

1. Last week I finished the exegesis and analysis of Daniel chapter three verses four and five. When time ran out I was about to begin the teaching of verse six.

2. Before resuming I want to give you an expanded translation of Dan 1:1-3:

Dan 4:1 Nebuchadnezzar, the regenerate ruler of the Chaldean Empire, unto all the racial, geographical and linguistic divisions in Babylon, peace from Jehovah, my God, be multiplied unto you.

Dan 4:2 As a result of my conversion, I thought it good to give my testimony and reveal the wonders that my Father has bestowed upon me.

Dan 4:3 How great are His revelations! How mighty is His salvation! God's kingdom is everlasting, and His rule extends to every generation.

Dan 4:4 I Nebuchadnezzar was enjoying a time of great prosperity in my palace; as King of the world's greatest empire I was content and happy.

Dan 4:5 Suddenly I had a horrifying dream followed by several terrifying visions I was greatly disturbed.

3. Now let's see what we can learn from an exegesis of verses six and seven:

KJV

Dan 4:6 Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream.

Dan 4:7 Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

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Dan 4:6 So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me.

Dan 4:7 When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me.

1. The powerful monarch, immobilized by fear, called on his "Magic Men" for help.

2. In view of the events of Daniel Chapter 2 it is surprising that Nebuchadnezzar did not call for Daniel immediately.

2.1 Obviously, he was still resisting the grace of God; so, as with most people, he first sought human viewpoint solutions.

3. Remember that Daniel 2:4 through Daniel Chapter 7 deals with Gentile nations, so we are working with the Chaldean language and not the Hebrew.

4. "Then came in the magicians "CHARTUMMAJA these were the scribes who wrote in hieroglyphics and recorded and maintained the files of Chaldean mysteries and religion.

5. "The astrologers "ASHEPMAJA were those who predicted the future trends of the nation based on astrology, other sciences, and their own espionage organization. They also practiced incantation by control of the breath.

6. In fact the very word ASHEPMAJA is derived from a verb meaning "to whisper, to breathe, to blow."

7. "The Chaldeans" KASDAJE as we have seen were the priestly caste who were exceedingly powerful within the governmental hierarchy.

8. "And the soothsayers" GAZERIN were the pagan counterparts of the biblical prophets who were energized by Satan's demons.

8.1 These men determined the future policies and course of action for the empire.

9. Notice what has been written of the Babylonian Priesthood in The Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. III, p. 208. "... we can foretell the influence which the priesthood of Babylon were to wield ... they were a powerful party whom it was well to placate ... "

10. As long as there is any other resource available, unbelievers (and for that matter many believers) will not seek solutions from the Word of God.

11. Since understanding this dream was beyond the reach of human wisdom we are not surprised to read in the king's report, "they did not make known unto me the interpretation."

12. Now let's see what we can learn from Dan 4:8 and 9:

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Dan 4:8 But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying.

KJV

Dan 4:8 O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

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Dan 4:9 I said, "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me.

KJV

Dan 4:9 O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

1. It was no accident that Daniel asked to come in last. There is a very obvious principle here and a lesson which can apply to us.

1.1 Many times, when dealing with an unbeliever we must leave him alone to fail.

2. This requires a great deal of wisdom and patience on the part of the believer; and Daniel, being spiritually mature, waited while the wise men floundered and failed.

2.1 Then at God's appointed time Daniel was summoned before the King.

3. Daniel was not "pushy;" he neither tried to advance himself nor did he move ahead of the Lord.

3.1 He knew that if the Lord does not provide opportunity for service he must faithfully and patiently wait with confidence.

Psa 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

4. The Bible cites many great believers who waited on the Lord. Among them was Joshua who served under Moses for forty years before the Lord promoted.

Jos 1:5 No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Jos 1:6 "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them.

Jos 1:7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

Jos 1:8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Jos 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

Jos 3:7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses.

Jos 6:27 So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

5. Another was David, a relaxed believer, who waited and looked after his father's sheep until the Lord actually opened the door for service.

5.1 His opportunity came when after forty days of crisis and failure on the part of the Jewish army, David arrived at their camp and volunteered to fight Goliath.

1Sa 17:4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall.

1Sa 17:16 For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.

1Sa 17:32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."

6. If you understand the principle of waiting on the Lord, you will never have to be concerned about advancing yourself.

6.1 When you are controlled by the Spirit and take in doctrine daily, eventually, God will use you; fortunately it will be in His way and in His own time!

7. Nebuchadnezzar mentioned the fact that Daniel had been named after Bel, the Chaldean god.

Dan 1:7 The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar ...

8. The formal address, "master of the magicians" as translated in the KJV of Dan 4:9 and Dan 5:11 was a title given by the king to Daniel.

Dan 4:9 O Belteshazzar, "master of the magicians", because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

Dan 5:11 There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made "master of the magicians", astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;

8.1 Notice Dan 2:48 where we see Daniel is said to have been placed over all the "wise men".

Dan 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.

9. Nebuchadnezzar, even as an unbeliever, recognized that Daniel's power came from a supernatural source and, therefore, he added confidently "no secret troubleth thee," literally "no problem overpowers you."

10. Let me remind you again of Daniel's reputation. Recall two earlier noted Scriptures:

Eze 14:13 Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it:

Eze 14:14 Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.

Eze 14:15 If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts:

Eze 14:16 Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate.

Eze 14:17 Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it:

Eze 14:18 Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves.

Eze 14:19 Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast:

Eze 14:20 Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.

Eze 28:3 Behold Satan, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that anyone can hide from you:

11. Before we move to the vision of the tree, let me give you an expanded translation of verses eight and nine:

Dan 4:8 Finally, my old friend Daniel appeared, this is the same Daniel whose Chaldean name was Belteshazzar, I earlier named him after the name of my former heathen god. I repeated the dream to him; after which I said:

Dan 4:9 "Belteshazzar, chief of the wise men, I know that the Spirit of God dwells in you and no mystery is too difficult for you; tell me the meaning of my dream and the visions which followed".

11. And now for the vision of the Tree:

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Dan 4:10 These are the visions I saw while lying in my bed: I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous.

Dan 4:11 The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth.

Dan 4:12 Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the beasts of the field found shelter, and the birds of the air lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed.

Dan 4:13 "In the visions I saw while lying in my bed, I looked, and there before me was a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven.

Dan 4:14 He called in a loud voice: '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.

Dan 4:15 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.

Dan 4:16 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 for him.

Dan 4:17 "The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, 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.'

Dan 4:18 "This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means, for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

1. The story of the "tree" is a symbolic representation much like the parables of the New Testament.

1.1 The basic narrative can be understood by anyone, but only a believer mature in the Word can make the spiritual application.

2. The story of the tree itself seemed to present little problem to Nebuchadnezzar; but when the tree was said to be a man, he became troubled.

2.1 Uneasily, he suspected it applied to himself, and this was the reason for his unrest and fear.

3. Every soul has the capacity to develop a frame of reference, and all that we learn forms a basis for advanced knowledge. This not only applies in the human realm, but also in the spiritual.

4. Both the conscious and the subconscious parts of one's mind use information stored in our frame of reference.

4.1 No doubt Nebuchadnezzar had remembered that in a previous vision Daniel had prophesied of both the King's greatness and down-fall; perhaps he correlated that information with the new vision.

5. In any event, sensing that there were divine implications and having exhausted all human resources, the king once again sought the interpretation through Daniel.

6. Daniel had listened to the dream and understood its implications only too well.

6.1 When Nebuchadnezzar stopped speaking, Daniel remained silent as he gravely pondered the doom of his king.

7. Before moving forward with a study of verse nineteen let me give you an expanded translation of Dan 4:10-18:

Dan 4:10 These were the visions in my mind: I saw a tree of great height in the center of the world.

Dan 4:11 It was large and strong, with its top touching the heavens, and it could be seen to the ends of the earth.

Dan 4:12 Its leaves were beautiful and its fruit abundant, providing food for all. Under it the wild beasts found shade; in its branches the birds of the air nested; all men ate of it.

Dan 4:13 In the vision I saw reconnaissance and judging angels come down from heaven and they cried out:

Dan 4:14 Cut down the tree and lop off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit; let the beasts flee its shade and the birds its branches.

Dan 4:15 But leave in the earth its stump and roots, bound with iron and brass in the grass of the field. Let him be bathed with the dew of heaven and then let him eat alongside the cattle in the fields; let him walk beside them and eat of the grass with them.

Dan 4:16 For seven years let this man lose the mind of a man and be possessed instead with the mind of an animal.

Dan 4:17 By the decree of the reconnaissance angels and the justice and love of God, this sentence is decided so that all who live may know that the Most High rules over the kingdom of men. He gives as He desires, and even sets over it the lowliest of men.

Dan 4:18 This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me its meaning. Although none of the wise men in my kingdom can tell me the meaning, you can, I know this because the Spirit of God is in you.

Now let's see what we can learn from Dan 4:19:

KJV

Dan 4:19 Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.

NIV

Dan 4:19 Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you." Belteshazzar answered, "My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries!"

1. "Daniel ... was astonished" found in the KJV is better, "Daniel was perplexed" but not because he had difficulty interpreting the dream but rather it was because he was most reluctant to give bad news to the kindly monarch.

1.1 "Was astonished" is the Hithpoel perfect of SHEMAM. Daniel was literally "shocked" into silence for a while by his thoughts which "troubled" or "agitated" him (Piel imperfect of BAHAL).

2. It is always difficult to be the bearer of bad news, but Daniel's concern and compassion for Nebuchadnezzar made this task an especially sad one.

3. The phrase "One hour" is an idiom like our familiar expression, "for a moment," meaning a moment or a very short time.

4. "His thoughts troubled" is better "His thoughts frightened him".

4.1 The king's assurance to Daniel seems to show in what affection he held his Hebrew counselor.

4.2 This in spite of his failure to invite Daniel to his presence earlier.

5. The phrase in the KJV "To them that hate thee" has been taken by some to indicate Daniel's desire that the distress predicted of the king might be on his enemies and rivals.

6. Others have interpreted his words to mean that the events predicted would give comfort to the king's enemies and rivals.

7. In my view it would seem better to translate "just as the NIV has rendered, "My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries!"

8. When the king observed Daniel's hesitation, he, in effect, urged him, "Don't hold back on my account; let the chips fall where they may!"

9. At this point only Daniel was aware of Nebuchadnezzar's fate a disaster which, when revealed, would be bad news to the king and welcome news to all his enemies.

End Lesson Taught 6-10-2001