

DANIEL PART 2

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Let's start with a recap from last week in the book of Daniel.

Chapter 1 Nebuchadnezzar attacks Jerusalem and takes captives and other treasures to Babylon ... circa 605 BC.

Among the captives were Daniel and his 3 friends ... they stand out from the rest.

Chapter 2 Nebuchadnezzar's dream about the great statue of Gold, Silver, Bronze and Iron. Daniel interprets the vision to show Nebuchadnezzar what will come ... which continues right up to Jesus' return.

Chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar some years later erects a huge statue/obelisk ... 90' high. He commands everyone to bow down to it when the orchestra plays ... to worship this great image. The story leads us into the adventures of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego ... who refuse ... and they are cast into the burning fiery furnace.

Daniel 3:22-30 (NKJV)

22 Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counsellors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

25 "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire.

27 And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

28 Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!

29 Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."

30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

Perhaps a foreshadow of the Beast of Revelation 13 ... his mark and also worship his image? If you don't accept the mark and worship the Beast ... you will forfeit your lives ... be put to death! Revelation 20 talks of those who were beheaded who had not worshipped the Beast or his image.

On to Chapter 4. An entire chapter of the Bible was written by Nebuchadnezzar ... not a man of God!

Daniel 4:1-3 (NKJV)

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king, To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.

2 I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.

3 How great are His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And His dominion is from generation to generation.

Daniel 4:4-9 (NKJV)

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.

5 I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. *(Another dream)*

6 Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. *(He knew this dream was significant)*

7 Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. *(Two reasons why they didn't interpret it ... they didn't know the meaning or ... they know the meaning but perhaps the counsellors were too scared to explain its meaning?)*

8 But at last Daniel came before me *(his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God)*, and I told the dream before him, saying:

9 "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation. *(Daniel had courage ... even to delivering difficult messages)*

Daniel 4:10-18 (NKJV) The Dream

10 "These were the visions of my head while on my bed:
I was looking, and behold,
A tree in the midst of the earth,
And its height was great.

11 The tree grew and became strong;
Its height reached to the heavens,
And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.

12 Its leaves were lovely,
Its fruit abundant,
And in it was food for all.
The beasts of the field found shade under it,
The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches,
And all flesh was fed from it. (*An idyllic picture*)

13 "I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there
was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven. (*The
watchers appear to be a class of spirit beings that confer with
God ... part of His governing Council*)

14 He cried aloud and said thus:
"Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,
Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit.
Let the beasts get out from under it,
And the birds from its branches.

15 Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth,
Bound with a band of iron and bronze,
In the tender grass of the field.
Let it be wet with the dew of heaven,
And let him graze with the beasts
On the grass of the earth.

16 Let his heart be changed from that of a man,
Let him be given the heart of a beast,
And let seven times pass over him. (*"Times" typically picture
years = 7 years*)

17 This decision is by the decree of the watchers,
And the sentence by the word of the holy ones,

In order that the living may know
That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men,
Gives it to whomever He will,
And sets over it the lowest of men.'

18 "This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you."

Daniel 4:19-27 (NKJV)

19 Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you." Belteshazzar answered and said, "My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!

20 "*The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth,*

21 whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—

22 *it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.*

23 "And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him';

24 *this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:*

25 **They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen.**

They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

26 "And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.

27 **Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; *break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.* Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity."**

Daniel explains ... king you need to REPENT!!

Daniel 4:28-33 (NKJV)

28 **All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.**

29 At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon.

30 The king spoke, saying, **"Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honour of my majesty?"**

31 **While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!**

32 And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."

33 That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

Nebuchadnezzar had a lot to be proud of in a sense ... because he was the Head of Gold. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon ... one of the 7 wonders of the world. The city was an architectural marvel. He was a great conqueror. Allegedly the walls were 300' high ... 25' thick.

Today there is a rare but recognised mental disorder ... Boanthropy. People who believe they are an ox and go out and eat grass.

Proverbs 16:18-19 (NKJV)

**18 Pride goes before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before a fall.**

**19 Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly,
Than to divide the spoil with the proud.**

This is a general statement that applies to anyone ... Nebuchadnezzar ... or you and me. Pride is destructive! God is against the proud! Here is a lesson for us all. We don't want to be found resisting God. There are good lessons there in the life of Nebuchadnezzar.

James 4:6 (NKJV)

**6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:
"God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble."**

Back to Daniel.

Daniel 4:34-37 (NKJV)

**34 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted
my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me;
and I blessed the Most High and praised and honoured Him who
lives forever:
For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,**

And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;

He does according to His will in the army of heaven

And among the inhabitants of the earth.

No one can restrain His hand

Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

36 **At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honour and splendour returned to me.** My

counsellors and nobles resorted to me, **I was restored to my**

kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. *(I guess the*

lesson was learned. It is easier for us to learn from other

people's mistakes rather than having to learn them for ourselves)

37 **Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice.**

And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

Daniel 5:1 (NKJV)

1 **Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand.**

Chapter 5 jumps to Belshazzar and the end of Babylon. About 23 years after chapter 4. Nebuchadnezzar is dead. This is the final king of Babylon. There have been a couple of rulers since. The current king is Nabonidus (history thinks he is away from Babylon). So he left the country with his son as co-regent.

Daniel 5:2-9 (NKJV)

2 While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar (*his forefather? An ancestor?*) had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them.

3 **Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and**

the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them.

4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

5 In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

6 Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other.

7 The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." (*Nabonidus ... Belshazzar ... then the person who interprets the writing on the wall*)

8 Now all the king's wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation.

9 Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.

Daniel 5:10-24 (NKJV)

10 The queen, (*probably the queen mother*) because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change.

11 There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, (or forefather?) light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.

12 Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were

found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”

13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?”

14 I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.

15 Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing.

16 And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

17 Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. *(Daniel was respectful to Nebuchadnezzar ... but here ... Daniel is a bit abrupt ... a bit harsh ... didn't have the same respect as he did for his father)*

18 O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honour.

19 And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down.

20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.

21 Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven,

till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

22 **"But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this.** (Daniel was quite harsh. The king should have known better)

23 **And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven.** They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. **And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.**

24 Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.

Daniel 5:25-31 (NKJV)

25 **"And this is the inscription that was written:**

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

26 **This is the interpretation of each word. Mene: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; (Your number's up!)**

27 **Tekel: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting;**

28 **Peres: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."**

29 Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

30 **That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain.**

(That very night ... that was the final party of Belshazzar and his friends. Babylon fell that very night ... October 539 BC)

31 **And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.**

Babylon fell to King Cyrus ... a Persian. There was virtually no battle. Babylon was impregnable ... the walls were 300' high ... 25' thick. The towers were 450' high. With massive gates ... that when they were closed ... no one could get through.

The River Euphrates flowed through the city ... through two great bronze gates ... with spikes which reached down to the riverbed. But Cyrus dug trenches upstream and diverted the river ... and then his armies ... by night ... waded through shallow water under the gates. It seems that the gates were unlocked? They were able to lay waste and capture the city that very night.

Daniel 6:1-4 (NKJV)

1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom;

2 and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss.

3 Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.

4 So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. (Compare Daniel to today's politicians and leaders. Could you say that today?)

Daniel 6:5-9 (NKJV)

5 Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God." (There's got to be something about his religion!)

6 So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever!"

7 All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counsellors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, (that was a lie ... Daniel hadn't agreed) that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.

8 Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter."

9 Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.

These men trapped the king. They knew Daniel would not compromise. The Law of the Medes and Persians: a bit like the infallibility of the Pope? The Doctrine of Infallibility ... the Pope's statements are True.

Daniel 6:10-15 (NKJV)

10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, (every day) and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. (They obviously had spies in Daniel's private room)

12 And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?"

The king answered and said, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter."

13 So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for

you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

14 *And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him. (The King was annoyed with himself ... he knew he had been tricked by his other governors)*

15 Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

Daniel 6:16-24 (NKJV)

16 *So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."*

17 Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

18 *Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.*

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. *The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"*

21 *Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!*

22 *My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."*

23 Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up

out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

24 **And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.** (*Corporate punishment of the malicious governors etc*)

Daniel 6:25-28 (NKJV)

25 **Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.**

26 **I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.**

For He is the living God,

And steadfast forever;

His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed,

And His dominion shall endure to the end.

27 He delivers and rescues,

And He works signs and wonders

In heaven and on earth,

Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. (*Darius and Cyrus are possibly the same person*)