

Strength for Today

“As for [Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego], God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams” (Daniel 1:17).

Godly wisdom guards against the influences of a godless society.

From the beginning of human history Satan has tried to confuse and confound God’s purposes by corrupting man’s thinking. In the Garden of Eden he succeeded by calling God’s character into question and convincing Eve that her disobedience would have no consequences. To this day he continues to deceive entire civilizations by blinding “the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ” (2 Cor. 4:4).

Daniel and his friends were captives of a pagan king who wanted to dilute their allegiance to God by reprogramming their thinking. However, unlike Eve, they were determined not to be overcome by the evil influences around them. God honored their integrity and taught them everything they needed to know to be productive in Babylonian society and to influence it for righteousness.

Babylon was the center of learning in its day, boasting of advanced sciences, sophisticated libraries, and great scholars. God gave these young men the ability to learn and retain that level of knowledge, and the wisdom to apply it to their lives. Furthermore, He gave Daniel the ability to interpret dreams and receive visions—gifts that would prove crucial later in his life as God elevated him to a position of prominence in Babylon and revealed the plan of history to him (see chapters 7—12).

Surely Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego didn’t understand all that God had in store for them or why He would allow them to be tested so severely at such a young age. But when they chose to love and trust Him despite their circumstances, they demonstrated the kind of wisdom that protects God’s children from the influences of a godless society. As we do the same, God uses us in significant ways. Also, we find that God never calls us to a challenge that He won’t equip us to handle.

Suggestions for Prayer

Moses prayed, “Teach us to number our days, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom” (Ps. 90:12). Make that your prayer as well.

For Further Study

Read Colossians 1:9-12. What are the results of being filled with “spiritual wisdom and understanding”?

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