

Daniel's Diet in Babylonian Captivity

A little secular Jewish vegetarian gospel number

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I find that this gets too long if the whole chorus is sung after every verse. Instead, I like to teach the chorus and then sing only its first line (or its last line, which is the same line) after verses 1, 3, and 5, while I sing the whole chorus after the other verses. Also, this needs a bit of a

swing feel: divide the eighth notes (quavers, if you're British) about 60:40 instead of the usual 50:50. You will, of course, need to vary the verse note durations slightly to cope with changes to the syllable pattern in the remaining verses. HLK

Lively (♩=168)

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 168 beats per minute. It features a melody line with lyrics and a guitar accompaniment line with chords. The chords are: C, E7, Am, D7, G7, C, C, E7, Am, D7, G7, F, C, C, G7, Em, F, C, A, G7, C, (G7), C, E7, Am, D7, G7, C, C, E7, Am, D7, G7, F, C, C, E7, Am, D7, G7, C, (G7), F, C, E7, C, E7, Am, D7, G7, C, (G7).

I did not make this sto-ry up. This sto-ry pre-ex - is - ted. It's not one of the fa - mous ones, and so, you may have missed it. It's in the Bi - ble, Dan - iel's book, and so it must be true. It takes up most of chap - ter one and none of chap - ter two. Oh Dan - iel, hold on - to your peo - ple's ways. Oh Dan - iel, hold on - to them all your days. Though you're in Ne - bu - chad - nez - zar's land, There's a high - er law than the king's com - mand. Oh Dan - iel, hold on - to your peo - ple's ways.

I did not make this story up. This story pre-existed. It's not one of the famous ones, and so, you may have missed it. It's in the Bible — Daniel's book — and so it must be true. It takes up most of chapter one and none of chapter two.¹

Oh, Daniel, hold on to your people's ways.
Oh, Daniel, hold on to them all your days.
Though you're in Nebuchadnezzar's land,
There's a higher law than the king's command.
Oh, Daniel, hold on to your people's ways.

"Go, find some Jews," said Nebuchadnezzar, "healthy, smart, and young. Enroll them in the three year course to learn our ways and tongue. And as they are our honoured guests, their health must not decline. We'll send them portions every day of royal meat and wine."

Though Daniel was his Hebrew name, they called him Belteshazzar, His kin Meschach, Abednego, and Shadrach — not in that order. When offered royal dainties, they told the king's steward, "No, sir; Whatever Nebuchadnezzar eats, we're sure it isn't kosher."

¹Chapter 1 of Daniel, from the version of the King James Bible on the web site <http://www.electricscotland.com/bible/daniel.htm>:

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that

at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye

make me endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

The idea for this song arose when the bible passage was cited during Stephen M. Stigler's Presidential Invited Address, "The problematic unity of biometrics", presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern North American Region of the International Biometric Society, March 2000. It was subsequently published in *Biometrics* 56, 2000, pp. 272-277.