

Daniel

Daniel means “*God is my judge,*” was an Israelite of royal or noble descent who was carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of Jehoiakim and with various companions trained for the king’s service, [Daniel 1:1-5].

Following a custom of the time [Daniel 1:7] Daniel was given the Babylonian name of Belteshazzar.

Daniel gained a reputation first as an interpreter of other men’s visions [Daniel 1:17-20], a God-given ability, [verse 17].

Daniel and the other three Jewish youths demonstrated not only aptitude but also discipline. This character trait served them well in their new culture.

Daniel 1:8-15 [New King James] *“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into the favour and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, ‘I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king.’ So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ‘Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king’s delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.’ So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days. And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s delicacies.”*

A courageous move that showed their dedication to the laws of the true Creator God.

Daniel 2:1 [New King James] *“Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.”*

Dreams were considered to be messages from the gods and the wise men were expected to interpret them.

Usually the wise men could give some sort of interpretation as long as they knew what the dream was.

This time they were expected to know what the dream was as well as its meaning, [Daniel 2:2-13]. Inability to do this would result in their death.

Daniel and his friends would be included in this slaughter, [Daniel 2:14-16].

Daniel then took the problem to the only One who could solve it, the Creator God, [Daniel 2:17-23].

In total confidence in the Creator God he obeyed and worshipped, Daniel asked to be taken to the king in time to save the lives of the “*wise men,*” also himself and his friends, [Daniel 2:24-25].

Daniel 2:26-30 [New King James] *“The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, ‘Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?’ Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, ‘The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King*

Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.’”

Daniel explained it was the true God in Heaven who had revealed the dream and its meaning to him. Before Daniel told the king anything he gave God the full credit.

Our job as true Christians is always to point people to the true Creator God, never taking any credit for ourselves, [John 15:4].

Daniel then explained what the king’s dream was and exactly what it meant, [Daniel 2:31-45].

The head of gold on the statue in the dream represented Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of the Babylonian Empire.

The silver chest and the arms represented the Medo-Persian Empire, which conquered Babylon in 539BC.

The belly and thighs of bronze were the Greece and Macedonia Empire under Alexander the Great, who conquered the Medo-Persian Empire in 334-330BC.

The legs of iron represented Rome, who conquered the Greeks in 63BC.

The feet of clay and iron represented the breakup of the Roman Empire, when the territory Rome ruled divided into a mixture of strong and weak nations.

The rock cut out of the mountain depicts God’s Kingdom, which will be ruled by Jesus Christ at His Second Coming, as King of kings, [**Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:11-16**].

Jesus Christ the Rock, [1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Corinthians 3:11] did not return when the first Roman Empire collapsed. There must be at least one more attempt to create a similar empire in Europe and the Middle East.

Napoleonic France, Nazi Germany and now the European Union are three examples of such attempts. Made up of different nations, **they all have a weak foundation because iron and clay do not form a durable structure, [Daniel 2:42-54].**

Please download and study the article listed on this website under the main heading of ‘*The World Tomorrow*’ with the title ‘*Is This The Generation That Will Experience Jesus Christ’s Second Coming?*’

There are questions we need to ask ourselves about our lives and examples we need to follow when we study the life of Daniel.

Do we hold so strongly to our faith in the true Creator God that whatever happens you will continue to obey what He commands in His Word, the Christian Bible?

Such conviction keeps us one step ahead of any temptation to sin.

Such conviction gives us wisdom and stability in changing circumstances.

Do we prayerfully live out our convictions in everyday life and trust God for the results?

Daniel’s life shows that quiet convictions in a Creator God often earn long-term respect.

We must **not** wait until we are in a tough situation to learn about the power of prayer.

Daniel 6:10 [New King James] *“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.”*

Notice the last words in this verse, *“As was his custom since early days.”*

The Creator God can use people wherever they are and whoever they are or in whatever situation life has placed them.

When the Creator God does use us, always give Him the credit, for it is really the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, Who is doing the work in us and through us, [John 15:4-5].

King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, [Daniel 4:5, 10-17]. The reason was that the king and all people needed to know that *“the Most High is sovereign.”*

This is one of the most difficult lessons to learn. We may feel we are free to do as we please, yet the Creator God is sovereign over all our plans and desires.

Daniel 4:19 [New King James] *“Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, ‘Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.’ Belteshazzar answered and said, ‘My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!’”*

When Daniel understood Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, he was stunned, and he wondered how to break the news to the king of what it meant.

How could Daniel be so deeply grieved at the fate of the king who was responsible for the destruction of his home and nation?

Daniel had forgiven Nebuchadnezzar, and so God was able to use Daniel.

Forgiveness means putting the wrongs of the past behind us. We have to learn to love those who have hurt us.

1 Corinthians 13:5 [NIV] *“It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.”*

“Keeps no record of wrongs” – this is reflecting the very character of the Creator God, [Isaiah 43:25]; once we have confessed our sins and received God’s forgiveness by accepting the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God forgets our sins.

The final visions that Daniel received we are **not** to try to understand, for they were *“closed up and sealed,”* [Daniel 12:9]. As with many prophecies, we will **only** understand them **after** the events they refer to happen, for they were given to prove the power and sovereignty of the Creator God.

Isaiah 46:9-10 [New King James] *“Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.’”*

The Creator God lives outside time and space so can see into the future, not only on a national scale but a personal way.

Psalms 139:16 [New King James] *“Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.”*

All our life is laid out before our Creator God.

Daniel 12:13 [New King James] *“But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”*

The promise of a resurrection was reaffirmed to Daniel, he would one day see the fulfilment of the words that God had inspired him to preach.

We must be content with the partial picture until the Creator God wants us to see more of His plan for humanity.