

Chapter Twenty Seven – Daniel Interprets Dreams

Daniel was one of the captives sent to Babylon. Because of his great wisdom, he was kept in the palace. One day King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and only Daniel was able to explain it. He dreamt of a big statue standing in the plain of Babylon. Its head was made of gold, the chest and arms were made of silver, the belly was made of bronze, and the legs were made half of iron and half of clay. Then he saw a small stone coming down from a mountain. The faster it rolled the bigger it became. By the time it had reached the bottom, it was very big. It dashed against the statue and broke it into pieces. No one could explain this dream except Daniel, a prophet of God.

Daniel explained to the king, “The golden head of the statue is yourself, the greatest king in the world. After your death, your kingdom will fall like the golden head of the statue. The body parts made of different elements symbolize that your kingdom will be ruled by different nations – first the silver kingdom, then the bronze kingdom and finally the iron kingdom. But as the feet were made half of iron and half of clay, it would not be strong and it would also fall. The stone that you saw coming down represents the kingdom established by God. It will be an everlasting kingdom.”

Nebuchadnezzar was so impressed with Daniel’s explanation that he was certain that Daniel must be from God. He therefore appointed Daniel to be his advisor.

After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, his son Belshazzar succeeded him as king. He was not a good king and ruled badly. One night, he gave a great feast. He used the gold and silver vessels which his father had taken from the Temple of Jerusalem. As he and his guests were drinking from the sacred vessels, suddenly a human hand appeared writing three words on the wall. When Belshazzar saw this, he was full of terror and his hands and knees began to tremble. He offered a big reward and honours to anyone who could explain the words, but no one could do so. Then he was told about Daniel who was old now and still living in the palace. He sent for him and offered him a great reward. But Daniel answered, “You can keep your rewards and honours; I do not want them. But I will tell you the meaning of these words. You have dared to insult God by drinking from his sacred vessels and you worship man-made gods. He is not going to protect your kingdom.”

Daniel continued, “The first word is ‘number’. The days of your governance have been numbered and tonight it will come to an end. The second word is ‘weight’. God has weighed your good and bad deeds, and your bad deeds outweigh the good. The third word is ‘divisions’. Tonight your kingdom will be divided between the Medes and the Persians.”

That night Darius the Mede invaded Babylon. The city was captured and Belshazzar was killed. That was the end of the kingdom of Babylon. King Darius valued the ability of Daniel and appointed him to an important government position.



Daniel interprets King Nebuchadnezzar's dream

Questions:

1. What special gift did Daniel have?
2. What would happen to the kingdom established by God according to Nebuchadnezzar's dream?
3. Draw a picture of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Label the different parts and their symbolic meanings.
4. How did Nebuchadnezzar's son disrespect God?
5. How do some Christians disrespect God nowadays?
6. List THREE of your good deeds in the past week. How did they make you a better person?