

Old Testament 45  
If I Perish, I Perish  
(Daniel 1, 3, 6; Esther 3-5, 7-8)  
By Lenet Hadley Read

(This material helps understand the Book of Daniel, which is a very important scripture for Latter-day Saints, and should not be ignored by them).

- I. The Book of Daniel is a book of great importance to Latter-day Saints.
  - A. Daniel and his fellows were Israelites in Babylon --- in exile from their kingdom. Their great longing was to return and re-establish the Kingdom of God.
  - B. Daniel's longing to come out of exile, and re-enter God's true Kingdom, is pointing to us. For we are Latter-day Israel being re-gathered out of the latter-day Babylons to reestablish God's Kingdom here on earth today.
  - C. Daniel's experience with the Lord's Health Code provides a major sign of that True Israel.
    1. The health laws given by the Lord then and now were given in wisdom, and will bring physical blessings to the lives of those who hearken. (See Doctrine and Covenants Sec. 89 for that law, and Boyd K. Packer, November 1979, *Ensign*, p. 20 for a recounting of some of its blessings.)
- II. More importantly, Daniel's life testifies that he who keeps God's Health Code will be blessed with special wisdom.
  - A. Daniel, after keeping God's Health Code, is able to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, and receives many revelations given by Gabriel about the future.
  - B. Actually, Daniel represents Israel as a whole. So his life shows that God's people can, by keeping God's Health Laws, receive special "wisdom" or revelation.
    1. This promise is fulfilled as the prophets of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints continue to be blessed with revelation after revelation, to guide their people through the difficult challenges of the Last Days.
    2. But the promise is also to individual Saints. For they can also receive special wisdom and revelation according to their desires, efforts, and the Lord's will.
- III. Another role of Daniel, like all the prophets, was to bear witness through "types" in his life, of Jesus the Christ.
  - A. His experience in overcoming the Jaws of Death by Lions bore witness of He Who Would Overcome Death for us all. (Ch. 6). Note the parallels:
    1. Daniel was put to die in a tomblike den filled with beasts signifying death.
    2. The den, like Jesus' tomb, was sealed with a stone.
    3. Yet in the morning [like Jesus] Daniel lived.
    4. As also prophesied in Psalm 34:20, none of his bones were broken.
      - a. John 19:36 notes Jesus' fulfillment of the Psalms and Daniel's prophecy.
    5. Daniel's preservation from death was due to his righteousness. "Innocency was found in me... I have done no hurt" (v. 22).
      - a. Not only was Jesus perfectly innocent, but He was literally the Son of God.

IV. Daniel's companions who passed harmlessly through fire bore witness of the protection Christ's servants will find in the Last Days.

- A. Daniel's associates also refused to worship false gods.
- B. They were cast into a fiery furnace.
- C. Instead, those who sought to destroy them were destroyed by the fire.
- D. This teaches of Christ's deliverance of His servants when He returns.
- E. Some will seek to destroy the Church and its members.

1. When Christ comes, He will send fiery forces, which will destroy the wicked. (See Malachi 4:1 "For, behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that he shall leave them neither root nor branch.")

2. The event of Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego testifies that in the time of these Last Days destructions, the righteous will find safety in spite of them.

V. *The Story of Esther also confirms that those who seek to destroy the Lord's People in the Last Days will themselves be destroyed.*

A. Consider the similarities between the stories in Daniel and those of Esther: Just as in Daniel, one who was wicked, who sought to destroy someone for worshipping the True God, was eventually himself destroyed.

VI. *We don't have to wait until the final days to see evidences of these truths already working in our times.*

- A. Joseph Banks (brother of Elder Ben B. Banks of the Seventy) shared several examples of his miraculous protection in his book, *A Distant Prayer*. [\*Written with Jerry Borrowman].
- B. He made many dangerous flights over Germany in a bomber during World War II. Because of his faith, he eventually became the accepted voice of prayer for his crew, even for one atheist. During the 49<sup>th</sup> flight, their plane was destroyed and he found himself plunging towards the ground, but stuck in a tube. An external voice told him how to extract himself. He was the only one of the crew to survive.

He was captured by the Germans, but recounts many other experiences when his life continued to be preserved.

One was an amazing recovery from a life-threatening gangrenous infection. Others occurred when he and a small group miraculously escaped their captors in Germany, after learning they were soon to be turned over to the S.S. for extermination. The escaped prisoners continued to be protected. As they were passing through a German town late at night, single file, a door suddenly opened and out stepped a German soldier. Banks was clearly framed in the light of the door. He still had POW clothing on him which was clearly marked. The soldier asked him something in German. Brother Banks had no idea what he said, yet, he heard himself answering in German. The soldier simply replied, "Ja, Ja" and

turned and went back into the house.

When his companions, stunned, asked him what the soldier had said, and what he had replied, Brother Banks had to admit he was clueless. But the Lord had blessed him in that moment with the gift of tongues to save all their lives.

VII. The Books of Daniel and Esther not only relate stories of courage in their days, but they both contain prophecy. They point to what will happen at the Lord's Second Coming. They teach that if we are obedient, something far more wonderful will happen than even they experienced. *For in the Latter-days, the faithful will pass through the destructions meant for the wicked, and will be preserved.*

The ultimate preservation will be Eternal Life, and the faithful will obtain far greater blessings than any blessings which can be obtained in this life.