

Daniel 1:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

Analysis

Daniel's proposal—"Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days"—demonstrates faith willing to be tested. The request for pulse (vegetables/legumes) and water represents the simplest diet, avoiding meat possibly offered to idols and rich foods violating dietary law. Ten days provides sufficient time to observe results without extended risk to Melzar. The humble 'I beseech thee' shows respectful petition rather than demand. Faith doesn't presume but trusts God to vindicate righteous choices through observable outcomes.

Historical Context

Pulse (Hebrew: *zeroa'im*, from *zera*, seed) refers to vegetables, legumes, or plant-based foods—likely lentils, beans, and grains forming typical Hebrew diet. This simple fare contrasted sharply with rich royal cuisine. Ten days represents a trial period—long enough to observe health effects but short enough to limit risk to Melzar if the experiment failed. Ancient understanding recognized that diet affected physical appearance and vigor.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Daniel's willingness to be tested demonstrate confidence that God honors faithfulness with observable results?
2. What does the proposal of a limited trial teach us about wise approaches to convincing others when conscience requires unconventional choices?

Interlinear Text

prove	H4994	H853	thy servants	days	I beseech thee ten	and let them give
	H5254		H5650	H3117	H6235	H5414
ל נ	ל נ	ל נ	ל נ	ל נ	ל נ	ל נ
H0	H4480	us pulse	to eat	and water	to drink	
		H2235	H398	H4325	H8354	

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 1:16 (Parallel theme): Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

Romans 14:2 (Parallel theme): For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.