Daniel - Commentaries by James M. Freeman

Manners and Customs of the Bible, 592. "Mighty Men"

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Daniel 3:20. He commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

On the monuments discovered at Khorsabad there are representations of gigantic and muscular men, like the “mighty men” of the text, who seem to have been always in attendance on the king, waiting to execute his orders. Such men were selected from the army on account of their size and strength, just as it is customary in the present day in Europe, as well as in the East, to select men of unusual stature as porters or guards in the palaces of kings. The monuments represent these men as clad in a peculiar costume, beautiful in style, and rich in ornament. It was probably men of this description who, at the king’s command, took the unfortunate captives and tossed them into the fiery furnace.

Manners and Customs of the Bible, 588. Babylonian Mode of Living

Daniel 1:5. The king appointed them a daily provision of the king’s meat, and of the wine which he drank.

This would have been a very luxurious mode of living for these Hebrew lads, quite in contrast to what they had been accustomed to, and to the extremely plain diet which Daniel requested for himself and his companions. The Babylonian kings and nobles were noted for their high living. Their tables were loaded with wheaten bread, meats in great variety, luscious fruits, fish, and game. The usual beverage was wine of the best varieties, and they were fond of drinking to excess. The ancient Persian kings followed the custom of the Babylonian monarch, and fed their attendants from their own tables.