

Old Testament Lesson # 45
If I Perish, I Perish
(Daniel 1-6; Esther)
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(The Book of Daniel is a very important scripture for Latter-day Saints and should be studied very carefully. The Books of Daniel and Esther teach the same significant truths.)

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 prophetic of 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.**

II. Daniel's obeying the **Lord's Health Code provides a major sign that we are that True Israel.**

A. The health laws given by the Lord then and now are a witness we are God's Kingdom.

1. This code was 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.)
2. Daniel drank no wine, ate no meat, and ate a great deal of pulse (seeds).
3. Another witness of the connection between a Health Code and Israel is found among the Moundbuilders.
 - a. Archeological findings show that after what would have been Christ's appearance, a major change occurred in the diet of the "Moundbuilders," in North America [who undoubtedly were some of the Nephites]. They too abandoned eating much meat and ate more cultivated plants. "Their eating of seeds [pulse] skyrocketed." [George Milner, *The Moundbuilders*, 2004.] As a result, their teeth and bones were found to be very healthy.

III. More importantly, Daniel's life testifies that the people who keep 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 receive 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, to guide us as a people through the difficult challenges of the Last Days.
2. But the promise is also to individual Saints. For we can also receive special wisdom and revelation according to our desires "to understand," our efforts, and the Lord's will.

IV. Daniel, like all ancient prophets, bore witness through "types" of Jesus the Christ.

- A. His experience in overcoming **the Jaws of Death by** Lions bore witness of Christ, 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 Daniel lived, [foreshadowing Christ].
 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).
 6. Not only was Jesus perfectly innocent, but He was literally the Son of God.

V. Esther was a rare woman in that her life also foreshadowed Jesus Christ.

A1. Esther was chosen to be next to the King because of her beauty.

A2. Jehovah was chosen to be next to God because of His great Beauty of Soul.

B1. Esther was precisely chosen to fulfill a vital role in the saving of her people, coming **"for such a time as this."**

B2. Christ, to a greater degree, was sent to act as Savior, "for such a time as this."

C1. Esther took courage, and regardless of the consequence, decided she must act to save her people. Without regard to her own life, she proclaimed, "If I perish, I perish."

C2. **Jesus Christ actually did "perish" in order that all mankind might be saved!**

VI. At the Second Coming, the rest of the things of which Esther's life prophesied will come to pass.

A. Israel will be surrounded by its enemies who have the intent to destroy it completely.

1. Many scriptures foretell that just prior to the Savior's Second Coming, Israel will be surrounded by her enemies seeking to destroy her, but she will be saved by the Lord's appearance.

2. This prophecy will also be **fulfilled by the preservation of the righteous throughout the world**, many who live under constant threat of others.

B. Those who intend to destroy will themselves be destroyed.

C. And at the same time, the wicked will be cast down, while the righteous will be lifted up and honored for their faithfulness.

D. Other scriptures declare this truth by saying metaphorically that the mountains will be cast down, and the valleys lift up. "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low" (Isaiah 40:4. See also Luke 3:5; D&C 49:23; D&C 109:74).

That is, there will be a great change in the status of the people: The truly meek (in Christ) will be lifted up in honor; the proud and rebellious will be cast down.

VII. The Book of Daniel adds another prophetic detail of **how** God's servants will fair at the Coming of Christ.

A. Daniel's companions passing harmlessly through fire **bears witness of this same protection Christ's servants will find in the Last Days.**

1. Daniel's associates, like him, refused to worship false gods.

2. They were cast into a fiery furnace.

3. As further witness, **those who sought to destroy them were destroyed themselves by the fire.**

VIII. Other prophecy, given more clearly, teaches:

A. “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” (Malachi 4:1).

B . So The event of Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego also testifies that in the time of these Last Days destructions, the righteous will find safety in spite of all things.

C. That these things will indeed come to pass is shown by the many times and many ways they are prophesied.

D. In addition to clearer prophecy, both Daniel and Esther’s lives revealed what will happen at the Lord’s Second Coming. If we are obedient, the faithful will pass through the destructions meant for the wicked, and will be preserved.

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