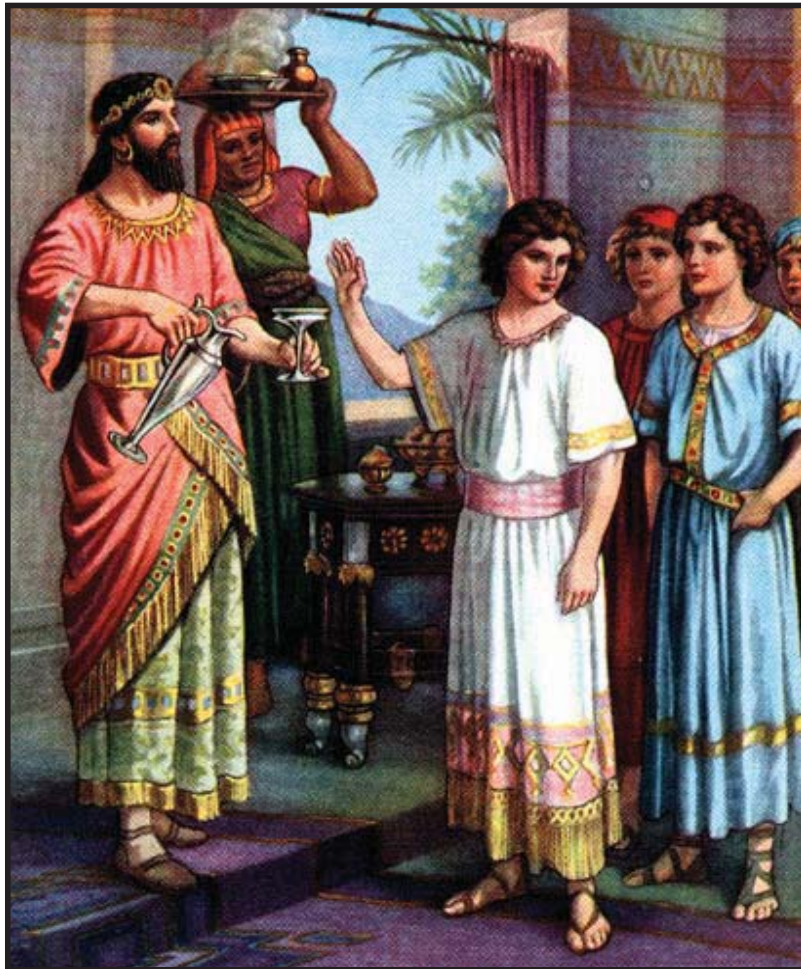


**A person who fears & trusts
God Will always be Victorious**



Daniel Study - 01



A person who fears & trusts God Will always be Victorious

Daniel 1 : 1 -21

Introduction :- In the book of ' Daniel ' Daniel himself acknowledges that he is the author of the book, (**Daniel 9 : 2, 10 : 2**) and our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ refers to him as the '**Prophet Daniel**' in the gospel of Matthew (**Mathew 24 : 15**).

Mathew 24 : 15 :- “ **So when you see standing in the holy place, ' the abomination that causes desolation, spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the reader understand –**”

Bible scholars are of the opinion that Daniel completed writing this book around 530 B.C., which means that the book was completed a short time after King Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonians and took over their kingdom in 539 B.C.

The meaning of the name Daniel is '**God is my judge**' and from the beginning of this book right upto the end, we can see the unshakable faith that Daniel had in God. The dedication and commitment that he had to refrain from doing anything that would displease God. The determination he had to depend on God alone, whatever the circumstances were.

Dear children of God, even as we commence studying this marvelous book today, let us decide to always, in every situation, be **obedient to God in every way, and thus bring glory and honour to God in everything that we do.**

1 Corinthians 10 : 31 :- “ **So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.** ”

Teaching :- Fear of God and Faith – The pathway to certain victory

The word of God mentions that the prophet Daniel was highly esteemed by God.

Daniel 9 : 23 :- “ As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I (the angel Gabriel) have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision. ”

Daniel 10 : 11 :- “ He (an angel) said , “ Daniel you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for now I have been sent to you. “ And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. ”

Considering the above fact, that Daniel was highly esteemed by God, some of you may be rather mystified, that the book of Daniel has the following verse at virtually the beginning of this fascinating, prophetic book.

Daniel 1 : 2 :- “ And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim King of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god. ”

Hence I propose to commence this Bible study, by focussing our attention on this verse.

1. Our God is a God who blesses the obedient and punishes the disobedient (Daniel 1 : 1, 2)

This does not mean that God is like us – ‘ **doing tit for tat** ’ – but is a God who is kind and compassionate, a God who loves us exceedingly.

Psalms 145 : 8, 9 :-

“⁸ The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. ⁹ The Lord is good to all ; he has compassion on all he has made. ”

Our loving Father in heaven does punish His children sometimes, but almost always He does so because of his love for us, in order to help us to grow and mature.

Proverbs 3 : 11, 12 :-

“¹¹ My son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in. ”

Let us now try to comprehend why Almighty God who had chosen the Israelites to be His own people, failed to prevent them from being captured by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, as mentioned in **Daniel 1 : 1, 2**.

The background relevant to this occurrence is as follows :

- (i) In order to birth the Israelites, God initially called a man named Abram who was seventy five years old, and gave him the sevenfold promise recorded in **Genesis 12 : 2, 3**. However, Sarai the wife of Abram was then a sixty five year old barren woman, who had no children (**Genesis 11 : 30**).
- (ii) Even when Abram reached the age of ninety nine, the couple were childless, but God appeared to Abram once again and promised to greatly increase his numbers (**Genesis 17 : 1, 2**).
- (iii) On this occasion God changed Abram’s name to Abraham, and confirmed that the promise that he had made to him would become an everlasting covenant between him and Abraham and his descendants for the generations to come (**Genesis 17 : 5 – 8**).

- (iv) According to the covenant that God made with Abraham, at the appointed time, the ‘ **Promised Land** ’ was captured by the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua.
- (v) Israel which was a united kingdom at this time, became divided into two after the reign of King Solomon and the Northern kingdom was called ‘ **Israel** ’ and the Southern kingdom was called ‘ **Judah**. ’
- (vi) Both these kingdoms however, were ‘ **disobedient to God** ’ and as a consequence, God permitted the Assyrians to capture ‘ **Israel** ’ in 722 B.C. and the Babylonians to capture ‘ **Judah** ’ in 605 B.C.

Thus God permitted King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to capture Judah due to their disobedience, for their own good, because of His love for them.

My dear children of God, all of us have been called by God to be His children. Our God who loves us greatly, will also punish us as well when we disobey him, because He wants to correct us, strengthen us, bless us and use us.

(Please read **Hebrews 12 : 5 – 11**)

2. Our God is Sovereign over all of creation

We are studying the book of Daniel which consists of twelve chapters and we can observe the sovereignty of God right throughout this book. In order to help you to identify this clearly, we wish to present the sovereignty of God in this book, in the following manner.

- (a)** Chapter one - **God’s sovereignty over Daniel.**
- (b)** Chapter two to seven – **God’s sovereignty over the Gentiles.**
- (c)** Chapter eight to twelve – **God’s sovereignty over the Jews.**

God's sovereignty over Daniel's life

Daniel 1 : 3, 4 :-

“³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz , chief of his court officials, to bring in some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility⁴ – young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. ”

Thus, although no mention is made in the Bible about Daniel's family, we can confidently state that, he was born to a noble family in Israel. Furthermore, the fact that his parents gave him a name which means, ' **God is my judge** ' indicates that he came from a very devout and God-fearing family.

We know that King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah in 605 B.C. , 597 B.C. and 588 B.C. and took captives from Judah to Babylon on all three occasions, and Daniel belonged to the first group that was thus taken captive to Babylon in 605 B.C.

Dear child of God, please understand this. Daniel who received his name which is so significant, was born to a noble and devout family and was taken captive to Babylon in the first batch of captives, **because of the Sovereignty of God over his life.** In fact none of the things I mentioned about Daniel in the previous sentence happened, because they were Daniel's will or choice. **They were all, according to the will of God.**

My dear Brother and Sister in Christ Jesus, I want to place before you here, a truth that I have mentioned several times earlier, in the Bible study books I have written.

They are as follows :

- You were born in Sri Lanka, because God made it happen that way.
- You were born into the family that you belong, because that was His will.
- Almighty God who created you, has prepared a unique and wonderful plan for your life.

Ephesians 2 : 10 :- “ For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ”

Hence it is my personal opinion, that the ‘ **dream** ’ of every sincere and genuine Christian should be, to submit to the sovereignty of God in our lives, and try to live as far as possible, according to the plan / will of God for our lives.

Because of the importance of this dear reader, for you to make this decision without delay, I want to place before you, a ‘ **word** ’ spoken by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in this connection.

John 4 : 34 :- “ My food, said Jesus, is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ”

Let me also follow the example of Jesus mentioned above and make a firm decision to endeavor to live according to the will of God. Let us not be misguided by the ‘ **dreams** ’ introduced into our hearts by the enemy, and live in obedience to God, always.

3. We Christians should always ‘ Fear God ’ but should not be afraid of man (Daniel 1 : 5, 8)

Daniel 1 : 5 :-

“ The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king’s table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service. ”

Daniel 1 : 8 :-

“ But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. ”

Let us now look at the situation that Daniel was placed in, and his fearless response.

(i) The situation that Daniel was placed in

Daniel was a youth, who was exiled from his motherland, and was under the rule of a foreign king. He was a young man, who was separated from his homeland, his family, his friends and loved ones.

Dear child of God, consider how you would react, if you were to be placed in a situation like this.

If we were to be placed in a similar situation, many of us who bear the name ‘ **Christian** ’ would get depressed and dejected, and abandon our hopes and expectations. Possibly our faith in God may be shaken and we may even start questioning the dependability of God and draw away from him.

However, Daniel did not react in this manner. He remained as a youth, full of faith, and placed his confidence in God and God alone.

(ii) The decision made by Daniel

The bold decision that Daniel made, in the face of the above mentioned ‘ **life-threatening** ’ situation was, ‘ **not to defile himself with the royal food and wine.** ’

Let us now understand, why Daniel considered the royal food and wine, as something that would ‘ **defile him.** ’

- (a) It was customary in Babylon to offer a portion of the king's food and wine first to the 'deities' the Babylonians believed in. Hence, if Daniel partook of the king's food and wine, Daniel would be inadvertently partaking of 'defiled food.'

(Please read **1 Corinthians 8 : 1 – 8**)

Furthermore, in the Old Testament, we know that God has specified certain foods as 'unclean' and hence should not be eaten by 'His people', the Israelites.

(Please read **Leviticus 11 : 2-23** in this connection)

In addition to the above, the Old Testament stipulates that even 'clean animals' need to be slaughtered and prepared in a particular manner, in order for their flesh to be 'clean' or considered suitable for eating.

When we consider all the above requirements, it is not difficult to understand why Daniel, 'resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine' (**Daniel 1 : 18**). In order to help you understand the meaning of 'defile himself' even more specifically, I want to place before you further instructions found in **Leviticus 11 : 43 – 45**.

Leviticus 11 : 43 – 45 :- “⁴³ Do not defile yourself by any way of these creatures. Do not make yourselves unclean by means of them or be made unclean by them. ⁴⁴ I am the Lord your God, consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves about on the ground. ⁴⁵ I am the Lord who brought you out of Egypt, to be your God ; therefore be holy, because I am holy. ”

(iii) The gravity of the decision made by Daniel

When Daniel made this bold decision, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, was the most powerful king living at that time and Daniel was a youth who was under his rule. Hence the decision made by Daniel, was one that put his life, gravely at risk.

However, in obedience to the command of God, ‘ **to be holy, because I am holy** ’ (**Leviticus 11 : 44, 45**) Daniel took this bold decision, prepared to die if it was necessary, rather than disobey Almighty God.

My dear child of God, are you sincerely making an effort, **to lead holy or pure lives, as required by God ? What importance are you giving to pleasing God in everything you do ?**

❖ **The importance given to leading holy lives – in the New Testament**

The words found in **Leviticus 11 : 44 & 45** are quoted by Peter in **1 Peter 1 : 15**.

1 Peter 1 : 15 :- “ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do. ”

Dear friend, God is calling all of us to be holy, even as He is holy. We who have become His children, by believing and receiving Him, (**John 1 : 12**) we who are ‘ **fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household,** ’ (**Ephesians 2 : 19**) have been called by God, to be holy. Daniel who was a young man in exile was prepared to put his life on a limb, to preserve his holiness (**Leviticus 11 : 44**) as commanded by God. **How about you, my friend ?**

May I humbly request you to meditate and examine yourself prayerfully before Almighty God, and act according to the guidance given to you, by the Holy Spirit.

Daniel risked his life, to keep himself undefiled by unclean food. We however find our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ teaching us that **' what comes out of the mouth is what makes him (man) unclean.'** **(Matthew 15 : 11)**

Let us all, who call ourselves Christians, apply the above teaching given by Jesus to our lives, and not allow Satan to cause impure words to come from our mouths, or impure thoughts to dwell in our hearts and minds. In order to help you to do so, I want to suggest two things from the Word of God.

- **Always keep a check on your hearts and minds**
Matthew 15 : 19 – 20 :- “¹⁹ For out of the heart comes evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.²⁰ These are what make a man ' unclean ' ; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him unclean. ”
- **Keep away from bad company**
1 Corinthians 15 : 33 :- “ Do not be misled : “ Bad company corrupts good character. ”

By the way, we are not suggesting that you totally keep away from those who are weak and easily fall into temptation and sin.

Most certainly, Jesus came into this world **' to save sinners.'** Hence we too need to do what we can do to do likewise and help them to come to know Jesus. However we need to do so only if and when the Holy Spirit guides us accordingly.

Trying to do so by our own strength, often results in we ourselves getting corrupted, as warned in **1 Corinthians 15 : 33**.

Proverbs 13 : 20 :- “ He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm. ”

Proverbs 22 : 24, 25 :- “ ²⁴ Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, ²⁵ or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared. ”

4. We Christians should fear no man, but we should always treat others with respect, humility and wisdom

Daniel 1 : 8b :- “ . . . and he (Daniel) asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. ”

In **Daniel 1 : 8b** we see Daniel being obedient to God’s Word whilst showing respect to man also. In **Daniel 1 : 9** we see God’s response to Daniel’s wise action.

Daniel 1 : 9 :- “ Now God had caused the official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel. ”

These words show us, **the Sovereignty of God over the Gentiles.**

Dear children, please understand this. Just as it is in your life, the sovereignty of God is over the lives of other people. Hence fear only Him. Be obedient to Him. **Then God will even change the attitudes of other people towards us, thus proving that we are truly His children.**

As a consequence of God causing the official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel, the official who was very well aware that failing to carry out the king’s order, could bring the death penalty to him, (**Daniel 1 : 10**) acceded to Daniel’s request.

The request made by Daniel was, to give him, Hananiah, (**Shadrach**) Mishael, (**Meshach**) and Azariah (**Abednego**) nothing but vegetables and water for ten days, and then to compare their appearance with the other young men (**Daniel 1 : 11 – 13**).

The results of this test are found in the Bible as follows.

Daniel 1 : 15 :-

“ At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. ”

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ Jesus, this mighty miracle was done by Almighty God, in response to the great faith of Daniel and his three friends, and the official who witnessed this miracle, gave only vegetables and water for their nourishment until the end of the three and a half years training that was given to them.

As a result of the fear of God and their obedience to him, **‘ to these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. ’ (Daniel 1 : 17)**

My dear children, are you prepared to live a holy life, in obedience to Almighty God ?

If you do so, He will definitely touch you, anoint you and do mighty things through you, **and use you to bring many people to salvation, thus bringing glory and honour to His Holy Name.**

Like Daniel and his three friends, please decide **today itself** not to be **defiled by earthly things**. Please pray – asking God to grant you the indwelling and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to enable you to live accordingly.

5. **Those who decide to live accordingly will be Blessed and Lifted up by God, and will be victorious in all situations (Daniel 1 : 18 – 21)**

At the end of the allocated time, these four young men were brought before the king by the official, to be examined by him, and the king realized that the four of them were superior to all the others in every way.

Daniel 1 : 19 :- “ The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah ; so they entered the king’s service. ”

It is quite possible that some of you would consider it normal for these four young men to be at the top of the batch, because in any batch of students, there can be a few students who are brilliant or outperform the others by a healthy margin.

However, the miracle was not the four of them topping the batch, the miracle was that, ‘ **the king found them ten times better than (everyone else) in his whole kingdom.** ’

Daniel 1 : 20 :- “ In every manner of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians, and enchanters in his whole kingdom. ”

For me, the statement of the king is indeed a miracle. Something which is beyond belief !! I say this because there is no indication anywhere, that these young people were tutored by ‘ **foreign teachers, lecturers or professors.** ’ They all learnt under whoever was available in Babylon.

Hence how did these four acquire knowledge and understanding, which was ten times more than everyone else in the whole kingdom ? How did they become so outstanding and brilliant ?

My answer to these questions is, that all this was the work of Almighty God, who is the God of Israel.

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, please understand who you are.

God's Word teaches us, that we are Children of Almighty God ; that we are His Heirs, and are Co-heirs with Christ Jesus.

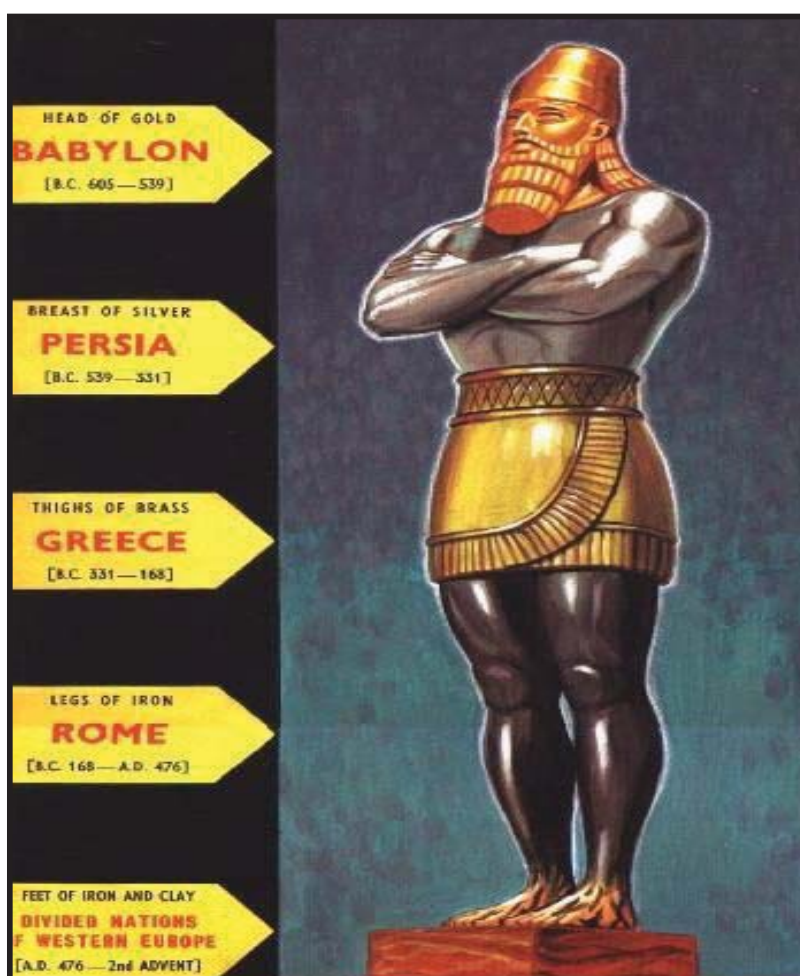
Romans 8 : 16, 17 :- “ ¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are God's children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, ”

Therefore when we as children of God, fear Him and commit our lives to him and live pure and holy lives, He :

- Blesses us
- Strengthens us
- Emboldens us
- Directs our paths
- Teaches us and gives us Wisdom and Knowledge.

**“ May Almighty God,
Give you the courage and strength
To pledge to live Holy Lives, always !!! ”**

God makes known the End from the Beginning - 1



Daniel Study - 02



God makes known the End from the Beginning - 1

Daniel 2 : 1 -23

Introduction :-

- (a) Our God (the God of Israel) is a God who makes known the end from the beginning.

Isaiah 46 : 9, 10 :- “⁹ Remember the former things, those of long ago, I am God and there is no other ; I am God and there is none like me. ¹⁰I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times what is still to come. ”

Psalm 33 : 11 :- “ But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. ”

Since God makes known the end from the beginning, the Word of God is full of prophecies.

For example, a prophecy that Jesus would crush the head of Satan on the cross at Calvary, was given by God, right at the beginning, whilst Adam and Eve were still in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3 : 15 :- “ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers ; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel. ”

This prophecy was prophesied by God, in the Garden of Eden, at the beginning of the history of mankind, and was fulfilled by Jesus about two thousand years ago, as we are all well aware.

There is no doubt whatsoever, that God will fulfill each and every prophecy written in His Word, at the appropriate time.

(b) We firmly believe that the times that we are presently living in, are very close to the second coming of Jesus. When we look at the New Testament, we find that this happening has been given a great amount of importance, and is mentioned very frequently therein.

For example, in the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, twenty-three books mention it. Furthermore, it is mentioned about three hundred times in the New Testament and covers about 5% of the verses therein.

Thus, even as we can see that this subject is given a lot of prominence in the New Testament, the most informative and descriptive prophecies regarding this are found in the book of Revelation. Similarly, in the Old Testament the book that provides us with many crucial prophecies about the second coming of Jesus and the ‘**times of the Gentiles**’ (**Luke 21 : 24**) is the book written by the prophet Daniel.

With the above introduction, as we proceed to study the book of Daniel, I want to urge all of you, to focus your attention on **Isaiah 46 : 12**, and if these words apply to you, to strictly follow the advice mentioned there by Daniel, without delay.

Isaiah 46 : 12 :-

“ Listen to me, you stubborn - hearted, you who are far from righteousness. ”

Teaching :-

Our God makes known the end from the beginning

Our God is All-knowing. He is Almighty. He is not limited by time. Hence where He is concerned, His time cannot be separated into the past, present and future, and **He ' always dwells in the present. '**

From the Bible, we see that when Moses asked God to reveal His Name, the reply given to him by God was, **' I AM WHO I AM ' (Exodus 3 : 14)** and **' This is my name forever, the name by which, I am to be remembered from generation to generation ' (Exodus 3 : 15).** Please read **Exodus 3 : 13 – 15.**

Therefore He is the God who knows our end from the beginning (our future from our past). Furthermore, He is the God who loves us, who protects us, who blesses us and gives us victory in all situations. Consequently, we are able to face, every challenge, every obstacle and every situation, confidently and boldly.

1. Facing every confounding situation boldly (Daniel 2 : 1 – 18)

Every person born into this world, has to face various situations during his/her lifetime. Hence, we who are children of God also have to go through experiences which are sweet/bitter, joyful/saddening, painful, confusing, frightening and various other situations during the course of our journey on earth.

Dear child of God, please understand this. We who are Christians too have to go through various difficult and challenging situations in our lives, and these are often the situations that reveal, our true spiritual condition and increase our faith, etc.

Hence in every confusing and confounding challenge that comes to our lives, let us all face them boldly, armed with the Word of God and the Power of the Holy Spirit.

In order to strengthen you to face such situations boldly, I want to bring to your remembrance, two Bible verses that I found to be extremely helpful in my own walk with God.

Romans 8 : 28 :- “ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ”

Hebrews 13 : 5, 6 :- “⁵ Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “ Never will I leave you ; never will I forsake you. ”⁶ So we can say with confidence, “ The Lord is my helper ; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me ? ”

None of us can forecast with absolute certainty, what would happen to us tomorrow. However, although we as human beings are so restricted in our knowledge about our future, our loving Father in Heaven, knows **every detail about our past, present and future in every way.**

Therefore, in every situation that we are faced with, let us **abide in Jesus, obey His Word in every way, and hand the situation over to Him.** When we act this in faith, we will most surely receive the answer that Jesus said we would.

John 15 : 7 :- “ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ”

2. The confounding situation that Daniel faced (Daniel 2 : 1 – 18)

- (a) Daniel was taken as a captive, under the orders of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in the year 605 B.C. and was taught the ‘ **language and the literature of the Babylonians.** ’ (Chaldeans) (Daniel 2 : 4)

From Daniel 2 : 4 we can also see that Daniel was a ‘ **young man . . . showing aptitude for every type of learning, well informed, quick to understand and qualified to serve in the king’s palace.** ’

The Word of God, also informs us that **God gave Daniel, knowledge and understanding as well as other special gifts.**

Daniel 1 : 17 :- “ To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds and literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. ”

Dear children of God, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Judah on three separate occasions in 605 B.C., 597 B.C. and 586 B.C. and on all three occasions exiled groups of Jews to Babylon. Daniel belonged to the first group that was taken thus to Babylon in 605 B.C.

I want to ask you a question. My question is, how did Daniel get included in the first group taken to Babylon ? Was it simply an accident or a coincidence ? Or was it caused purposely and intentionally by Almighty God, the God of Israel ?

It is my firm conviction, that our God who makes known ‘ **the end from the beginning** ’ (Isaiah 46 : 10) caused it to happen according to His plan and purpose. Similarly, He gave ‘ **the ability to understand visions and dreams of all kinds** ’ to Daniel (Daniel 1 : 17) in order to fulfill His intentions.

- ❖ God, who thus acted in accordance with His plans and purposes in the lives of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, has a plan and purpose for your life too, dear reader.

Therefore, the most important thing in your life is to, **get hold of this truth, and live your life according to it, as far as you possibly can. Please surrender your life to God without delay, and seek to please Him in everything you do.** I myself did so way back in 1969, and God took hold of unworthy me and started using me, although I feel totally unworthy to experience the incredible, miraculous way that He has blessed me and used me for over half a century.

Therefore my dear Brothers and Sisters, Sons and Daughters in Christ Jesus, I urge you from the depths of my being, to commit your lives unto God and dedicate your life, to live according to the plan and purpose, that God has prepared for you.

Please do not delay. Begin a wonderful, blessed, fruitful, purposeful walk with God, today.

- (b) **“ In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams ; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. ” (Daniel 2 : 1)**

The above occurred in the second year of the reign of the king, (in 604 B.C.) but the king could not remember what he had dreamt. The king who was deeply disturbed by the dreams, summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers and demanded that they reveal to him the dream and its meaning. However, their response was as follows.

Daniel 2 : 10, 11 :- “¹⁰ The astrologers, answered the king, ‘ There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks !¹¹ What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among men. ”

This reply from the ‘ **astrologers** ’ enraged the king, and he commanded ‘ **the execution of all the wise men of Babylon** ’ (Daniel 2 : 12)

Since the king’s command was applicable to Daniel, Arioch, the commander of the king’s guard sought Daniel as well as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, to put them to death.

Thus Daniel was faced with a confounding and dangerous situation that was life threatening. However, Daniel was totally unaware of the reason for the king to make such a reckless decision nor the background to it.

Let us now focus our attention on how Daniel responded to this virtually hopeless situation.

3. Daniel acted Calmly, Wisely, Boldly and in Faith

- (i) **Daniel 2 : 14 :- “ When Arioch, the commander of the king’s guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him in wisdom and tact. ”**

Friends, please think or imagine the situation that Daniel was placed in. Arioch, the commander of the king’s guard came in search of Daniel, because the king had sent him to put Daniel and his friends to death (Daniel 2 : 13). Any man who has to face such a situation, would normally act with great fear and trembling. However this is not what the Bible records of Daniel. Instead of fear, Daniel ‘ **spoke to Arioch with wisdom and tact** ’ (Daniel 2 : 14) is what is stated in God’s Word.

Daniel was able to respond to Arioch in this manner, because he had come to know God intimately. **He knew that God does not lie. He knew that God would always do what was beneficial and good for His people, Israel. He trusted God with all his heart.**

- ❖ Dear child of God, how much do you trust God and His unchanging Word ?

Let us look at a couple of promises found in God's Word.

Isaiah 41 : 10 :- “ So do not fear , for I am with you ; do not be dismayed , for I am your God . I will strengthen you and help you ; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. ”

Isaiah 43 : 1, 2 :- “ ¹ But now, this is what the Lord says – he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel : “ Fear not for I have redeemed you ; I have summoned you by name ; you are mine. ² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you ; and when you pass by the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned ; the flames will not set you ablaze. ”

I am very confident, that many of you reading this Bible study, are familiar with the above mentioned Bible verses. However I am deeply saddened that possibly a great majority of you reading this, probably do not really believe these promises, given to us by God.

If you do happen to be in this position presently, please ask God to rid you from this situation. Our God is a loving Father and He will always help you and teach you to trust in Him, and will strengthen you, if your request to God is made genuinely and sincerely.

It is also possible that presently, you are placed in all types of problems, for which you cannot see any possible solutions. If so dear brother / sister I urge you to **stop struggling with your problems by your strength.**

Simply hand over all your problems to God in Prayer and Faith. Stop worrying about your problems, and simply depend on God.

When you do so, God will solve your problems, and give you peace.

Philippians 4 : 6, 7 :- “ 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ”

(ii) Daniel acted very sensibly and with Great Faith - (Daniel 2 : 15, 16)

Daniel 2 : 15 :- “ He (Daniel) asked the king’s officer, “ Why did the king issue such a harsh decree ? ” Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. ”

What we see here is, Daniel acting calmly and confidently in an extremely hazardous situation and inquiring from Arioch why the king was so furious.

If Daniel himself had got agitated and afraid, as a result of his situation and acted irrationally, we do not know, how Arioch would have reacted.

As we learnt earlier, in 605 B.C. when Daniel requested from Ashpenaz, the chief of the king’s court officials, **(Daniel 1 : 3 – 8)** for permission not to defile himself by the king’s food and wine, Ashpenaz granted him his request.

Daniel 1 : 9 :- “ Now God had caused the official to show favour and sympathy to Daniel. ”

Even as God had caused Ashpenaz to show favour and sympathy on that occasion, Daniel doubtless had the faith to believe that God would cause Arioch to act in a similar manner on this occasion as well. The words ‘ **Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel, ’ (Daniel 2 : 15)** shows us the positive results of Daniel’s faith in God.

Daniel 2 : 16 :-

“ At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him. ”

These words reveal to us the great faith and resulting boldness that Daniel had. Let us now observe how Daniel’s faith grew step by step as he ‘ **acted in faith** ’.

- ❖ **Step 1** :- By speaking to Ashpenaz the chief of the king’s official **in boldness and faith**, Daniel got positive results, **which strengthened his faith**.
- ❖ **Step 2** :- By speaking to Arioch the commander of the king’s guard **in boldness and faith**, Daniel once again received positive results, **which strengthened his faith further**.
- ❖ **Step 3** :- By speaking to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon **in boldness and faith**, requesting the king to grant him time to interpret the dream, shows us how much Daniel’s faith had increased in leaps and bounds, and we read the wonderful way that God responded, in **Daniel 2 : 19**.

A few important things that we all need to understand about faith

- Our faith can be seen by **our actions and their results**, rather than the words we speak.
- **When we act boldly and in faith**, (which is in agreement with the Word of God) **God invariably gives us positive results.**

Mark 11 : 24 :- “ . . . whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ”

James 5 : 15 :- “ And the prayer offered in faith, will make the sick person well ; the Lord will raise him up . . . ”

- The positive results given by God will make our faith grow, **and encourages us to act in faith.**
- The result of all this is that **we learn to act in faith, and our faith will grow progressively stronger and stronger.**

Dear children, what I have written above is my own personal experience and I urge you to trust my words, **and place your faith in God without doubting, and put your faith into action.**

When you do so, God will richly bless you **and make your life a blessing to many people.**

Hebrews 11 : 6 :- “ And without faith it is impossible to please God, . . . ”

Philippians 4 : 13 :- “ I can do everything through him who gives me strength. ”

(iii) Daniel shared the situation with his three friends and requested them to pray about it - (Daniel 2 : 17, 18)

Daniel 2 : 17, 18 :- “¹⁷ Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. ¹⁸ He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of Heaven concerning the mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.”

From the course of action taken by Daniel, we can learn important steps we need to take when confronted with a confounding crisis.

- (a)** Share the problem / situation with a few dependable and trustworthy friends.

Dear friends, when we are faced with a problem, our greatest helper, strength and security is of course Almighty God. However it would be prudent to share our situation with a couple of sincere friends who have also faced such situations themselves. Getting together with them and searching for a solution, sharing one another's opinions, and praying together would certainly be of great value.

Matthew 18 : 19 :- “ Again I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you. ”

Dear child of God, understand this. Whilst our God listens to and answers our prayers, united prayer frequently releases forth God's power with spectacular results. The united prayers of the believers prior to and on ' **the day of Pentecost** ' is a powerful example of this.

Acts 1 : 14 :- “ They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers. ”

- (b) Daniel did not simply request his three friends to pray and put the burden on them. Undoubtedly he would have pleaded with God with intense faith.

Dear friends, in certain situations it is very important to petition God in united prayer with others. However our personal prayer life is of ‘ **critical and vital importance** ’. This is specially so because the relationship between you and God, is strengthened and grows, primarily through your personal prayer life.

Two examples

- The prayer of Hannah – 1 Samuel 1 : 10 :- “ In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord. ”
- The prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsamane – Matthew 26 : 39 :- “ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “ My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will. ”

- (iv) When God revealed the mystery of the king’s dream to Daniel, Daniel praised God - (Daniel 2 : 19, 23)

Daniel 2 : 19 :- “ During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of Heaven. ”

When God revealed the mystery of the king’s dream to Daniel, the prompt response of Daniel was to praise God. However it is sad to note that, many Christians who are abundantly blessed by God, frequently take it for granted and fail to praise and thank God.

Let us all, always remember to thank and praise God, for His blessings which are ' new every morning. '

Let us now focus our attention on the things, mentioned by Daniel, for praising God.

Daniel 2 : 20 :- " Wisdom and Power are from Him. "

Daniel 2 : 21 :- " He sets up kings and deposes them. "

Daniel 2 : 21 :- " He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. "

Daniel 2 : 22 :- " He reveals deep and hidden things. "

Daniel 2 : 22 :- " He knows what lies in darkness. "

Daniel 2 : 22 :- " Light dwells with him. "

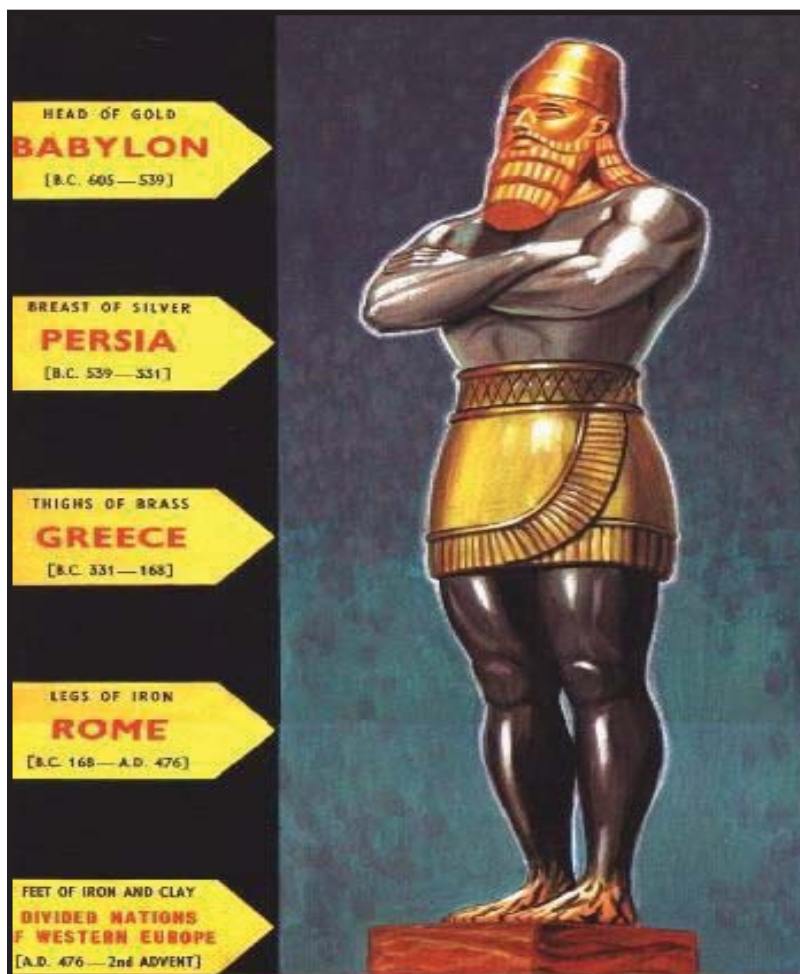
My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, one of the disappointing traits we see in certain Christians, is that when God blesses them, they become proud, arrogant and haughty. Let us not fall into this trap of Satan, and **become more and more humble when God blesses us.**

Let us always live in a manner that brings Honor and Glory to God, Praising and Thanking Him for His countless blessings, incessantly.

Let us follow the wonderful example of Daniel's life, and be victorious in every situation.

**" May the Lord our God, help you all to live,
Lives which are full of Faith, Boldness,
Thanksgiving and Praise !!! "**

God makes known the End from the Beginning - 2



Daniel Study - 03



God makes known the End from the Beginning - 2

Daniel 2 : 24 - 49

Introduction :-

- (a) I want to commence this Bible Study, by focusing your attention on something that we mentioned in page 4 of the first study in this series.

Our God is Sovereign over all of creation

We are studying the book of Daniel which consists of twelve chapters and we can observe the sovereignty of God right throughout this book. In order to help us to identify this clearly, we wish to present the Sovereignty of God in this book, in the following manner.

- (i) Chapter one – God's sovereignty over Daniel.
- (ii) Chapter two to seven – God's sovereignty over the Gentiles.
- (iii) Chapter eight to twelve – God's sovereignty over the Jews.

(Quoted from Daniel Bible Study Book 1)

Accordingly in **Daniel 2 : 1 – 23**, we primarily see the sovereignty of God over Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, who was a Gentile.

Today, as we study **Daniel 2 : 24 – 49**, we will clearly see the sovereignty of God over the Gentiles, and over Gentile kingdoms.

- (b) The times of the Gentiles

Towards the end of the ministry of Jesus on earth, his disciples asked him certain questions, whilst they were on the mount of Olives. These questions are found in **Matthew 24 : 3**.

Matthew 24 : 3 :- “ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “ Tell us ” they said “ When will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age ? ”

The extensive answer given to them by Jesus, is recorded in, **Matthew 24 : 4 – 44, Mark 13 : 5 – 37 and Luke 21 : 8 – 36.** Something that is special about what Luke has recorded is that only he has mentioned ‘ **the times of the Gentiles.** ’

Luke 21 : 24 :- “ They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ”

Since this is a prophetic word, spoken by Jesus himself, it is important that we understand the meaning of, ‘ **the times of the Gentiles** ’ correctly.

When we study the Old Testament and the New Testament regarding this, we can see that,

- (i) From the time that the Israelites were recognized as a ‘ **separate people** ’ while they were in Egypt, until the Second Coming of Jesus is referred to as the ‘ **the times of the Gentiles** ’.
- (ii) Bible scholars are of the view that Jacob and his entire family went to Egypt on the invitation of Pharaoh in 1876 B.C. If we accept this date as correct, we can see that until now, (A.D. 2020) the times of the Gentiles has completed almost 3,900 years.

Even as the Christian church today believes that the Second Coming of Jesus is very near, I am of the firm opinion that we are nearing the end of ‘ **the times of the Gentiles.** ’

- (iii) ‘ **The times of the Gentiles** ’ (**Luke 21 : 24**) may be a time utilized by God to bring the Nation of Israel, to a position where they are ready to fall in line with the plans and purposes of God.
- (iv) In the book of **Revelation in Chapter 17**, eight powerful Gentile Kingdoms / Empires that will rule over the Nation of Israel, are mentioned.

Revelation 17 : 10, 11 :-

“ ¹⁰ **They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come ; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while. ¹¹ The beast who once was, and now is not, is the eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction. ”**

As recorded in the Old Testament, out of the eight kings, mentioned in **Revelation 17 : 10, 11**, the first five are,

1. Egypt
2. Assyria
3. Babylonia
4. Media and Persia
5. Greece

At the time that the book of **Revelation was written (A.D. 95)** even as mentioned in **Revelation 17 : 10**, ‘ **Five had fallen.** ’ At that time, the Roman Empire was ruling and what is mentioned as ‘ **one city** ’, is the Roman Empire which therefore is the sixth king.

Our intention in this series of Bible studies, is to identify all eight kings mentioned in **Revelation 17 : 10, 11**, and to teach you about them in more detail, to enable you to correctly learn about the amazing prophecies we find in the book of **Daniel**.

**Teaching :- Our God who is sovereign over the Gentiles –
Daniel 2 : 24 – 49)**

1. It was God who caused king Nebuchadnezzar to see a dream concerning the times of the Gentiles (Daniel 2 : 1)

Daniel 2 : 1 :- “ In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams ; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. ”

Dear Child of God, please get a firm grip on this truth. Our God is a God who reveals the end from the beginning.

(Please read **Isaiah 46 : 9 – 12**) once again.

In order to help you grasp the background to the dream of the king, I want to place before you a few relevant facts about the Nation of Israel.

(a) God called a man named Abram, for the purpose of making a great nation, **(Israel)** through him.

Genesis 12 : 1, 2 :-

“ ¹ God had said to Abram, “ Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you ; ”

(b) God who changed Abram’s name to Abraham later, made the following promise / covenant with Abraham.

Genesis 17 : 8 :-

“ The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you ; and I will be their God. ”

- (c) Subsequently, God bequeathed the ‘ **promised land** ’ to Israel as promised by him. Along with that God commanded them to live in obedience to him, and warned them that disobedience to Him would bring drastic results.

Deuteronomy 28 : 15 :- “ However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you :”

Deuteronomy 28 : 62, 63 :- “⁶² . . . because you did not obey the Lord your God.⁶³ . . . you will be uprooted from the land you are entering to possess.”

Please read **Daniel 1 : 1, 2**, where it is mentioned that God, ‘ **delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.** ’ (King Nebuchadnezzar’s)

- (d) From the facts mentioned above, we can see that Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon was a king who was chosen by God, to bring the Nation of Israel in alignment with His plans and purposes.

In order to accomplish this, God delivered Jehoiakim, King of Judah into his hand (**Daniel 1 : 2**).

Similarly, it was God who caused King Nebuchadnezzar to see a dream concerning ‘ **the times of the Gentiles.** ’ Through this dream God has revealed information from the time of the third king of the times of the Gentiles, right upto the Second Coming of Jesus and the eternal kingdom that will be established subsequently. Furthermore this dream also clearly indicates details of the fourth, fifth and sixth kings, all of whom were permitted to rise to those positions by Almighty God.

Let us now focus our attention on the dream seen by the king and the prophetic meaning of the dream.

2. (a) **The dream seen by king Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2 : 24 - 36)**

When God revealed the mystery of the king's dream to Daniel, the first thing Daniel did was to praise God (**Daniel 2 : 19**). He next requested Arioch to take him to the king, in order to tell the king the dream and its meaning.

Daniel was taken before the king, whose first question to Daniel was, ' **Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it ?** ' The prompt reply given by Daniel was that, ' **although no man can do so,** ' (**Daniel 2 : 27**) ' **there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries** ' (**Daniel 2 : 28**) and that ' **He has shown king Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come** ' (**Daniel 2 : 28**).

Daniel 2 : 29 :- " As you were lying there, O king, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen. "

- ❖ **Daniel 2 : 28, 29** shows us that, things that were prophetic and still to happen in the future and that would impact the entire world, were revealed by God to King Nebuchadnezzar in a dream. It is important here to realize/understand that the person thus chosen by God for such a vital purpose **was an idolatrous, heathen, merciless, arrogant, Gentile king.**

In fact, the Word of God, consistently shows us,

The Sovereignty of God over

- The lives of all people
- Gentile nations
- The Nation of Israel

Daniel 2 : 21 :- “ He changes times and seasons ; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.”

Romans 13 : 1, 2 :- “¹ Everyone submit himself to the governing authorities for there is no authority except what God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.² Consequently, who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgement on themselves. ”

- ❖ **Daniel 2 : 30 :- “ As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than other living men, but so that you, O king, may know the interpretation and that you may understand what went through your mind. ”**

The words attributed to Daniel in **Daniel 2 : 30** are a clear indication of Daniel’s intense humility.

When Daniel was given the interpretation of the king’s dream it was 604 B.C., just one year after Daniel was taken as an exile to Babylon. Hence Daniel was in his mid or late teens when God revealed such a great mystery to him. However even on this occasion when he was highly appreciated and esteemed by the king, he displayed no pride or arrogance, but rather acted in admirable humility.

Dear children of God, let us all also, be always clothed in humility and shun pride in our lives.

James 4 : 6, 7 :- “⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says : ‘ God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ”

(b) Daniel reveals the dream to the king (Daniel 2 : 31 - 35)

Daniel 2 : 31 – 35 :-

- “ ³¹ You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue – an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance.**
- ³² The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,**
- ³³ its legs of iron, feet partly of iron and partly of clay.**
- ³⁴ While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them.**
- ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a high mountain and filled the whole earth. ”**

(c) Daniel interprets the dream to the king (Daniel 2 : 36 - 45)

As I have mentioned to you earlier, the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’ (**Luke 21 : 24**) is the period of time from when the Israelites were forced into slavery in Egypt, upto the Second Coming of Jesus. This time period would be approximately around 3,900 years during which time, ‘ **Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles** ’ (**Luke 21 : 24**) .

Furthermore, during the time period there will be eight kings (kingdoms) that would exercise their power over Jerusalem (**Revelation 17 : 10, 11**).

With the above in mind, let us proceed to understand the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

(i) The head of Gold of the statue represented King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon

Daniel 2 : 37 – 38 :-

“³⁷ You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory ; ³⁸ In your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are the head of Gold. ”

Since this dream was given to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, it is possible that there could be some people who think that Babylon is the first kingdom during the ‘ times of the Gentiles ’. However from the Bible we can clearly see that this time commenced with **Egypt followed by Asyria and then Babylon**, thus making it the third kingdom.

- (ii) **The chest and arms of the statue were made of Silver, and Daniel 2 : 39 states that this indicates that the kingdom that followed Babylon would be inferior to it.** Although this kingdom would be the fourth kingdom of the times of the Gentiles, its name has not been mentioned at this juncture.
- (iii) **The belly and the thighs were made of Bronze, and Daniel 2 : 39 states that this fifth kingdom ‘ will rule over the whole earth. ’**
- (iv) **Daniel 2 : 40 states that the sixth kingdom represented by the legs which are made with iron,** will be a very strong kingdom, which would be very strong like iron.
- (v) **Daniel 2 : 33 states that the feet of the statue would be partly of iron and partly of clay, whilst Daniel 2 : 40 – 43 explains that this kingdom which is the seventh kingdom would be partly strong and partly weak and would be a divided kingdom.**

Daniel 2 : 44 and 45 states that during the time of this kingdom, **the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, and will last forever.**

3. The revelation that God gave the king about three kings who would reign after him was fulfilled exactly as interpreted by Daniel

We will now turn our attention to the interpretation of the dream God gave to Daniel regarding the Babylonian kingdom, and the three kingdoms that followed along with certain information recorded in human history.

(i) Babylon where King Nebuchadnezzar reigned

‘ Babylon ’ is mentioned in the Bible for the first time in **Genesis 10 : 10**, and was built by **Nimrod** who was a mighty warrior on the earth (**Genesis 10 : 9, 10**). It was also referred to as **Shinar (Genesis 10 : 10, 11 : 2)** and **Chaldea (Daniel 2 : 4, 5, 10 – KJV)**.

Babylon became a mighty empire under the leadership of King Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned from 605 B.C. to 526 B.C. The king built Babylon so majestically and beautifully and the ‘ Hanging Gardens of Babylon ’ was recognized as one of the ‘ Seven Wonders ’ of the ancient world. Hence it is not surprising that the Babylonian Empire was represented by the head of gold of the statue, that the king dreamt of. (In order to really understand the heights to which God lifted up the king – please read **Daniel 2 : 37, 38**).

(ii) The united kingdom of the Medes and Persians

Daniel Chapter 2, does not specifically identify the kingdom that will defeat Babylon, merely mentioning that this kingdom would be, ‘ **inferior to Babylon** ’ (**Daniel 2 : 39**). However, it is stated in **Daniel 5 : 28** that, ‘ **your kingdom** ’ (Babylon) **is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.**

The Prophet Isaiah also has prophesied about the fall of the Babylonian Empire, at hands of the Medes.

Isaiah 13 : 1 :- “ An oracle concerning Babylon that Isaiah son of Amoz saw : ”

Isaiah 13 : 17 – 19 :- “¹⁷ See, I will stir up against them the Medes, ¹⁹ Babylon the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians pride, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. ”

History records that just as Isaiah foretold, in **539 B.C.** the Babylonians were overthrown by the **Medes (and the Persians)**.

We informed you earlier that the book of Daniel was completed in around **530 B.C.** Hence when Daniel interpreted the king’s dream, the fall of Babylon was already history. However the prophecy by Isaiah about this event was given by Isaiah (**740 – 681 B.C.**) long before it happened.

(iii) The kingdom of Greece

The next kingdom was the kingdom of Greece, that came to power in **330 B.C.** In the interpretation given by God to Daniel regarding the king’s dream, it is mentioned that this kingdom will be ‘ **one of bronze (that) will rule over the whole earth (Daniel 2 : 39).** ’

The Bible also records that God gave Daniel a vision of the kingdom of Greece, overthrowing the Mede and Persian Empire long before the event.

Daniel 8 : 1 :- “ In the third year of king Belshazzar ’s reign, (in 551 B.C) I Daniel had a vision. ”

(Please read **Daniel 8 : 1 – 7** for details of Daniel’s vision)

The interpretation of Daniel's vision is found in **Daniel 8 : 20, 21.**

Daniel 8 : 20, 21 :- “²⁰ The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia. The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king.”

(iv) The Roman Empire

The feet of the statue, in the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar were made of Iron.

Daniel 2 : 40 :- “ Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron – for iron breaks and makes everything – and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. ”

From world history we learn that this fourth kingdom, was the Roman Empire, which dealt very harshly with foreign nations. Consequently, the Roman Empire was sometimes referred to as the ‘ **Iron Empire.** ’

The Roman Empire was established in A.D. 63, but God made known to Daniel through giving him the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream in 604 B.C., which was approximately 670 years before the establishment of the empire.

Dear Friend, our God is the only God whose sovereignty is over every Nation, every Country, every Super-Power and every Continent on earth. If not there is no other way that he was able to accurately prophesy about the four kingdoms (Empires) mentioned above.

Hence let us all BELIEVE His Word unconditionally, and trust that He will never fail to keep His promises. Let us therefore Trust Him, Obey Him, and Live for Him, always.

4. **The most important prophecy in the king's dream - (Daniel 2 : 44)**

Daniel 2 : 44 :- “ In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed , but will itself endure forever . ”

Dear child of God, **Daniel 2 : 44** is referring to the Kingdom of Heaven, **the place that God has prepared for us, for eternity.**

(Please read **Daniel 2 : 45** also)

Due to the importance of this, I now intend to focus your attention on the Kingdom of Heaven.

Important information about the Kingdom of God (of Heaven)

- (i) In this Bible study, whilst we focused our attention primarily on the third, fourth, fifth and sixth kingdoms during the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’ all the prophecies given by God regarding these four kingdoms were fulfilled in every detail.

There is hence no doubt in our minds whatsoever, that the prophecies mentioned in **Daniel 2 : 44, 45** will also be fulfilled as foretold.

In other words there is no doubt that at the end of, ‘ the times of the Gentiles ’ God will establish His Eternal Kingdom, after the Second Coming of Jesus.

- (ii) In order to enter His kingdom, **we must become children of God.** The way to become children of God, is mentioned in **John 1 : 12** as follows.

John 1 : 12 :- “ Yet to all who received him, (surrendered their lives to Jesus) to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ”

(iii) When we study the signs given in the Bible about the Second Coming of Jesus, it is clear that this event is very near.

(iv) If anyone is not a child of God or is someone who is not ready for the Second Coming of Jesus, he/she may not be able to enter **the Kingdom of God.**

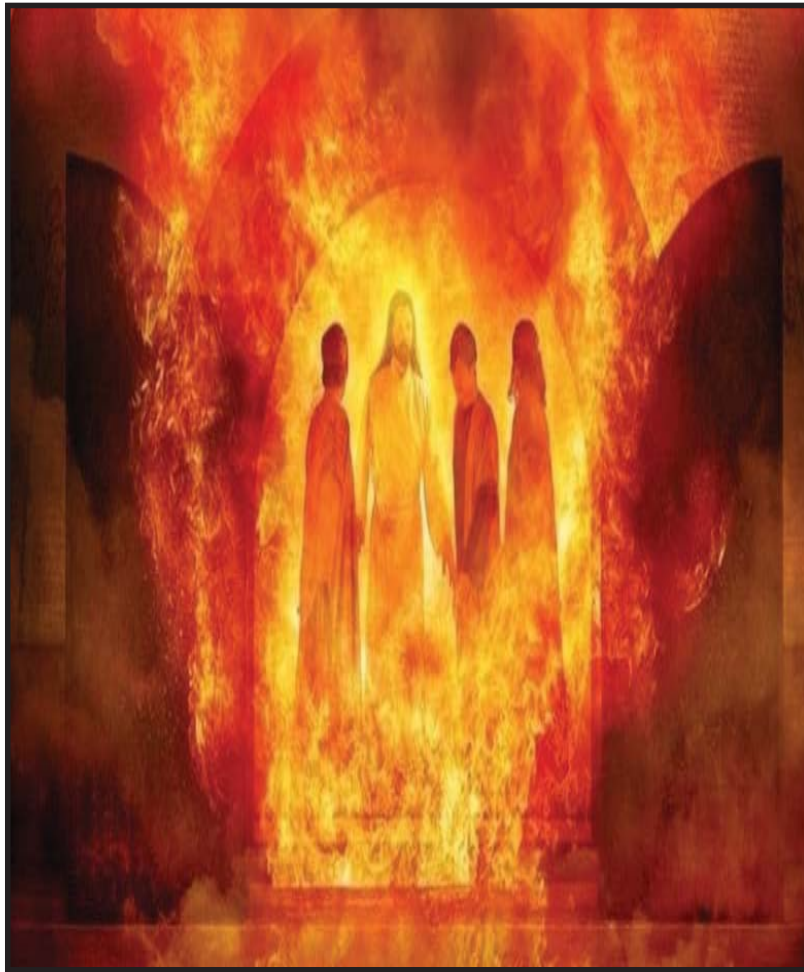
(Please prayerfully read **Matthew 25 : 1 – 13** and meditate on it)

Matthew 25 : 13 :- “ Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour. ”

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ Jesus, please place your trust in God who reveals the end from the beginning, **surrender your lives to Jesus, and be always prepared for His Second Coming.**

“ May Almighty God, give you all the Faith and the Strength to do so !!! ”

God working in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar



Daniel Study - 04



God working in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 1 : 1 – 3, 30

Introduction :- Something that we will encounter in this Bible study series quite consistently, would be the working of God, in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar. This helps us to learn many things about the way Almighty God works in the lives of human beings.

Today, we will be looking into some of these, and thereby understand more about how God works in the lives of Gentiles and unbelievers.

Dear children, every single human being who has lived on earth has been created by God, and it is not God's desire that any of them would perish.

2 Peter 3 : 9 :- “ He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ”

It is the desire / will of God that ‘ **everyone comes to repentance** ’, and hence he is always working in the lives of people in order to bring them to repentance. Therefore he has given us a great responsibility regarding bringing unbelievers to repentance.

Mark 16 : 15, 16 :- “ ¹⁵ He said to them, “ Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation . ¹⁶ Whoever believes will be saved, ”

Matthew 5 : 16 :- “ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. ”

Therefore in this Bible study we are not going to restrict ourselves to limiting it to studying the working of God in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar only. We are going to focus our attention on the lives of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and their powerful and impressive testimonies as well.

Teaching :- God working in the life of the King

1. (a) **God delivered the king of Judah into his hand – (Daniel 1 : 2)**
Daniel 1 : 2 :- “ And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. ”

From **Daniel 1 : 1, 2** we can see very clearly that it was God, who delivered **Judah** into the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar, thus making Babylon the third kingdom in the ‘ **times of the Gentiles.**’

We mentioned earlier that in 722 B.C., the Assyrians captured the ‘ **Northern Kingdom of Israel** ’ and was the second kingdom during the ‘ **times of the Gentiles.**’ However in 626 B.C., Babylon became a prominent and powerful kingdom as well and conquered **Judah (the Southern Kingdom)** in 605 B.C. The Bible tells us as mentioned above, that it was **God who acted to deliver Judah to King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1 : 1, 2).**

It was God who delivered Jehoiakim who was the King of Judah, along with some articles from the temple of God, to King Nebuchadnezzar, but the king was not aware of it. He undoubtedly believed that because of his power and might, because of his great ability and the strength of his armed forces, he was able to capture Judah.

- (b) According to the command given by King Nebuchadnezzar, a group of Jewish youths from the royal family and nobility, and capable of serving in the king’s palace, were taken captive to Babylon in 605 B.C. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were included in this group.

Daniel 1 : 7 :- “ The chief official gave them new names : to Daniel the name Belteshazzar ; to Hananiah Shadrach ; to Michael Meshach ; and to Azariah Abednego. ”

Dear child of God, please get hold of the following truth. The four young Israelis mentioned in **Daniel 1 : 7** were not taken captive to Babylonia in 605 B.C. by accident. The four of them were taken to Babylonia in the first group of captives, **according to the will, purposes, plans and working of Almighty God**. It is my firm belief, that God worked in this manner **to make them mighty witnesses of Almighty God**, before King Nebuchadnezzar.

- ❖ My Dear Brother and Sister in Christ Jesus, Almighty God choses these four young Israelites to be great witnesses before the most powerful king in the world at that time.

Similarly, **today God is calling you to be a mighty witness for God**, wherever you are.

He has not only chosen / called all of you, God has, through the Holy Spirit baptized you into one body.

1 Corinthians 12 : 13 :- “ For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given one Spirit to drink. ”

Every child of God, enters the family of God, only through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Hence, **every true child of God, has the Holy Spirit residing in him.**

1 Corinthians 6 : 19 :- “ Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God ? You are not your own ; ”

Jesus himself said, “ **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you ; and you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. ”
(Acts 1 : 8)

As explained above, since all of us are temples of the Holy Spirit, all of us have received **the power of the Holy Spirit**. Hence I want to place the following questions before you. They are,

- (i) **Do you experience this power, working in you ?**
- (ii) **Jesus said, “ I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I am doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ”**

Sadly, my experience is that a vast majority of Christians would give negative answers to both questions. **Thus revealing that they are failing badly to live as witnesses of Jesus**. Daniel and his three friends, **had great faith in God and acted accordingly**, and became tremendous witnesses of the unlimited power of God, before the most powerful king living then. Let us all, **put our faith into action and become witnesses of Jesus** and bring honour and glory to Almighty God.

2.(a) The results of these four acting in faith – (Daniel 1 : 10 - 21)

Although we studied **Daniel 1 : 10 – 21** in our first study in this series, I want to focus your attention once again to these verses, because I believe that it would greatly strengthen your faith and help you to, ‘ **walk in faith** ’ (Read **2 Corinthians 5 : 7**).

Daniel 1 : 19, 20 :-

“ ¹⁹ **The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, or Azariah ; so they entered the king’s service.**

²⁰ **In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.** ”

Dear friends, at the end of their training period, all the Israelite captives were tested by the king (**Daniel 1 : 18**). However only **Daniel and his three friends, did not defile themselves with the king's food and wine, (Daniel 1 : 8, 11 – 15)** and the miraculous result was that the king found them, **ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom (Daniel 1 : 20)**.

This is indeed an absolutely incredible miracle of God, because they were ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in the whole kingdom of Babylon, **(including all those who taught them) because God is the one who gave them the wisdom, knowledge and understanding** .

❖ God has called all of us to be, the light of the world.

Matthew 5 : 14 :- “ You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ”

Just like these four young Israelites decided to obey God, let us also decide ‘ not to be defiled in any way ’ **and obey God in everything**. When we do so, God will truly make our lives ‘ **Shine** ’ **before men (Matthew 5 : 16)**. So let us also follow the example of these four and always,

- **Act in Faith**
- **Act Boldly**
- **Fear God**
- **Obey God** in everything we do.

When we do so, God will make our lives shine like lights, do great things through us and use our lives to bring many people to salvation.

- **The results of Daniel acting in great Faith (Daniel 2 : 46 – 49)**

During our previous Bible study, we focused our attention on **Daniel 2 : 36 – 45** which records the interpretation given by Daniel regarding the king's dream.

The king was greatly astonished by the interpretation because he knew that no man could reveal such a mystery and that it was **the God of Israel**, (the God in whom Daniel believed) who had revealed his dream and its interpretation to Daniel.

The response of King Nebuchadnezzar

The response of the king is written in **Daniel 2 : 46 – 49** was twofold, and I want to present it to you as follows.

A) The king promoted Daniel to a high position (Daniel 2 : 46, 48)

Daniel 2 : 46 :-

“ Then king Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel and paid him honour and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him. ”

Daniel 2 : 48 :-

“ Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men. ”

Here we see the king falling prostrate before Daniel and thus honouring Daniel as he would honour the gods he believed in.

B) The king praised the God of Israel (Daniel 2 : 47)

Daniel 2 : 47 :-

“ The king said to Daniel, “ Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings, and the revealer of mysteries , for you are able to reveal this mystery. ”

Here we see the most powerful king on earth at that time, proclaiming three great truths about our God, as a result of Daniel’s faith. These three ‘ **true statements** ’ are,

- **Our God is the God of gods.**
- **Our God is the Lord of kings** (presidents and prime ministers).
- **Our God is the revealer of mysteries** (He leads us, guides us and speaks / communicates with us)

Dear child of God, do you really believe these three truths ?

If not, please stop where you are, and sincerely examine your faith. Re-dedicate your life to Jesus, and start living for Him.

2. (b) The great faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego - (Daniel 3 : 1 – 30)

The third chapter of the book of **Daniel** commences with the incident of the king constructing an image of gold which was ninety feet high and nine feet wide and the dedication of the image he had set up.

Scholars are of the opinion that this image represented (**Nabu**) who was a god of the Babylonians. If their view is correct the name Nebuchadnezzar would mean ‘ **Nabu protect my son / boundaries.** ’ Hence the erection / dedication of this image may indicate a deep desire of the king to receive worship. During the dedication of the image, the following was proclaimed.

Daniel 3 : 5, 6 :-

“⁵ As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that king Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace. ”

Let us now look at the last verse in **Daniel Chapter two.**

Daniel 2 : 49 :-

“ Moreover, at Daniel’s request the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the royal court. ”

As a result of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego being appointed as administrators over the province of Babylon, all three of them would have been invited to the dedication ceremony of the image. Most certainly the three of them would have known, that failing to fall down and worship the image, would bring them the punishment of being thrown into a blazing furnace.

Let us now study how these three young Israelites faced this frightening challenge. If we think about the possible courses of action that they could have taken, in order to save their lives, we can think of several. Let’s consider some of them.

(i) Act insincerely and pretend to worship the image

One such possibility would have been for them to fall on their knees and pretend to worship the image in order to please the king, **whilst they actually worshipped and praised the God of Israel, with all their hearts.**

In fact they could even quote scripture, to convince one another that their actions were legitimate and acceptable.

1 Samuel 16 : 7 :- “ The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. ”

They could also justify themselves saying, ‘ **If we die now in this furnace, we will lose the opportunity to serve the Lord in the future. However if we live, God can use our lives for his work.** ’

Dear friends, we Christians are sometimes guilty of this type of behavior – this is not pleasing to God. When we act like this we are only fooling ourselves, misleading ourselves. We would actually be **rejecting God’s plan and purpose for us, and losing the opportunity to honour and glorify God.** So let us look at what Jesus said regarding such type of action on our part.

Matthew 10 : 32, 33 :- “ ³² Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven. ”

- (ii) **Decide to bow to the command of the king, ‘ just this time only ’**
These three Israelites knew one thing for certain – that the dedication of the image would take place only on one day. So all they had to do to escape death was to accede to the king’s command just once. They could justify their decision saying among themselves, ‘ **Surely God will understand our position. He knows our hearts and knows that we won’t do so again. Anyway we as administrators have to obey the king’s command, isn’t it ? ’**

Dear child of God, please grasp this. We Christians must obey the law of our land. However, never forget that there is a law that supersedes all other laws – **the laws of God. Specially the laws regarding worshipping other gods.**

Exodus 20 : 3 – 5 :- “³ You shall have no other gods before me. ⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them ; ”

These three young Israelites, **were prepared to sacrifice their lives if necessary**, rather than disobey God’s laws regarding worshipping Him.

Dear Brother, Sister, are you willing to sacrifice your life if necessary, in order to obey God ? Before you answer this question, please read the following Bible verse and meditate on it.

Revelation 13 : 15 :- “ He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. ”

I am confident that virtually everyone reading this Bible study, would be quite capable of formulating various other means as well, whereby one could justify himself for worshipping the image or avoiding the dedication ceremony. However, the bold and correct decision taken by the three Jewish lads was to, **attend the dedication ceremony and refrain from worshipping the golden image.**

When the king was informed of their disobedience to his commands, he was furious and summoned them immediately and spoke threateningly to them as follows.

Daniel 3 : 14, 15 :- “¹⁴ is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up ? ”¹⁵ but if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand ? ”

The reply given by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to the king, in the face of this extremely serious threat, was fearless and full of faith and is recorded in **Daniel 3 : 15 – 18**. Here we find the three young men boldly expressing their faith in God to the king, mentioning three wonderful truths. They are,

A) Our God is the King of Kings

Daniel 3 : 16 :- “ We do not need to defend ourselves before you in this manner. ”

This reply contains three unwritten statements and they are,

- We do not need to reply to you.
- We have a God who is greater than you.
- We need to answer only to him.

Dear child of God, there will come a time in the future, when we will have to answer to God, regarding how we lived our lives (faced life’s challenges).

(Please read **2 Corinthians 5 : 10**)

B) For our God, nothing is impossible

Daniel 3 : 17 :- “ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand. ”

Dear child of God, do you really believe this ? Do you really believe that God is able to save / protect you, from any attack of Satan on your life ?

Philippians 4 : 13 :- “ I can do everything through him who gives me strength. ” is written in the Word of God. Do you really, sincerely believe this ?

C) We always live in 100% obedience to God

Daniel 3 : 18 :- “ But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up. ”

Dear children of God, let us decide firmly to live faithfully to God and God alone. Even if we are faced with threats of death, let us be firm, bold and face every situation with confidence and in unshakable faith in Almighty God, our Father.

Matthew 10 : 28 :- “ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ”

2. (c) The amazing miracle done by God in response to the marvelous faith of the three young Israelites

The response of the three young males enraged the king even more and he became so furious that he commanded that the burning furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual, before the three of them were thrown in.

(Please read **Daniel 3 : 19 – 23** for more details)

According to the king’s command, these three young men who were fully clothed were bound and thrown into the furnace.

The wonderful miracle done by God on this instance is written in the Bible as follows.

Daniel 3 : 35, 36 :- “ ³⁵ He (the king) said, Look ! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods. ³⁶ Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, ‘ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out ! Come here ! ”

The three of them came out, and all those who observed and examined them, found that the fire had not harmed them at all, and there was even no smell of fire on them.

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ Jesus, the description written in **Daniel 3 : 35, 36** are from the Word of God, **and is not a lie ! With our God truly nothing is impossible.** However the catalyst that brought about this incredible miracle, was the steadfast, unshakable faith of three young men !

Hence I want to place before you a word spoken by Jesus.

Mark 11 : 23, 24 :-

“²³ I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘ Go, throw yourself into the sea, ’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.

²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ”

Almighty God responded to the faith of these three young people who placed their trust 100% on Him, and acted in great faith, thereby bringing Honour and Glory to His Holy Name.

Our God does not change and if we trust God and His Word unwaveringly and act in faith, **God will do mighty things through us, and thereby bring many people to trust in Him and be saved.**

Let us decide today itself, to always trust God and to act in faith.

2.(d) God performed a mighty transformation of the king as a result of the faith of the three believing Israelites

Some of the changes God made in the king's life

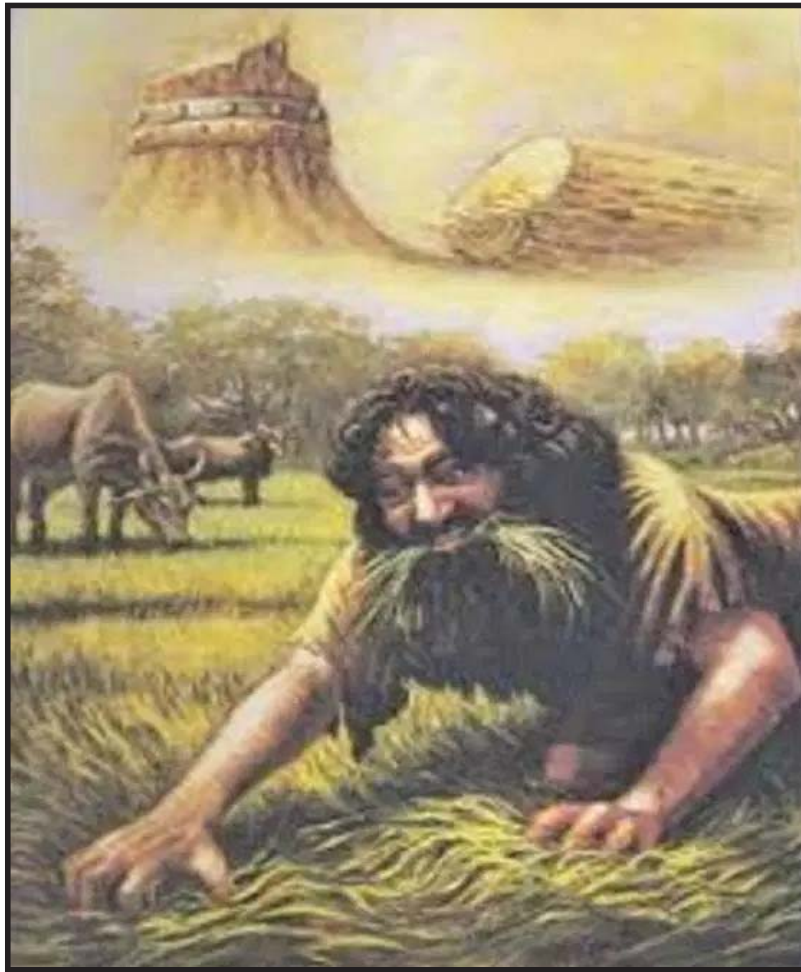
- A) The king who asked them, ‘ **Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand** ’, (Daniel 3 : 15) was transformed to the king who accepted their God as the ‘ **Most High God** ’ (Daniel 3 : 26).
- B) The king who agreed with those who accused them, was transformed to the king who proclaimed, ‘ **Anyone who says anything against their God, will be cut into pieces and their houses turned to piles of rubble** ’ (Daniel 3 : 29).
- C) The king who tried to destroy these servants of God,
- Spoke to them with great respect (Daniel 3 : 26)
 - Praised God (Daniel 3 : 28 – Please read and ponder)
 - Promoted all three of them (Daniel 3 : 30)

The God who made a strong impact on the king, through the faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, is waiting and wanting to use you all in the service of His Kingdom.

Therefore let us all act boldly and in faith, saying, ‘ **The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me ?** ’, in all threatening situations.

**“ May Almighty God Strengthen you Spiritually
And enable you to act in this manner !!! ”**

God Opposes the Proud



Daniel Study - 05



God Opposes the Proud

Daniel 4 : 1 – 37

Introduction :-

- (a) One of the important things that we can distinctly learn from the book of **Daniel**, is the way that God worked in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar. In fact right at the beginning of the book, in **Daniel 1 : 2** we find it written that, ‘ **And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God** ’

As mentioned in this verse, God delivered Judah into the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar, because Judah had been disobedient to God and God wanted to correct Judah, and guide the Kingdom of Judah back to the correct track. In order to achieve his objective, God lifted up King Nebuchadnezzar to the position of being one of the greatest kings living during this period of time.

I am of the opinion, that it is possible or even likely, that this caused ‘ **pride** ’ to enter into the king’s heart.

- (b) God not only caused Jehoiakim King of Judah to be delivered to the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C., but also gave a dream to the king in 604 B.C., showing that the kingdom that followed the Babylonian kingdom would be inferior to it.

Daniel 2 : 37 :- “ You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory ;”

Daniel 2 : 38, 39 :- “ ³⁸ you are the head of gold. ³⁹ After you another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule the whole earth. ”

There was no person in the whole of the kingdom of Babylon who was able to understand or reveal the mystery of the dream to the king. What is recorded in **Daniel 2 : 37 – 39** is the revelation given by God to Daniel about the dream seen by the king, and the interpretation of the dream.

It is likely that on hearing these words the king became, ‘ **even more proud** ’. However he would have also realized that ‘ **the God of Israel** ’ was greater and mightier than himself and every other human being born to this world.

Daniel 2 : 47 :- “ The king said to Daniel, ‘ surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you are able to reveal this mystery. ”

- (c) Some time later the king erected a massive image of gold on the plain of Dura in the Province of Babylon. Bible scholars are of the view that this image was that of a ‘ **Babylonian god named Nabu.**’ If their view is correct, it gives us a strong indication, that King Nebuchadnezzar may have had a desire to be worshipped by man.

On the occasion of the dedication of this image, the king saw for himself, the incredible way that God protected Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the blazing furnace. As a consequence of this ‘ **amazing experience** ’ King Nebuchadnezzar **praised God wholeheartedly.** (Please read **Daniel 3 : 28, 29** regarding the king’s response)

As we can see from the above, Almighty God, revealed His greatness and glory to the king over and over again. However it is evident that the king was becoming gradually more proud and more arrogant with every new experience, as we will see as this Bible study progresses. In fact he seems to have forgotten very soon, that ‘ **it was God who had given him dominion and power and might and glory** ’ (**Daniel 2 : 37**).

One of the most important things we are going to study today, is the tremendous truth found in **James 4 : 6, 7.**

James 4 : 6, 7 :- “⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why scripture says : ‘ God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ”

Our hope and prayer is, that all who are reading this Bible Study, would become like Jesus, and clothe yourselves in humility.

Teaching :- God’s work in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar

1.(a) Realizing the dangerousness of Pride – (James 4 : 6)

Towards the end of the sixth century A.D., Pope Gregory who was referred to as ‘ **Gregory the Great,** ’ categorized all sins committed by man into seven kinds. His position was that all sins we commit fall into one of them.

The seven types were identified by him as,

- **Pride**
- **Anger**
- **Envy**
- **Impurity**
- **Gluttony**
- **Slothfulness**
- **Avarice**

These seven sins are frequently referred to as the ‘ **Seven Deadly Sins** ’ today, and is also the title of a book written by Dr. Billy Graham, the now deceased world renowned evangelist. In his book Dr. Graham states that, **out of these seven sins, the one that is most frequently used by Satan to trap us is the sin of pride.**

Proverbs 16 : 18 :- “ Pride goes before destruction , a haughty spirit before a fall. ”

Proverbs 16 : 5 :- “ The Lord detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this : They will not go unpunished. ”

Proverbs 29 : 23 :- “ A man’s pride brings him low , but a man of lowly spirit gains honor. ”

- (b) The pride within any man, would display itself in many forms. However the origin of each and every form of pride is in the heart.

One person may take pride in his / her attractive appearance, whilst another is proud of his / her success in business. Others may be proud of their spirituality, intelligence, wealth, education or social position, etc. but the worst and most dangerous form of pride is ‘ **spiritual pride.** ’

- Please read the ‘ Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector ’ taught by Jesus and recorded in **Luke 18 : 9 – 4.**

Here we see that the Pharisee who acted with ‘ **spiritual pride** ’ was considered by Jesus to be worse than the Tax Collector who acted with great humility.

Dear child of God, please leave no room in your heart for ‘ **spiritual pride** ’ which is detested / hated by God, (Proverbs 16:5) and try to always act in a humble manner.

Galatians 6 : 3 :- “ If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ”

Philippians 2 : 3, 4 :- “ ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

⁴ Each one of you should not look only on your own interests, but also to the interests of others. ”

Psalm 101 : 5 :- “ . . . whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, him will I not endure. ”

(c) The fall of Satan, was due to his intense pride.

Isaiah 14 : 12 :- “ How you have fallen from heaven, O Morning star, son of the dawn ! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations ! ”

In **Isaiah 14 : 13 – 15**, the Word of God explains how the pride that originated in his heart brought Satan (**Lucifer – KJV**) to his downfall.

Isaiah 14 : 13 – 15 :-

“¹³ You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven, I will raise my throne above the stars of God ; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. ¹⁴ I will ascend above the tops of the clouds ; I will make myself like the Most High. ¹⁵ But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. ”

In **Isaiah 14 : 13, 14** we find Lucifer saying (**thinking to himself ?**) ‘ **I will** ’ five times, indicating how proud and self - centred he had become, and this resulted in his downfall as mentioned in **Isaiah 14 : 15**.

- Dear child of God, please never ever forget that Satan who was created by God as a powerful angel was brought down as a result of his **pride and arrogance**.

Hence one of his most common methods of tempting / ensnaring us is to make us **proud and envious**, which would invariably bring about our destruction (**Proverbs 16 : 18**).

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, I make the following statement with great responsibility. One of the most effective methods used by Satan to make the church **powerless, fruitless and ineffective** is to make its members to become **disunited, competitive, jealous and proud**.

Anyone who would care enough to observe / study the truth that I mentioned above, would have no difficulty in discovering how successful the enemy has been in this regard. This would be evident by,

- the competitiveness and the suspicion that denominations often have with one another,
- the lack of unity and harmony found within many local congregations where you find that jealousy is very common, that members are competing with one another for posts and recognition, that many look down on others and even take advantage of those of lower social standing, that very few accept their faults, that most are unwilling to forgive and forget, etc.

All this and much more is due to the success of the devices of the enemy within our churches.

Hence let us all unite against our common enemy Satan, and genuinely love, care, and pray for one another, sincerely and wholeheartedly. Let us resist the enemy and he will flee. (James 4 : 7).

2. God warning the king about a disastrous future event in his life, through a dream (Daniel 4 : 10 – 17)

- (a)** The king saw a dream that all the wise men of Babylon could not interpret **(Daniel 4 : 4 – 7)** and thus Daniel who was by now appointed as the person, ‘ **in charge of all the wise men,** ’ **(Daniel 2 : 48)** was requested by the king to interpret his dreams **(Daniel 4 : 9)**.

The dream that the king saw is described in **Daniel 4 : 11 – 18**, and the following is a short summary of it.

In the middle of the land stood a very tall, large strong tree, beautiful and abundant in fruit, and was also visible to the ends of the earth. Suddenly a messenger of heaven appeared and declared as follows.

Daniel 4 : 14 – 17 :-

“¹⁴ Cut down the tree and trim off its branches ; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches.

¹⁵ But let the stump and its roots bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth.

¹⁶ Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times pass by him.

¹⁷ The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, as that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men.”

(b) When Daniel was told his dream by the king, Daniel was greatly perplexed and disturbed. This was because he realized the gravity of the warning that God had given the king, through his dream.

The king observed Daniel’s alarm on hearing the details of the dream, and requested Daniel to tell him the interpretation without withholding anything.

(c) Daniel interprets the dream to the king (Daniel 4 : 20 – 26)

The interpretation given by Daniel to the king is as follows.

- (i)** The tall strong tree, visible to the ends of the earth, represented **King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4 : 22)**.
- (ii)** The tree growing large and strong, and its top touching the sky, showed that, '**the king's dominion extended to distant parts of the earth**' (Daniel 4 : 22).
- (iii)** A holy messenger coming down from heaven, showed that, **God had sent a messenger to the king with a message.**
- (iv)** Cut down the tree but let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze remain in the ground, indicates that, **although the king would lose his kingdom for a while, God will keep it secure.**
- (v)** Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven ; let him live like the wild animals, means that, **the king would lose his mind or become insane (Daniel 4 : 23)**.
- (vi)** Until seven times pass by for him, indicates that, **the insanity of the king would last for seven years (Daniel 4 : 23)**.
- (vii)** This is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king, confirms that, **the message brought by the holy messenger was a decree by Almighty God** (and could not be altered or annulled by anyone) **(Daniel 4 : 24)**.
- (viii)** Until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives it to anyone he wishes, confirms that, **God is the God of gods (Daniel 2 : 47), no other god can save the way he does (Daniel 3 : 29), he gives the kingdom of men to anyone he pleases (Daniel 4 : 17), and that until the king acknowledges this, he will live like a wild animal (Daniel 4 : 25b)**.

(ix) Leave the stump of the tree with its roots, was a command of God, and informs that, **until the king acknowledges that Heaven rules, God will keep His kingdom secure (Daniel 4 : 26).**

All these facts given above, go on to show the intensity, gravity and firmness with which God dealt with King Nebuchadnezzar, who was drunk with pride and arrogance due to the greatness and power that God had given him.

(c) **The advice given to the king by Daniel (Daniel 4 : 27)**

Daniel 4 : 27 :- “ . . . Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue. ”

Let us now look at what we can learn from the advice given by Daniel to the king.

Daniel had to leave his country that he loved, his family and loved ones, as well as the temple where he worshipped, as a result of the decisions and the actions of King Nebuchadnezzar. Hence his reaction to the dire warning given to the king by God, could easily have been happiness and joy. However this was not how he reacted, instead he acted with love and compassion and gave invaluable advice to the king.

Dear friends, do not rejoice if someone whom you dislike, falls into trouble. Instead, help him, advise him and guide him. This is what the Word of God teaches us (see **Luke 6 : 27, 28**).

Furthermore, Daniel knew something that we too as Christians are well aware of. **Daniel knew that unless God permitted it no harm/problem would happen to him** and that his real enemy was **Satan, and not the king.**

Please read **Romans 8 : 28** and trust that God will make all things (situations) work for your good, when you truly love and obey him.

Hence Daniel is making a genuine and sincere attempt to advise the king and help him to have a change of heart, to renounce his arrogance, and save him from the impending catastrophe. Let us all follow Daniel's example and do good even to those who oppose us.

3. The king speaks with great pride and the interpretation of the dream comes true (Daniel 4 : 28 – 33)

It is quite likely that King Nebuchadnezzar made a sincere effort to follow the advice given by Daniel. He may have even tried to do 'good works' and to be kind to the oppressed. However, unless there is a genuine change of heart, this type of good work is of little value.

Almighty God looks at our true self. He examines our hearts and our intentions. Hence without having a change of heart, by doing 'good works' only, no one can please him.

Actually the king was suffering from a very serious disease. A disease of the heart. A disease called **pride. A disease produced by Satan !** And this disease cannot be healed by external medication.

From the Bible we can see that the king managed to survive for twelve months after his dream quite satisfactorily (**Daniel 4 : 28, 29**). Probably the king was able to avoid the oncoming disaster for this period because of his effort to adhere to Daniel's advice.

However the only cure for the disease called pride is a transformed heart / a renewed mind (see Romans 12 : 2). Great effort and commitment may control this ailment, but a total cure is very rare indeed.

Hence in **Daniel 4 : 30** we find, the king making a proud and arrogant statement, after twelve months.

Daniel 4 : 30 :- “ He (the king) said, ‘ Is not this the great Babylon that I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty ? ’ ”

When we compare this statement of the king, with the statement made by Lucifer / Satan (**Isaiah 14 : 13, 14**) we find that they are very similar. Hence it is not surprising that **Daniel 4 : 31** commences with the words, ‘ **The words were still on his lips, when a voice came from heaven ,** ’ (**Daniel 4 : 31**).

4. The king humbles himself and repents and receives the blessings of God (Daniel 4 : 34 – 37)

- (a) Our God is a God who reveals the end from the beginning (**Isaiah 46 : 10**).

Hence just as prophesied by the holy messenger, the king was, ‘ **driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.** ’ (**Daniel 4 : 33**)

However although the king became ‘ **insane** ’ and behaved like an animal, without any hope of a blessed future, as proclaimed by the holy messenger, his kingdom was protected and secured by God, until he came to his senses.

(b) The repentance of the king – (Daniel 4 : 34)

We can easily identify the repentance of the king by the words, ‘ **I Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored.** ’ (**Daniel 4 : 34**)

During the time he was filled with ego and pride, the words that emerged from his mouth were words like, ‘ **the great Babylon that I have built,** ’ ‘ **my mighty power,** ’ and ‘ **my majesty.** ’

However the moment that he repented, he was enabled to see **the limitless power of Almighty God** and his focus was turned away from himself to God.

(c) The king praises Almighty God – (Daniel 4 : 34, 35, 37)

The king praised God for the following.

- (i) His dominion being an eternal dominion ; His kingdom endures from generation to generation (Daniel 4 : 34).**
- (ii) He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth (Daniel 4 : 35).**
- (iii) No one can hold back his hand or say to him : “ What have you done ? ” (Daniel 4 : 35).**
- (iv) Everything he does is right (Daniel 4 : 37).**
- (v) All his ways are just (Daniel 4 : 37).**
- (vi) Those who walk in pride he is able to humble (Daniel 4 : 37).**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, if a heathen king like Nebuchadnezzar praised God in this manner, I think it is important to ask ourselves the question, ‘ What importance do we give to praising God, in our lives ? ’

As a response to my own question, I want to suggest that you yourself, prepare a list of things for which you need to praise and thank God, and remember to use it daily to praise God, in your personal ‘ **quiet time.** ’

(d) God blesses the king once again – (Daniel 4 : 36)

- (i)** God restored the king's sanity.
- (ii)** God restored the king's honor and his splendor.
- (iii)** God restored his throne to the king and made him even greater than before.

Dear child of God, I think that it is of utmost importance that we all understand the truth we find in **James 4 : 6, 7**, and apply it to our lives consistently and conscientiously.

Actually what we read in **James 4 : 6** is a quotation of **Proverbs 3:34** which is also quoted by Peter in **1 Peter 5 : 5**. Hence the words written in **James 4 : 6 :- ' God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble . ' is found in the Bible three times, thus emphasizing the importance that the Lord our God has given to it.**

Today in this Bible study we learnt how King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was filled with pride, due to the power and position given to him by God and the way God dealt with him, in order to teach him humility. Hence if someone is trapped by Satan today, and becomes **filled with spiritual pride**, I cannot even imagine how God will deal with him. However, I am absolutely certain of one thing. One day each and every such person will definitely have to answer to God, '**who opposes the proud.**'

Dear children, please always make every effort to rid yourselves completely from **pride**, and never ever permit **spiritual pride to enter your heart / mind**.

**“ May God help you to be totally free of
Spiritual pride,
Submit yourself to Him
And live for Him always !!! ”**

Notes

**The Danger of using
Holy things for Unholy purposes**



Daniel Study - 06



The Danger of using Holy things for Unholy purposes

Daniel 5 : 1 – 31

Introduction :-

- (a) **Daniel Chapter 5** mentions that King Belshazzar of Babylon was slain on the very night that he ordered that goblets brought from the temple in Jerusalem were to be used for his nobles, wives and concubines to drink wine.

Daniel 5 : 30, 31 :- “³⁰ That very night Belshazzar king of the Babylonians was slain,³¹ and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty two. ”

In other words, the night on which the king ordered that the ‘ **holy goblets** ’ brought from the temple in Jerusalem were to be used to drink wine, became the last day of the kingdom of Babylon, which was defeated by the Medo-Persian kingdom.

In **Daniel 7 : 1** it is mentioned as follows. ‘ **In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon , Daniel had a dream, visions passed through his mind as he was lying in his bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream.** ’

Furthermore, in **Daniel 8 : 1**, it is stated as follows.

Daniel 8 : 1 :- “ In the third year of King Belshazzar’s reign , I Daniel had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me. ”

Hence, common sense tells us, and we can all agree that, the incident mentioned above and recorded in **Daniel 5 : 30, 31** actually occurred after the incidents recorded in **Daniel, Chapters 7 & 8**. It is therefore important for us to understand the reasons why **Daniel Chapter 5** is not following the chronological order.

It is my opinion, that Daniel did so, possibly to keep the narration from **Daniel 7 : 1 to 12 : 13** which is mainly ‘ **prophetic,** ’ in an unbroken sequence.

- (b) Daniel 5 : 2 :-“ While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, ”**

The Bible verse states that Belshazzar was the son of Nebuchadnezzar, whilst history records that he was the grandson. What is recorded in history is that a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar named Nitochris got married to Nabonidus and that Belshazzar was their son.

Consequently there could be many people who could come to the conclusion, that the Bible is not always accurate and totally dependable. I therefore as a person who strongly believes that the Bible is inerrant take it upon myself to unravel this seeming discrepancy.

Solution of the seeming discrepancy

Jeremiah 27 : 6, 7 :- “⁶ Now I will hand all your countries over to my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon ; I will make even the wild animals subject to him. ⁷ All nations will serve him and his son and his grandson until the time of his land comes ; then many nations and great kings will subjugate him. ”

The prophet Jeremiah (**626 – 585 B.C.**) is prophesying here that the Babylonian Empire would reign until the time of Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson’s subjugation happens.

From **Daniel 5 : 30** we see that Jeremiah’s prophecy was fulfilled as foretold, when in **539 B.C., Belshazzar king of the Babylonians was slain (Daniel 5 : 30)**, and that he was Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson, as prophesied by Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 27 : 7**).

Hence there is absolutely no conflict between the Bible and recorded history, in this connection.

- ❖ Further it is seen from the Bible that it was common practice to refer to ancestors as ‘ **father.** ’
(Please read **2 Chronicles 34 : 1, 2 ; 1 Kings 15 : 11 ; 2 Kings 14 : 3 ; Romans 9 : 10**)
- (c) I want to place before you, two important facts about the book of **Daniel.** They are,
 - (i) The originals of two books of the Bible, **Daniel and Ezra** have been written in two languages, and **Daniel 1 : 1 to 2 : 4a** and **8 : 1 to 12 : 13** have been written in Hebrew, while **Daniel 2 : 46 to 7 : 28** has been written in Aramaic.
 - (ii) **Daniel** is one of two Old Testament books which was recorded outside Israel. The other is **Ezekiel.**

Teaching :- Danger of using Holy things for Unholy purposes

1. What God taught King Nebuchadnezzar

In this Bible study our focus would be mainly on the ‘ **Danger of using holy things for unholy purposes,** ’ and I want to commence this teaching by refreshing your minds about what God had taught King Nebuchadnezzar, about himself, thus far.

Daniel 4 : 37 :-

“ Now I Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of Heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble. ”

From this Bible verse we see that God had done a mighty work in the life of the king. Let us now list out the many things that God taught him, as mentioned in **Daniel 1 – 4**.

- (i) **Daniel 2 : 47** :- God is the God of gods.
- (ii) **Daniel 2 : 47** :- God is the Lord of kings.
- (iii) **Daniel 2 : 47** :- God is a revealer of mysteries.
- (iv) **Daniel 3 : 28** :- God protects those who trust in him and sends angels to protect them.
- (v) **Daniel 3 : 16 – 18, 28** :- God's servants will not worship other gods, even if they are threatened by death.
- (vi) **Daniel 3 : 29** :- No other god, can save his people in this way, except the God of Israel.
- (vii) **Daniel 3 : 25 – 29, 4 : 2, 3** :- God gives great signs which are miraculous, and performs mighty wonders ; and is the Most High God.
- (viii) **Daniel 4 : 3, 34** :- God's kingdom is an eternal kingdom.
- (ix) **Daniel 4 : 3** :- God's dominion endures from generation to generation.
- (x) **Daniel 4 : 8, 9, 18** :- The spirit of God dwells in people who place their trust in Him.
- (xi) **Daniel 4 : 17** :- God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men.
- (xii) **Daniel 4 : 17, 32** :- God gives the kingdoms of men to anyone He wishes.
- (xiii) **Daniel 2 : 2 – 12 ; 4 : 4 – 8** :- Although there are many problems that magicians, enchanters and wise men of the world cannot resolve, God can solve all of them.
- (xiv) **Daniel 4 : 27 – 33** :- Those who are proud and arrogant and disobey God, bring judgement and disaster upon themselves.

- (xv) **Daniel 4 : 35** :- God's hand cannot be held back by anyone.
- (xvi) **Daniel 4 : 35** :- No one can question God about his actions.
- (xvii) **Daniel 4 : 37** :- God should be praised, exalted by mortal man.
- (xviii) **Daniel 4 : 37** :- God is the King of Heaven.
- (xix) **Daniel 4 : 37** :- Everything God does is correct.
- (xx) **Daniel 4 : 37** :- God is always just.
- (xxi) **Daniel 4 : 37** :- God is able to humble all those who walk in pride.

Everything mentioned in the above list, emerged from the mouth of King Nebuchadnezzar and there is no doubt that he was taught all these by Almighty God.

2. Learning about King Belshazzar – (Daniel 5 : 2)

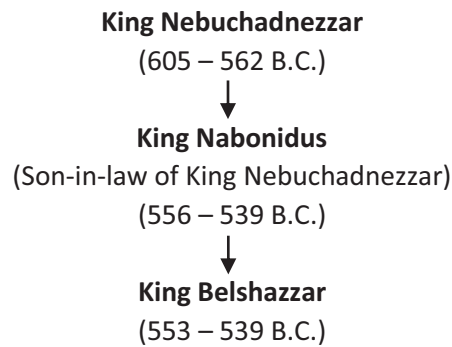
Daniel 5 : 1, 2 :-

“ ¹ **King Belshazzar** gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them.

² **While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem ,”**

These two Bible verses clearly state that King Belshazzar was the son of King Nebuchadnezzar. As we mentioned in our ‘ **introduction** ’, this is not in agreement with recorded history.

Hence I want to place before you, historical facts about the Babylonian Empire, that are relevant to this Bible study, in order to resolve this apparent contradiction.



- **Four inferences that we can arrive at, from the historical data above.**
 - (i) King Nebuchadnezzar passed away in 562 B.C.
 - (ii) From 553 – 539 B.C. the Babylonian Empire was reigned by King Nabonidus and King Belshazzar, who reigned together during this period.
 - (iii) The Babylonian Empire was subjugated by the Medo-Persian Empire in 539 B.C.
 - (iv) Belshazzar was appointed as king, nine years (562 – 553) after the death of Nebuchadnezzar.

When we look at **(iv)** above, I think it is logical to come to the conclusion that Belshazzar would have known about at least some of what God had taught his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, through his grandfather himself.

In any event, Belshazzar would have definitely known about how God dealt with his grandfather, because of his pride and arrogance. He would have known that his grandfather, **'was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle, ' (Daniel 4 : 33) ' for a period of seven years. ' (Daniel 4 : 32)**

Hence when we read **Daniel 5 : 1, 2** we come to the conclusion that King Belshazzar was a person, who **did not fear or respect God, who used holy things**, (things that are separated / dedicated unto God) **for unholy / sinful purposes, who did not learn from his grandfather's tragic experiences**. We therefore conclude that he was a **proud, arrogant and foolish** king.

3. The banquet arranged by King Belshazzar

Although it is mentioned in **Daniel 5 : 1**, that the king gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them, the Bible does not mention why he did so.

However, archaeological excavations have unearthed a massive 172 feet x 60 feet banquet hall, confirming the veracity of the truth of this great banquet given by the king.

At this banquet a large amount of wine was drunk, and it is quite possible that Belshazzar was rather intoxicated when, '**he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets . . . so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.**' (Daniel 5 : 2)

(a) All these goblets were holy

2 Kings 24 : 10 :- " At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it, "

2 Kings 24 : 13 :- " As the Lord had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed all the treasures from the temple of the Lord and from the royal palace, and took away all the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made for the temple of the Lord. "

2 Kings 25 : 15 :- “ The commander of the imperial guard took away the censers and sprinkling bowls – all that were made of pure gold or silver. ”

Let us now understand the meaning of the word ‘ **holy** ’ when used in the Bible. We can see that ‘ **holy** ’ means ‘ **separated from the world and dedicated unto God.** ’

Hence all the articles mentioned above were ‘ **holy.** ’

The temple in Jerusalem was constructed by King Solomon and there were many articles in the temple which were made of gold and silver, and had been provided by him. In addition to these there were also a large number of similar articles dedicated by King David and other kings of Israel.

1 Kings 7 : 51 :- “ When all the work King Solomon had done for the temple of the Lord was finished, he brought in the things his father David had dedicated – the silver and gold and the furnishings – and he placed them in the treasuries of the Lord’s temple. ”

2 Chronicles 15 : 17, 18 :- “ ¹⁷ Although he did not remove the high places from Israel, Asa’s heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life. ¹⁸ He bought into the temple of God the silver and gold and the articles that he and his father had dedicated. ”

Thus the amount of gold, silver and other valuable articles that were in the temple was very large, and **Daniel 1 : 1, 2** mentions that some of these articles from the temple were delivered to the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar by God.

After the Babylonian empire was defeated by the Medo-Persian empire, ‘ **the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia, who brought out these articles from Babylon, and handed them over to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.** ’

(Please read **Ezra 1 : 1, 2, 7, 8**). The list of articles sent back to Judah is mentioned in **Ezra 1 : 9 – 11**.

Ezra 1 : 9 – 11 :- “⁹ This was the inventory : gold dishes – 30, silver dishes – 1,000, silver pans – 29, ¹⁰ gold bowls – 30, matching silver bowls – 410, other articles – 1,000. ¹¹ In all there were 5,400 articles of gold and of silver”

If ‘ **some of the articles** ’ (**Daniel 1 : 2**) is such a long list, the total value of the articles in the temple would have been enormous.

- ❖ Dakes Annotated Reference Bible (KJV) mentions that dedicated articles in the temple fell into two categories, the ‘ **holy** ’ and the ‘ **most holy**. ’

A special note in this Bible, mentions that according to the ‘ **Scriptures** ’ there were 28 articles that were ‘ **holy** ’ and 1,000 articles were considered as ‘ **most holy**. ’ Furthermore from **Numbers 4 : 19, 20** it is evident that all items within the ‘ **Most Holy Place** ’ were to be considered as ‘ **most holy**. ’

(Please read **Numbers 4 : 1 – 20**)

(b) The consequences of using holy things for unholy purposes as ordered by King Belshazzar – (Daniel 5 : 5 – 9)

On the orders of King Belshazzar, gold and silver goblets brought from the temple in Jerusalem were used for drinking wine, thus desecrating these items which had been dedicated to God.

All participants of this banquet of the king, did not stop at this, they went further to insult the God of all creation by worshipping what God had created and giving honour, glory and praise to worthless ‘ gods ’ who were not gods at all.

Daniel 5 : 4 :- “ As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. ”

By doing so they not only insulted and humiliated Almighty God, **they also challenged the Sovereignty of God Most High.**

The response of God to this senseless and stupid actions of the king and his invitees to the banquet is as follows.

Daniel 5 : 5 :- “ Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. ”

On seeing this, the king got thoroughly frightened, called for the enchanters, astrologers and divines to decipher what had been written on the wall, but there was no one who was able to do so, and this terrified the king even more.

Daniel 5 : 9 :- “ So king Belshazzar became even more terrified and his face grew more pale. His nobles were baffled. ”

(c) The queen advises King Belshazzar to request Daniel to interpret the writing on the wall – (Daniel 5 : 10 – 17)

Bible scholars are of the view that the queen mentioned here is the wife of King Nebuchadnezzar or King Nabonidus.

She educates the king and informs him that, ‘ **In the time of your father he was found to have insight and intelligence and wisdom like that of the gods. King Nebuchadnezzar your father – your father the king, I say – appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners. ’ (Daniel 5 : 11),** and requests him to consult Daniel, and the king does so.

(d) Daniel interprets the writing on the wall and advises the king – (Daniel 5 : 18 – 28)

Daniel begins his response to the king, as follows.

Daniel 5 : 18 :- “ O King, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. ”

He goes on to inform the king that although, **all these things were given to him by God**, King Nebuchadnezzar became proud and arrogant, as a result of which God took him away from his throne for a period of seven years, during which time he dwelt with the wild-animals. Subsequently he spoke the following words to King Belshazzar.

Daniel 5 : 22 – 24 :- “ ²² But you his son, O Belshazzar , have not humbled yourself , though you knew all this . ²³ Instead you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven . You had goblets from his temple brought to you, But you did not honour the God who holds in his hand your life – and all your ways. ²⁴ Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription. ”

Here we find, Daniel under the guidance of God, making several serious allegations against the king. I want to expand on two of these allegations, in order to help you to understand their gravity, so that you can address them suitably if they are applicable to you.

(i) You know what happened to your father Nebuchadnezzar as a result of his pride

This is indeed a very serious allegation, because what happened to King Nebuchadnezzar the most powerful king in the world at that time is an unthinkable disaster, and to know about it and yet to follow his steps to a greater level / depth is to oppose the Lord of all creation.

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ Jesus, we know that we all, often fall into sin. While we sin in this manner ‘ **most of the time we are unaware of it** ’ while there are other things we do, ‘ **well knowing that they are wrong and sinful.** ’

There is no doubt in my mind, that you are well aware of the promise of God that, ‘ **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness.** ’ (1 John 1 : 9)

Regarding this promise, my advice to you, is as follows.

- Always endeavor to refrain from everything that is considered wrong / sinful according to the Word of God.
- If in a weak moment, you are tempted to do and do something which is sinful, as soon as possible repent of your sin, confess it to God and receive his forgiveness.

In the promise mentioned above, God is advising us to confess our sins, and we cannot do so regarding ‘ sins that we are not aware of.’

Hence I want to word the promise above as follows, for clarity.

- ❖ **If we repent and confess our sins**, (sins that we know we have committed) **God will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness** (and purify us of the sins we have committed without knowing, because our God is always just).

King Belshazzar knowingly, arrogantly, impudently and brazenly sinned against God, (and had to pay a very heavy price).

Let us firmly resolve to never disobey God, knowingly.

(ii) Yet you refused to honour Almighty God

In the present day church, a tragic trait that we can observe frequently is that, ' **the fear of God and honouring God** ' is diminishing progressively in certain churches.

An example

Even as we frequently receive a considerable amount of ' **interesting news** ' from our churches, a worrying amount of them are not about a great spiritual revival or a mighty work of God, etc.

Actually a majority of the news that reaches us, **is concerning dishonesty, misuse of funds, injustice, adultery and other such sinful activities.**

Dear friends if what I am stating here is incorrect, please forgive me. However ' **with eyes filled with tears** ' I am writing this with a heavy heart in the very early hours of the morning, **even as the Holy Spirit is prompting me to do so.**

- Dear children of God, please never forget, that God has chosen and called us to be his children, in order that we might live lives,
 - which are holy (**1 Peter 1 : 16**)
 - which are to be like, ' **the salt of the earth** ' (**Matthew 5 : 13**)
 - which are to be like, ' **the light of the world** ' (**Matthew 5 : 14 – 16**)

(e) The message that was written on the wall – (Daniel 5 : 26 – 31)

Daniel 5 : 25 :- “ MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN ” (Aramaic)

The meaning of the message

- MENE** - God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end (Daniel 5 : 26).
- TEKEL** - You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting (Daniel 5 : 27).
- PERES** - Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians (Daniel 5 : 28).

Please note that ‘ Peres ’ (Daniel 5:28) and ‘ Parsin ’ (Daniel 5 : 25) mean the same, ‘ Peres ’ being the singular of ‘ Parsin. ’

This message to King Belshazzar was fulfilled that very night.
(Please read **Daniel 5 : 30, 31**)

Dear child of God, to commit sin knowingly, ignoring God’s calling to live holy lives (**1 Peter 1 : 18**) is extremely dangerous and foolhardy and can bring you disaster.

Therefore , let us all , in view of God’s mercy, “ offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. ”

(Romans 12 : 1)

Let us keep our thoughts, hearts, and minds holy and dedicate them to God.

Let us keep our tongues / lips, eyes, ears and hands away from all that is sinful and impure.

Let us completely rid ourselves of pride, be always clothed in humility and serve God faithfully.

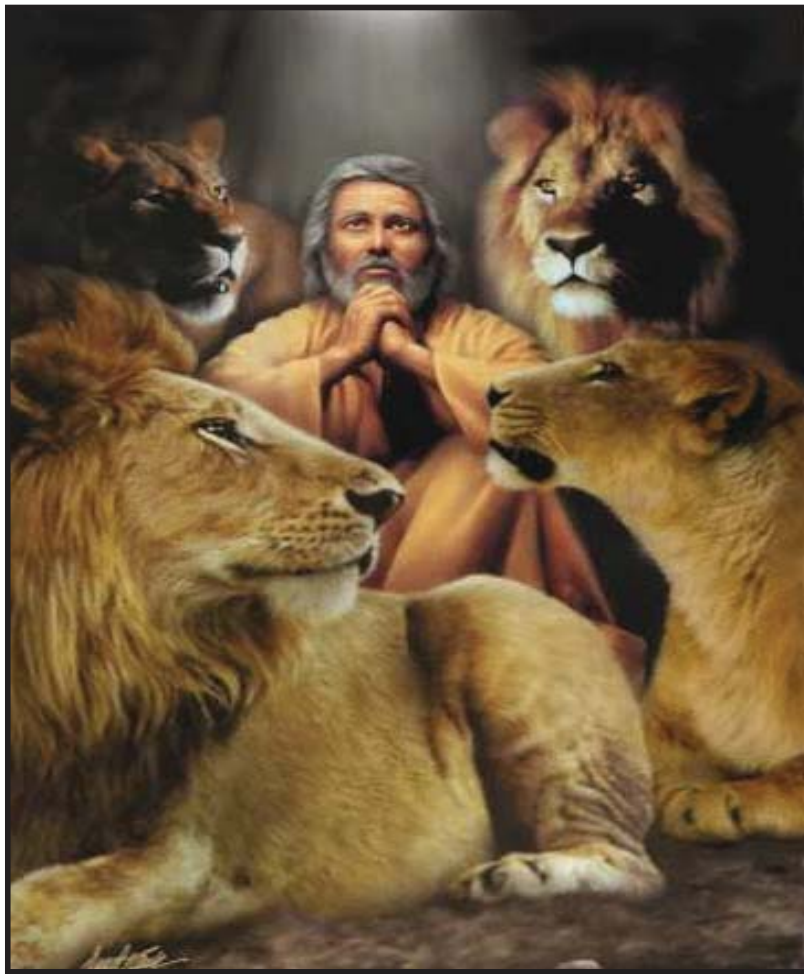
**“ May Almighty God help all of you
To live accordingly !!! ”**

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**Steadfast Faith will always
bring Victory**



Daniel Study - 07



Steadfast Faith will always bring Victory

Daniel 6 : 1 – 28

Introduction :- The last two verses of **Daniel Chapter 5**, record that the very night that King Belshazzar acted in a manner that displayed his total disrespect for God, **‘ he was slain and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty two ’ (Daniel 5 : 30, 31)**. Furthermore **Daniel 5 : 29** states that, **‘²⁹ . . . Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom. ’**

Actually it was King Belshazzar who promoted Daniel to this position, in accordance to the promise that he had given, that whoever is able to **‘ read the writing on the wall and interpret it would be treated in this manner. ’ (Daniel 5 : 16)**

In our previous Bible study, we learnt that from 553 to 539 B.C., two kings namely Nebozardus and his son Belshazzar would reign simultaneously over the Babylonian Empire. Hence the **‘ third highest ruler in the kingdom ’** was probably the highest position that could be given to anyone else. If this assumption is correct, we can see that, **Almighty God promoted Daniel to the highest position that could be held by a foreigner in the Babylonian Empire**, according to His will.

Another relevant piece of information about this promotion, is the age of Daniel at that time. So let’s delve into this for a moment.

The Babylonian Empire was taken over by the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C., whilst Daniel was exiled to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C. Hence, Daniel was given this appointment sixty six years (605–539) after his arrival in Babylonia. If we assume that Daniel was about 18 years old then, we find that Daniel was appointed to this post when he was around 84 years of age.

Dear friends, appointing an 84 year - old foreigner to this incredibly high position in the mighty Babylonian Empire can be done only by Almighty God, our loving father.

Daniel 4 : 17 :- “ so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men. ”

Daniel 2 : 21 :- “ He changes times and seasons ; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. ”

Dear child of God, in this Bible study we will learn how God lifts up Daniel over and over again, due to his steadfast faith, and it is our hope and prayer that God will use it to strengthen your faith in a similar manner.

Teaching :- Steadfast Faith always brings Victory

1. King Darius appointing Daniel to a high position in the Medo-Persian Empire – (Daniel 6 : 1, 2)

Daniel 6 : 1, 2 :- “¹ It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, ² with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. ”

It is possible that some of you would be quite surprised to discover, that even about 2,540 years ago, there existed the above mentioned organized structure of Administration.

However through **Daniel 3 : 2**, we learn that 60 years prior to this, a more detailed structure was established and functioning in Babylon.

Daniel 3 : 2 :- “ He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the other provincial officials, to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. ”

From the above Bible verse, we are able to identify eight levels / types of employees who served in the Administration of Babylonia, and **Daniel 2 : 48** shows us that Daniel who was a youth at that time was appointed as a ' **Ruler** ' over the entire province of Babylon.

Daniel 2 : 48 :- “ Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon , and placed him in charge of all its wise men . ”

Dear children, please get a firm hold of this. The appointment of Daniel who was a youth, as the ruler of the province of Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar, and his appointment at the age of 84 as the third highest ruler in the kingdom by King Belshazzar, as well as the appointment given to him by King Darius, (**Daniel 6 : 1, 2**) were all **orchestrated by the hand of God.**

In my opinion, one reason that caused God to promote Daniel in this amazing manner are the wonderful attributes that Daniel had, some of which are,

- **His fear of God**
- **His honor and respect for God**
- **His unwavering and steadfast faith**
- **His faithfulness**

2. The intention of King Darius to promote him further – (Daniel 6:3)

King Darius became king in 539 B.C., with the Medo – Persian kingdom coming to power and the slaying of King Belshazzar (the 2nd king) of Babylon (**Daniel 5 : 30**).

Although the Bible does not record such an event it is likely that Nebonidus (the 1st king) of Babylon was slain at the same time.

If the assumption is correct, Daniel who had been appointed the third ruler by King Belshazzar was the highest official who remained in the Kingdom of Babylon.

With Darius the Mede taking over Babylon, God blessed Daniel further and Darius planned to set Daniel over the whole kingdom.

Daniel 6 : 3 :- “ Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. ”

Now let us take another look at **Daniel 6 : 2** where it is stated that, ‘ **the (120) satraps were made accountable to the Administrators so that the king might not suffer less.** ’

This means that the 3 Administrators needed to be absolutely trustworthy. It is evident, **from Daniel 6 : 3**, that the king observed that Daniel was, **extremely faithful, totally trustworthy, and had no deceit in him, and was the best person amongst them all.**

- ❖ **Daniel was a foreigner**, (and was not a Babylonian, a Mede or a Persian) but the conclusion of King Darius was that Daniel was the most dependable of the 120 satraps and 3 administrators.

Dear friends, Almighty God is calling us who bear the name Christian, to shine as lights and to be always, SINCERE, HONEST, HARDWORKING, LOYAL and FAITHFUL wherever we are employed.

1 Corinthians 4 : 1, 2 :-

“¹So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ”

Dear child of God, let us consider, why Daniel was identified by King Darius as the person who was the most trustworthy, out of the 123 officials who were appointed by him.

It is my opinion, that possibly one of the most significant reasons was that, Daniel considered himself **as a servant of God, and realized that everything that he had was given to him by God.**

Consequently Daniel saw himself as a steward of God, responsible to God regarding everything that he possessed. **Hence wherever he was, whatever work or responsibility was entrusted to him, Daniel engaged in the work wholeheartedly, considering it as something which was entrusted to him by God Himself.**

1 Peter 2 : 13, 14 :- “¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men : whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ”

1 Peter 2 : 17 :- “ . . . Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honour the king. ”

1 Corinthians 10 : 31 :- “ So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. ”

Let us all follow the example of Daniel, and carry out all work entrusted to us by our employers, **as work entrusted to us by God and carry them out, efficiently, excellently and faithfully.**

When you work in this manner, many people at your workplace would observe your dedication, honesty and integrity. Consequently it is very likely that your employers would appreciate your work and even reward you for it, whilst some of those of your own grade may become envious of you and become your enemies.

However regardless of how others in your workplace treat you, God will appreciate you and reward you at the appropriate time.

Dear child of God, in your workplace,

- **be a witness of God, through your faithful service,**
- **never forget that you are a steward entrusted with the secret things of God (1 Corinthians 4 : 1) and act accordingly.**

3. The inability of those who were jealous of Daniel, to find any fault in him – (Daniel 6 : 4)

Daniel 6 : 4 :-

“ At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. ”

From **Daniel 6 : 4** we see that although his fellow officials unitedly attempted to find some fault in Daniel they were unable to do so. Hence they all came to the conclusion that, ‘ **they will never find any basis for charges against Daniel unless it has something to do with God.** ’ (Daniel 6 : 5)

These words are a tremendous testimony of Daniel’s exemplary life, and the amazing thing is these words **were proclaimed by Daniel’s enemies !**

Titus 2 : 9, 10 :-

“⁹ Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them.

¹⁰ and not steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive. ”

4. **Daniel's enemies use his prayer life as a weapon to trap him – (Daniel 6 : 6 - 9)**

The administrators and the satraps who were unable to find any fault in Daniel, devised a method to mislead the king and thereby trap Daniel. They made a suggestion to the king to issue an edict and enforce the decree, that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except the king, shall be thrown into the lion's den. **(Daniel 6 : 6, 7)**

The words spoken by the administrators and satraps were not true, as the following Bible verse indicates.

Daniel 6 : 6, 7 :- “⁶ So the administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said : O King Darius, live forever ! The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict”

These words cannot be true because there were only three administrators and Daniel was one of them, and he was not aware of this trap, although the king was told that ‘ **all agreed that the king should issue an edict** ’, which was a blatant lie.

❖ The Bible states that the devil is the father of lies.

John 8 : 44 :- “ You belong to your father, the devil, and you carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ”

(These words were uttered by Jesus Christ himself)

Therefore it is evident that the administrators and the satraps deliberately lied to the king, as a result of the promptings of the devil.

The king who believed what he was told by them, put the decree in writing. **(Daniel 6 : 8, 9)**

- ❖ At the place where you are employed, there could be certain employees who are always looking for opportunities, to impress higher officers in order to get recognition or promotion. At the same time, there would be other employees who are very sincere and honest and do their work faithfully.

In a situation like this, what would frequently happen is that the employees who are trying to impress the management, **(the crafty ones)** would make false allegations against the faithful workers, to the higher officers.

With this background in mind, I want to place a couple of pertinent questions before you.

- (i) **I believe that as a child of God, you belong to the group that does their work sincerely, honestly and truthfully.**

If this is not so, please confess this sin to God, receive his forgiveness, and commence doing your work considering it as something you are doing for God, and not for man.

- (ii) **As mentioned by me above, if someone makes a false allegation against another, never support or take the side of the one making the false allegation. Instead stand against the devil and his lies, and always stand with who / what is right.**

James 4 : 7 :- “ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ”

5. **Daniel on coming to know of the decree continues to pray to God and is cast into the den of lions – (Daniel 6 : 10 - 16)**

- (a) When Daniel comes to know of the decree, ' he went to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. ' (Daniel 6 : 10)

There are a couple of things here, which we like to comment on.

(i) Praying facing Jerusalem

2 Chronicles 6 : 38, 39 :-

“³⁸ and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken, and pray toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and toward the temple I have built for your Name ;³⁹ then from heaven your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you. ”

(Please read **2 Chronicles 6 : 36 – 39**)

Please also note that what is recorded in **2 Chronicles 6 : 38, 39** is a part of the prayer offered by King Solomon, at the Dedication of the Temple, and is absolutely relevant to Daniel's situation.

(ii) Praying three times a day

Psalm 55 : 17 :- “ Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice. ”

In Israel, the ' **day** ' commences in the evening, and the Jewish people pray in the evening, (**the beginning of the day**) at the commencement of a new day.

Let us also, commence our day by praying unto God early in the morning.

(iii) Kneeling and praying

We should kneel before the Lord when we pray in order to honour him, because He is so far above us in every way.

Revelation 4 : 10 :- “ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever. They throw their crowns before the throne and say ; ”

Even as the worship in Heaven goes on forever and ever, with the 24 elders falling down before God, in many of our churches today, it is common to observe people ‘ **worshipping God** ’ whilst being seated. I therefore want to ask you most respectfully and humbly, to ask yourself sincerely whether this should be the way that Christians give Glory and Honour to God.

- (b)** King Darius signed the decree, without knowing anything about Daniel’s deep faith in God, or about his prayer life. However as soon as Daniel prayed unto God, his enemies informed the king that Daniel had disregarded the king’s decree and was praying three times daily.

The king was deeply disturbed by this information and attempted to save Daniel from certain death, but the law of the land, prevented him from doing so. Hence Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den, but even at this time the words spoken by the king to Daniel were as follows.

“ May your God whom you serve continually, rescue you ! ”

6. God saves Daniel from the lions – (Daniel 6 : 17 - 24)

- (a) After Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, a stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den and sealed with the king's signet ring. **(Daniel 6 : 17)**

However by this time, the king realized that he had been misguided by some of his officials who were jealous of Daniel, and made him to issue a decree that would cause the death of Daniel.

The king who was extremely sad and disappointed by his blunder spent the night without eating and at the first light of dawn, hurried to the lion's den. He then called Daniel in an anguished voice saying, "**Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions ?**" **(Daniel 6 : 20)**

- ❖ Dear reader, please take a few moments and read **Daniel 6 : 16 & 20** once again. I am sure that you will observe that in both these Bible verses, **the king is professing an amazing testimony about Daniel.**

The testimony is that, **Daniel is serving God continually.** In other words the king is stating that the advice given to us by Paul and recorded in **1 Corinthians 10 : 31** is being carried out by Daniel continually, as observed by him.

Dear friends, King Darius who previously had no knowledge of Daniel's faith in God or his prayer life, saw in Daniel's life, a person who continually served God. Because of the importance of living according to **1 Corinthians 10 : 31** I am being prompted by God to share, another verse from **1 Corinthians** for your edification.

1 Corinthians 15 : 58 :-

“ Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. ”

When you serve the Lord in this manner, Satan will oppose you in various ways, sometimes using even members of your own church to hinder and obstruct you.

Dear Brother and Sister, do not be shaken, dismayed or discouraged by this. Stand firm and in steadfast faith serve God continually. When we do so, Almighty God who sees our hearts, and loves us deeply, will protect us from all harm and grant us victory in every situation, and lift us up even as he lifted up Daniel.

- (b) The response of Daniel to the question asked by the king and recorded in **Daniel 6 : 22** as follows.

Daniel 6 : 22 :-

“ My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king. ”

- ❖ Dear reader, please read the words that I have underlined in the above verse, and ask yourself this question – ‘ **Can I say the same about my life ?** ’

Genesis 17 : 1 :-

“ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “ I am God Almighty ; walk before me and be blameless. ”

(c) All those who falsely accused Daniel were cast into the lions' den along with their families, at the king's command and were instantly killed by the lions.

❖ Dear believer, please do not get trapped by Satan's lies, and make false accusations against innocent people.

If you do so, you will be punished (by God) and not them.

7. The decree made by king Darius subsequently – (Daniel 6 : 25 - 27)

Thus King Darius experienced Daniel's outstanding faithfulness, steadfast faith and absolute blamelessness, and also the might and limitless power of Almighty God. He therefore became filled with Fear of God, and immensely honoured God.

As a consequence of this, King Darius, '**wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land.**' (Daniel 6 : 25)

The decree that he wrote, was focussed on God, and His attributes. Let us now look at what he wrote concerning God.

(a) Fear and reverence of God – (Daniel 6 : 26)

Daniel 6 : 26 :- " . . . in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel."

(b) The attributes of God – (Daniel 6 : 6, 7)

- He is the living God.
- He endures forever.
- His kingdom will not be destroyed.
- His dominion will never end.
- He rescues and he saves.
- He performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth.

King Darius who was the (second) king in the Medo - Persian Empire, issued this powerful decree which was sent to every part of the empire, **as a result of the exceptional and exemplary life of Daniel.**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, our God is Almighty, He is a God who loves us and will never leave us or forsake us. He will protect us always and grant us victory in every situation.

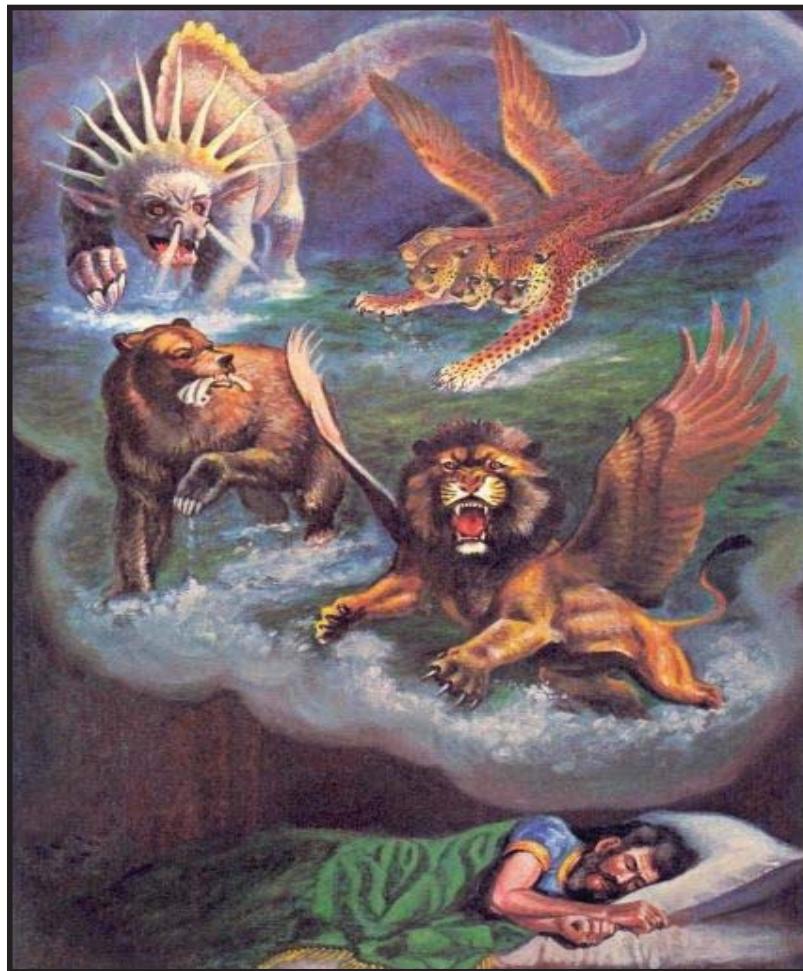
I hence want to conclude this study, by asking you a question.

The question is, **Do you really believe what is written just above, and live in a manner that all around you see this truth reflected in your life ?**

In other words, **' Are you a true witness of Almighty God ? '**

**“ May God Bless you,
Help you and grant you
Great Faith and Faithfulness
To enable you to do so !!! ”**

Visions and Dreams seen by Daniel about the times of the Gentiles - 1



Daniel Study - 08



Visions and Dreams seen by Daniel about the times of the Gentiles - 01

Daniel 7 : 1 – 28

Introduction :- In the second Bible Study of this series we learnt about the dream seen by King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C. regarding the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’ (Luke 21 : 24). Although the king had forgotten the dream, God revealed it and its interpretation to Daniel.

In this dream the king saw an enormous dazzling statue which had a head of Gold (**Daniel 2 : 1 – 49**).

In the Bible study we do today, we are going to look at ‘ **dreams and visions that Daniel saw** ’ regarding the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’ which are recorded in **Daniel 7 : 1 – 28**.

Daniel 7 : 1 :-

“ In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying on his bed ”

Facts to remember

- (i) Daniel saw these dreams and visions, ‘ in the first year of Balshazzar King of Babylon ’, that is in 553 B.C.**

Hence we can see that through the dream seen by King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C. Daniel who had already received some understanding about the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’, was given further information by God about the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’ in 553 B.C., which is 51 years after the dream of the king.

The reason for these dreams / visions to be shown twice

- One reason that we find in the Bible for a dream to be repeated is found in **Genesis 41 : 32**.

Genesis 41 : 32 :- “ The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon. ”

(Please read **Genesis 41 : 1 – 7, 17 – 31**)

- Another reason is when God reveals further information on the second occasion, in order to provide more details, thereby making the interpretation more clear.

Dear child of God, our Almighty God has thus included more detailed information about the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’ in **Daniel 7** than what is mentioned in **Daniel 2**, thereby confirming, that the interpretation will be fulfilled totally, absolutely and completely.

- (ii)** The fulfilment of the dream / vision mentioned in **Daniel 7 : 1 – 28** took place in 553 B.C. (the first year of King Belshazzar). The incidents mentioned in **Daniel 5 : 1 – 31** happened in 539 B.C. (the year King Belshazzar was slain).

The incidents mentioned in **Daniel 6 : 1 – 28** happened in 539 B.C. (the first year of King Darius).

Therefore we can see clearly that the prophet Daniel has not placed **Daniel 7** in chronological order. It is our opinion that this has been done by him intentionally in order to place **Daniel 7** at the beginning of **Daniel 8 – 12** which is filled with visions and interpretations about the ‘ **times of the Gentiles.** ’

**Teaching :- Visions & Dreams seen by Daniel about the times of
The Gentiles**

1. Understanding the special calling of Prophet Daniel

The Israelites who belong to the ' **chosen people of God** ' were considered as a ' **people** ' initially while they were in Egypt. From that time until the second coming of Jesus is referred to as ' **the times of the Gentiles** ' (Luke 21 : 24).

Many Bible scholars are of the view that this period of time would be approximately about 3,750 years.

The Word of God or the Bible was given to man by God, primarily for the purpose of revealing our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ to mankind. Therefore the Old Testament contains many prophecies about the coming of Jesus to earth, but does not mention directly, that he is coming twice.

The Old Testament mentions the coming of the Messiah, **(the Anointed One)** through numerous prophecies, and the Israelites who studied those diligently were earnestly looking forward to the coming of their Messiah.

However they found the prophecies quite confounding and difficult to understand because they observed that there were certain prophecies about the Messiah which were conflicting with others.

We ourselves when we study the Messianic prophecies can easily observe that the Messiah is described in two different ways in the Old Testament. The two are,

- (i) **A Suffering Servant – (Isaiah 53 : 2 – 9)**
- (ii) **A Victorious King – (Isaiah 9 : 6, 7, 11 : 1 – 5, 40 : 9, 10)**

The Israelites who had suffered immensely under Gentile rulers and longed for a 'Victorious King' to deliver them, naturally started to believe that the Messiah would be a king who would bring them victory over their enemies, and rejected the possibility of him being a 'Suffering Servant.'

Hence when Jesus was born in a lowly manger (at His first coming) a vast majority of the Jews, did not accept him as their Messiah.

However we who are Christians firmly believe that Jesus Christ our Saviour who was born into this world in human form over two thousand years ago is the Messiah. Hence we are presently joyfully waiting for His Second Coming. In fact we believe that the present time belongs to the '**end times**' and that the books of **Daniel** and **Revelation** have been given to us by God, to reveal many '**secrets about the end times.**'

- (a) Bible scholars are of the opinion that **Daniel** completed writing the book that bears his name around 530 B.C. Since Daniel was taken as an exile to Babylon in 605 B.C., by 530 B.C. he would have lived in Babylon for 75 years. Since it is likely that Daniel was about 18 years old, when he arrived in Babylon, he would have been approximately 93 years old when he completed this book.
- (b) **Daniel 1 : 1 to 2 : 4a, and from 8 : 1 to 12 : 13** has been written by Daniel in Hebrew, and **Daniel 2 : 4b to 7 : 28** has been written by him in Aramaic.

Furthermore in the section written by Daniel in Hebrew (**Daniel 8 : 1 to 12 : 13**), which contains amazing prophecies about the '**end times**,' Daniel refers to himself as '**I, Daniel**' instead of writing '**Daniel**,' from which it becomes clear to us, that **Prophet Daniel who was 93 years old at that time, definitely wrote this section in his mother tongue which was Hebrew.**

(c) In the book of Daniel, Prophet Daniel is described as ‘ **Highly esteemed** ’ (by God) by angels and heavenly beings on three occasions. They are as follows.

1. **Daniel 9 : 23 :- “ As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. ”** (Spoken by angel Gabriel – **Daniel 9 : 21**)
2. **Daniel 10 : 1 :- “ He said, Daniel you are highly esteemed . . . ”** (Spoken by a heavenly being – ‘ **His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flowing torches** ’ – **Daniel 10 : 6**)
3. **Daniel 10 : 19 :- “ Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed, he said. Peace ! Be strong now ; be strong. ”** (Spoken by the same heavenly being mentioned above)
4. The book of ‘ **Daniel** ’ helps us to understand better, some details mentioned in the New Testament about the ‘ **end times** ’

An Example :-

The book of ‘ **Daniel** ’ helps us to understand the reply given by Jesus to questions asked by the disciples at the Mount of Olives, (**Matthew 24 – 25 ; Mark 13 ; Luke 21**) the words spoken by Paul about the Second Coming of Jesus (**2 Thessalonians 2 : 1 – 12**) and many portions of the book of ‘ **Revelation.** ’

2. **Daniel’s dream of Four Beasts – (Daniel 7 : 1 – 14)**

This dream was seen by Daniel, ‘ **in the first year of Belshazzar King of Babylon,** ’ (**Daniel 7 : 1**) which is 553 B.C. Through this dream, God is revealing to Daniel about four great Gentile empires which would be established, by showing Daniel ‘ **Four great beasts, each different from the others, coming up out of the sea.** ’ (**Daniel 7 : 3**)

I want to draw your attention to the dream seen by King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C. and recorded in **Daniel 2** where the king saw an ‘ **enormous dazzling statue, awesome in appearance** ’ (**Daniel 2 : 31**). Since both these dreams are about the same four Gentile Kingdoms, and concern the ‘ **times of the Gentiles** ’ I intend to study them together.

(a) The First Beast seen by Daniel – (Daniel 7 : 4)

Daniel 7 : 4 :- “ The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it. ”

In the dream seen by the king, the dazzling statue had a head of gold (**Daniel 2 : 32**) and **Daniel 2 : 37, 38** interprets that the head of gold represented King Nebuchadnezzar.

Although we read in God’s Word that ‘ **The God of heaven had given you (the King) dominion, and power and might and glory,** ’ (**Daniel 2 : 37**) due to the king becoming proud and arrogant, God made him stoop down to such a low level that he, ‘ **was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle, (Daniel 4 : 33) for a period of seven years.** ’ (**Daniel 4 : 32**). Possibly **Daniel 7 : 4** is referring to this incident.

(b) The Second Beast seen by Daniel – (Daniel 7 : 5)

Daniel 7 : 5 :- “ And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, “ Get up and eat your fill of flesh ! ”

In the dream seen by the king, ‘ **the chest and arms (of the statue) were made of silver** ’ (**Daniel 2 : 32**) and Daniel interprets that this represents ‘ **another kingdom inferior to Babylon that comes after it.** ’ (**Daniel 2 : 39**)

In the dream seen by Daniel, the second beast was raised up on one side (**Daniel 7 : 5**) indicating the Medo-Persian Empire in which **Persia was more powerful than Media**. It is also mentioned in **Daniel 7:5** that, ' **it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth.**' This possibly refers to the three significant war victories won by this empire. These victories were won against Lydia (546 B.C.), Babylonia (539 B.C.) and Egypt (525 B.C.).

(c) The Third Beast seen by Daniel – (Daniel 7 : 6)

Daniel 7 : 6 :-

“ After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule. ”

The statue mentioned in **Daniel 2 : 32**, had its ' **belly and thighs made of bronze** ' interpreted as representing, ' **a third kingdom, one of bronze, which will rule over the whole earth.** ' (**Daniel 2 : 39**)

This beast which resembled a leopard, represents the Greek Empire under Alexander the Great, and the four wings on its back indicate the great speed with which he would overcome his enemies. This beast had four heads, and these symbolize the breaking up of the Greek Empire into four separate kingdoms, after his untimely death.

(d) The Fourth Beast seen by Daniel – (Daniel 7 : 7)

Daniel 7 : 7 :-

“ After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast – terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth ; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. ”

The statue mentioned in **Daniel 2 : 33**, ' **had legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.** ' Furthermore the interpretation given by Daniel is recorded in **Daniel 2 : 40** as follows.

Daniel 2 : 40 :-

“ Finally there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron – for iron breaks and smashes everything – and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. ”

The fourth beast represents the Roman Empire, and the ten horns it had, (**Daniel 7 : 7**) are indicated in the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, by the ten toes which were partly iron and partly clay (**Daniel 2 : 41, 42**). The ten horns on the beast also indicate the power of this empire.

3. God gives Daniel some revelations about the Antichrist – (Daniel 7 : 8)

Daniel 7 : 8 :-

“ While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them ; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully. ”

Dear reader, please note that in the dream given by God to King Nebuchadnezzar, in the interpretation given to Daniel, **there is no mention in Daniel 2 : 41, 42 that ' another little toe appeared among the ten toes ' (of the statue).**

However it is mentioned in **Daniel 7 : 8** that, ' **another horn came up among them** (the ten horns). '

(a) **Identifying this 'Little Horn'**

In the Bible, the word '**antichrist**' is found only in **1 John** and **2 John**, and is found only in the following Bible verses, which are, **1 John 2 : 18, 22 ; 4 : 3 ; 2 John 7.**

1 John 2 : 22 :- " Who is the liar ? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist – he denies the Father and the Son. "

It is my opinion that the '**little horn**' mentioned in **Daniel 7 : 8** is the opposer of Jesus Christ who will be revealed in the '**end times**', and is commonly referred to by Christians as '**the antichrist.**'

In order to give you a better understanding about him, I mention herewith a few verses where he is mentioned.

1. He is the person described in **2 Thessalonians 2 : 3 – 8** as '**the man of lawlessness.**'
2. He is the person described in **Daniel 11 : 36 – 45** and is referred to as '**the king who exalts himself.**'
3. He is the person referred to as '**the beast**' in **Revelation 13 : 4 – 10.**
4. In **Revelation 19 : 20** it is mentioned that :
' the beast was captured and with him the false prophet The two of them were thrown alive to the fiery lake of burning sulfur ' and he is '**the beast**' mentioned in this verse.

I propose to use the word '**beast**' instead of '**antichrist**', for him from here onwards.

(b) The time when the 'beast' will be revealed – (Daniel 7 : 8)

The fourth beast mentioned in **Daniel 7 : 7** refers to the Roman Empire and this beast had ten horns. Furthermore we see from **Daniel 7 : 8** that the ' **little horn** ' appeared after the ten horns of the beast, and that ' **three of the first horns were uprooted before it.** '

This means that at the ' **end times** ' ten kingdoms will emerge from the region that was controlled by the Roman Empire, and unite together. After this union is formed ' **the beast** ' will take control of three of them. This ' **beast** ' will be a man who will ' **speak against the Most High and oppress His saints** ' (**Daniel 7 : 25**).

(Please read **Daniel 7 : 25, 11 : 36, Revelation 13 : 1, 5, 17 : 3**)

Since ' **the beast** ' is a man, and because we are now living in the ' **end times** ', undoubtedly the ' **beast** ' is a man who is presently living on this earth.

Daniel 9 : 27 :- " He (the beast) will confirm a covenant with many for one seven (seven years). In the middle of the ' seven ' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him. "

Matthew 24 : 15, 16 :- " ¹⁵ So when you see standing in the holy place ' the abomination that causes desolation spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the reader understand – ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. "

At the beginning of the last seven years of our world, the ' **beast** ' will sign a covenant of seven years, but after three and a half years will break the covenant, and ' **will put an end to sacrifice and offering.** ' (**Daniel 9 : 27**).

(c) The vision Daniel saw, regarding the mighty and decisive acts of God against the rebellion of the beast – (Daniel 7 : 9 – 11)

Daniel 7 : 9 – 11 records an awe inspiring vision, given to Daniel by God.

Daniel 7 : 9 – 11 :-

“⁹ As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow ; the hair on his head was as white as wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. ¹⁰ . . . ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. ¹¹ Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire.”

- In this vision, God is showing Daniel the ‘ **Courts of Heaven** ’ with God seated on His throne, and others on their own assigned thrones.

Daniel 7 : 9 :- “ . . . thrones were set in place . . . ”

Here, ‘ thrones ’ is plural and not singular, indicating that all the members (possibly) of the Court had thrones themselves, with God seated on the Greatest Throne.

- **Daniel 7 : 9** also mentions the ‘ **Ancient of Days** ’ ‘ **whose hair was white as wool** ’ indicating the Fatherhood of God.
- In the courts of Heaven, the only acceptable evidence was what was written in the ‘ **books.** ’

Daniel 7 : 10 :- “ . . . The court was seated, and the books were opened. ”

Exodus 32 : 32 :- “ But now, please forgive their sin – but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written. ”

Dear child of God, please understand this clearly. Our God is a God who is absolutely just. He will judge even the ' **beast** ' and the ' **dragon** ' (Satan) justly and fairly.

All His judgements are always correct, just and fair. In the future He will definitely judge the ' **beast** ' and the ' **dragon** ' at the correct time, and will punish them suitably.

(Please read **Job 1 : 6 – 12 ; 2 : 1 – 10 ; 41 : 10 – 17**)

(d) God shows Daniel a vision about the Second Coming of Jesus – (Daniel 7 : 13, 14)

Daniel 7 : 13 :- “ In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His presence. ”

In this Bible verse, ' **one like a son of man** ' refers to Jesus and this is the first occasion in the Bible, where Jesus is described in this manner.

(Please read other verses referring to Jesus as ' the son of man ' in **Matthew 24 : 29 – 31 ; 25 : 31 ; 26 : 64 ; Revelation 1 : 13**)

While **Daniel 7:13** describes the Second Coming of Jesus, **Daniel 7:14** records some details of His kingdom.

Daniel 7 : 14 :- “ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power ; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. ”

- ❖ In **Daniel Chapter 7**, we find a wonderful truth / assurance mentioned three times about the kingdom that awaits **every true child of God**.

These three verses are the following.

Daniel 7 : 18 :- “ But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and possess it forever – yes forever and ever. ”

Daniel 7 : 22 :- “ Until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgement in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. ”

Daniel 7 : 27 :- “ Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him. ”

I want to focus your attention to the words, ‘ **all rulers will worship and obey him,** ’ (Daniel 7 : 27) for a moment.

‘ **In the beginning** ’ the whole of creation was under the rule of God, and this changed due to the rebellion of Lucifer. However with the Second Coming of Jesus, everything will revert back to God who will establish a kingdom that will last forever and ever.

(Please read **Daniel 7:27 ; 1 Corinthians 15:24 – 28 ; Ephesians 1:9 ; Revelation Chapters 21 & 22**)

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, please read **Daniel 7 : 18, 22, 27** over and over again and ask yourself the question, **Am I a saint (a child) of the Most High ?**

Please note that in certain denominations a small number of God’s children are designated as ‘ **saints** ’ and therefore you may think that you are not included in the promises found in **Daniel 7 : 18, 22 and 27.** This conclusion may not be correct, because from the Word of God we see that ‘ **a saint is a SINNER WHO HAS RECEIVED THE FORGIVENESS OF GOD.** ’

Therefore my beloved children I want to urge you most lovingly, kindly and humbly to do the following.

- (i) **Without delay, repent of your sins, confess them to God, and surrender your life to God and thereby become a child of God (a saint) – (John 1 : 12).**
- (ii) **Always endeavor to live a holy life – (1 Peter 1 : 15).**
- (iii) **In every situation, surrender your will to the will of God, and live a life that brings Glory and Honour to God – (Matthew 7 : 21 ; 26 : 39 ; John 4 : 34 ; 6 : 38).**

**“ May God our loving Father
Help you to live as a
SAINT OF THE MOST HIGH,
now and forever !!! ”**

**Visions and Dreams seen by Daniel
about the times of the Gentiles - 2**



Daniel Study - 09



Visions and Dreams seen by Daniel about the times of the Gentiles - 02

Daniel 8 : 1 – 27

Introduction :- In the second and third studies of this series, we looked at **Daniel 2 : 1 - 49** and learnt about the dream that King Nebuchadnezzar saw in 604 B.C. This dream was interpreted by Daniel as revealed by God to him and was primarily concerning ‘**the times of the Gentiles**’ and four kingdoms that would be established during that period and the culmination of this period with a kingdom established by God.

Daniel 2 : 44 :- “ In the time those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. ”

Fifty one years later, that is in 553 B.C. God gave a vision to Daniel also, about ‘**the times of the Gentiles**’ and this vision gave more details and clarity regarding those times.

In our last Bible study we commenced studying the visions given to Daniel and recorded in **Daniel 7 : 1 – 28**, about ‘**the times of the Gentiles**,’ and came across a ‘**little horn**’ that would appear towards the end of the ‘**end times**’ and identified that the ‘**little horn**’ symbolized the ‘**beast**’ (the antichrist).

Today we will be studying **Daniel 8 : 1 – 27** which provides more information about the ‘**beast**’ etc. and I kindly request you to enter this study with much prayer and an open mind, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to help you to understand God’s word clearly.

Teaching :- Visions & Dreams seen by Daniel about the times of the Gentiles

1. Understanding why God gave the vision / dream twice

(a) The dream seen by King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C. and the interpretation of the dream – (Daniel 2 : 31 – 43)

Head of Gold :- Babylonian Empire
(605 to 539 B.C.)
(Please read **Daniel 2 : 32, 38 ;**
Jeremiah 51 : 7))

Chest and arms
of Silver :- Medo – Persian Empire
(539 to 330 B.C.)
(Please read **Daniel 2 : 32, 39)**)

Belly and thighs
of Bronze :- The Greek Empire of Alexander the
Great (330 to 63 B.C.)
(Please read **Daniel 2 : 32, 39)**)

Legs of Iron :- Roman Empire
(63 B.C. ??)
(Please read **Daniel 2 : 33, 40)**)

- ❖ **Short Notes** :- The above mentioned durations and the years of the 4 Empires, have been copied from the detailed diagram provided in ' **The NIV Study Bible – 1985** ' page **1311**, (and the year of the end of the Roman Empire, is not indicated therein).

' Its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay ' – (Daniel 2 : 33)

The interpretation of this is given in **Daniel 2 : 41** and **43** as follows.

Daniel 2 : 41 :- “ Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron – for iron breaks and smashes everything – and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. ”

Daniel 2 : 45 :- “ And just you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay. ”

Just as foretold in **Daniel 2 : 43**, in A.D. 395 the Roman Empire broke up into two parts, and was administered from two capital cities. **Caesar Augustus** ruled one part from **Rome**, and **Constantine** ruled the other from **Constantinople**.

Since **Daniel 2 : 41** mentions the toes of the image as well, most Bible Scholars interpret this to mean that 10 kingdoms that are from within the Roman Empire will unite together, and form one confederacy as the ‘ **end times** ’ draw closer. I too believe that this opinion is correct, although in the interpretation given by God to Daniel, recorded in **Daniel 2 : 36 – 43** there is no mention of this occurrence. Furthermore what is recorded in **Daniel 2 : 44** is that, ‘ **In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed,** ’

(b) The vision that Daniel saw regarding Four Beasts and its interpretation – (Daniel 7 : 1 – 28)

Since we looked at this in our last Bible study, I do not intend to look at this in detail once again. Hence my intention is to study / teach, why God revealed the future to King Nebuchadnezzar and gave another vision covering the same subject to Daniel 51 years later. The method I chose for this purpose, is to break down this question into two questions, and to provide answers for them as follows.

(i) Why did God cause King Nebuchadnezzar to see his dream ?

While we can give you many possible reasons for this, I want to restrict my reply to a few reasons which are relevant to the Bible study.

- While God wanted to deal with the Southern Kingdom of Israel (Judah) which was disobedient to him, the person God chose for this purpose was King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

Daniel 1 : 1, 2 :- “¹ Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah, into his hands, ”

- The Prophet Jeremiah who prophesied from 626 B.C. to 585 B.C., foretold that the people of Judah would be exiled to Babylon and will serve the King of Babylon for 70 years.

Jeremiah 25 : 11 :- “ This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and those nations will serve the King of Babylon 70 years. ”

- God made King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon great and mighty and gave Judah to his hand. However the promotion of this king to such a powerful position made the king proud and arrogant, and God punished him as well until he repented, and then re-established him as the king of the Babylonian Empire.

Thereby King Nebuchadnezzar came to know the greatness of our Almighty God and God used him to proclaim the Name of God, bringing glory and honour to His name throughout the Babylonian Empire.

(Please read **Daniel 2 : 47 ; 3 : 28, 29 ; 4 : 34 – 37**)

(ii) Why did God give Prophet Daniel visions repeatedly and use angels often to give him their interpretations ?

- The Prophet Daniel was a very special prophet, chosen, called and appointed by God for a very special ministry.

Daniel 1 : 17 :-

“ To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. ”

(At this time Daniel was a youth who was possibly about 18 years of age)

Daniel 2 : 48 :-

“ Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all his wise men. ”

(By this time Daniel was possibly only 19 years old).

- In the book of Daniel, it is mentioned thrice that Daniel was ‘ **highly esteemed** ’ (Daniel 9 : 23 ; 10 : 11 ; 10 : 19).
- From Daniel 7 : 1 to 12 : 3, the Bible record focusses mainly on the **visions and their interpretations given to Daniel by God, including revelations given to him through angels.**
- The book of Daniel, written by the Prophet Daniel, may be considered as an important key given to man by God, to unlock many of the prophecies regarding the ‘ **end times** ’ found in both the Old and the New Testaments.

An example

Towards the end of the vision given to Daniel, concerning four beasts and relevant to the 'end times' we read the following words.

Daniel 7 : 24, 25 :- “²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones ; he will subdue three kings.²⁵ He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.”

Please note that I have underlined certain parts of **Daniel 7 : 24, 25** above. These portions refer to the beast (antichrist) who will appear at the 'end times.' However this information was not revealed in **Daniel Chapter 2.**

Another important factor that we see in connection to **Daniel 7 : 24, 25** is that Daniel received the interpretation of the dream only because he asked ' **someone standing there** ' **the true meaning of all this (Daniel 2 : 16, 20).**

The ' **someone standing there** ' was certainly an angel (or some other heavenly being), and Daniel received the interpretation because he really **wanted to know and asked a heavenly being.**

(Please read **Daniel 2 : 16 & 20** again and understand this)

This act of Daniel is a terrific and vital example for us to follow. Dear true child of God, please always ' **seek God's will and guidance in prayer** ' in every situation where you are uncertain of what you need to know / do.

In the situation we are in today (21st November 2021), we are in grave danger of being overtaken by a fourth wave of Covid-19. **What should we do ?** Even as I put this question before you the Holy Spirit is prompting me to write down the following Bible verses.

1 Timothy 2 : 1 – 4 :-

“¹ I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone – ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, ⁴ who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of truth. ”

(Let us all commit ourselves to obeying God and doing so)

2. Further revelations given by God to Daniel, about the times of the Gentiles – (Daniel 8 : 1 – 27)

(a) Daniel’s vision of a Ram and a Goat

This vision was given to Daniel, in the third year of King Belshazzar’s reign (**Daniel 8 : 1**) which was 551 B.C.

We see here, God who gave Daniel a vision of four beasts in 553 B.C., giving him another vision 2 years later of two different beasts but representing two of the four empires represented by two of the four former beasts.

As we mentioned earlier, God sometimes repeats a dream / vision for several possible reasons, some of which are,

- (i) To confirm what was given in the first.
- (ii) To add important details to the first.
- (iii) To clarify whatever is unclear in the first.

With this in mind let us now look at **Daniel 8 : 1 – 27**.

• **Daniel 8 : 3 :-**

“ I looked up, and there before me was a ram with two horns, standing beside the canal, and the horns were long. One of the horns was longer than the other but grew up later. ”

The interpretation of this vision was given to Daniel by the **Angel Gabriel (Daniel 8 : 16)**, who informed Daniel that **' the two-horned ram represented the kings of Media and Persia. '** **(Daniel 8 : 20)**

Please note that the Medo-Persian Empire was represented by a bear in the vision that Daniel saw two years earlier and is recorded in **Daniel 7 : 5**.

Daniel 7 : 5 :- " And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, "

Please note that, **' one of the horns was longer than the other, '** **(Daniel 9 : 3)** and **' It was raised up on one of its sides '** **(Daniel 7 : 5)**, are both confirming that in the Medo-Persian Empire, Persia was the dominant partner.

Furthermore it is mentioned in **Daniel 8 : 3** that, **' the other (the longer horn) grew up later '** showing that the Persian kingdom became more powerful later, as we can see this confirmed in God's word which states that the first king of Babylon was King Darius the Mede.

Daniel 5 : 30, 31 :- " ³⁰ That very night Belshazzar King of the Babylonians, was slain, ³¹ and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two. "

- **Daniel 8 : 5 – 7 :-**
" ⁵ suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came from the west ⁶ He came toward the two-horned ram and charged at him in great rage. ⁷ I saw him attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering his two horns "

The angel Gabriel interpreted this vision to Daniel, explaining to him that ‘ **the goat** ’ represented the kingdom of Greece and that the ‘ **prominent horn** ’ represented the first king (Alexander the Great) – (**Daniel 8 : 21**).

Please note that in the previous vision that Daniel saw, Alexander the Great was represented by a ‘ **leopard with four wings on its back** ’ – (**Daniel 7 : 6**).

- **Daniel 8 : 8 :- “ The goat became very great, but at the height of his power his large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven. ”**

The interpretation of this as given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel is recorded in **Daniel 8 : 22** as follows.

Daniel 8 : 22 :- “ The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power. ”

Please note that these four kingdoms that are represented by ‘ **four horns** ’ in **Daniel 8 : 8**, are represented by ‘ **four heads** ’ in **Daniel 7 : 6b**.

❖ **The interpretation of Daniel 7 : 6b, 8 : 8 & 8 : 22**

The goat, mentioned in **Daniel 8 : 8** is identified as the King of Greece who was Alexander the Great in **Daniel 8 : 21** where the goat is described as ‘ **the shaggy goat.** ’ Alexander who was successful in winning all his wars very rapidly, died prematurely in 323 B.C.

With his untimely death, the Grecian Empire was divided into four kingdoms that were ruled by four of his prominent and powerful Generals as follows.

Cassander - Ruled over **Macedon and Greece**

Lysimachus - Ruled over **Turkey and Thrace**

Seleucus - Ruled over **Syria**

Ptolemy - Ruled over **Egypt**

- **Daniel 8 : 9 :- “ Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. ”**

‘ Out of one of them ’

It is not difficult to understand what is meant by ‘ **one of them** ’ in **Daniel 8 : 9**, and it is evident that it means, one of the four kingdoms mentioned above, namely ‘ **Greece, Turkey, Syria and Egypt.** ’

This means that from one of the above four kingdoms a ‘ **little horn** ’ would emerge, and as we learnt in the previous Bible study, this ‘ **little horn** ’ represents the ‘ **beast** ’ (the antichrist) – **Daniel 7 : 8.**

Daniel 8 : 9 also informs us that this ‘ **little horn** ’ would extend its power toward the **Beautiful Land** (Israel).

- **Daniel 8 : 10, 11 :- “ ¹⁰ It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. ¹¹ It set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host ; it took away the daily sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was brought low. ”**

(Please read **Daniel 8 : 10 – 14**)

When we read **Daniel 8 : 10 – 14** it seems that the person being described here is the ‘ **beast** ’ (the antichrist).

However when we study **Daniel Chapter 11**, from the Bible verses given below, it becomes evident that other than the person being described in **Daniel 8 : 10 – 14**, another person who acts in a similar manner is being foretold in **Daniel 11 : 31, 32**.

Daniel 11 : 31, 32 :- “³¹ His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. ³² With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know God will firmly resist him. ”

In **Daniel 8 : 14** too we find the following words, which seem to confirm what is recorded in **Daniel 11 : 31, 32**.

Daniel 8 : 14 :- “ He said to me, ‘ It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings ; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated. ”

The words recorded in **Daniel 11 : 31, 32** and **8 : 14** which are prophetic words written by Daniel, were fulfilled from 168 B.C. to 164 B.C., by **Antiochus IV Epiphanes who was the King of Syria which had come under the rulership of General Seleucus**, after the death of Alexander the Great.

History records that Antiochus was a very cruel king who made a determined effort to capture Israel and destroy the Jewish faith, during the last 4 years of his reign.

In order to do so, he did the following.

- **He had a pig sacrificed on the altar of the Temple in Jerusalem.**
- **He forbade circumcision.**
- **He destroyed all the Old Testament books that he could find.**

- ❖ The above has been extracted from the ' New Compact Bible Dictionary – Special Crusade Edition – The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. ' (Page 47)

However in December 165 B.C. Judas Maccabeus recaptured Jerusalem and rededicated the temple to the Lord.

If anyone were to study the Bible diligently and sincerely about the Second Coming of Jesus, and the '**beast**' (antichrist), he/she would most certainly learn that both these events will happen in the future.

Daniel 8 : 19 :-

" He said : ' I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end. "

Hence Antiochus IV Epiphanes was definitely not the **beast** (antichrist). Therefore the question we need to find an answer to is : '**Who was he ?**'

My answer to this question is that, although he definitely was not the '**antichrist**', he possibly / probably was a '**type**' of the antichrist.

- ❖ The words, '**and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them,**' (Daniel 8 : 10b) are rather difficult to comprehend. However when we look at the words, '**Because of rebellion, the host of the saints and the daily sacrifice was given over to it,**' (Daniel 8 : 12a) we find a clue that is helpful.

It is possible that '**some of the starry host**' refers to the valiant God-fearing Jews who gave their lives to protect their nation and their faith.

- ❖ Let us now look at **Daniel 8 : 14** and understand its meaning. In order to do so let us read **Daniel 8 : 13, 14** and focus our attention on the words, ‘ **twenty three evenings and mornings** ’ (**Daniel 8 : 14**).

Antiochus IV Epiphanes, desecrated the altar of the temple in December, 168 B.C. and built a pagan altar there after about two months. This pagan altar was removed by Judas Maccabeus in December, 165 B.C. and rededicated it to the Lord on the identical day that it was desecrated.

- The Bible tells us that two daily sacrifices were offered in the temple, one in the evening and the other in the morning.

Exodus 29 : 38, 39 :- “³⁸ This is what you are to offer on the altar regularly each day : two lambs a year old. ³⁹ Offer one in the morning and one at twilight. ”

(Please read **Daniel 9 : 21** too, in this connection)

Special Note regarding the number **2,300** found in **Daniel 8 : 14**, let us see whether it is in agreement with **Exodus 29 : 38, 39**.

According to the information above, the period during which the Altar remained desecrated = **3 years + about 2 months**

$$= (3 \times 365) + (2 \times 30) \text{ days}$$

$$= \underline{\underline{1,155 \text{ days}}}$$

The number of offerings that we missed

$$= 1,155 \times 2$$

$$= 2,310 \text{ (approximately)}$$

However, the two months delay in building the pagan altar is an approximate period.

Thus we can conclude that the prophecy of missing 2,300 evening and morning sacrifices (**Daniel 8 : 14**) was fulfilled with 100% accuracy by the actions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

- The Jewish people have been celebrating the reconsecration of the Altar in Jerusalem during December upto this day, in order to praise and thank God for this, calling it the **Feast of Hanukkah**.

(Please read **John 10 : 22**)

- ❖ **Daniel 8 : 9 :- “ Out of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power ”**

Daniel Chapter 8 is about Daniel’s vision of a Ram and a Goat, that represent Persia and Greece. Furthermore, the ‘ **horn that started small** ’ represents the ‘ **beast** ’ (the antichrist) who would emerge from one of the four kingdoms, namely Greece, Turkey, Syria and Egypt which came from the Greek Empire of Alexander.

I am repeating this again here, since many scholars proclaim that the antichrist would emerge from the Roman Empire. In a way both these views are not incorrect. This is because all four kingdoms which belonged to the Greek Empire were subsequently subjugated by the Roman Empire.

- **Daniel 8 : 26 :- “ The vision of the evenings and mornings that have been given to you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future. ”**

The interpretations of all the visions seen by Daniel and recorded in **Daniel Chapter 8**, were given to him by the **Angel Gabriel**, (**Daniel 8 : 16**) who tells Daniel the following.

Daniel 8 : 17 :- “ “ Son of man, he said to me, understand that the vision concerns the time of the end. ”

The words spoken by **Angel Gabriel** are in total agreement with the words spoken by Jesus and recorded in **Matthew 24 : 15**.

Matthew 24 : 15 :- “ So when you see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation, spoken of through the prophet Daniel - ” confirms that this will occur at the time of the end, since Jesus was teaching the disciples about the signs of the end when he spoke these words.

(Please read **Daniel 9:27 ; 11:31 ; 12:11**)

Hence Antiochus IV Epiphanes is **definitely not the antichrist**, but may be considered as a prototype of the antichrist.

My beloved children, we are now definitely in the times of the end.

The Second Coming of Jesus is very near.

The Rapture of all true believers is imminent.

Hence let us all, **be always prepared and wait joyfully and expectantly for the Rapture.**

“ May Almighty God help you to do so !!! ”

Notes

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Notes

Daniel's Vision of Seventy 'Sevens'



Daniel Study - 10



Daniel's Vision of Seventy 'Sevens'

Daniel 9 : 1 – 27

Introduction :- In our previous two studies on the book of Daniel, we have studied the first two visions that God gave Daniel, which are recorded in **Daniel chapters 7 & 8** respectively.

Today we are going to study the third vision given by God to Daniel, which is commonly referred to as the '**vision of Seventy Sevens.**'

Daniel 9 : 1 mentions that Daniel saw this vision, '**in the first year of Darius**' which was 539 B.C. Let us now look at **Daniel 9 : 2.**

Daniel 9 : 2 :- "**in the first year of his reign, I Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would be seventy years.**"

Let us now try to understand an outstanding and exemplary quality of Daniel recognizable from this Bible verse, and decide to follow his example.

Daniel 9 : 2 was written by Daniel in 539 B.C., while he was exiled to Babylon in 605 B.C. Hence he had already spent 66 years in Babylon when he wrote this. If we surmise that Daniel was 18 years when he was exiled, he would have been **about 84 years** when he wrote this.

Therefore we understand from this Bible verse, that even at the ripe old age of 84, **Daniel was reading and studying the Scriptures faithfully.**

Let us now look at some of the qualities of Daniel displayed through these words.

- (i) Although Daniel had already been compelled to be away from Jerusalem and Israel for 66 years, **he was not dejected or discouraged, his faith was not affected and he was faithful to God.**
- (ii) At the age of 84 he is stating that, **' I Daniel, understand from the Scriptures, ' (Daniel 9 : 2).**

Dear friends let us all follow his examples and as long as we have breath, **let us read the Word and learn. Let us do so daily, asking God to Speak to us and Teach us, through it.**

- (iii) Daniel believed God's Word 100% and acted according to it.
Let us all read, learn, believe and obey God's Word always.
- (iv) He knew that the Word of God was always relevant to him, his country, his situation, etc.

Let us all understand that according to God's word, we are now in the ' end times ' and try to follow in the steps of Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Peter 2 : 21).

Now, I want to place before you, the prophecy of Jeremiah referred to by Daniel.

Jeremiah 25 : 11 :-

" This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. "

Jeremiah 29 : 10 :-

" This is what the Lord says : ' when seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. "

Teaching :- Daniel's Vision of Seventy Sevens

1. The response of Daniel who understood prophet Jeremiah's prophecy - (Daniel 9 : 3 – 19)

(a) Daniel pleaded with God in prayer – (Daniel 9 : 3)

Daniel 9 : 3 :- “ So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. ”

As I read this verse, what immediately sprang to my mind was the response of Nehemiah, when he learnt about the disgraceful condition of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 1 : 4 :- “ When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. ”

I am sure that everyone reading the above responses of Daniel and Nehemiah, would recognize the strong similarity between the two. It is my opinion that one of the reasons that the two responses are so similar is the fact that both of them were in exile, when they learnt of certain important things concerning their motherland.

Another probable reason would be their **love for their motherland and for Almighty God, who gave them Israel as their precious motherland.**

When prophet Daniel learnt that, ‘ **the desolation of Jerusalem would be seventy years.** ’ (Daniel 9 : 2), he had already been in Babylon for about 66 years, which meant that only 3 or 4 years remained for the fulfilment of this prophecy. What is written in **Daniel 9 : 3**, is Daniel's response which was **from the depth of his heart.**

Let us now focus our attention on Daniel's prayer.

(i) ' In Prayer and Petition '

As soon as I commenced pondering the above, God drew my attention to **Philippians 4 : 6**.

Philippians 4 : 6 :- " Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

• ' Prayer '

Prayer is to ' **speak with God.** '

Dear friends, very often when we are faced with a problem we do pray and also speak of our problem with many others. Although sometimes it is advisable to share with others, I would suggest that we **always speak with God in Faith trusting Him to resolve our problem.**

• ' Petition '

This means to wholeheartedly, with deep feeling, fervently urge God to grant your request. (Please read **Philippians 4 : 7** also)

(ii) ' In Fasting '

Daniel's fasting shows us how deeply he loved his country, his close friends, his family, the temple in Jerusalem and the worship there and Almighty God. It also shows, that he **considered the prayer and petition that he placed before God, as being more important to him than his own food itself.**

Dear child of God - Do you fast and pray ?

- Do you do so, mainly regarding your personal requests ?

- Or is it mainly to make supplications for others ?

Let us also commence to fast and pray regarding our country, our leaders and those who are perishing.

(iii) ' In Sackcloth and Ashes '

In order to understand this, let us look at the following words spoken by Jesus.

Matthew 11 : 21 :- " Woe to you, Korazin ! Woe to you, Bethsaida ! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. "

The words spoken by Jesus here, indicate that, ' **in sackcloth and ashes** ' mean to pray **with true / deep repentance**.

(b) The Petition of Daniel – (Daniel 9 : 4 - 19)

We mentioned to you earlier about the prophecy that Daniel found in the book of Jeremiah, stating that the Babylonian captivity of the Israelites, **would be limited to 70 years (Jeremiah 25 : 11, 29 : 10)**.

When Daniel found this, he realized that the fulfilment of this prophecy was quite close, and petitioned God about it. We will focus our attention on this petition, breaking it up into three parts, for clarity.

(i) Repenting for the sins of Israel – (Daniel 9 : 4 – 11a)

Daniel 9 : 5 :- " We have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and rebelled ; we have turned away from your commands and laws. "

In this Bible verse, Daniel uses four different words to describe the sins of the Nation Israel. However I do not consider this as a suitable time to go into details of this.

One of the most beautiful and admirable things, I see in this prayer of repentance of Daniel is **his humility**. From the beginning of his prayer, right upto the end, Daniel is stating things like, '**We sinned, We have done wrong, We have been wicked and rebelled, We have turned away.**' He is humbly stating that **he himself is also responsible for Israel's sin.**

Dear child of God, we know very well that this is not the way that we Christians act sometimes. What we do most frequently when something goes wrong is to point the finger at others, and insist that '**it is not my / our fault !!**' This is not what the Word of God teaches us, so let's learn to humble ourselves and accept our faults, weaknesses and sins and seek God's forgiveness.

Psalm 139 : 23 :- " Search me, O God, and know my heart ; test me and know my anxious thoughts. "

(ii) Accepting that the Israelites have failed to keep the Law of Moses and deserve the curses that have come upon them – (Daniel 9 : 11b - 15)

In this section we see Daniel admitting that the Israelites had not kept the '**Law**' that God had given them through **Moses**.

Daniel 9 : 11b :- " Therefore the curses and sworn judgements written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. "

Daniel is accepting that the judgement of God regarding the Israelites who failed to obey Him, is correct, just and fair. He is accepting that God was acting according to His Word when He dispersed the Israelites away from their homeland as he promised to do, if they disobeyed Him.

Please find herewith, a couple of Bible verses, concerning God's punishments that he would give if they disobeyed Him.

Deuteronomy 28 : 64, 65 :-

“⁶⁴ Then the Lord will scatter you among the nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods – gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known.

⁶⁵ Among these nations you will find no repose, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the Lord will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing, and a despairing heart. You will live in constant suspense, filled with dread both night and day, never sure of your life. ”

(iii) Daniel earnestly petitioning God to restore Jerusalem to the Jewish people – (Daniel 9 : 16 – 19)

In this connection the words spoken by Daniel and recorded in **Daniel 9 : 18** are very important.

Daniel 9 : 18 :- “ Give ear. O God, and hear ; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. ”

Sometimes we come across Christians who have been exceedingly blessed by God, who seem to think that they have been blessed because they are better and more righteous than other people, and thus act proudly and arrogantly. Their assumption is **completely incorrect and dangerous.**

Dear child of God, our loving Heavenly Father loves us and blesses us because of His compassion, love and mercy towards us and not because of our mistaken righteousness. **So please do not get snared by this trap of our enemy, and be always clothed in humility.** (Please read **1 Peter 5 : 5**).

2. The wonderful response of God to Daniel's prayer – (Daniel 9 : 20 – 27)

(a) God sends the Angel Gabriel to Daniel – (Daniel 9 : 20 - 23)

Daniel 9 : 20, 21 :-

“ ²⁰ While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the Lord my God for his holy hill –

²¹ while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. ”

(i) While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin

From the words above, we can see the great importance given by God to Daniel's petition. God not only provided an immediate reply to Daniel, but sent the reply through the Angel Gabriel.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus please understand this. Our loving God gives ear to all our prayers, and when we petition him, sincerely, earnestly and in faith, **He invariably answers our prayers and petitions at the best time, according to His Will.**

Although this is absolutely true, sometimes one may feel that God is delaying His answer to one's prayer for an exceedingly long time. If this does happen, one likely reason could be that our request is not in alignment with God's Will. However, please be aware that the Will of God could be higher and be higher and better than what you are requesting him.

Hence dear child of God, **if you feel that God is not answering your petition, do not be sad or discouraged. Realize that what he wants to give you is better than what you are asking for, and Praise and Thank Him in Faith !**

Isaiah 65 : 24 :- “ Before they call I will answer ; while they are still speaking I will hear. ”

(ii) The Angel Gabriel introduces God’s Message to Daniel – (Daniel 9 : 22, 23)

Daniel 9 : 22, 23 :-

“ ²² He instructed me and said to me, ‘ Daniel I have now come to give you insight and understanding.

²³ As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision. ”

Right at the beginning of these studies on the book of Daniel, (Daniel Bible Study 1) we learnt that God gave Daniel, the understanding of visions and dreams of all kinds.

Daniel 1 : 17 :-

“ To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. ”

The above Bible verse was written by Daniel himself and we can see from God’s Word, that Daniel had the gift of understanding visions and dreams, in 605 B.C. when Daniel was still a teenager.

Furthermore in 604 B.C., he was appointed to the highest position regarding this by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

Daniel 2 : 48 :-

“ Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men. ”

In addition to this, God showed visions to Daniel in 553 & 551 B.C., and revealed their interpretations as well to him. Hence when we look at the Word of God, it seems that it is possible that other than God Most High, the person who had the most knowledge and understanding of visions and dreams was the prophet Daniel.

In spite of this as we mentioned earlier the Angel Gabriel tells Daniel, 'I have come to give you insight and understanding,' (Daniel 9 : 22). 'Therefore consider the message and understand the visions.' (Daniel 9 : 23)

Hence it is my opinion that the visions found in **Daniel 9:24 to 12:13** are extremely important, and are possibly difficult to understand / interpret as well.

(b) The message conveyed to Daniel by the Angel – (Daniel 9 : 24 - 27)

- (i) Daniel 9 : 24 :- "Seventy 'Sevens' are declared by your people and your holy city to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy."**

The first thing that we need to understand regarding **Daniel 9 : 24** is that all 6 events described therein concerns the **Nation of Israel** (your people) and **Jerusalem** (your holy city) '**Shebuva**' translated as '**Sevens**' (NIV) and '**Week**' (KJV), means Seven. Hence '**Seventy Sevens**' means $70 \times 7 = 490$ years.

Therefore '**From the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem,**' (Daniel 9 : 25) **to the time taken to complete the six events mentioned in Daniel 9 : 24 would be 490 years as ordained by God.**

Furthermore, these 490 years that commenced with this Decree ends with the Second Coming of Jesus.

Let us now look at the 6 events mentioned in **Daniel 9 : 24**, and understand what they mean.

- **‘ To finish transgression ’**

This means that all the disobedience of the Nation Israel will end with the Second Coming of Jesus. This would happen through the **Nation of Israel, accepting him as their Messiah, who by his sacrifice on the cross (atonement) has become their Saviour who brings them salvation.**

- **‘ To put an end to sin ’**

Very close to the Second Coming of Jesus, **God will pour out on the house of David a spirit of grace and supplication.** (Please read **Zechariah 12 : 10 to 13 : 1 ; Romans 11 : 25 – 29**). Thereby the Nation of Israel, will receive pardon for all their sins, and their sins will come to an end.

- **‘ To atone for wickedness ’**

By them accepting the **‘ blood of Jesus as the sacrifice that turns away the wrath of God ’** (propitiation) this will be accomplished at the Second Coming.

- **‘ To bring in everlasting righteousness ’**

Whilst the 3 events mentioned above would be fulfilled with the Second Coming of Jesus, subsequently God / Jesus will establish an everlasting **kingdom of righteousness.**

- **‘ To seal up vision and prophecy ’**

This kingdom will fulfill all the prophecies and visions given by God and hence visions and prophecies would become redundant.

- **' To anoint the most holy '**

The **' most holy '** which would have been desecrated by the **' beast '** (antichrist) would be purified and reconsecrated to the Lord, before the commencement of the **everlasting kingdom of righteousness** mentioned earlier.

- (ii) **The prophecies given by Gabriel and their fulfillment, regarding the sacrifice of Jesus, the destruction of the Temple, and the antichrist – (Daniel 9 : 26, 27)**

Daniel 9 : 25 – 27 :-

²⁵ **Know and understand this : (A) From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ' sevens ' and sixty-two ' sevens ' (B1) It will be built with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.**

²⁶ **(B) After the sixty-two ' sevens ' the Anointed One will be cut off and have nothing. (B2) The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood : War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.**

²⁷ **He will confirm a covenant with many for one seven. (C) In the middle of the ' seven ' he will put an end to sacrifice of offering. (D) And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him. ”**

The prophecy mentioned in **Daniel 9 : 25 – 27** was written by Daniel in 530 B.C. or earlier. Let us focus our attention on some of them.

A) Let's look at the words underlined in **Daniel 9 : 25** and marked as (A), along with (B1). The decree mentioned here was issued by King Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign, which was 444 B.C.

(Please read **Nehemiah 2 : 1 – 9**)

The prophecy in (A) states that the time that elapses from this decree, ' **until the Anointed One comes** ' is ' **seven sevens and seventy two sevens.** '

This means, **(7 + 62) x 7 years = 483 years**

Daniel 9 : 26 :- (B1) " After the sixty two ' sevens ' the Anointed One will be cut off " which means that after 483 years after the decree, the ' **Anointed One ' (Jesus) would be killed.**

Therefore the crucifixion of Jesus should have occurred 483 years after 444 B.C., which is A.D. 39.

However the Hebrew calendar has 360 days in an year while the Gregorian calendar we use has 365.25 days in one year.

Therefore 483 years then = $\frac{483 \times 360}{365.25}$ years = 476 years

Therefore the crucifixion took place 476 years after 444 B.C. which gives us A.D.32.

- B)** Let's look at the words underlined in **Daniel 9 : 26** and marked as (B2). ' **The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.** ' These words prophecy that after the crucifixion of Jesus, and before His Second Coming, **Jerusalem and the Temple** would be destroyed. This prophecy was fulfilled in **A.D.70 when the Romans under the leadership of Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple completely.**
- C)** Let us now look at the words underlined in **Daniel 4 : 27** marked as (C). ' **In the middle of the ' seven ' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.** ' This prophecy is still to be fulfilled and will commence seven years before the Second Coming of Jesus, with the signing of a peace accord between Israel and her enemies who will be represented by the antichrist.

Although this peace treaty would be for seven years, after 3½ years the antichrist will break the covenant, and attempt to receive worship. (Please read **Daniel 9 : 27 ; 12 : 11**).

- D)** Let us now look at the words underlined **Daniel 9 : 27** and marked as (D).

‘ And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation. ’

The antichrist will erect an idol (**the abomination that causes desolation**) inside the temple.

(Please read **Daniel 7 : 25 ; 8 : 9 – 14 ; 11 : 36 ; Matthew 24 : 15 ; 2 Thessalonians 2 : 3, 4** for more details).

- However our God who is Almighty, will gather the antichrist and his armies to a place called **Armageddon** (in Hebrew) and defeat them completely, and the antichrist and the false prophet will be thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

(Please read **Revelation 16 : 16 ; 19 : 11 – 21**)

Special Note regarding the prophecies in Daniel 9 : 25 – 27

(B1) Fulfilled at the crucifixion of Jesus.

(B2) Fulfilled in A.D. 70 by the Romans under Titus.

(C1) & (D) Will happen 3½ years before the Second Coming of Jesus.

Dear Child of God, every Word of God is true. Every prophecy written in His Word will be fulfilled, even as (B1) and (B2) above have been fulfilled already.

We believe that the Second Coming of Jesus is very near. We also believe that before the ' **Peace Treaty of 7 years** ' is signed by the antichrist, God's Children will be ' raptured. '

(1 Thessalonians 4 : 13 – 18)

Hence let us all, draw closer to God and be always ready for the Rapture, that could happen at any moment.

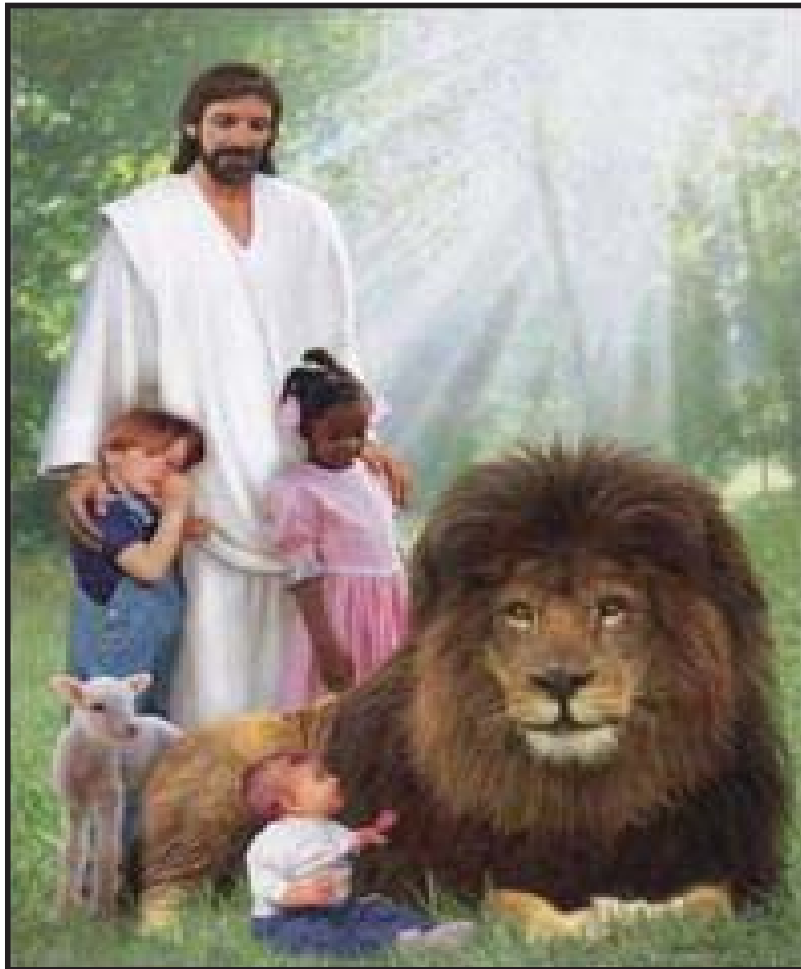
**“ May Almighty God our Lord
Help you all to do so !!! ”**

Notes

Notes

Notes

**Visions and Messages conveyed to Daniel
upto the Second Coming of Jesus, through
Angel Gabriel**



Daniel Study - 11



Visions and Messages conveyed to Daniel upto the Second Coming of Jesus, through Angel Gabriel

Daniel 10 : 1 to 12 : 13

Introduction :- Today we are going to study **Daniel 10 : 1 to 12 : 13** which records several visions and messages concerning the future of the Nation of Israel, conveyed to Daniel through Angel Gabriel.

Daniel 10 : 1 :-

“ In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia (536 B.C.) a revelation was given to Daniel . . . Its message is true, and it concerned a great war. The understanding of it came to him in a vision. ”

In this vision, Daniel saw the angel ‘ **in great splendor** ’ and revelations were given to him, about the period between the Old and the New Testaments and the tribulation period right upto the Second Coming of Jesus, concerning the Jewish people.

The prophecies are mentioned in **Daniel chapters 10, 11 and 12**, and history records that all prophecies mentioned in **chapter 11** were fulfilled. Thus the book of **Daniel confirms once again, the Sovereignty of God over All Nations of the World.**

Teaching :- The visions seen by Daniel

1. Daniel 10 : 2, 3 :-

“² At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks.³ I ate no choice food ; no meat or wine touched my lips ; and I used no lotion at all until the three weeks were over. ”

(a) As mentioned in **Daniel 10 : 1**, he received these revelations in 536 B.C., which was the third year of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia.

There is no doubt in my mind, that King Cyrus came into power at this time according to the plans and purposes of God, who had called Cyrus, ' **to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah.** ' **(2 Chronicles 36 : 23)**

2 Chronicles 36 : 22 :-

“ In the first year of Cyrus King of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus King of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and put it in writing : ”

(Please read **2 Chronicles 36 : 22, 23 ; Ezra 1 : 1 – 6**)

Thus reconstruction of the temple in Jerusalem which had been destroyed by the Babylonians was already underway, as per the proclamation of King Cyrus, when Daniel received a revelation ' **concerning a great war** ' (in Israel) **(Daniel 10 : 1)**. It seems possible that Daniel thought that the involvement of King Cyrus would bring lasting peace to Jerusalem and Israel. Hence on receiving this revelation, Daniel responded by fasting for three weeks and praying earnestly to God **(Daniel 10 : 2, 3)**.

(Please read **Daniel 10 : 1 – 3** once again)

- On reading **Daniel 10 : 3** once again we see the tremendous love Daniel had for his country, his people, the holy city Jerusalem, and the temple in Jerusalem.

Therefore Daniel earnestly petitioned God, foregoing various things voluntarily for three weeks, interceding for his people and his country, from the depths of his being.

Dear child of God, please examine yourself to check whether this is the way that you react when you get ' **bad news** ' like Daniel did.

Isn't it true that quite frequently our reaction is the opposite of that of Daniel ? Is it not correct to say that our response would be to blame other people or even our leaders for the situation ?

Let us abandon this type of negative and unhelpful behavior altogether. No matter how threatening or challenging the situation is, let us believe that no problem is too hard for our Lord. Let us therefore make it our practice to always trust God in every situation, and place our problem before God with praise and thanksgiving.

Mark 11 : 24 :- “ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ”

(b) Daniel 10 : 4 – 9

The result of Daniel praying as recorded in **Daniel 10 : 2, 3** was that, God sent Angel Gabriel to him at the great river Tigris. However the angel was visible only to Daniel, while the men with Daniel did not see him, although a great terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves (**Daniel 10 : 7**).

Thus Daniel watched the great visions given to him by God alone, **‘ and his strength left him, and his face turned deathly pale and he was helpless ’ (Daniel 10 : 8)**. However Daniel could hear Gabriel speaking, and fell asleep with his face to the ground, as he listened to him.

(Please read **Daniel 10 : 8, 9 ; Revelation 1 : 13 – 17**)

(c) Daniel 10 : 10 – 14

- (i) The Angel Gabriel touched Daniel, set him on his hands and knees, referred to Daniel and said, **‘ Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, ’ (Daniel 10 : 11)**.

In the book of Daniel, on three different occasions, ‘ **heavenly beings** ’ sent by God to Daniel, refer to him as someone ‘ **highly esteemed** ’ (by God).

From this we can see God’s own **incredible appraisal of Daniel**.

Even as I pen these words, I am reminded of Noah, as described as follows, in God’s Word.

Genesis 6 : 9 :- “ Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God. ”

(ii) **Daniel 10 : 12 :- “ Then he continued, Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. ”**

The words spoken by Gabriel to Daniel are extremely important, because they are so relevant to our ‘ **prayer lives.** ’ Hence let us focus our attention on these words and learn from them and thereby be strengthened in our personal prayer lives.

• ‘ **set your mind to gain understanding** ’

There is no doubt, that almost all of you reading this Bible study, pray daily. However although all of you pray to God, how well do you know Him ? Do you understand His ways ? Do you really know Him personally and intimately ?

In order to help you, I want to remind you of two important and vital things, that would help you to gain ‘ **understanding.** ’

- **God loves you very much and His will is that you too love Him always.**
- **His desire is to Bless you and Promote you, and the way to receive these is to obey Him always.**

My dear children of God, please understand these two truths that I have placed before you and do your utmost to try and live accordingly. I assure you that when you do so, God will make your life as wonderful, peaceful and blessed to such an extent that you yourself cannot believe it !

- **‘ to humble yourself before God ’**

James 4 : 6, 7 :- “⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says : God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. (See Proverbs 3 : 34)⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

Let us all, be humble and submit ourselves to God. Let us all read and meditate on His Word daily, praying unto God asking Him to help you and **‘ give you understanding. ’**

Almighty God will then respond to your request and speak to you through His Word. When God thus directs you, please Humble yourself and obey Him completely.

When you pray and respond in this manner God will tell you, **‘ from the first day that you set your mind to ’**
(Daniel 10 : 12).

(iii) Daniel 10 : 13 :- “ But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. ”

- **‘ the prince of the Persian kingdom ’**

The ‘ prince of the Persian Kingdom ’ mentioned here, is actually an evil spirit, appointed by Satan, to be the head of all demonic activities within the Persian kingdom, opposing the works of God. I would like to inform you of some important facts regarding this prince, herewith.

- A) This so called ‘ **prince** ’ appointed by Satan, was sufficiently powerful to delay the ‘ **powerful Angel Gabriel** ’ for twenty-one days in Persia. **Gabriel** was able to overcome this prince and proceed to Babylonia and meet Daniel because, ‘ **Michael one of the chief princes,** ’ (an Archangel) came to him.

This gives us an idea about the power that is wielded by Satan and his servants. Hence I want to request you, dear reader, to refrain from getting into unnecessary battles with evil powers. In fact we should usually do so only when, **we receive guidance from God, to do so.** When you receive such guidance, **be full of the Holy Spirit and oppose the enemy boldly with the Power of Almighty God behind you.**

- B) When we are obedient to God, and serve Him faithfully, the devil will oppose you, and place various obstructions in your path. Although our real opposer / enemy in this connection is Satan, he usually uses other humans to do so. Please be well aware of this fact when you come across opposition in your ministry, and oppose Satan.

Ephesians 6 : 12 :-

“ For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ”

Hence dear child of God, if you are facing various difficulties in your ministry, **please do not be angry with the people who seem to be opposing you, pray for them instead.**

Resist the devil who is the one really opposing you.

James 4 : 7 :- “ Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ”

I also want you to understand one more important thing. As we mentioned earlier, Satan and his servants do possess some power, but their power is limited. However, our God is **Almighty and possesses Unlimited Power.**

Hence when we abide in God, and oppose Satan, we are able to put him to flight.

(iv) **Daniel 10 : 14 :- “ Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”**

- **‘ what will happen to your people in the future ’**

In **Daniel 10 : 14**, the Angel Gabriel is informing Daniel of another reason for which he was sent so promptly. The reason was it was in order to, **‘ explain to you what will happen to your people (the Israelites) in the future. ’**

- **‘ the vision concerns a time yet to come ’**

Here we find Gabriel explaining to Daniel that, **‘ the vision concerns a time yet to come. ’** This means that the vision shown to Daniel would be fulfilled in the **‘ end times. ’**

I want to explain to you, two more important facts, at this juncture.

A) In our previous Bible study we looked at the **‘ Seventy Sevens ’** vision recorded in **Daniel chapter 9** where we learnt that Jesus would be crucified at the end of the sixty-nine weeks, **(Daniel 9 : 25, 26)** and will come again at the end of the 70th week.

This means that there will be an extended period of time between the end of the 69th week and the beginning of the 70th week.

- B)** When we study the visions recorded in **Daniel chapter 11**, we find that the fulfilment of these prophecies would cover quite a long period of time.

We find that the visions recorded in **Daniel 11 : 1 – 35** have been fulfilled during the period between the Old and the New Testaments, while those recorded in **Daniel 11 : 36 – 45** would be fulfilled during the ' **end times.** '

Dear child of God, when we consider the facts that we learnt earlier in this series, **we are amazed at the wonderful unity and agreement we can so clearly observe, in Daniel chapters 9, 10 and 11.**

Let us therefore commit ourselves to read, study, meditate, understand and obey the **unchanging, everlasting, Word of God, which will most certainly be fulfilled, because we believe in a God who does not lie.**

d) Daniel 10 : 15 – 21

- (i)** In **Daniel 10 : 15 – 21** we find recorded the impact Gabriel's previous words had on Daniel.

Daniel 10 : 15 :- " While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. "

However the Angel Gabriel strengthened and encouraged Daniel and spoke the following words to him.

Daniel 10 : 19 :- " Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed, he said. Peace ! Be strong now ; be strong. "

(ii) Daniel 10 : 20 :- “ So he said, Do you know why I have come to you ? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go the prince of Greece will come ;”

- ‘ Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, ’

Let us now understand these words spoken by Gabriel. The key to understand this are the words, ‘ **I will return.** ’

Daniel who was informed earlier, that there would be a ‘ **great war** ’ (involving Israel) was greatly affected by this revelation, and mourned and fasted for three weeks (**Daniel 10 : 1 – 3**). In response to Daniel’s prayer, God sent Angel Gabriel to him without delay. However Gabriel was held up as the ‘ **prince of Persia** ’ obstructed him, and proceeded to continue his journey to Babylon only after the Arc Angel Michael came to fend off the ‘ **prince of Persia.** ’ (**Daniel 10 : 12, 13**)

Hence Gabriel had ‘ **to return** ’ to Persia and defeat the ‘ **prince of Persia** ’ to complete his mission.

- ‘ When I go the prince of Greece will come ; ’

The ‘ **prince of Greece** ’ mentioned here, is an evil spirit, appointed by Satan to be in charge of all Satan’s work within the Grecian kingdom. Hence the words ‘ **when I go** ’ spoken by Gabriel actually mean, ‘ **when I go, after defeating the prince of Persia** ’ the prince of Greece will take over (Persia).

Dear reader please understand this clearly. The dream King Nebuchadnezzar saw (**Daniel 2**), and the dream of four beasts that Daniel saw (**Daniel 7**) were given to them by God, to reveal the kingdoms of **Babylon, Medo – Persia, Greece and Rome** that would become World Empires in that order, at God’s appointed time.

In order to do so, God according to His Will and His Time, caused the 'princes' (demons appointed by Satan) of these nations to be defeated. Hence in order for Greece to come into power, the Angel Gabriel needed 'to return and defeat the prince of Persia.'

2. Gabriel reveals to Daniel things concerning Israel during the Inter – Testament period – (Daniel 11 : 1 – 35)

Daniel 11 : 1 :- " And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I (Gabriel) took my stand to support and protect him. "

(Please note that **Daniel 11 : 1**, confirms what is written above regarding Gentile Kingdoms).

In fact **Daniel 11 : 1** tells us, that it was the **Angel Gabriel who defeated the ' prince of Babylon ' and caused the Medo – Persian Kingdom to come into power**, and also **took a stand to protect the new kingdom of Medo – Persia.**

The following are some prophecies made by Gabriel regarding this period.

- (a) Daniel 11 : 2** concerns a prophecy that there will be four kings in Israel who will be under the Persian Empire, and that the fourth king of Israel would become very wealthy and will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.
- (b) Daniel 11 : 3 & 4** foretells that Alexander the Great would defeat him and will rule with great power, but after his demise the Grecian Empire will be divided into four kingdoms.
- (c) Daniel 11 : 5 – 20**, tells us that while the Grecian Empire got divided into four, **Ptolemy ruled Egypt and Seleucus ruled Syria** and are referred to as the King of the South and the King of the North, respectively.

Hence this portion of the book of Daniel, mainly foretells about many wars that will take place between these two kingdoms.

- (d) **Daniel 11 : 21 – 35** foretells about two wars that would take place between King Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Syria and the king of Egypt. In the first battle the king of Syria was victorious, but was defeated by the king of Egypt in the second.

That, Antiochus IV Epiphanes who was enraged by this defeat, would set up the **abomination that causes desolation** in the temple before returning to Syria, is also foretold here by the Angel Gabriel in this prophecy.

Daniel 11 : 31 :- “ His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. ”

All the prophecies mentioned above are found in **Daniel 11 : 2– 35**, and history affirms that all of them were fulfilled exactly as revealed by God through Angel Gabriel.

3. **In the last days the antichrist will speak against God and try to show that he is greater than God, but will be destroyed at the Second Coming of Jesus – (Daniel 11 : 36 – 45)**

When all the prophecies found in **Daniel 11 : 2 – 35** have been fulfilled already, the prophecies found in **Daniel 11 : 36 – 45** will be fulfilled during the ‘ **end times,** ’ close to the Second Coming of Jesus.

- (a) **Daniel 11 : 36 – 39**, mentions that the antichrist who will come in the future, will magnify himself above every god.

Daniel 11 : 36 :- “ The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath ”

- (b) **Daniel 11 : 40 – 43**, mentions that during the time of the end, the king of the South (**Egypt**) will rise up against the antichrist, and that the antichrist will defeat him and enter the land of Israel.

Daniel 11 : 40, 41 :- “⁴⁰ At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North (Syria – antichrist) will storm out against him He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. ⁴¹ He will also invade the Beautiful Land (Israel)”

- (c) **Daniel 11 : 44 :- “ But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and to annihilate many. ”**

The opinion has been expressed by reputable Bible scholars, that the ‘ **east and the north** ’ mentioned here are **China and Russia**. (“ Old Testament survey : Daniel ” by Dr.Rick Griffith, page 543)

- (d) **Daniel 11 : 45 :- “ He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him. ”**

What is mentioned in this Bible verse is that, although the antichrist makes Jerusalem his headquarters and attempts to rule the entire world, Jesus Christ will destroy him totally at His Second Coming. (Please read **Revelation 19 : 19, 20** as well)

4. The thousand year reign of Jesus Christ in the Kingdom he will set up on earth – (Daniel 12 : 1 – 13)

- (a) **Daniel 12 : 1 :- “ At that time Michael (archangel Michael) (See Jude 1 : 9) the great prince who protects your people will arise”**

This Bible verse further explains that, ‘ **There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then** ’ but that Michael will protect and deliver the Jewish people.

- (b) **Daniel 12 : 2, 3 :- “² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake : some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”**

Dear Precious Children of God, please read, understand and meditate on the amazing, marvelous promises of God in **Daniel 12 : 3 that are underlined above.**

Our God will never fail to keep these promises !

So please pray and endeavor to share the Gospel and bring many to righteousness (**Salvation**) and inherit / receive the incredible promises mentioned here.

- (c) **Daniel 12 : 4 :-** In this verse we find Gabriel instructing Daniel to, ‘ **close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end.** ’ (Please read **Daniel 12 : 4** yourself).
- (d) **Daniel 12 : 5 – 7 :-** In the vision mentioned here, Daniel sees two angels standing on the two banks of the **River Tigris**, and Gabriel who was above the waters (**Daniel 12 : 7**) proclaiming that the **period of distress (Daniel 12 : 1) which would occur during the end times** would last for three and a half years.

Daniel 12 : 7 :- “ lifted his right hand and left hand toward heaven and swear saying : ‘ It will be for a time, times and half a time ”

This means that this time period would be for 3½ years. Please note that in the lunar calendar this would be **360 x 3.5 days, which is 1,260 days.**

- (e) **Daniel 12 : 8 – 13** :- It is mentioned in **Daniel 12 : 8**, that Daniel who could not understand what the Angel Gabriel had said, asked Gabriel at this point –

Daniel 12 : 8 :- “ I heard, but did not understand. So I asked, ‘ My Lord what will the outcome of all this be ? ”

The response of Gabriel to Daniel’s question was to inform Daniel not to inquire into this, ‘ because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. ’ (**Daniel 12 : 9**)

- I am certain that you will remember that God gave Daniel the special gift of ‘ **understanding visions and dreams of all kinds,** ’ (**Daniel 1 : 17**) when Daniel was still a young man barely 18 years of age.

However the response of Gabriel to Daniel’s question in **Daniel 12 : 8** and recorded in **Daniel 12 : 9** begins with, ‘ Go your way, Daniel, because the words . . . time of the end, ’ and almost seems like a snub. Hence it is my opinion that it would be inappropriate for us to delve into the meaning of what Gabriel swore and is recorded in **Daniel 12 : 7**, too much, unnecessarily.

- However I want to express my opinion on the words, “ **Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days.** ” (**Daniel 12 : 12**)

Let us therefore look at **Daniel 9 : 27** once again.

Daniel 9 : 27 :- “ He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘ seven. ’ In the middle of the ‘ seven ’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. . . . ”

Hence we are able to understand the following.

- (i) **Daniel 9 : 27** - A 7-year covenant, confirmed by the antichrist
 - (ii) **Daniel 9 : 27** - After 3½ years (1,260 days) the antichrist breaks the covenant and puts an end to sacrifice and offering in the temple.
 - (iii) **Daniel 12 : 12** - 45 days after the 7 years our Lord Jesus will set up the **Millenial Kingdom** (1,000-year Kingdom)
- (f) **Daniel 12 : 13** :- Here we find the Angel Gabriel confirming to Daniel that, ‘ **at the end of the age you will rise** (Daniel would be remembered) **to receive your** (his) **allotted inheritance.** ’

My Dear precious Brothers and Sisters, if the Lord calls us to Himself **before the Rapture**, the assurance / promise given to Daniel, applies to us as well (**1 Thessalonians 4 : 15 – 17**).

Hence let us all dedicate our lives to the Lord, let us obey Him, thank Him, praise Him, worship Him and faithfully serve Him, as long as we have breath.

Special Note

Dear reader, even as I conclude this series of Bible studies on the book of **Daniel** at this point, I consider myself totally unworthy to **teach God’s amazing and wonderful Word.**

Although I have been teaching God’s Word for a long period of time, I have never received any formal Theological Education from any Institution. Hence I want to briefly share my testimony with you in this connection, for your edification.

Towards the end of 1979, I was prompted by the Holy Spirit to commence teaching the Bible in my local church. However, since I considered myself totally unworthy to do so, I prayed continuously for three months, and on receiving the confirmation from Almighty God, commenced conducting ' a Bible Study Class ' in my local church in February 1980.

This ' Bible Study Class ' which was commenced in 1980 was continued unbroken for 40 years (**through the Grace of Almighty God**) until February 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic compelled us to discontinue it temporarily.

Around 2009, God called me to write each Bible Study in the form of a booklet, but I disobeyed God for about one full year, because I considered my Sinhalese to be of very poor quality. However my loving merciful Father patiently continued to prompt me, until I humbled myself and in 2010 (**very reluctantly**) accepted the responsibility he had given me.

Dear reader, I want to inform you most sincerely and honestly, that from the moment I started to obey Him in this regard, Almighty God has been guiding and teaching me in an incredible way. Very often as I sit at my table to write, He guides me constantly and has filled my life with joy, peace and satisfaction.

So let me share with you 3 more sources that He has given me, to write this Bible Study on the book of **Daniel**.

They are,

- (i) **Primarily, the guidance of the Holy Spirit**
- (ii) **The NIV Study Bible – 1985**
- (iii) **Dake's Annotated Reference Bible – 1999**
- (iv) **Old Testament Survey – Daniel by Dr. Rick Griffith**
(Only for writing the Bible Study on the book of Daniel)

Dear Children of God, when God gives you a Calling, Responsibility or Guidance, please do not disobey Him. He who calls you, will always grant you, all that you need in order to carry out what He has entrusted to you, successfully. He will never fail you.

Therefore, with confidence and faith, joyfully thank and praise Him and walk along the path He leads you, faithfully.

**“ May God help you to do so,
And use you abundantly in His Service !!! ”**

Notes

**The Priceless Prize at
– Zero Price**



THE PRICELESS PRIZE AT ZERO PRICE

INTRODUCTION :-

Something that all human beings commonly accept as an indisputable fact of life is that, “ **In order to obtain or achieve anything of real value, invariably one has to make a great effort, commitment, sacrifice or pay a considerable sum of money.** ”

For example a student who desires to become a doctor, would certainly need to devote a big chunk of his time to study in order to achieve his goal. In fact anyone whose goal is to ' do well ' in any field of education would necessarily have to sacrifice or do away with many things that he would like to do otherwise, in order to reach his objective. Hence when we are informed that something of value is given free, our natural reaction is to view this information with doubt and suspicion.

My dear friend I am writing this tiny booklet in order to give you some news that is truly incredible. **A priceless gift can be received by you at no cost.**

Hence as a person who has received this incredible gift, I want to urge you to devote just 30 minutes of your precious time, to read this booklet to the end.

1. CERTAIN NEGATIVE TRAITS THAT ARE EVIDENT IN MODERN SOCIETY

(i) Increase in knowledge and decline in moral values

Today we live in a world, where knowledge is increasing at an unbelievably rapid rate. For example the technological knowledge is advancing so rapidly that, if you were to purchase the most modern mobile phone available in the market today, after a period of one year, doubtlessly you will be able to purchase a more advanced model at a cheaper price.

However in a world where knowledge is advancing at breakneck speed, what can be clearly observed is a rapid decline in moral values. Whilst it is natural to expect progress in human behaviour along with the progress of civilisation, what is evident in modern society is virtually diametrically opposite to this.

' **In our modern and developed society** ' what we see is an increase in injustice, fraud, theft, bribery and corruption, and not the converse. My dear friend, have you ever seriously tried to find out the root cause of this phenomenon? If you have given this question serious thought, you may possibly arrive at the conclusion, that the above is a result of the human nature springing from within our hearts - that is from within ourselves.

Dear friend, I am confident that this little booklet will not only help you to understand the cause of the above, but will also help you to discover the solution.

(ii) In the battle between good and evil, the tendency for evil to emerge victorious

In a rapidly developing society one problem that would be inherent is the battle between good and evil, justice and injustice etc. One of the primary causes of these conflicts is the desire of many to endeavour to reach the top echelons of society.

We would certainly agree that it is commendable for anyone to set himself high standards and goals in life. However, what we see today is a very unhealthy trend, where people resort to '**questionable methods**' that disregard the rights of others and act very selfishly and unfairly to achieve their goals and objectives. As a consequence of this we live in a society, where competition has replaced corporation and an increasing number of people value their own selfish development, '**far above justice and fair play.**'

Please find listed below some of the very unhealthy impacts this has had on modern society.

- (i) The 'haves' taking unfair advantage of the 'have-nots.'
- (ii) Many people resorting to giving bribes in order to reach their goals.
- (iii) In order to get job promotion employees stooping to despicable methods.
- (iv) People abusing their position, power and wealth to get unjust gain.

Due to the above mentioned reasons, in the battle between right and wrong, almost invariably, wrong emerges victorious.

My dear friends, in a society where wrong seems to be winning all the time, do you think that you are unable to make a difference ?

I certainly believe THAT YOU CAN !!

2. THE PRIMARY REASONS WHY THE ABOVE NEGATIVE TRAITS HAVE BECOME PREVALENT

When we focus our attention on the negative traits that are prevalent today, what we can observe is that the above mentioned traits along with many other similar and worse ones can be seen in every country. I would like to list some of them below.

- (i) Drug addiction.
- (ii) Murder being committed for even very minor reasons.
- (iii) Increase in rape.
- (iv) Increase in child abuse.
- (v) Increase in abortions.
- (vi) Increase in divorce.

- (vii) Homosexual relationships and marriages on the rise.
- (viii) Increase in theft, thuggery and fraud at every level in society.
- (ix) Mergence of all types of gangs.
- (x) A majority of citizens breaking the law of the land, when they believe they would not be detected.
- (xi) Society accepting ' **lying** ' as normal and a very minor wrong.

Dear friend, if you are able to study this global problem deeply, and find the cause of it, you would be doing a great service to society. However if you are able not only to identify the problem, but also find a solution to it, you would be doing a great service to humanity as a whole.

I hence want to invite you to join me in searching for the cause of the present global situation as described above. I want to commence my search with the assumption that the world that we live in did not come into being by chance, and that the world itself and mankind was created by an everlasting almighty being whom we call God. If you accept my assumption as correct, you may conjecture that the tragic situation that exists in the world today is possibly due to one of the following reasons.

- (i) The God, who created us, is a God who does not care how mankind conducts itself.
- (ii) The God, who created us, is a God who cares and wants to solve the tragic situation in the world, but is unable to find a solution.
- (iii) The God, who created us, is opposed by a power that seeks to mislead and destroy mankind, and our creator God is unable to overcome this opposing power.
- (iv) **The God who created us is ALMIGHTY and can overcome the opposer, however He is a God who always acts in a just and fair manner and has provided an INCREDIBLE SOLUTION to the above-defined problem.**

My Dear friends, I firmly believe, that (iv) above is the correct position. I hence define the correct position as follows The God who created us is a God who is Almighty and Righteous. He loves every one of us and wants to solve every problem of every human being, and is waiting to give all of us a PRICELESS GIFT AT ZERO PRICE.

THE PRICELESS GIFT OUR LOVING GOD OFFERS US AT NO COST

(i) The biggest problem faced by mankind

The Bible tells us that in the beginning, our Almighty, righteous and loving God created man in His own image and likeness.

(Genesis 1 : 2) He then provided man with everything that he would need to live a happy, peaceful and contented life. God also provided a place for man to live in - a garden that was planted with trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.

(Genesis 2 :) Consequently in the beginning man lived in a beautiful, pollution-free environment, having an abundance of tasty food.

Genesis 1 : 2 , :-

² Then God said, “ I give you every seed- bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground - everything that has the breath of life in it - I give every green plant for food. ”

We see from the above verses that in the beginning God supplied the food required by all creation and **both humans and animals were vegetarians** and did not feed on the flesh of others. Consequently in the whole of creation fear was nonexistent and everyone lived in peace and harmony. There was peace and harmony between the creator God and mankind, mankind and the animal kingdom, mankind and nature.

The opposer of God to whom we refer to as Satan then made his move, in order to destroy the perfect and harmonious relationships that existed in the whole of creation. His motive was to **steal the blessings** given by God to man, **kill the relationship** between God and man, and **destroy the future** of mankind forever.

John 1 : 1 :- “ The thief comes only to STEAL and KILL and DESTROY I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full . ”

The strategy of the opposer was use lies, deceit and cunning to mislead man and make man mistrust and disobey God. Satan succeeded in achieving his objective and the tragic outcome of man's disobedience was that the harmonious relationship between God and man was shattered, and ' eternal death ' became the lot of man, who was banished from his beautiful dwelling place by God.

The consequences of man's disobedience were far more outreaching and tragic. Let me explain it as follows -

As we saw earlier man was created by God, ' **in His own image and likeness** '. (Genesis 1 : 2) Hence in the beginning **man had the very nature of God within him**. However when man chose to disobey God and obey Satan, **the nature of Satan was born within him** and started controlling him.

- As we pointed out to you earlier, in today's society we can see,
- A rapid decline in moral values
 - In the battle between good and evil, evil generally emerging victorious
 - Breakdown in law and order becoming widespread worldwide.

This, my dear friend is because, with man's disobedience to God, SATAN'S NATURE STARTED REIGNING WITHIN MAN !!!

The tragedy that befell man on account of his disobedience is that, every human being born into this world thereafter is born with Satan's nature or a Sinful nature within him.

Since everyone born into this world is born with this SINFUL NATURE, it is impossible for man to lead a sinless life. Furthermore it is not necessary for anyone to teach a man to do 'sinful things', since he is born with the tendency to sin, within him. Because of this, parents can easily observe that at a very tender age little infants have 'temper tantrums' etc. with no training or coaching whatsoever.

My Dear Friends, the IMPROBABLE ANSWER is to find an answer to the question,

HOW CAN MAN BE SAVED FROM THIS SINFUL NATURE THAT EVERYONE IS BORN WITH

(ii) The solution given by Almighty God - REE

The God who created us is a God who does not lie. Our God loves mankind, and since He does not change, although mankind rebelled against Him and disobeyed Him, His love for you and me remains unchanged. Hence it is God's desire to re-establish the close relationship He had with man before the fall.

However, love is not the only characteristic of God. Our God is a **Holy God**. Hence it is not possible for Him to enter into a relationship with sinful man and also retain His holiness. The net result of these two characteristics of God, Love and Holiness is that although He loves man and wants to renew His relationship, His holiness disables Him from doing so.

Furthermore, our God is a **Righteous God**. Hence His righteousness requires Him to judge and effect punishment on man for his rebellion - disobedience sin.

My very dear friends the solution that God provided for this 'unsolvable problem' is way beyond our comprehension and understanding. He knows that no man can lead a sinless life and that **“the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6 : 2)**. He therefore sent His only son Jesus Christ into this world, to live a sinless life and then offer His life as a ransom for your sins and mine. The Lord Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and sacrificed His life on a cross at Calvary, to enable you and me to be clothed again in the image and likeness of God.

Romans 5 : 8 :- “ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this : While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. ”

The Bible tells us that every human being who believes that Jesus Christ paid the price for his sins, and accepts Jesus as his saviour, is empowered by God to become His sons.

John 1 : 12 :- “ Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ”

My dear friend, please focus your attention on this amazing promise given by Almighty God who does not lie. Here we find God promising that He will give you the right to become a child of God. This means that once again He will re-create His nature within us. In other words God is promising to change our 'evil or sinful nature' and make us 'children of God' with His nature reigning within us.

2 Corinthians 5:17 :- “ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation the old has gone, the new has come ! ”

I personally know without a shadow of doubt, that God will cast out the evil nature within us, and replace it with His nature, because years ago as a year old, I received Jesus as my personal saviour (John 1 : 12) and experienced God changing me from within. Hence my dear friend I want to request you with all my heart, to take the following steps yourself.

Step 1 :- Repent of all the sins which you may have committed knowingly or unknowingly, due to the sinful nature within you, and seek God's forgiveness.

Step 2 :- Commit your life to Jesus, and enter into God's sonship.

Step 3 :- As a child of God, **decide to live a life of faithfulness and obedience to God.**

When you sincerely take the above mentioned steps, God in His Infinite love will not only accept you as a son, but will guide you like a shepherd leading his sheep.

I hence want to place before you the words of **Psalm 2** .

Psalm 2

1. **The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.**
2. **He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,**
 - . **He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**
4. **Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**
 - . **You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil my cup overflows.**
 - . **Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

Dear friend, please take the steps mentioned above, and receive your priceless gift today. In order to help you to do this, may I humbly suggest that you sincerely offer the following prayer to God.

Loving Father, today I came to understand the sacrifice you made for me. I came to know today, how Jesus took my punishment on the cross at Calvary. I thank you Jesus for dying for my sins. I accept you as my Saviour and Lord. Accept my life Lord Jesus and mould it according to your will. Amen.

My dear friend, please share this wonderful news with others as well.

May God give you the strength

And the courage to do so !!

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