

Daniel

In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar, and placed the

5 vessels in the treasury of his gods. Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and

10 language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court.

Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah. The palace master gave them other names: Daniel he called

15 Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego. But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself. Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master. The palace master said

20 to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and

your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your own age, you would endanger my head with the king." Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: "Please test your servants for ten days. Let
5 us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal rations, and deal with your servants according to what you observe." So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days. At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who
10 had been eating the royal rations. So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams. At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the
15 palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, and the king spoke with them. And among them all, no one was found to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they were stationed in the king's court. In every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the
20 magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. And Daniel continued there

until the first year of King Cyrus. In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed such dreams that his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. So the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his

5 dreams. When they came in and stood before the king, he said to them, "I have had such a dream that my spirit is troubled by the desire to understand it." The Chaldeans said to the king (in Aramaic), "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will reveal the interpretation." The king answered the Chaldeans, "This is a public decree: if you do not tell me both

10 the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. But if you do tell me the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation." They answered a second time, "Let the king first tell his servants the dream, then we can give its

15 interpretation." The king answered, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see I have firmly decreed: if you do not tell me the dream, there is but one verdict for you. You have agreed to speak lying and misleading words to me until things take a turn. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation." The

20 Chaldeans answered the king, "There is no one on earth who can reveal what

the king demands! In fact no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. The thing that the king is asking is too difficult, and no one can reveal it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with mortals." Because of this the

5 king flew into a violent rage and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. The decree was issued, and the wise men were about to be executed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, to execute them. Then Daniel responded with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the king's chief executioner, who had gone out to execute the wise men of

10 Babylon; he asked Arioch, the royal official, "Why is the decree of the king so urgent?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. So Daniel went in and requested that the king give him time and he would tell the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his home and informed his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and told them to seek mercy from the God

15 of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions with the rest of the wise men of Babylon might not perish. Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel said: "Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and

20 sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who

have understanding. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with him. To you, O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and power, and have now revealed to me what we asked of you, for you have revealed to us

5 what the king ordered." Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will give the king the interpretation." Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king and said to him: "I have found among the exiles from Judah a man

10 who can tell the king the interpretation." The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to tell me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?" Daniel answered the king, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or diviners can show to the king the mystery that the king is asking, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has

15 disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed were these: To you, O king, as you lay in bed, came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and the revealer of mysteries disclosed to you what is to be. But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have

20 more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation may be

known to the king and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

"You were looking, O king, and lo! there was a great statue. This statue was huge, its brilliance extraordinary; it was standing before you, and its

appearance was frightening. The head of that statue was of fine gold, its

5 chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its

feet partly of iron and partly of clay. As you looked on, a stone was cut

out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and

clay and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the

silver, and the gold, were all broken in pieces and became like the chaff of

10 the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a

trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a

great mountain and filled the whole earth. "This was the dream; now we will

tell the king its interpretation. You, O king, the king of kings--to whom the

God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory,

15 into whose hand he has given human beings, wherever they live, the wild

animals of the field, and the birds of the air, and whom he has established

as ruler over them all--you are the head of gold. After you shall arise

another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which

shall rule over the whole earth. And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong

20 as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and

shatter all these. As you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the strength of iron shall be in it, as you saw the iron mixed with the clay. As the toes of the feet were part iron and part clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy." Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, worshiped Daniel, and commanded that a grain offering and incense be offered to him. The king said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery!" Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king's court. King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue whose height was sixty cubits and whose width was six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. Then King

5 Nebuchadnezzar sent for the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to assemble and come to the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. So the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the

10 officials of the provinces, assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. When they were standing before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, you

15 are to fall down and worship the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire." Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the

20 golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Accordingly, at this time

certain Chaldeans came forward and denounced the Jews. They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! You, O king, have made a decree, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, shall fall down and worship the golden statue, and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire. There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These pay no heed to you, O King. They do not serve your gods and they do not worship the golden statue that you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought in; so they brought those men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods and you do not worship the golden statue that I have set up? Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble to fall down and worship the statue that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?" Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. If our God

whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with

5 rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire. So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics, their trousers, their hats, and their

10 other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. Because the king's command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. But the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was

15 astonished and rose up quickly. He said to his counselors, "Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "True, O king." He replied, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god." Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and

20 said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God,

come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their
5 tunics were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them.

Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a
10 decree: Any people, nation, or language that utters blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way." Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and
15 languages that live throughout the earth: May you have abundant prosperity!

The signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me I am pleased to recount. How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his sovereignty is from generation to generation. I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living at ease in my home and prospering
20 in my palace. I saw a dream that frightened me; my fantasies in bed and the

visions of my head terrified me. So I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, in order that they might tell me the interpretation of the dream. Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the diviners came in, and I told them the dream, but they

5 could not tell me its interpretation. At last Daniel came in before me--he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and who is endowed with a spirit of the holy gods--and I told him the dream: "O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that you are endowed with a spirit of the holy gods and that no mystery is too difficult for you. Hear the

10 dream that I saw; tell me its interpretation. Upon my bed this is what I saw; there was a tree at the center of the earth, and its height was great. The tree grew great and strong, its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the ends of the whole earth. Its foliage was beautiful, its fruit abundant, and it provided food for all. The animals of the field found shade under it, the

15 birds of the air nested in its branches, and from it all living beings were fed. I continued looking, in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and there was a holy watcher, coming down from heaven. He cried aloud and said: 'Cut down the tree and chop off its branches, strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from beneath it and the birds from its

20 branches. But leave its stump and roots in the ground, with a band of iron

and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. Let him be bathed with the dew of heaven. and let his lot be with the animals of the field in the grass of the earth. Let his mind be changed from that of a human, and let the mind of an animal be given to him. And let seven times pass over him. The

5 sentence is rendered by decree of the watchers, the decision is given by order of the holy ones, in order that all who live may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdom of mortals; he gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of human beings.' This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation, since

10 all the wise men of my kingdom are unable to tell me the interpretation. You are able, however, for you are endowed with a spirit of the holy gods." Then Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar, was severely distressed for a while. His thoughts terrified him. The king said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or the interpretation terrify you." Belteshazzar answered, "My lord,

15 may the dream be for those who hate you, and its interpretation for your enemies! The tree that you saw, which grew great and strong, so that its top reached to heaven and was visible to the end of the whole earth, whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and which provided food for all, under which animals of the field lived, and in whose branches the birds of

20 the air had nests-- it is you, O king! You have grown great and strong.

Your greatness has increased and reaches to heaven, and your sovereignty to the ends of the earth. And whereas the king saw a holy watcher coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze, in the

5 grass of the field; and let him be bathed with the dew of heaven, and let his lot be with the animals of the field, until seven times pass over him'-- this is the interpretation, O king, and it is a decree of the Most High that has come upon my lord the king: You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the wild animals. You shall be made to eat grass

10 like oxen, you shall be bathed with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals, and gives it to whom he will. As it was commanded to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be reestablished for you from the time that you learn that Heaven is

15 sovereign. Therefore, O king, may my counsel be acceptable to you: atone for your sins with righteousness, and your iniquities with mercy to the oppressed, so that your prosperity may be prolonged." All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, and the king said, "Is this not

20 magnificent Babylon, which I have built as a royal capital by my mighty

power and for my glorious majesty?" While the words were still in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven: "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: The kingdom has departed from you! You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the animals of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals and gives it to whom he will." Immediately the sentence was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven away from human society, ate grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers and his nails became like birds' claws. When that period was over, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me. I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored the one who lives forever. For his sovereignty is an everlasting sovereignty, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does what he wills with the host of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. There is no one who can stay his hand or say to him, "What are you doing?" At that time my reason returned to me; and my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom. My counselors and my lords sought me out, I was reestablished over my kingdom, and still

more greatness was added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol
and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are truth, and his ways are
justice; and he is able to bring low those who walk in pride. King
Belshazzar made a great festival for a thousand of his lords, and he was
5 drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. Under the influence of the
wine, Belshazzar commanded that they bring in the vessels of gold and silver
that his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem, so
that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from
them. So they brought in the vessels of gold and silver that had been taken
10 out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his
lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. They drank the wine
and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.
Immediately the fingers of a human hand appeared and began writing on the
plaster of the wall of the royal palace, next to the lampstand. The king was
15 watching the hand as it wrote. Then the king's face turned pale, and his
thoughts terrified him. His limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together.
The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the
diviners; and the king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read
this writing and tell me its interpretation shall be clothed in purple, have a
20 chain of gold around his neck, and rank third in the kingdom." Then all the

king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king the interpretation. Then King Belshazzar became greatly terrified and his face turned pale, and his lords were perplexed. The queen, when she heard the discussion of the king and his lords, came into the banqueting hall. The

5 queen said, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts terrify you or your face grow pale. There is a man in your kingdom who is endowed with a spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father he was found to have enlightenment, understanding, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods. Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters,

10 Chaldeans, and diviners, because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation." Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, "So you are Daniel, one of the

15 exiles of Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? I have heard of you that a spirit of the gods is in you, and that enlightenment, understanding, and excellent wisdom are found in you. Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and tell me its interpretation, but they were not able to give the interpretation of the

20 matter. But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve

problems. Now if you are able to read the writing and tell me its interpretation, you shall be clothed in purple, have a chain of gold around your neck, and rank third in the kingdom." Then Daniel answered in the presence of the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, or give your rewards to
5 someone else! Nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and let him know the interpretation. O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar kingship, greatness, glory, and majesty. And because of the greatness that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. He killed those he wanted to kill, kept alive those he
10 wanted to keep alive, honored those he wanted to honor, and degraded those he wanted to degrade. But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he acted proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory was stripped from him. He was driven from human society, and his mind was made like that of an animal. His dwelling was with the
15 wild asses, he was fed grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals, and sets over it whomever he will. And you, Belshazzar his son, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this! You have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven! The vessels of
20 his temple have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your

wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them. You have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know; but the God in whose power is your very breath, and to whom belong all your ways, you have not honored. "So from

5 his presence the hand was sent and this writing was inscribed. And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; TEKEL, you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting; PERES, your kingdom is divided and given to the

10 Medes and Persians." Then Belshazzar gave the command, and Daniel was clothed in purple, a chain of gold was put around his neck, and a proclamation was made concerning him that he should rank third in the kingdom. That very night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was killed. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old. It

15 pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred twenty satraps, stationed throughout the whole kingdom, and over them three presidents, including Daniel; to these the satraps gave account, so that the king might suffer no loss. Soon Daniel distinguished himself above all the other presidents and satraps because an excellent spirit was in him, and the king planned to

20 appoint him over the whole kingdom. So the presidents and the satraps tried

to find grounds for complaint against Daniel in connection with the kingdom.

But they could find no grounds for complaint or any corruption, because he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption could be found in him. The men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel

5 unless we find it in connection with the law of his God." So the presidents and satraps conspired and came to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an interdict, that whoever prays to anyone,

10 divine or human, for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions. Now, O king, establish the interdict and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." Therefore King Darius signed the document and interdict. Although Daniel knew that the document had been

15 signed, he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him, just as he had done previously. The conspirators came and found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God. Then they approached the king and said concerning the interdict, "O

20 king! Did you not sign an interdict, that anyone who prays to anyone, divine

or human, within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions?" The king answered, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." Then they responded to the king, "Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no
5 attention to you, O king, or to the interdict you have signed, but he is saying his prayers three times a day." When the king heard the charge, he was very much distressed. He was determined to save Daniel, and until the sun went down he made every effort to rescue him. Then the conspirators came to the king and said to him, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the
10 Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed." Then the king gave the command, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you faithfully serve, deliver you!" A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with
15 the signet of his lords, so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no food was brought to him, and sleep fled from him. Then, at break of day, the king got up and hurried to the den of lions. When he came near the den where Daniel was, he cried out anxiously to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the
20 living God, has your God whom you faithfully serve been able to deliver

you from the lions?" Daniel then said to the king, "O king, live forever! My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong." Then the king was exceedingly glad and commanded

5 that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. The king gave a command, and those who had accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the den of lions--they, their children, and their wives. Before they reached the bottom of the den the lions overpowered

10 them and broke all their bones in pieces. Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: "May you have abundant prosperity! I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: For he is the living God, enduring forever. His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his

15 dominion has no end. He delivers and rescues, he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth; for he has saved Daniel from the power of the lions." So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian. In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down

20 the dream: I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven

stirring up the great sea, and four great beasts came up out of the sea,
different from one another. The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings.
Then, as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from
the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human
5 mind was given to it. Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like
a bear. It was raised up on one side, had three tusks in its mouth among its
teeth and was told, "Arise, devour many bodies!" After this, as I watched,
another appeared, like a leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its
back and four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the
10 visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly
strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, breaking in pieces, and
stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that
preceded it, and it had ten horns. I was considering the horns, when another
horn appeared, a little one coming up among them; to make room for it,
15 three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like
human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly. As I watched,
thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing
was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was
fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and
20 flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousands served him, and ten

thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened. I watched then because of the noise of the
arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was
put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire.

5 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives
were prolonged for a season and a time. As I watched in the night visions, I
saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he
came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. To him was given
dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages
10 should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass
away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed. As for me,
Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me, and the visions of my head
terrified me. I approached one of the attendants to ask him the truth
concerning all this. So he said that he would disclose to me the interpretation
15 of the matter: "As for these four great beasts, four kings shall arise out of
the earth. But the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and
possess the kingdom forever--forever and ever." Then I desired to know the
truth concerning the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest,
exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which
20 devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped what was left with its feet; and

concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and concerning the other
horn, which came up and to make room for which three of them fell out--
the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke arrogantly, and that seemed
greater than the others. As I looked, this horn made war with the holy ones
5 and was prevailing over them, until the Ancient One came; then judgment
was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when
the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom. This is what he said: "As
for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth that shall be
different from all the other kingdoms; it shall devour the whole earth, and
10 trample it down, and break it to pieces. As for the ten horns, out of this
kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them. This one
shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. He
shall speak words against the Most High, shall wear out the holy ones of the
Most High, and shall attempt to change the sacred seasons and the law; and
15 they shall be given into his power for a time, two times, and half a time.
Then the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away,
to be consumed and totally destroyed. The kingship and dominion and the
greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the
people of the holy ones of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an
20 everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them." Here the

account ends. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly terrified me, and my face turned pale; but I kept the matter in my mind. In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me at first. In the vision I was looking and saw myself in

5 Susa the capital, in the province of Elam, and I was by the river Ulai. I looked up and saw a ram standing beside the river. It had two horns. Both horns were long, but one was longer than the other, and the longer one came up second. I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. All beasts were powerless to withstand it, and no one could

10 rescue from its power; it did as it pleased and became strong. As I was watching, a male goat appeared from the west, coming across the face of the whole earth without touching the ground. The goat had a horn between its eyes. It came toward the ram with the two horns that I had seen standing beside the river, and it ran at it with savage force. I saw it approaching the

15 ram. It was enraged against it and struck the ram, breaking its two horns. The ram did not have power to withstand it; it threw the ram down to the ground and trampled upon it, and there was no one who could rescue the ram from its power. Then the male goat grew exceedingly great; but at the height of its power, the great horn was broken, and in its place there came

20 up four prominent horns toward the four winds of heaven. Out of one of

them came another horn, a little one, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the beautiful land. It grew as high as the host of heaven. It threw down to the earth some of the host and some of the stars, and trampled on them. Even against the prince of the host it

5 acted arrogantly; it took the regular burnt offering away from him and overthrew the place of his sanctuary. Because of wickedness, the host was given over to it together with the regular burnt offering; it cast truth to the ground, and kept prospering in what it did. Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one that spoke, "For how long is

10 this vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled?" And he answered him, "For two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state." When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I tried to understand it. Then someone appeared standing

15 before me, having the appearance of a man, and I heard a human voice by the Ulai, calling, "Gabriel, help this man understand the vision." So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I became frightened and fell prostrate. But he said to me, "Understand, O mortal, that the vision is for the time of the end." As he was speaking to me, I fell into a trance, face to

20 the ground; then he touched me and set me on my feet. He said, "Listen,

and I will tell you what will take place later in the period of wrath; for it refers to the appointed time of the end. As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia. The male goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn between its eyes is the first king. As for

5 the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power. At the end of their rule, when the transgressions have reached their full measure, a king of bold countenance shall arise, skilled in intrigue. He shall grow strong in power, shall cause fearful destruction, and shall succeed in what he does. He shall

10 destroy the powerful and the people of the holy ones. By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall be great. Without warning he shall destroy many and shall even rise up against the Prince of princes. But he shall be broken, and not by human hands. The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true. As for

15 you, seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now." So I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days; then I arose and went about the king's business. But I was dismayed by the vision and did not understand it. In the first year of Darius son of Ahasuerus, by birth a Mede, who became king over the realm of the Chaldeans-- in the first year of his reign, I,

20 Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the

word of the LORD to the prophet Jeremiah, must be fulfilled for the
devastation of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. Then I turned to the Lord
God, to seek an answer by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth
and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "Ah,
5 Lord, great and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love with
those who love you and keep your commandments, we have sinned and done
wrong, acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments
and ordinances. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who
spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our ancestors, and to all
10 the people of the land. "Righteousness is on your side, O Lord, but open
shame, as at this day, falls on us, the people of Judah, the inhabitants of
Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in
all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that
they have committed against you. Open shame, O LORD, falls on us, our
15 kings, our officials, and our ancestors, because we have sinned against you.
To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled
against him, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by
following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. "All
Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your
20 voice. So the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses, the servant of

God, have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against you. He
has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers,
by bringing upon us a calamity so great that what has been done against
Jerusalem has never before been done under the whole heaven. Just as it is
5 written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us. We did not
entreat the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and
reflecting on his fidelity. So the LORD kept watch over this calamity until
he brought it upon us. Indeed, the LORD our God is right in all that he has
done; for we have disobeyed his voice. "And now, O Lord our God, who
10 brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and made
your name renowned even to this day--we have sinned, we have done
wickedly. O Lord, in view of all your righteous acts, let your anger and
wrath, we pray, turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain;
because of our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your
15 people have become a disgrace among all our neighbors. Now therefore, O
our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his supplication, and for
your own sake, Lord, let your face shine upon your desolated sanctuary.
Incline your ear, O my God, and hear. Open your eyes and look at our
desolation and the city that bears your name. We do not present our
20 supplication before you on the ground of our righteousness, but on the

ground of your great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, listen
and act and do not delay! For your own sake, O my God, because your city
and your people bear your name!" While I was speaking, and was praying
and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my
5 supplication before the LORD my God on behalf of the holy mountain of
my God-- while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had
seen before in a vision, came to me in swift flight at the time of the
evening sacrifice. He came and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come out to
give you wisdom and understanding. At the beginning of your supplications a
10 word went out, and I have come to declare it, for you are greatly beloved.
So consider the word and understand the vision: "Seventy weeks are decreed
for your people and your holy city: to finish the transgression, to put an end
to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal
both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. Know therefore
15 and understand: from the time that the word went out to restore and rebuild
Jerusalem until the time of an anointed prince, there shall be seven weeks;
and for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in
a troubled time. After the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off
and shall have nothing, and the troops of the prince who is to come shall
20 destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to

the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall make sacrifice and offering cease; and in their place shall be an abomination that desolates, until the decreed end is poured out upon the desolator." In the

5 third year of King Cyrus of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. The word was true, and it concerned a great conflict. He understood the word, having received understanding in the vision. At that time I, Daniel, had been mourning for three weeks. I had eaten no rich food, no meat or wine had entered my mouth, and I had not anointed myself at

10 all, for the full three weeks. On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris), I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen, with a belt of gold from Uphaz around his waist. His body was like beryl, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and

15 the sound of his words like the roar of a multitude. I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the people who were with me did not see the vision, though a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone to see this great vision. My strength left me, and my complexion grew deathly pale, and I retained no strength. Then I heard the sound of his

20 words; and when I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a trance, face to

the ground. But then a hand touched me and roused me to my hands and knees. He said to me, "Daniel, greatly beloved, pay attention to the words that I am going to speak to you. Stand on your feet, for I have now been sent to you." So while he was speaking this word to me, I stood up

5 trembling. He said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed me twenty-one days. So Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I left him there

10 with the prince of the kingdom of Persia, and have come to help you understand what is to happen to your people at the end of days. For there is a further vision for those days." While he was speaking these words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then one in human form touched my lips, and I opened my mouth to speak, and said to the one

15 who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision such pains have come upon me that I retain no strength. How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For I am shaking, no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me." Again one in human form touched me and strengthened me. He said, "Do not fear, greatly beloved, you are safe. Be strong and courageous!"

20 When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Let my lord speak, for

you have strengthened me." Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Now I must return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I am through with him, the prince of Greece will come. But I am to tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth. There is no one with me who

5 contends against these princes except Michael, your prince. As for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to support and strengthen him.

"Now I will announce the truth to you. Three more kings shall arise in Persia. The fourth shall be far richer than all of them, and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of

10 Greece. Then a warrior king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and take action as he pleases. And while still rising in power, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted and go to others besides these. "Then the king of

15 the south shall grow strong, but one of his officers shall grow stronger than he and shall rule a realm greater than his own realm. After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to ratify the agreement. But she shall not retain her power, and his offspring shall not endure. She shall be given up, she and her

20 attendants and her child and the one who supported her. "In those times a

branch from her roots shall rise up in his place. He shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall take action against them and prevail. Even their gods, with their idols and with their precious vessels of silver and gold, he shall carry off to Egypt as spoils of war. For some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north; then the latter shall invade the realm of the king of the south, but will return to his own land. "His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall advance like a flood and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. Moved with rage, the king of the south shall go out and do battle against the king of the north, who shall muster a great multitude, which shall, however, be defeated by his enemy. When the multitude has been carried off, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall overthrow tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail. For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, larger than the former, and after some years he shall advance with a great army and abundant supplies. "In those times many shall rise against the king of the south. The lawless among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall fail. Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siegeworks, and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, not even his picked troops, for there shall be no strength to resist. But he

who comes against him shall take the actions he pleases, and no one shall
withstand him. He shall take a position in the beautiful land, and all of it
shall be in his power. He shall set his mind to come with the strength of
his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of peace and perform them. In
5 order to destroy the kingdom, he shall give him a woman in marriage; but it
shall not succeed or be to his advantage. Afterward he shall turn to the
coastlands, and shall capture many. But a commander shall put an end to his
insolence; indeed, he shall turn his insolence back upon him. Then he shall
turn back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and
10 fall, and shall not be found. "Then shall arise in his place one who shall
send an official for the glory of the kingdom; but within a few days he shall
be broken, though not in anger or in battle. In his place shall arise a
contemptible person on whom royal majesty had not been conferred; he shall
come in without warning and obtain the kingdom through intrigue. Armies
15 shall be utterly swept away and broken before him, and the prince of the
covenant as well. And after an alliance is made with him, he shall act
deceitfully and become strong with a small party. Without warning he shall
come into the richest parts of the province and do what none of his
predecessors had ever done, lavishing plunder, spoil, and wealth on them. He
20 shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time. He shall stir up

his power and determination against the king of the south with a great army,
and the king of the south shall wage war with a much greater and stronger
army. But he shall not succeed, for plots shall be devised against him by
those who eat of the royal rations. They shall break him, his army shall be
5 swept away, and many shall fall slain. The two kings, their minds bent on
evil, shall sit at one table and exchange lies. But it shall not succeed, for
there remains an end at the time appointed. He shall return to his land with
great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. He shall
work his will, and return to his own land. "At the time appointed he shall
10 return and come into the south, but this time it shall not be as it was
before. For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall lose heart
and withdraw. He shall be enraged and take action against the holy covenant.
He shall turn back and pay heed to those who forsake the holy covenant.
Forces sent by him shall occupy and profane the temple and fortress. They
15 shall abolish the regular burnt offering and set up the abomination that makes
desolate. He shall seduce with intrigue those who violate the covenant; but
the people who are loyal to their God shall stand firm and take action. The
wise among the people shall give understanding to many; for some days,
however, they shall fall by sword and flame, and suffer captivity and
20 plunder. When they fall victim, they shall receive a little help, and many

shall join them insincerely. Some of the wise shall fall, so that they may be refined, purified, and cleansed, until the time of the end, for there is still an interval until the time appointed. "The king shall act as he pleases. He shall exalt himself and consider himself greater than any god, and shall speak

5 horrendous things against the God of gods. He shall prosper until the period of wrath is completed, for what is determined shall be done. He shall pay no respect to the gods of his ancestors, or to the one beloved by women; he shall pay no respect to any other god, for he shall consider himself greater than all. He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these; a god whom

10 his ancestors did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall make more wealthy, and shall appoint them as rulers over many, and shall distribute the land for a price. "At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him. But

15 the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. He shall advance against countries and pass through like a flood. He shall come into the beautiful land, and tens of thousands shall fall victim, but Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites shall escape from his power. He shall stretch out his hand against

20 the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall become ruler

of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the riches of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in his train. But reports from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to bring ruin and complete destruction to many. He shall pitch his palatial tents

5 between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with no one to help him. "At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book.

10 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, keep the words secret and the book sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be

15 running back and forth, and evil shall increase." Then I, Daniel, looked, and two others appeared, one standing on this bank of the stream and one on the other. One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was upstream, "How long shall it be until the end of these wonders?" The man clothed in linen, who was upstream, raised his right hand and his left hand toward

20 heaven. And I heard him swear by the one who lives forever that it would

be for a time, two times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be accomplished. I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?" He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for

5 the words are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be purified, cleansed, and refined, but the wicked shall continue to act wickedly. None of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. From the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that desolates is set up, there shall be one thousand two

10 hundred ninety days. Happy are those who persevere and attain the thousand three hundred thirty-five days. But you, go your way, and rest; you shall rise for your reward at the end of the days." *

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