As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Daniel 1:17.

The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon come to pass.

Consider the circumstances of the Jewish nation when the prophecies of Daniel were given. The Israelites were in captivity, the Temple had been destroyed, their Temple service suspended. Their religion had centered in the ceremonies of the sacrificial system. They had made the outward form all-important, while they had lost the spirit of true worship. Their services were corrupted with traditions and practices of heathenism, and in the performance of the sacrificial rites they did not look beyond the shadow of the substance. They did not discern Christ, the True Offering for the sins of man. The Lord wrought to bring the people into captivity, and to suspend the services in the Temple, in order that the outward ceremonies might not become the total of their religion. The principles and practices must be purged of heathenism, the ritual service ceased, in order that the heart might be revived. The outward glory was removed, that the spiritual might be revealed.

In the land of their captivity, as the people returned unto the Lord with repentance, He manifested Himself unto them. They lacked the outward representation of His presence, but bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone into their minds and hearts. When they called unto God in their humiliation and distress, visions were given to the prophets which unfolded the events of the
future—the overthrow of the oppressors of God's people, the coming of the Redeemer, and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom....

Daniel had companions, and they had a special work to do. Although greatly honored in this work, they did not become in any way exalted. They were scholars, being skilled in secular as well as religious knowledge; but they had studied science without being corrupted. They were well-balanced because they had yielded themselves to the control of the Holy Spirit. These youth gave to God all the glory of their secular, scientific, and religious endowments. Their learning did not come by chance; they obtained knowledge by the faithful use of their powers; and God gave them skill and understanding.—Letter 134, May 27, 1898, to J. H. Kellogg.

This devotional is from The Upward Look by Ellen G. White. To download free books by Ellen G. White, visit www.egwwritings.org.