

*Daniel: Faith in the Fire*

Daniel 1.8-21

September 17, 2023

I hope that your first week of this new Life Group session went well. We're only in our second section of the Book of Daniel, so you're in good shape if you're just getting started. Dig in and enjoy, which means, of course, you don't have to answer every question. Have a great journey!

Pastor Eric

Group Sharing:

Do you eat a certain kind of diet? What has been your experience with dieting?

Again, it's a good idea to read all of Daniel 1, if not the whole of Daniel. But for sure, read over Daniel 1.1-7, and get a good idea in your head about what's going on. Recall the major characters of the story and its overall setting. After that, read verses 8-21.

What decision does Daniel make in verse 8? Even though it's difficult to tell, why do you think Daniel drew the line at the food and insisted on only eating water and vegetables? Note the word, "defile" in verse 8. There was something about the food that made him feel unclean, impure. Did he think it wasn't kosher? Then why did he reject wine? If it was because it was offered to idols before being offered to them, why does he eat the vegetables?

The chief eunuch, Ashpenaz, didn't like Daniel's plan, but for some reason, the steward (or guard) went along with it for ten days. What kind of risk do you imagine Daniel was taking by even proposing changing their diet? Why do you think the steward goes along with it? Make sure you make careful note of verse 15. Apparently, this was their diet for the remainder of their three years. How does the whole story turn out when they are finally presented to the king? What do you think it meant to Daniel and his three friends that the king was so impressed by them even though they hadn't been eating his fine food?

As we noticed, "God gave" is all over this chapter. Look at verses 2, 9, and 17, and note what God gave (*hint: it's a lot clearer in the English Standard Version*). "God gave" serves to underscore the theme of Daniel:

"In spite of present appearances, God is in control."

Tremper Longman III

*The NIV Application Commentary*

Think about instances when you've undergone trial (maybe currently). What has been your interaction with God during these times? Can you remember a moment when in the middle of a tough time you took a specific step of faith despite the difficulties? What happened? How have you seen God faithful when you've been faithful to him?

"To the faithful you show yourself faithful."

Psalm 18.25

*New International Version*

In your present life circumstances, what does it look like for you to step out in faith? Be specific. What must happen in order for you to actually step out in faith? Now the challenge becomes to open your eyes to the signs that God is at work doing something in response to your act of faith. Pray and ask God for the ability to "walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5.7).