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AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT

In the book of Daniel, we learn that as a young man taken captive into Babylon, he ***“... purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself....”*** (Daniel 1:8.)

Daniel was a young Jewish man that had been taught the things of his heritage. He learned the scriptures as a youth and applied them to his life. He had a determination, a purpose, that he would not defile or expose himself to those things contrary to God’s word. This gave him a spirit of excellence and favor with the kings he served under.

In chapter 5 of Daniel the handwriting on the wall had appeared and none of the Babylonian magicians could tell the king what it meant. The queen was aware of Daniel from what had transpired with him and King Nebuchadnezzar. In 5:11-12 she said, ***“There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.”*** Daniel was brought in and despite being of an old age, interpreted the handwriting on the wall.

Daniel’s spirit of excellence allowed him to serve all those years despite being a Jew and hated by the religious leaders in Babylon. He earned much respect from the kings for never wavering during his seventy-year period of captivity. He never strayed from his love of God and lived his life by putting God first. He did not compromise the truth. When asked hard questions he gave answers that were given to him from God, knowing they might cause his death. This excellent spirit was with him throughout his entire captivity.

How does one achieve this kind of spirit of excellence? It comes from spending hours alone with God, studying his word and listening to Holy Spirit. It comes from not compromising when everyone else strays. It comes from walking alone when others leave you. It comes from being sold out totally to God’s plan and not your own.

Having an excellent spirit should be our objective in life, no matter what the consequences may be. Then one day we will hear the voice of God say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter into thy rest.”