The Test of Time

**Daniel 1: 1-21** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god. 3 Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, 4 young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. 5 And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. 6 Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. 7 To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego. 8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. 9 Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. 10 And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king." 11 So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 12 "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants." 14 So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days. 15 And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. 16 Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. 17 As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. 18 Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. 20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. 21 Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus. NKJV
1. Our natural giftings are but the first gift God wants to give us.
   - We each have a level of talent somewhere.
   - We tend to value what we are good at.
   - There was a basic talent for learning in these young men.
   - Our giftings can take us to places where our character cannot hold us.

2. Don’t let disappointments destroy your destiny!
   - The boys were kidnapped
   - Their parents were killed
   - They were made into Eunuchs
   - They had their name changed.
   - But, they still applied themselves to be the best they could be.
   - Joseph learned the protocol of the palace while in prison!

   - There are sacrifices that God asks us to give up to make room for His divine resources.
   - Even after all the pain they experienced they did not reward themselves with the KING’s rewards.
   - They did not feel like they were owed anything.
   - The result of their sacrifice was that they grew in knowledge and they grew in favor. But, then God added interpretation of dreams!

3. Temporary testing can bring about permanent change
   - They told the attendant to test them. They were not afraid of a period of testing.
   - When we measure where we are, we face the true condition of our life.
   - We lose the ability to ignore the truth.
   - We judge others by their actions, but we judge ourselves by our intentions. Testing brings our intentions out of the dark and into the light.

4. Being faithful allows you to see the Final faithful’s of God
   - The three Hebrew children quite possibly broke Israel’s addiction to idolatry.
   - Daniel served under Nebuchadnezzar.
   - Daniel served under Beltshazzar
   - Daniel served under Darius the Mede
   - Daniel served until the first year of Cyrus of Persia.
   - Daniel carried the nation spiritually from the position of an Eunuch and was still there in the palace to notify Cyrus of his divine calling to re-establish Israel!