throughout.

They were made eunuchs. This is evident for they were turned over to the prince of the eunuchs. This meant that they would have no sons to carry on their name.

Daniel's first great test came quickly. He was offered meat offered to idols and intoxicating drink. Daniel could have been bitter about his condition and fatalistic about the future. He could have reasoned that there was no purpose in keeping true. But Daniel did no such thing!

*"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat" (Daniel 1:8).* He kept his dedication to God and maintained his separation from the world. It was for this reason that he, like Joseph, could be promoted to the highest office in the land, next to the king himself.

#### **D. DANIEL, THE STATESMAN:**

The dream that God gave Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign was extremely important. It has been called the ABC prophecy. It was because of Daniel's interpretation of this dream that he was promoted to be ruler over the province of Babylon and chief of the wise men. He held this position for a long time, for years later Nebuchadnezzar referred him as the master of the magicians (Daniel 4:9).

At the time of the Persian conquest when Daniel was eighty years of age, he was retained in a position of high responsibility. He was one of the three presidents over the governors of Persia's 120 provinces.

This speaks well of Daniel's ability as a statesman. God blessed him with a long, successful life because he had never compromised on his dedication to God's will.

#### **E. DANIEL, THE HERO:**

Undoubtedly, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews referred to him in Hebrews 11:33, *"stopped the mouths of lions."* It was Daniel's habit to pray three times each day with his windows opened toward Jerusalem. When the decree went forth that he would be thrown to the lions if he asked petitions of anyone other than King Darius, Daniel's courage and faithful devotion is clearly revealed. Daniel prayed *"as he did aforesaid."* His prayer did not change.

Through this experience of spending a night with hungry lions, Daniel became a great hero of the Old Testament.

#### **F. DANIEL, THE BELOVED OF GOD:**

The ninth chapter of his prophecy is one of the greatest chapters in the Bible.

Here we find it recorded that Daniel sought God by prayer, supplications, fasting, sackcloth and ashes. As he prayed, this godly man searched his heart and confessed his sins. In answer to his prayer, God sent Gabriel with the answer to his enquiry regarding the future of Daniel's people. Along with the answer, Gabriel told Daniel, "*Thou art greatly beloved*" (*Daniel 9:23*).

Certainly Daniel had a special place in the heart of God. He was the beloved of God!

## LESSON TEN

### **SELF HELP TEST**

A. State the meaning of Daniel's name and the Hebrew name of each of his three friends.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

B. State the meaning of the Chaldean names given each of them.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

C. Describe Daniel under each of the following:

1. The Statesman:

2. The Prophet:

3. The Hero:

D. Write a paragraph on Daniel 9:23.