



FAITHFUL IN OUR CHOICES

At the end of ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. – Daniel 1:15

DANIEL IN NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S COURT

READ DANIEL 1

Back in the early days of computer programming, the phrase “Garbage in, garbage out” (also known as GIGO) was coined to explain the phenomena that a computer’s data was only as good as the information being input by a human being. Bad input results in bad output. As amazing as a computer’s abilities can seem, it takes a knowledgeable, competent person on the other end putting in “good” data or designing the program that tells the computer how to operate.

Daniel, even as a young man, knew that he had a responsibility to pursue good things physically and spiritually. Although King Nebuchadnezzar was willing to give Daniel and his friends the same royal foods that were available to him, Daniel knew that what he put into his body had consequences. He requested a special diet, consisting of vegetables and water. His request was granted – but only on a trial basis. At the end of the ten-day trial period, there was no denying that the diet Daniel had requested was good.

“Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself” (1 Corinthians 6:19). Paul’s words urged them to examine the ways they were treating their bodies, minds, and spirits. What we take in matters. The foods we eat affect our physical health, which can affect our ability to minister and care for our families and our community. The shows we watch and the music we listen to can affect our mood and our emotional state, or even affect our witness and example to others. Jesus himself tells us in Matthew 6:45b, “What you say flows from what is in your heart.”

The good news is that every day offers us a fresh start and a chance to evaluate the things we are taking in. God is always ready and faithful to help us as we choose new, healthier habits physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He is the God of new beginnings! together and talk about how this activity helps us think about this week’s Bible story and prayer.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Are there areas in your life where you might be taking in “garbage?” It might be foods you’re eating, shows you’re watching, or things you’re listening to. It might even be in your own mind – in the ways you talk to yourself or think about yourself.
2. What are some good things you can replace the “garbage” with? What steps can you take to start developing new, healthy habits?