

Commentary on Daniel

Chapters 1 - 6

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Serve Yahweh in All Circumstances

Daniel - Pt. 1

Text: **Daniel 1**

I. Today we begin a new book of the Bible, a book I am excited about studying, and one which I believe we can learn a great deal from.

- A. It is amazing what you learn when you actually study complete books of the Bible.
- B. It is one thing to read a verse here and there (and that's not always a bad thing) but when you dig into an entire book and notice all that is said in its original context and setting, points that may not have been so clear before begin to become clearer than you ever imagined.
- C. So what is the setting of the book of Daniel?
 - 1. The setting is in the land of Babylon, ruled at this time by a very powerful leader named Nebuchadnezzar. (**Daniel 1:1-2**)
 - 2. You can read about how Nebuchadnezzar took over the Judahite peoples as well as destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, tore down Jerusalem's wall, and burned down all its palaces in *2 Chronicles 36*. In doing this he took the House of Judah to the land of Babylon where they would dwell under his command.
 - 3. Now you may think that this is such a terrible thing for a heathen, foreign ruler to do to the city and the people of Yahweh. I would agree that it is a terrible occurrence, but what placed the Judahites into this circumstance was even worse. *2 Chronicles 36:15-16* tells us that Yahweh, time and time again sent messengers (prophets) to His people to tell them to repent for He had compassion upon his people and His dwelling place. But the people would not listen. They continued to ridicule Yah's messengers, despise Yah's words, and scoff at His prophets until Yahweh's wrath was so stirred up against His people that He brought this

attack upon them. He had told them previous that if they do not obey they would be led into a strange land (Leviticus 26).

4. This is the scene of the book of Daniel. The nation of Judah had been taken captive by the Babylonian government so to speak. We are going to see though, that in the midst of this crisis there were still a few faithful people that were devoted to Yahweh and sought to serve him in spite of their circumstance.

II. Daniel 1:3-7

A. Verses 3-4

1. King Nebuchadnezzar here has his chief official seek out some capable Israelite men to serve in his palace.

2. Notice that Nebuchadnezzar wanted them to be of noble blood, just not any Israelites would do. He was looking for men who descended from a royal family in Israel.

3. He also required that they be without any physical defect, handsome, and suitable to instruction. They needed to be perceptive, able to learn. He wanted to teach them the Chaldean literature.

B. Verse 5

1. The King wanted to make sure that these men were well taken care of seeing they would serve in the royal court.

2. So, he assigned for them daily meals from the royal food and royal wine. The King ordered that they were to be given the best food and wine (by his estimation) in the Kingdom.

3. They were to be trained for 3 years. It was as though they would go to this Babylonian school for 3 years and then they would be qualified to serve in the Kings palace.

C. Verses 6-7

1. The book now gives us the names of the men from Judah who were chosen for service to the King.

2. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah.

3. Note here that most people are pretty familiar with the name Daniel, but most are not familiar with the Hebrew names of the other three men. Most people know these men by the names of Shadrach, Meshach, and

Abednego; this is correct, but only as it pertains to their Babylonian/Chaldean names given to them by the chief official under Nebuchandnezzar.

4. If these Judahite men were going to serve under the Babylonian King then they would need names “suitable” for the palace.
5. Their Hebrew names exalted Yahweh, God of Israel. Their Babylonians names however did not.
6. **Daniel** - “*Elohim is my Judge*” whereas **Beltashazzar** - “*the prince of whom ‘Bel’ favors*” Bel was the name of a chief idol/god served by Nebuchadnezzar. See **Daniel 4:8**. This probably notes that Daniel was even at this time a favorite amongst those chosen.
7. **Hananiah** - “*Yah has favored*” whereas **Shadrach** - “*Command of Aku; the inspiration of the sun*”
8. Mishael - “Who is what Elohim is?” whereas Meshach - “He who belongs to the goddess Sheshach”
9. **Azariah** - “*Yah has helped*” whereas **Abednego** - “*Servant of Nebo*”
10. These men had their Hebrew names taken from them which exalted their Creator and had names attached to them that gave exaltation to false deities thus idols.

III. **Daniel 1:8-16**

A. **Verse 8**

1. Daniel committed himself to Yahweh and believed that to partake of the Kings food and wine would be a defilement to him.
2. There is more than one way to understand this decision by Daniel.
 - a. First, Daniel may have refrained from eating the King’s food because it contained meat which would be considered unclean or unfit for a Judahite to eat. Based on the laws found in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 we find that some animals are not permissible to eat.
 - b. Secondly, it could have additionally been that all of the Kings meat and wine had been offered in sacrifice to the gods which they served. Heathen nations offered animals in sacrifice to their gods as well as drink offerings to their gods.

c. Thirdly, it may have been as the **Geneva Bible** notes: “Not that he thought any religion to be in the meat or drink (for afterwards he did eat), but because the king should not entice him by this sweet poison to forget his religion and accustomed sobriety, and that in his meat and drink he might daily remember of what people he was from. And Daniel brings this in to show how God from the beginning assisted him with his Spirit, and at length called him to be a Prophet.”

3. Daniel thus asked permission to abstain.

B. Verses 9-10

1. Notice that Yahweh had granted Daniel favor and compassion with the chief official.
2. Daniel, even under the circumstances he was in, remained dedicated to the law of Yahweh and because of this he was favored in the eyes of a heathen official.
3. Here the official explains to Daniel that he would like to grant his request but the King has given him orders that Daniel is to eat this food and drink this wine. If Daniel doesn’t do so he may look sickly to the King and then the chief official would get into trouble and may even lose his life.

C. Verses 11-16

1. Daniel asks if they will just perform a test. He asks that they (the four men) be given vegetables to eat and water to drink for 10 days.
2. After the 10 days are over Daniel asks if they will inspect their appearance as well as the appearance of the other men in training who are eating the King’s food and drinking the Kings wine.
3. The 10 days were completed and the young men were examined. Daniel and company looked healthier (lit. “fatter of flesh”) than all the other young men in training.
4. After this test the guard agreed to continue to feed Daniel and company the vegetables they had requested.

IV. Daniel 1:17-21

A. Verse 17

1. Yahweh blessed these men with great wisdom.
2. Daniel was given the special gift of understanding visions and dreams of all sorts.

B. Verses 18-21

1. When the time had come to present them to the King (presumably 3 years; vs. 5) the King interviewed them and no one was found equal to the four men.
2. When the King would ask them about a matter he found them to be 10 times better than all the other diviner-priests and mediums in his kingdom.
3. Daniel remains in Babylon until the reign of Cyrus, a king who would come much later in the story of Daniel.

V. What We Learn from Daniel Chapter One

A. Seek for ways to glorify Yahweh in your life; even in the small matters.

The parents of these men had given them names that uplifted the Creator. This shows that the fathers and mothers of these men sought to glorify Yahweh even in the matters that others may feel to be insignificant.

B. Don't allow a terrible circumstance to drive you away from serving Yahweh.

I am sure Daniel would have rather been in Jerusalem, with a standing temple, keeping the feasts at the place Yahweh chose to put His name. Instead of grumbling and complaining, He recognized that this is where Yahweh had him for the moment, and he would make the best of it.

C. Do not think that captivity means that you quit obeying Yahweh's laws.

Sure, there were some laws that Daniel couldn't possibly obey while in Babylon, but the ones that he could still obey he obeyed. He was faithful in that which was possible. Even when the King's orders said different, he remained true.

D. Approach the situations Yahweh places you in with humility.

Daniel requested of the chief official that he be given different food and drink; he did not demand it. Always remember that much can be gained by approaching matters with humility and a soft word.

E. Recognize that Yahweh rewards dedication even though it seems like a long time.

Daniel was trained for 3 years before being noticed by the King. His commitment to Yahweh didn't result in his being led back to Jerusalem the next

day. However, after 3 years of commitment, he was brought before the King and he and his companions were recognized as being the most noble of all the servants in the Kings palace. So, here we have four Judahites that are ruling in the Babylonian government.

False Prophets Have Satanic Power

Daniel - Pt. 2

Text: **Daniel 2:1-3**

I. Introduction

A. Today we will not get far into the 2nd chapter of Daniel. As I was reading I felt I could not go past verse 3 without explaining to you the seriousness of recognizing the Satanic power of the false prophet.

B. That kind of sounds strange to me even as I say it, but it is Scripturally true. False prophets, fortune tellers, enchanters, witches, mediums, etc. have power. This power though is not approved by Yahweh only permitted by Yahweh to take place in this world. We are called to shun it even though miraculous things happen because of it.

II. **Daniel 2:1-3**

A. Verses 1 - 3 (*Categories of Wise Men*)

1. Diviner Priests

- SEC defines this as a "horoscopist." Someone who used the formation of the stars to tell people a "fortune." Similar to so-called "fortune-tellers" today who say that through certain card tricks or palm reading that your future can be known.

2. Mediums

- SEC and Gesenius' states this word as having to do with "enchantment" an "enchanter." W1828 defines the word enchanter as: "One who enchants; a sorcerer or magician; one who has spirits or demons at his command; one who practices enchantment, or pretends to perform surprising things by the agency of demons."

3. Sorcerers

- SEC defines this as "to whisper a spell" and then adds "to enchant or practice magic."

4. Chaldeans

- a. SEC states that this word can be used of an "astrologer." It is in this sense that the word is used here in Daniel.
- b. Albert Barnes' notes state in commentary on verse 2 the following: "The purpose of Nebuchadnezzar was to assemble at his court whatever was remarkable throughout the world for skill and knowledge, and the wise men of the Chaldeans were employed in carrying out that design. The Chaldeans were so much devoted to these secret arts, and became so celebrated for them, that the name came, among the Greek and Roman writers, to be used to denote all those who laid claim to extraordinary powers in this department."

5. What we have here is categories of men who were used in Babylon, particularly by the King of Babylon, to interpret dreams and practice magic and witchcraft for various reasons (fortune telling, future events, etc.).

II. We see these practices in other Scriptures.

A. In Genesis 41 after the Pharaoh of Egypt had the dream of the good ears of grain (and healthy cows) and bad ears of grain (scrawny cows) he awoke and called for all the magicians and wise men in Egypt.

B. Another instance in Egypt is found in Exodus 7 where Yahweh tells Aaron to throw his staff on the ground and it will become a serpent. Verse 11 of chapter 7 tells us that all the magicians of Egypt did the same with their occult practices (KJV says "enchantments").

C. We also see in Exodus 7 and 8 that the magicians of Egypt could turn water into blood with their enchantments as well as bring much frogs upon the land of Egypt. (NOTE: It is true that after the plague of frogs (2nd plague) the Egyptians could no longer perform the miracles which Yahweh performed through Moses, but it is equally true that Scripture tells us they were able to perform the first two miracles.)

D. Let's turn to **Deuteronomy 18:9-14**. Here we have a place in Yahweh's law forbidding the use of such magic, enchantment, fortune-telling.

1. **Leviticus 19:26** agrees by saying, "You are not to practice divination or sorcery."

2. It is so serious an offense that **Exodus 22:18** states, "You must not allow a sorceress to live."

E. Let's look at **2 Chronicles 33:1- 6** to see how one of the King's of Judah (Manasseh) disobeyed Yahweh's law in these areas.

F. One reason why this was so serious is because it was Satanic. False prophets, enchanters, mediums, diviners, etc. actually did have power derived from demon activity.

1. Many people today see certain "miracles" happening in the name of "Scripture." I do believe many things taking place are simply a hoax at best, but there are times when certain "healings or miracles" do in fact take place.

2. Many of these same people who see these things taking place feel that the bonified miracle places a stamp of approval upon the ministry. "After all," they may say, "the God of Scripture heals, the people have been healed; it must be by the God of Scripture."

3. Do not be deceived, it is not outside of the realm of possibility that people can experience healing or even have their future told to them accurately by a false prophet or witch claiming to be pure.

4. Do not be deceived either into thinking that everything false looks false. This is the genius behind the counterfeit. The counterfeit must appear like the original in order for their to be any chance of it passing by the eyes and ears of those watching.

5. Let's look at **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** before we move on.

6. I had someone write to me the other day, "*I assure you, I am not deceived.*" That's a nonsensical statement, because if you were deceived you wouldn't know it.

III. Four Verses to Keep in Mind Here

A. **Deuteronomy 13:1-5.** A false prophet can show a sign or wonder and claim to have divine dreams. This type of prophet urges you to follow other gods.

B. **Matthew 24:24.** False "anointed ones" and prophets do perform great signs and wonders and could deceive the elect if it were possible. We are not told whether they claim to follow Scripture here or not.

C. **Matthew 7:21-23.** Here we are told of people who (1) call Yeshua Lord, (2) claim to prophesy in his name, (3) claim to cast out demons in his name, and (4)

claim to perform miracles in his name. Here we have people who are wondering why they will not make it into the kingdom because all along they thought they were approved by the signs and wonders taking place in their ministry.

D. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12. Notice here that the power is from Satan (ultimately from Yahweh). Notice also that false miracles, signs, and wonders are associated with this lawless one.

IV. Conclusion

A. Here are 2 simple ways to tell if a man is a false prophet.

1. He predicts something to happen but it does not come to pass. Even if he speaks in Yahweh's name (**Deuteronomy 18:21-22**).
2. Never believe what a self professed man of God tells you if he has negative feelings and saying about the Law of Yahweh. We saw this in **Deut. 13, Mt. 7, and 2 Thess. 2**. Every one of these passages made a point to speak about lawlessness, not following Yahweh's laws.

B. I am not saying that all pastors in modern Christianity are false prophets. Some are genuinely walking in everything they know currently, but be on guard against those who make failed predictions and who speak directly against the perpetuity of Yahweh's law.

Yahweh Has Sovereign Free Will

Daniel - Pt. 3

Daniel 2:1-30

I. Introduction

A. Last week we touched the actual text of Daniel chapter 2 very briefly, and instead took time out to notice the four categories of "wise men" in ancient Babylonia.

B. Today we will walk through this chapter from verses 1 through 30 centering in on not only the context, but also recognizing the sovereignty and free will of Almighty Yahweh.

C. You hear a lot today from Bible believers about the free will of man, but you never hear that much if anything about the free will of Yahweh. It is as though most people believe that man has more freedom than Yahweh, and in this belief the inevitable conclusion is the sovereignty of man rather than the sovereignty of Yahweh.

D. I want to show you today that Yahweh is in complete control of everything and that He can do anything He desires to do. This is a theme we are going to see throughout the entire book of Daniel, because Daniel understood it well.

II. Daniel 2:1-13

A. Verses 1-3

1. Nebuchadnezzar was dreaming things at night that troubled him, so much so that he was losing sleep.
2. One way to stop this from occurring was to find out what the dreams he was having meant; did they have a meaning? He calls all his wise men to find out the meaning.

B. Verses 4-6

1. The wise men begin speaking and the text of Daniel changes at this point from Hebrew to Aramaic. All of the OT Scriptures were originally written in Hebrew minus a large portion of the book of Daniel (here through 7:28) which is written in Aramaic, a related language to Hebrew. This was the vernacular of the Chaldeans speaking and this was different from Hebrew probably in dialect more so than language.
2. These fellows wanted to hear the dream and only have to give the interpretation.
3. The King however must have realized that it would be easy to "make up" an interpretation for his dream. To pronounce the dream first and then the interpretation would prove that a "higher power" was at work here.
4. The difference would either be to be torn limb from limb or given a reward, great gifts, honor, etc. quite the difference.

C. Verses 7-9

1. These men have the audacity to request the dream be told to them again by the King. Even after they'd just been told they will be torn limb from limb if they do not tell him both the dream and the interpretation.
2. The King sees that they are just trying to "buy time" and then states that what he has decreed is final. He states that if they don't tell him the dream any interpretation they speak will be looked upon as being false.

D. Verses 10-13

1. At this point the Chaldeans become very worried because they can't fulfill what the King has asked. They remark that no King has ever asked a request so difficult.
2. They state that a mere mortal does not have the power to do what the King is asking. Only the gods, whose dwelling is not with mortals, has this power. In their mind "the gods" would be the many gods of ancient Babylon that they believed to be immortal.
3. The King became angry with them to the point that he issued the decree for the execution of all the wise men in Babylon; this included Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

III. Daniel 2:14-23

A. Verses 14-16

1. Daniel now thinks wisely. He has to figure out a way to "buy some time" himself. So he goes to Arioch, the commander of the King's guard, asking him why the decree from the King is so harsh - as if he didn't know!
2. Of course he knew! This was probably the biggest news in the Kingdom, but Daniel acted as though he was unaware of the situation in order to speak at length with Arioch.
3. Arioch did explain the situation to Daniel, and Daniel then went and asked the King for some time to give him a true interpretation.
4. We are not told here about Daniel's visit with the King; if Daniel actually went himself or if he asked the King through the agency of Arioch, but we do know this, Yahweh must have granted Daniel favor with the King. The King had already made up his mind back in verse 13 so for Daniel to receive more time was a favor from the hand of Yahweh.

B. Verses 17-19

1. Daniel goes and tells his friends what had happened and he immediately urges them to ask favor from Yahweh to let them know the dream of the King and the interpretation.
2. The text states it like this, "ask the God of heaven for mercy concerning this mystery..." Daniel knew that if they didn't get an answer from Yahweh they would be "toast." They would be killed with the rest of the wise men.

3. The result: the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision at night by none other than the God of heaven - Almighty Yahweh.

4. Daniel was special; he had a special gift. You don't see many people in Scripture that Yahweh revealed things like this to. Be careful to accept all the people who today claim to have dreams and visions. Most of the time they claim to dream general things or things that we really already know will take place. How many do you know who have told a King was he dreamed though?

C. Verses 20-23

1. This is my favorite part of our text today. This is the part I have taken the title of this message from. When Daniel receives the vision at night he makes this declaration.

2. He states things like this:

a. Wisdom and power belong to the God of heaven.

b. He changes times and seasons; the power is with him, it is in His hand.

c. He is the one who removes Kings and establishes Kings. He decides who rules in the realm of mankind.

d. He gives wisdom and knowledge to people. The reason people are wise and understand things is because of being given these gifts by Yahweh.

e. He reveals things that seem impossible. He knows what is "hidden" and what is in "darkness."

3. Daniel offers thanks and praise to Yahweh for Yahweh gave him - Daniel - wisdom and power. Yahweh let Daniel know what he had requested - the King's mystery.

4. When I read this section of Daniel I see Yahweh pictured here as completely sovereign, totally free to do whatever he pleases. I do not see Yahweh as being controlled by the actions of men or tied to what men may do and then having to jump in and "fix" things.

5. Listen now as I read a list of verses that teach that Yahweh is King Almighty; He does what He wants, when He wants, however He wants. He is not bound to the will of His creation.

- a. Psalm 115:3 - "Our God is in heaven and does whatever He pleases."
 - b. Psalm 135:6 - "Yahweh does whatever He pleases in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all the depths."
 - c. Proverbs 19:21 - "Many plans are in a man's heart, but Yahweh's decree will prevail."
 - d. Proverbs 21:1 - "A king's heart is a water channel in Yahweh's hand: He directs it wherever He chooses."
 - e. Isaiah 43:11-13 - "I, I am Yahweh, and there is no other Savior but Me. I alone declared, saved, and proclaimed - and not some foreign god among you. So you are my witnesses - and I am God. Also, from today on I am He alone, and no one can take anything from My hand. I act, and who can reverse it?"
 - f. Isaiah 45:6-7 - "...I am Yahweh, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make success and create disaster; I, Yahweh, do all these things."
 - g. Isaiah 46:10 - "I declare the end from the beginning, and from long ago what is not yet done, saying : My plan will take place, and I will do all My will."
 - h. Lamentations 3:37-38 - "Who is there who speaks and it happens, unless the Lord has ordained it? Do not both adversity and good come from the mouth of the Most High?"
6. I could go on and on with more verses, but these are sufficient for now to show that Yahweh is in control of the universe He created. He is not tethered to the will of man. He is not bound to the actions of His creatures. He does what He wants to because He is Almighty. The will of man always has and always will bow to the will of Yahweh. Daniel knew this and he gave thanks to Yahweh for this. We should learn to love Yahweh's sovereignty just like Daniel.

7 Example of Crucifixion - **Acts 4:27-28** - the words of Peter and John.

IV. Daniel 2:24-30

A. Verses 24-26

1. You can imagine how excited Daniel was to approach Arioch with news that he would give the King exactly what he had asked for!

2. Arioch must have been excited to for the text says he brought Daniel quickly before the King.
3. The King then says these words, "Are you able to tell me the dream and the interpretation?"
4. At this point I like to think there was a pause of silence; those in attendance stood wondering if Daniel really was going to tell the King his dream. You could hear a "pin drop" as the old saying goes.

B. Verses 27-30

1. Daniel answers the King by telling him basically that it is not in the power of a man no matter how wise he may be to grant what the King has requested.
2. Daniel then points the King to the God of heaven, Yahweh Almighty. He is the One who reveals mysteries. Daniel takes the attention that was placed upon him at that moment and directs it to Yahweh.
3. Daniel then begins to tell the King that his dreams were about events that would take place in the future - at a time later on from the time they were speaking. Yahweh had let Nebuchadnezzar know what would take place.
4. Daniel then remains in humility, he states that he was given the understanding not because he is more wise than all others, but simply for the purpose of the dream to be made known to the King.

V. Conclusion

A. Do you recognize Yahweh for who He really is? When you pray to Him do you speak to Him as a Sovereign King or a heavenly butler? Sometimes people say things like, "I demand this of you Yahweh, it is my right and I claim it!" I don't even speak like this to my wife, much less should I do so to my Creator!

B. Do you believe in the free will of Yahweh? Many people get all bent out of shape arguing for the free will of man, when what we should be arguing for is the free will of Yahweh. We do have a will as persons, but it is not above the will of Yahweh. We are not able to do one small thing apart from the allowance or disallowance of our Sovereign King. Do you believe all the Scripture references we read earlier?

C. Will you humble yourself like Daniel? Daniel had the opportunity to "toot his own horn" here. He could have really puffed himself up, I mean he was the only wise man in the entire kingdom to be able to fulfill the King's request, but he

pointed the King to the direction of Yahweh. When Yahweh uses you, do not get prideful, point people to His direction. Let them focus upon Yahweh instead of you.

The Statue is Crushed by the Stone

Daniel - Pt. 4

Text: **Daniel 2:31-49**

I. Review from last weeks sermon...

- A. If you will recall we discussed last Sabbath about King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams that troubled him.
- B. We talked about how there was no wise man in Babylonia that could tell the King his dream and the interpretation.
- C. We did see though how Daniel and his three friends prayed to Yahweh for mercy and Daniel was given the understanding in a vision at night. He then went into the King and explained that the God of heaven had showed him the mystery.
- D. This week we delve into the actual dream and its interpretation.

II. Daniel 2:31-35

A. Verses 31-33

1. The first thing to speak of is this colossal statue appearing in the Kings dream.
2. The word "a" here is the word "chad" in Aramaic - obviously connected with the Hebrew word for one "echad." The Aramaic word means "one, single, first, once, etc." The point is that this was one statue made from different materials. The picture on the screen is a possible representation of what the King was dreaming about.
3. The statue/image was very tall and very "dazzling" the HCSB says, and it was somewhat terrifying. In other words it was shocking to see a statue this big in your dream.
4. If you will notice the picture on the screen we will cover the parts and materials of the statue.
 - a. The text says the head was made of pure gold.
 - b. Next the chest and the arms were made of silver.

- c. The stomach and thighs were bronze.
- d. The legs were made of iron.
- e. The feet were a mixture - partly iron and partly clay.

B. Verses 34-35

1. As Nebuchadnezzar watched this statue "a stone broke off without a hand touching it." In other words no human was involved in this stone breaking off.
2. It is odd here that Daniel simply speaks of this "stone breaking off" without really mentioning where or what it broke off of.
3. Daniel 2:45 (a text we get more into in a moment) is more specific concerning the breaking off of the stone. It states, "*You saw a stone break off from the mountain without a hand touching it.*" So there was a mountain in Nebuchadnezzar's dream as well.
4. Next we read of this stone striking this colossal statue on its feet (of iron and fired clay) crushing them.
5. As we read the text it appears that as the stone crushed the feet of the statue the entire statue began to fall and was shattered in pieces. Verse 35 tells us that it was shattered so much that it was like chaff from the summer threshing floors. The chaff is the refuse off of the wheat that was carried away by the wind. Psalm 1 depicts the ungodly like chaff which the wind drives away.
6. We read in verse 35 that the wind drove away the shattered pieces of the statue so that the pieces could not be found.
7. Finally in the dream the stone that struck the statue becomes a great mountain itself and this mountain fills the whole earth.

III. Daniel 2:36-45

A. Verses 36-38

1. You can imagine King Nebuchadnezzar's face when Daniel began to tell him his dream. We know from the text that Daniel spoke of the dream correctly so the King was listening to Daniel tell him something that the King had not told to anyone.
2. Daniel begins to interpret the dream by pointing to the King himself. Nebuchadnezzar was a mighty king, Daniel even calls him a king of kings, i.e. of the many kings of the earth Nebuchadnezzar was one of the

greatest.

3. Notice Daniel directs Nebuchadnezzar's greatness to the God of heaven. Daniel says that it is Yahweh that gave the King his strength and his glory.

4. Daniel speaks of how the King rules over people and animals and then tells him that he is the head of gold on the statue.

B. Verse 39

1. King Neb. represents the head of gold and now we are told that the next two parts of the statue represent two other kingdoms.

2. The chest and arms were made of silver so this kingdom is said to be inferior to Neb. In reading the book of Daniel we see that this Kingdom was the Kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. This kingdom is represented by the silver part of the statue.

3. Then after this the stomach and thighs made of bronze (a little lesser metal) represent this third kingdom. Moving on in what is history now - if we follow the Kingdom of the Medes and the Persians we come to a Kingdom after them: the Greeks or the Grecian Monarchy. This Kingdom was ruled by a man known as Alexander the Great. This Kingdom was said the "rule the whole earth" and Alexander pretty much did at least for a while. He didn't last long though (history teaches us).

C. Verses 40-43

1. Next we come to the iron legs which represent strength. These iron legs represent a fourth kingdom that crushes and shatters all the other kingdoms. This Kingdom is most likely the powerful Roman Empire whose strength did crush all other kingdoms of the world.

2. But we do see that this will be a divided kingdom represent by the feet of the statue. The strength of iron is there but it is mixed with clay which is not a strong. This represents the brittle part of the kingdom.

3. The text says that the peoples will mix with one another but will not hold together. I take this (along with other commentators) to mean that many in the Roman Empire will make marriages with people of other nations and kingdoms and the marriages will lessen the strength that was initially there in the Empire. It will be like trying to mix iron with fired clay.

D. Verses 44-45

1. I like how John Gill interprets verse 44 here. Notice it says "In the days of those kings..." He takes this to mean not the Roman Empire itself, but the 10 kings represented by the 10 toes of the statue which were brittle.
2. It says that the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed. It will crush all the kingdoms (remember the stone breaking off and hitting the feet of the statue).
3. Daniel reminds Neb. of the stone he saw in the dream breaking off of the mountain and crushing the statue.
4. This began with the 1st coming of the Messiah and will be finalized at the 2nd coming of the Messiah.
5. Yeshua spoke of himself as a stone in **Luke 20:17-18**.
6. Also **1 Peter 2:1-7**.

IV. Daniel 2:46-49

- A. The King immediately falls down and the text says pays homage to Daniel. We must not veer here and think that the King is doing something pagan. It was a common custom even amongst the Hebrews to bow before royalty, and Yahweh even mentions in Scripture about people bowing before those that He exalts.
1. You may even see the word "worshipped" in your translation and that is acceptable. Worship literally means to bow to the ground in honor of someone. Granted, we should never bow down in honor of a person as if they are Yahweh, but to bow down out of respect for the dignity of a person Yahweh exalts is acceptable.
 2. I'm not as sure about the sacrifices. Neb. gave orders to present an offering and incense to Daniel... I don't think this would be acceptable because we do not see anywhere in Scripture where this was done amongst Yahweh's people.
- B. King Neb. then lifts up the God of Daniel (Yahweh) because he sees that through the power of Daniel's God, Daniel was able to see the dream of the King and give the interpretation.
- C. The King then promotes Daniel making him (1) ruler over the entire province of Babylon, and (2) chief governor over all of the wise men.
- D. Daniel then asks for the King to appoint his three friends to manage the province, and Daniel himself stayed in the Kings court.

V. Conclusion

A. I would just like to leave you with two thoughts as I close.

1. **When you find yourself in a situation like Daniel (captive, threat of problems, etc.) how do you act in your situation?** Do you panic? Do you give up? Do you get mad at Yahweh for placing you there? Or do you calmly continue to serve Him, doing everything you know and thereby He works through you to bring about His sovereign will?

2. **When you are rewarded or blessed for your endeavors never forget the people of Yahweh around you.** Daniel could have easily forgotten about his three friends when the King exalted him, but he requested they get to manage the province. Daniel looked out for his brethren and we ought to always consider our brethren no matter how much we are exalted in whatever way as individuals.

These Three Hebrews Were No Joke

Daniel - Pt. 5

Text: **Daniel 3:1-30**

I. Review from last week...

A. We received the telling of Neb's dream and its interpretation by Daniel.

B. We found that although the colossal statue in Neb's dream represented four kingdoms, they would all be crushed by the Stone Kingdom of Yahweh - the stone representing Yahweh's Son, Yeshua.

C. It appeared as we ended last week that Neb had a change of heart. He called Daniel's God a "God of gods and Lord of kings."

D. He even promoted Daniel as well as Daniel's three Hebrew friends.

E. However, we will see now that Neb just did not get it. He may have begun to recognize Yahweh as Daniel's powerful God, but He obviously has not at this point turned over to truly give Yahweh the worship that He alone deserves.

F. It is not enough to just recognize Yahweh as "a" god among many other gods. As though we've got Yahweh here and yes He is a good God, but we also give some sort of service and worship to these other gods. This has been termed by some today as religious tolerance.

G. In other words you worship whom you want to and I'll worship whom I want to, and we will be respectful of each others religion. This sounds all nice and

good, but it's really not taught in Scripture. Yahweh did not teach the Israelites to have "religious tolerance." Let's just look at one passage - **Deuteronomy 13:6-18**.

H. That was very plain, but let's quote a NT verse for the NT crowd. The OT is plenty, but some just will not believe it because of their false paradigm of "Well that's Old Testament..." Look at **1 Timothy 6:3-5**.

I. We will see that Neb had his own "religious tolerance" idea, but that the three Hebrew friends of Daniel (even though held captive in a foreign land) did not tolerate Neb's religion. They refused to conform to his decrees even when faced with death.

II. Daniel 3:1-7

A. Verse 1

1. A couple things I find interesting about this statue.
2. It was 90 feet high. I have a difficult time not thinking about the dream that we just studied about in Daniel 2. It is likely that Neb took this dream and built upon it.
3. Notice that it was a "gold" statue. Remember which precious metal represented Neb back in chapter 2? Right... GOLD. Some scholars believe that Neb was saying with this gold statue, "I am the head of gold, but I am also the entire body of gold and my kingdom will not be crushed."

B. Verses 2-7

1. Neb coordinated a dedication for this statue he had made because he was going to issue a decree that commanded all those in attendance to bow down to the image of gold.
2. As the people stood before the statue Neb had set up and herald, a town crier of sorts, gave this commandment: "*When you hear the sound of all the musical instruments you are to fall down and worship the gold statue. If you do not do so you will be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire.*"
3. What immediately comes to my mind as I read this is that it violates the 2nd commandment in the 10 commandments. I'm reminded of the golden calf fashioned by the Israelites in Exodus 32 as they were waiting for Moses to come down from the mountain. Many other examples could be cited.
 - a. Think about the stupidity in worshiping a statue. (1) Men had to make the statue, (2) some people set food in front of their idols

only to have to come in later and remove the food because the statue cannot eat or drink.

b. Look with me briefly at **Jeremiah 10:1-10**. Notice the contrast between the true and living God verses the idols of the people.

c. Yahweh says to not set up idols or worship idols, but instead give your worship to Him for it is through Him that we live and move and have our being.

4. However we see in Daniel 3:7 when all the people heard the sound of the instruments Neb had ordered they fell down and worshiped the golden image.

III. Daniel 3:8-15

A. Verses 8-12

1. Some Babylonian men took this as a chance to accuse some of the Judahites, so they go to the King and explain to him that everyone is not bowing down as he's decreed.

2. The men were none other than Mishael, Hananiah, and Azariah. They were said to have (1) ignore the king, (2) not served the gods of the king, and (3) not worship the gold statue.

3. We might ask a question that pops up in my mind here: where is Daniel? The answer is that we just simply are not told where Daniel is at this time.

a. Some people believe he may have been away on a journey that was commissioned by the King.

b. Others believe he may have just not gotten picked on by the Babylonians at this point because of his exalted position in the Kingdom.

c. We really just do not know, but we do know that Daniel would not have bowed to the statue. We know this from Daniel chapter 1 where he refused to be defiled with the Kings food and wine, and we also know this from Daniel 6 where he refused to obey the decree of another King.

B. Verses 13-15

1. Neb gets furious here. I can imagine the pride that rose up in him. He's

king of kings, he's the head of gold, he's the top ruler; how dare anyone defy his orders.

2. So here he gives the three Hebrews another chance to bow down to the image. He tells them the music will be played so they can worship the statue, and if not into the blazing furnace they will go.

IV. Daniel 3:16-18

A. They respond by saying to the King that their decision is final; they are not going to change their mind.

B. They tell Neb that if their God really exists He does have the ability to rescue them from Neb's furnace, but even if their God chooses not to rescue them they still aren't going to bow down.

C. What a contrast is this to the mind set of people today who believe that doing things for God means that He owes them something.

1. We should never think in our minds that anything we do makes Yahweh obligated to us as individuals.

2. Look with me to **Luke 17:7-10**. I know teaching like this is rare, but it's found right here in our Bibles.

3. The three Hebrews recognized the sovereignty of Yahweh. They knew Yahweh had the ability to rescue them, but they also understood that He may choose to let them die in the furnace; be martyred for not straying from Yahweh's law.

4. What great faith we have here! I want to encourage those who may hear this sermon and may be faced with some kind of hardship or even incurable disease. Yahweh has the ability to deliver you and/or cure you, but even if He chooses not to do not give up on Him. Recognize that He is sovereign and His ways and thoughts are high above our own.

5. Think about it. The three Hebrews were in essence saying this: Throw us into your furnace - we may even die in your furnace - but we don't care we are going to remain true to the God we serve. That blows my mind when I really ponder upon it.

V. Daniel 3:19-23

A. Verses 19-20

1. You can imagine Neb's blood boiling at this time. I mean he is really

upset because they just defied him to his face.

2. He heats the furnace seven times more than customary as if that will make them more dead.

3. He also had his strong men tie the Hebrews up before throwing them into the fire.

B. Verses 21-23

1. He throws them in their completely clothed.

2. This happened so quickly and the fire was so hot that the men throwing the Hebrews into the fire were killed by the flames. This was some hot fire my brothers!

3. The three Hebrews fell (bound) right into the furnace.

VI. Daniel 3:24-25

A. Here while Neb knew they threw three men into the fire he was alarmed when he saw FOUR men, untied, walking around in the fire.

B. Neb then makes the statement that the fourth looks like "a son of the gods."

1. The KJV has an unfortunate translation at verse 25 in saying "the Son of God." Some have used this verse in attempts to prove that the Son of God (Yeshua) was the fourth man in the fire.

2. A few problems with that are (1) the Aramaic text does not read the particular article "the" here, but rather "a" as it is translated in the HCSB as well as many other versions of the Bible. (2) Neb was a pagan Babylonian king that did not serve Yahweh so he would not see that fourth man and think about the Messiah prophesied about in the Hebrew Scriptures as being in the fire. (3) Remember back to chapter 1 were the wise men said that the power to know Neb's dream was with the "gods." This was the speech of the heathens and would have been the speech of Neb thus the translation "a son of the gods" is very accurate at conveying what Neb said.

C. Of course some people acknowledge that such is the case with Neb's statement here, but they go on to speak of things like "the angel of Yahweh" and correlate that with Yeshua the Messiah, pre-incarnate in the OT. We will delve more into this at a later time.

VII. Daniel 3:26-30

A. Verses 26-27

1. Neb approaches the furnace, calls for the men to come out, and they walk out.
2. The miracle performed by Yahweh had several unique qualities such as (1) not one hair on their head was singed, (2) their clothes were unaffected, and (3) they did not even smell of fire. This is amazing to me for I know how that warming yourself in front of a fire causes you to smell like smoke.

B. Verses 28-30

1. Neb here praises the God of these Hebrews and then says, "He has sent His angel and rescued His servants..." A statement we will delve more into next week.
2. Neb is now praising these guys for violating His decree!
3. So he issues another decree (he's just making these decrees left and right) that anyone who speaks against the God of these Hebrews will be torn limb from limb, and his house made a garbage dump.
4. The King speaks highly of the Hebrews God and He rewarded the three men.

VIII. Conclusion - four thoughts:

1. Have you fallen for the religious tolerance lie? Some times we get caught up more in the laws of our current country than we do in the laws of Yahweh. People get more upset when you speak against the Constitution than they do when you speak against the laws of Yahweh. Let me tell you that the laws of our nation are all about religious tolerance, but Yahweh is not. While we must seek to live peaceably there comes times when we've got to let others know that a line in the sand is drawn. The world's ways and the many religions of the world are wrong, Yahweh's law is supreme.

2. What would you do if faced with the same decision as the three Hebrews? Are you sold out to Yahweh in such a way that you would refuse to bow to a statue upon threat of your life? It's easy to talk the talk in the comforts of modern America, but what if the time comes in your lifetime where you are faced with a decision to either "bow" or die? Can't you see yourself trying to justify bowing. "Well I'm not bowing down in my heart - God knows my heart. I'll be better off alive than dead..." The Hebrews didn't justify the sin, they refused the sin. We need to be in the business of refusing to sin.

3. Do you believe Yahweh owes you or are you serving Him because you love Him and expect nothing in return? Remember - even if our God does not rescue us from the fire we will not bow down to your image oh King. If you had an incurable disease would you be able to utter these words? Would you be able to pray, "Father I love you, please heal me and make me strong, but even if you choose not to, I still love you and will serve you until I die."

4. Are you wishy-washy like Neb? At the end of chapter 2 he's praising the God of the Hebrews; at the beginning of chapter 3 he is building a 90 feet tall idol; in chapter 3 he's burning people alive that don't worship his idol; at the end of chapter 3 he's issuing another decree to not speak against the God of the Hebrews. Are you unsure in your faith-walk? Do you have absolutes in your life? Do you have a standard that is supernatural? You know when it comes to standards it is not whether, but which. Everyone lives by certain rules it's just that some people make them up as they go and pick and choose what they believe is moral and immoral. We need to be a people who are set upon looking at the unchangeable God and His laws for our guide, not wavering at every turn, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. Be firm in Yahweh's law. That must be your standard.

The Fourth Being in the Fire

Daniel - Pt. 6

Opening Text: **Daniel 3:24-28**

I. Last Week's Review

A. We discussed Daniel chapter 3 in its entirety - what a glorious portion of Scripture!

B. We did however run across a very interesting portion of text in Daniel 3 that I would like to comment further on, in more detail.

a. That is this - who was the fourth being in the fire?

b. In our opening text we read of two statements of Neb. (1) a son of the gods, and (2) an angel from the God of the Hebrews.

C. Remember last week to my understanding of Neb's statement in Daniel 3:25. It would be quite appropriate for a heathen king to speak this way.

D. When we contrast this statement from Neb (in shock and amazement) with the statement in verse 28 (Your God sent His messenger) we recognize that although at first Neb said "a son of the gods" he afterward at least acknowledged that it was a messenger from the God of the three Hebrews.

E. HOWEVER... who *really* was in the fire? I'm going to explain to you in this sermon why I believe the most likely explanation is that it was one of the created angelic beings of Yahweh, and why it was not the "pre-incarnate" Yeshua.

II. Let's look first to Exodus 3 - the burning bush text.

A. This is a very familiar text to many Bible believers, but what may not be so familiar to you is what we will read at the first portion of the chapter - **Exodus 3:1-2.**

1. I remember the first time I read this passage and realized that verse 2 spoke of the Angel of Yahweh being within the bush.
2. This puzzled me at first because I was at that time already familiar with Exodus 3:14-15 where YAHWEH is speaking concerning His name and the definition of His name.
3. So I wondered, "Well, who is it? Yahweh or the Angel of Yahweh?"
4. A common explanation at least amongst Trinitarian believers is that God (Yahweh) consists of three persons. They view the angel of Yahweh as Yeshua prior to his birth at Bethlehem. Because they view Yeshua as existing as a spirit being (co-eternal / co-equal) with the Father they speak of his birth as an incarnation.
 - a. The word "incarnation" has to do with "taking on flesh." It may be defined theologically as "the second person of the Trinity (the Son) as taking on the form of a human, but remaining fully God and fully man."
 - b. Hopefully that helps you understand what I mean when I say people believe that the Angel of Yahweh was the "pre-incarnate" Yeshua.
5. So to them it was "Yahweh (God)" speaking at the burning bush, but it wasn't the first person of the Trinity speaking, but rather the second person of the Trinity speaking. At least this is how some of the trinitarians I've discussed with see it.

B. I on the other hand (along with others) do not believe in a pre-incarnate Yeshua, thus I do not believe this was Yeshua speaking at the burning bush.

1. One way to know this is by simply considering the statement in **Exodus 3:15** where Yahweh calls Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

2. Now turn with me to **Acts 3:13** where Peter states that the God of A, I, and J has glorified his servant Yeshua. (Servant is the Greek word "pais" and can be translated "son" or "child" but is better rendered in English as servant.)

3. My point is that if Yeshua is the servant of the God of A, I, and J then he is not the God of A, I, and J. He then is not the one speaking to Moses in the burning bush.

C. However, this does not solve our initial question about whether this was the Angel of Yahweh or Yahweh Himself speaking... unless you begin to realize the mindset in Scripture concerning Yahweh accomplishing His work through the agency of His angelic beings.

III. Yahweh Uses Angels to Accomplish His Work

A. We've saw this in Exodus 3:2, but let's now take our Bibles and turn to **Acts 7:30, 35, 38, and 53**.

1. All of these passages show that Stephen understood that it was an angel at the burning bush, as well as it was under the direction of angels that the law was received.

2. Now turn to **Galatians 3:19**. Notice the text says that "the law was ordered through angels." The word "ordered" here in the Greek text is "diatasso" and is often translated as "commanded" or "appointed" in the NT.

3. Now look with me to **Hebrews 2:1-3**. The argument here is that if the message spoken through angels was binding, how much more the message spoken through the Son. ("From the light to the heavy.")

4. These NT men/writers understood that Yahweh used angels to accomplish His work; even His giving of the law!

5. It might do good here to mention **Deuteronomy 33:2** and compare the Hebrew text with the LXX.

a. KJV - "And this *is* the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said, Yahweh came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand *went* a fiery law for them."

b. LXX - "And this *is* the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said, The Lord is come from Sina, and has appeared from Seir to us, and

has hasted out of the mount of Pharan, with the ten thousands of saints; on his right hand were his angels with him."

c. Notice the Hebrew text reads "fiery law" while the Greek text reads "angels."

d. If we understand that Yahweh gave the law through the agency of angelic beings there is no contradiction. This also couples with **Hebrews 1:7**.

B. So, who was it at the burning bush speaking to Moses? My answer is that it was Yahweh speaking to Moses through the agency of His Angel. This way we can really believe that the Angel of Yahweh appeared in the bush just like the text says.

IV. Is the Angel of Yahweh actually Yahweh?

A. Let me begin this portion of the sermon by stating that my answer to the question is - NO. I do not believe the angel of Yahweh is one-to-one identical with Yahweh.

1. Rather he is the angel OF Yahweh and has been granted a good portion of Yahweh's power and authority. Recognize that the angel does not immediately have such power and authority, this has to be placed in him.

2. There is more than one verse that others use in attempts to prove that the Angel of Yahweh is in actuality Yahweh (or the second person of their triune God) but they are all similar to the Exodus 3 passage (the burning bush).

B. However, we find Scriptures where the Angel of Yahweh is clearly seen to be separate from Yahweh God, and thus is not Yahweh God.

1. **2 Samuel 24:15-16** / Yahweh speaks to the angel.

2. **Zechariah 1:8-13** / Notice again the angel asks Yahweh a question and Yahweh replies to the angel.

3. These two passages show (1) the angel receives commands from Yahweh to be carried out, (2) the angel asks to receive information from Yahweh, and (3) there is obvious conversation going on between the two.

4. There are some who at this point would say, I realize that Yahweh and the Angel of Yahweh are two separate persons and I agree that they are not co-equal, but I still believe that this was the pre-incarnate Yeshua from the Arian perspective (JW's and some Assemblies of Yahweh today).

C. The angel of Yahweh is not Yeshua pre-incarnate.

1. **Mark 12:26-27** / While much could be said about this passage we will center in on how Yeshua does not speak as though it was himself at the burning bush (the angel) but rather God - Yahweh.
2. **Matthew 1:20-24** / The angel of Yahweh is speaking to Joseph while Yeshua is in the womb of Mary. Joseph was a Hebrew; do you believe that he thought that the baby he found out in Mary's womb was really the angel of Yahweh speaking to him?
3. **Matthew 28:1-6** / The angel of Yahweh speaks about someone other than he named Yeshua and tells those listening to him - "He is not here, he has risen!"
4. **Hebrews 1:1-5** / A lot of information here, but this is not intended to be a detailed verse by verse examination. We will cover the portions pertinent to the message today.
 - a. **Verse 1-2** shows that God speaks by His Son in these last days contrasted with "long ago."
 - b. **Verse 2** comment on (1) appointed, (2) heir, (3) through, and (4) universe = Greek word "*aion*" plural meaning "ages."
 - c. **Verse 3** shows the Son sits down at the right hand of the Majesty on High. Clear contrast between the two titles here.
 - d. **Verse 4:** he becomes higher in rank than the angels.
 - e. **Verse 5 is key.** Yahweh never spoke the words of verse 5 to an angel, therefore Yeshua could not have previously been an angel or else this would mean that Yahweh did speak these words to an angel.
5. Angels were created immortal, meaning "not able to die."
 - a. **Luke 20:34-36** / The "cannot die anymore" is directly linked to "are like the angels." This is teaching that once we are resurrected, raised from the dead, we will be raised to immortality.
 - b. **Romans 2:6-8** / Those who live holy are seeking for immortality.
 - c. **1 Cor. 15:50-54** / Mortal will become immortal.

d. My point is this. If Yeshua was THE angel of Yahweh in the OT then he would have been created immortal - an immortal spiritual being. This poses a problem because the Bible teaches that Yeshua died and then was resurrected to immortality. If you say, "Well he lost his immortality for a while." that poses a serious problem for then how can you really say he was "not able to die" to begin with???

e. If we try to force-fit both of these together we lose the meaning of immortal. Someone with immortality cannot die, while someone with mortality can die.

V. Who was the fourth being in the fire?

A. The most probable answer was as Neb. said in **Daniel 2:28** - "The God of the Hebrews has sent his angel..." This wouldn't merely be a human angel but an angelic being like Michael or Gabriel.

B. The way to harmonize passages that appear to teach on the surface a one-to-one identity between the angel of Yahweh and Yahweh should be looked upon in this light:

1. All of these passages clearly speak of the being as an "Angel of Yahweh" and then they seem to show Yahweh speaking. This then is Yahweh speaking through the agency of the messenger. It's like you saying, "Yahweh blessed me with some groceries!" yet it was a brother or sister in the church that gave you \$100.00.

2. The principle of agency is not at all foreign to the Hebrew Scriptures. Many time Yahweh does things but uses vessels or instruments of angels and men to accomplish what He has set out to do.

Was Nebuchadnezzar Regenerate?

Daniel - Pt. 7

Text: **Daniel 4:1-9**

I. Intro & Reminder

A. Daniel 3 - Fiery Furnace

B. This is after, some say maybe 30 years

C. Neb. had acknowledged Yahweh but not genuinely as the being ALONE.

(Shema)

II. Daniel 4:1-3

- A. A letter from Neb.
- B. It appears he is acknowledging Yahweh correctly here.
- C. "The Most High God" could still be in his mind "a god" among many others he worshiped.
- D. Don't let words fool you. People profess things all the time, but that doesn't mean they are truly regenerate.
 - 1. You ask people "Do you believe in the God of the Bible?" The answer may be yes, but that doesn't mean they are His child.
 - 2. You may even have experienced seeing people get emotionally stirred at a meeting, but then leave and live as though Yahweh did not exist.
 - 3. The way you know a person has been delivered by Yahweh is by testing them according to the Biblical tests.
 - 4. It is not if they prayed a prayer or have been baptized or can recite a Bible verses or verses. It's not if their parents are believers or they are a nice person. It is if their life shows evidence of them being truly born from above.
 - 5. Neb. had acknowledged Yahweh in chapter 2 after Daniel revealed to him his dream and its interpretation, but then in chapter three he sets up an idol for all to bow down to. Don't be fooled by professions of faith.

III. Daniel 4:4-9

- A. Neb. has another dream that scares him.
- B. He still was relying on the diver priests, mediums, Chaldeans, and astrologers, all of which we talked about back in Daniel chapter 2.
- C. Notice also that he mentions Daniel by the Babylonian name that had been given to him - Beltashazzar - after the name of "my" god it says.
- D. He also makes a statement that reads here: "you have the spirit of the holy gods..." which could be translated "spirit of the Holy God" in reference to Yahweh. I believe though that Neb. is referencing all the gods he believed in which probably included Yahweh as we see back in verses 1-3.

E. What we learn here is that Neb. had was not regenerate at least at this time. He may have spoken a few nice words about Yahweh, but he still was holding on to his past. He was still clinging to his heathen beliefs.

1. Unregenerate people today are just like Neb. They profess or "serve" Yahweh when it's convenient for them. They may even quote a verse here and there.

2. The problem is that these are just snap-shots of their life. Their life-style is ungodly. They do not live life by Scripture, they are not sensitive to sin, they don't keep the commandments, they don't love the true followers of Yahweh, and they are in a love affair with the ways of the world.

IV. The Problem with *Decisionism*

A. It is common today for a person to preach "a version of the gospel" and then say something like this: "Now, would you like to accept Christ into your heart? Repeat these words after me."

1. One major problem is that you'll never find where anyone in the Bible evangelized lost people in this way.

2. Secondly, usually after someone "accepts Christ into their heart" they are told that they are saved and maybe even brought to the front of the church and shown to all with the proclamation that they've "been saved now."

B. Contrary to this false message the Biblical message always spoken by Yahweh holy prophets and apostles was "Repent and Believe!" And no true prophet or apostle ever brought a person in front of a crowd and proclaimed to everyone they've been saved!

1. In Matthew 4:17 Yeshua began to preach - Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

2. Matthew 3:2 records John the Baptist as preaching the same.

3. In Mark 1:15 Yeshua says for people to repent and believe the gospel.

4. In Mark 6:12 the 12 disciples of Yeshua went out and preached that men should repent.

5. In Luke 13:5 Yeshua said unless you repent you will all perish.

6. In Acts 3:19 Peter tells those listening to repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.

6. In Acts 17:30 Paul says that Yahweh commands all men everywhere to repent.

7. Many more passages speak of turning away from sin and turning to Yahweh.

C. We have got to get out of the mindset that it is man's job to "get somebody saved" or to even tell someone "now you're saved."

1. No preacher saves anyone, and no preacher should place up on a bulletin board or in a church bulletin or email that they had "50 people saved last week..."

2. This is all un-biblical. Except a man truly repents of his sins he will be lost. And don't think that this means a one time thing. When Yeshua says to "repent and believe the gospel" he means for the rest of your life. You continue to grow in grace and knowledge of Yahweh and Yeshua.

V. Does this mean salvation is a work of man?

A. Repentance is something that you must do in order to be saved, but the reason you are even able to repent is because you've been given the ability to do so by Yahweh.

B. You do not have the ability to come to the Son unless you've been drawn by the Father. You don't have the ability in your natural, carnal state to repent of your sins unless the Father first changes your nature by giving you a new heart and a new mind.

C. Look with me to **John 6:44** for a moment.

1. **John 6:53-54** explains what being raised up at the last day means.

2. **John 6:35** explains what eating his flesh and drinking his blood means.

3. **John 6:65** shows again that it is not possible to come to the Son unless the Father gives you to the Son.

4. **John 6:37-40** sums it up nicely.

VI. So you may ask, "How do I know I'm saved Brother Matthew?"

A. First of all, it's not my place to tell you that you are saved, i.e. that you will be in the kingdom.

B. I will say this though, have you truly repented of your sins? Do you truly

believe in the good news? Do you believe Yahweh's kingdom is coming? Do you believe Yeshua is the Son of Yahweh, the Messiah that was promised? Do you believe he lived perfectly and died as a substitute and that he bore your sins and his righteousness is imputed to your account? Do you believe he is the only way to the Father?

C. Also, is their evidence in your life that shows forth the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit working in your mind and heart? Is your deepest desire to live as Yeshua lived? Do you hate sin and love righteousness? Do you really keep Yahweh's commandments? Does it bother you greatly when you do sin? Do you want to be like the world or do you desire to live according to the Torah?

D. Test yourselves brother and sisters. 1 John 5:13 says that John wrote the things he did so that we would know that we have eternal life. Read the book of 1 John and test yourselves regularly. Don't be fooled by the false salvation methods of many today.

Stay Humble or Lose Your Mind

Daniel - Pt. 8

Text: **Daniel 4:4-37**

I. Introduction

A. We will look today at another dream of King Neb. A dream which was specifically given to him by Yahweh. What we are going to see today in our text is what we have already seen before in the book of Daniel - Yahweh is completely sovereign. He does whatever He pleases to do.

B. We are also going to learn some thing about pride and humility which are always valuable subjects to study.

II. **Daniel 4:4-18 ("The Dream")**

III. **Daniel 4:19-27 ("The Interpretation")**

IV. **Daniel 4:28-33 ("The Sentence Executed")**

V. **Daniel 4:34-37 ("Neb's Change of Heart")**

VI. Points to Remember and Ponder Upon

A. Yahweh Rules on the Earth - Man may think he rules but Yahweh is in control. **Proverbs 21:1** - "*A king's heart is a water channel in Yahweh's hand: He directs it wherever He chooses.*" Keep the proper perspective. Recognize that whatever takes place in the kingdom's of men Yahweh governs from heaven, and will take care of all those who place their trust in him.

B. Yahweh set up the basest of men. It is my belief that Barak Obama is Yahweh's judgment on this nation because of the tremendous decline of morality in the minds and actions of people. You may think that Yahweh is not concerned with the president of America and you are wrong if you think that. Neb was not an Israelite king, he was an Assyrian, non-Israelite king, and this is the context in which we see Yahweh setting up the basest of men.

C. Never think you are the reason for your prosperous times. We have a tendency to think thoughts in our minds that we have something to do with why we are successful. Be very cautious here. It was when Neb spoke the words about his building Babylon that his sanity was taken away. The book of Job teaches us that Yahweh gives and takes away. If you are successful in this life always give Yahweh the glory and put Him first.

D. Yahweh can take away a man's mind. It is hard for us to fathom Neb walking around with animals, eating grass with hair like eagle feathers on his back, and fingernails like birds claws... but that's what the text teaches does it not? This man was like this for 7 years... 7 years. Yahweh has control over your sanity.

E. Remember what Neb said before his sanity returned. Verses 34-35 - let's read them again.

No Mercy for Belshazzar

Daniel - Pt. 9

Text: **Daniel 5**

I. Introduction - Today we come to a new King in Babylon named Belshazzar.

A. While the King spoken about in the last four chapters of Daniel received mercy from Yahweh, this new King in Daniel 5 did not.

B. Mercy is Yahweh taking away from you what you deserve. It is different from grace in that grace is Yahweh giving you what you do not deserve.

C. This King did not receive the mercy of Yahweh on his life, neither physically or spiritually. Instead he died in his sins.

II. **Daniel 5:1-4**

A. The first point I would like to notice is that although we jump from Neb to Bel (from chapter 4 to 5) we do see a mention of Neb here in verse 2.

1. Neb is called the predecessor of Belshazzar.

2. Actually the Aramaic word here is "ab" which literally means "father." However, this does not mean Neb was Bel's father like I am the father of Benjamin.
3. The term "father" is used in Scripture not only to refer to a persons immediate father, but also to grandfather's or great grandfathers, or even distant "ancestor fathers."
4. One example that will help here is how David is called Yeshua's father in **Luke 1:32**.
5. Study shows that Bel's immediate father's name was "Evil-Merodach." Neb was Bel's grandfather.

B. Next (verse 2) notice that it was "under the influence of wine" that Belshazzar gave orders to bring the gold and silver cups from Jerusalem to drink from.

1. These cups had been taken from Jerusalem by Neb when he entered Jerusalem and ransacked the city taking many of the inhabitants of Judah captive away to Babylon (**Daniel 1:2**).
2. These were holy vessels of Yahweh and should have never been taken by Neb in the first place.
3. Here though Bel desecrates these holy vessels by using them for "common" drinking, and for a Babylonian party at that.
4. Wine in Scripture is a blessing to Yahweh's people.
5. In **Psalm 104:14-15** we read, "He (Yahweh) causes grass to grow for the livestock and [provides] crops for man to cultivate, producing food from the earth, wine that makes man's heart glad - making his face to shine with oil - and bread that sustains man's heart." All of these blessings are grouped together, grass, crops, food, wine, oil, and bread.
6. In **Proverbs 3:9-10** we read this, "Honor Yahweh with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest; then your barns will be completely filled, and your vats will overflow with new wine."
7. At the same time we are warned in Scripture concerning drunkenness, and here we see what can happen when a person becomes "influenced" by wine. A person can drink too much wine and do things that he or she would not normally do. This is not because they were drinking wine it is because they were drinking too much wine.
8. Consider the same book, **Proverbs 31:4-5** - "It is not for kings, Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine or for rulers [to desire] beer. Otherwise

they will drink, forget what is decreed, and pervert justice for all the oppressed." Is this a picture of a king having wine with his dinner? Not at all, this is a picture of a king who gorges on too much wine and it causes him to lose his mind and pervert justice.

9. Consider also **Leviticus 10:8-11**, "Yahweh spoke to Aaron: you and your sons are not to drink wine or beer when you enter the tent of meeting, or else you will die; this is a permanent statute throughout your generations. You must distinguish between the holy and the common, and the clean and the unclean, and teach the Israelites all the statutes that Yahweh has given to them through Moses." I believe this here is a prohibition against wine of ANY amount for the times of the service in the tent of meeting.

10. While driving a car is not one-to-one comparable with ministering in the tent of meeting, the law today against drunk driving is based on the same principle. You should not drink and drive because when you drive if your senses aren't at full capacity you have a great chance of killing someone behind the wheel. We've all heard of or may even know someone or be someone who has lost a wife, a child, a friend, etc. because of a drunk driver.

11. Remember, do not blame the wine or the beer for the death of someone in an accident with the drunk driver. Likewise, do not blame the gun for the murder of an innocent person. The blame falls upon the person who did not use the wine or the gun properly.

12. Thus we see Belshazzar misusing holy vessels under the influence of wine.

C. Verse 4 here shows that not only were they misusing holy vessels but they were also praising their gods made of various materials.

III. Daniel 5:5-12

A. While this party is going on this hand shows up out of nowhere and begins to write on the plaster wall of the Kings palace.

B. Verse 6 tells us that Bel's face turned pale and his knees knocked together.

C. Then we read of Bel calling all his wise men to interpret the handwriting that was written upon the wall.

D. Bel then offers rewards to the man who interprets the writing.

1. Purple clothing was a color at that time worn by princes and persons of

high rank. It would be like buying the guy a fancy, expensive set of clothes.

2. A gold chain around the neck was also indicative of authority. We know this same thing was done to Joseph in Egypt in **Genesis 41**.

3. And then he promises the third rank in the kingdom. Why third? Generally when a king speaks words like this the second seat in the kingdom was promised. However, Bel had the second seat for he was second in command to the highest king in Babylon at the time named Nabonidus (we learn from secular history).

E. No one was able to interpret the writing, so the queen speaks up and tells Bel about a man in the kingdom whom she says has "the spirit of the holy gods" in him. She explains that Daniel had helped Neb out with his dreams and visions and Neb had made him the chief of all the wise men.

F. Daniel was summoned.

IV. Daniel 5:13-17

A. The king begins to speak to Daniel and explains to him what is going on.

B. Daniel responds to the king by telling him to keep his gifts. Daniel was a man who could not be bought with money.

1. Yahweh's law teaches that a good judge is a judge who judges justly without respect of persons, and who will not receive a bribe.

2. Many judges throughout time and in our day have authority problems. There is nothing wrong with authority but it is not to be misused.

3. Instead of a man ruling under the authority of Yahweh men often begin to become power hungry and rule by their own authority. This also happens with preachers.

4. They feel the need to tell people what "they think" needs to be done, and they often show partiality to people in their family or their close friends. In other words they are not ruling justly but rather are accepting the praises that men have to offer.

5. A righteous judge looks at a situation without bias. He does not consider a rich man higher than a poor man in court. He is not interested in the praises of the people around him. His desire is that Yahweh's law is upheld in the matter.

6. Daniel, though not acting as a judge here was of this same mindset. He let the king know quickly that he did not "peddle" his gift. He did not go around telling people he would interpret their dreams if they pay him so much money.

V. Daniel 5:18-23

A. In verses 18-21 Daniel recalls Belshazzar's memory to King Neb. He explains to him how powerful Neb was, but that when he became boastful Yahweh brought him down.

B. Daniel brings up what we learned back in chapter 4. Neb lost his mind and turned into an animal pretty much until he acknowledged that Yahweh the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and set up over the kingdoms of men anybody He wants to.

C. Daniel now contrasts Neb's change of heart with Bel's lack of change of heart.

1. Bel had exalted himself against the Lord of heaven and had profaned the holy vessels of Yahweh.

2. Bel was not glorifying Yahweh and recognizing that Yahweh holds his life-breath in his hand and even controls the whole course of your life.

3. This goes back to something we covered last week, so I will not repeat myself much here, but notice the theme of Yahweh's complete control continued in chapter 5.

VI. Daniel 5:24-28

A. Daniel now interprets the writing on the wall.

1. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin

2. Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, and Divided.

B. Numbered is mentioned twice probably for the purpose of emphasizing that Bel's days were numbered and finished permanently. His kingdom was about to end.

C. Weighed stands for Bel's lack of measuring up to the proper amount. As though you need something a certain number of pounds but you weigh it on a scale and it is lacking.

D. Peres (Parsin) - when I look up these apparently different words they are the same Aramaic word "pares" meaning divided. Here the words refers to Bel's

kingdom being divided between the next rulers - the Medes and the Persians.

VII. Daniel 5:29-31

A. It is odd that right after Daniel pretty much pronounces harsh judgment on Bel that he keeps his promise concerning the reward. Maybe he was a promise keeper or maybe this was the wine talking.

B. The interpretation didn't take long to come to pass because the text says that very night Bel was killed and Darius the Mede took over in Babylon.

VIII. Closing thoughts

A. Do you believe Yahweh holds your life-breath in his hand and controls the whole course of your life? Are you living life for His glory and praise, or are you just going with the flow and profaning what is holy, caring nothing about how your life impacts people, families, cities, etc. Whether or not Yeshua's return is near or far you do not know when the time of your last breath is. One thing is for sure, Yahweh holds it in His hand and can take it away.

B. Be thankful for Yahweh's mercy. Neb got mercy but Bel did not get it; he got what he deserved. Don't be of the mindset that you want Yahweh to be fair because if he is we would all get what Bel got this night. Be of the mindset that you want mercy from Yahweh. I want to remind you that He shows us mercy through the salvation that is only possible in His Son. If you've never given your life over to fully trust in Him and believe in His Son... to repent of your sins and follow Him fully, do that today.

Daniel's Prayer Schedule

Daniel - Pt. 10

Text: **Daniel 6**

I. Introduction

A. We have here today an account that many people that grow up in a church of some type learn as a little child.

B. It is probably one of the most famous historical accounts in Scripture.

C. While you probably know the main focus of the text today (Daniel is saved from the mouth of lions by Yahweh) I want to focus in on some often overlooked facts in this chapter, looking at Daniel's godly example and making application to our lives.

II. Daniel 6:1-5

- A. Darius must have heard about Daniel's wisdom under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.
- B. The text tells us that the King Darius planned to set Daniel over the whole realm of this Medo-Persian kingdom.
1. *Satraps* = Princes, Governors, Rulers
 2. *Administrator* = High Officer, obviously higher in rank than the Princes.
 3. Daniel would be set over not only the 120 princes, but also the 3 administrators.
- C. The satraps and administrators must have been jealous of Daniel's preeminence because we read of them attempting to find a reason to charge Daniel of a crime in the Kingdom - but they could not.
1. Daniel was trustworthy. This word here refers to Daniel's interaction in the secular matters of the kingdom. Of course all things done in honesty are spiritual matters, but the point is that in his kingdom business he was top notch.
 2. The men talk amongst themselves and realize the only way they will ever find a charge against Daniel is to examine his walk in the law of his God, Yahweh.
 - a. What a testimony!!! His "co-workers" are upset because he is considered "the best worker" in the kingdom.
 - b. They realize though that he is going to continue to be a good worker so they must look to his way of life spiritually to find a way to accuse him.
 - c. What do they mean here? How can they accuse him for his spiritual way of life? It is because he is living in a kingdom other than Yahweh's. Their way of thinking here is maybe they can find a way where his spiritual convictions violate the laws of the kingdom.
 - d. This shows that the men here recognized Daniel to be devoted to

his faith.

e. Daniel was letting his light shine. Even if the men did not agree with Daniel's "life serving Yahweh" they knew that he was not wishy-washy or just all mouth. He proved his devotion with his actual living for the Father.

III. Daniel 6:9

A. The men here have concocted a plan to have Daniel thrown into the den of lions - a punishment for those committing atrocious crimes against the Medo-Persian king.

B. They realize that Daniel's faith will forbid him from praying or making a petition to any man or any other god but Yahweh.

C. The Medo-Persian Empire had a rule or law that said that once a law was enacted it could not be changed. The men knew this and they knew that Daniel would be caught praying to Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, thus they had a "fool-proof" plan, or so they thought.

III. Daniel 6:10-14

A. Firstly let me point out Daniel's unwavering quality here. As soon as Daniel learned the document had been signed he went up to his room and prayed out of an open window where no doubt these men had seen him praying in the past.

1. When what we do or how we act in obedience to Yahweh causes us to suffer consequences that is when the men are separated from the boys.

2. I wear tassels, and it is a way of life for me. It is a command and I'm obedient. But what if... just what if the local city of Conyers issued a decree tomorrow that anyone caught wearing tassels would be fined \$100.00?

3. I know \$100.00 is nothing compared to a lion's den, but I'm keeping it simple for now. Would I still wear my tassels?

4. Some of you may be thinking right now, just wear them under your clothes and no one will see. Is that what Daniel did? He could have closed his window or prayed to himself while sitting in his room where no one could see, but he didn't.

5. Another illustration. Let's say a law was passed in our current kingdom that anyone caught holding a religious service to any other god than Allah would be put to death. Sharia law at its fullest. What would you do? Would you quit worshiping Yahweh in accordance with the Torah so as not to lose your life?

6. Just how devoted are we to Yahweh? Would we continue to keep His commandments if we faced death for doing so? A lot of people may say they would but in reality they would not. A lot of people today even act one way at church and then act entirely different depending on what person or group they are with. These type people are not following Daniel's example. Let me tell you this, if you aren't devoted to Yahweh now when you have state and national freedom to do so you certainly won't be devoted to him if your life is at stake.

B. Next point in these verses. Matters relating to prayer.

1. Daniel prayed three times a day. Many equate this practice with what is written in **Psalm 55:17** - "Morning, noon, and evening will I pray and He will hear my voice."

2. There are actually set prayer times documented for us in the book of **Acts 3:1** - "Now Peter and John were going up together to the temple complex at the hour of prayer at three in the afternoon."

3. This prayer is called in some Bibles to be at the "ninth hour" which does correspond to what we call 3 p.m. Contrast this to Peter's use of "third hour" of the day in Acts 2:15 (which some translations call "9 [a.m.] in the morning.") 9 a.m. would be the third hour of the day / 12 p.m. would be the sixth hour of the day / and 3 p.m. would be the ninth hour of the day.

4. The morning and afternoon/evening prayers corresponded to the times of the morning and evening sacrifices. While the prayer at noon had no sacrificial correspondence we do see an example of it in **Acts 10:9** where we read that Peter went on a rooftop to pray about the sixth hour, i.e. 12 noon.

5. While there is no commandment to pray 3 times a day in the Torah, we are commanded to pray throughout Scripture, and we do see that Daniel practiced the 3 times a day thing, and that certain hours of prayer were customary in the time of the Apostles.

6. Sometimes we are prone to not get to things throughout the day if they are not on our schedule. I've been meaning to put this 3 times a day custom to practice for quite some time and am planning on beginning it very soon. No matter what's going on, no matter what I'm doing, when those hours of prayer come around I stop momentarily and take time to kneel and pray to my Father.

7. That brings me to the next point about prayer and that is that Daniel prayed towards Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the place where the temple was,

and the temple was the visible symbol of Yahweh's presence on the earth.

8. Scriptures about Jerusalem/Temple

a. **Psalm 135:21** - "May Yahweh be praised from Zion; He dwells in Jerusalem. Hallelujah!"

b. **Psalm 137:5-6** - "If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not exalt Jerusalem as my greatest joy!"

c. **Jeremiah 51:50b** - "Remember Yahweh from far away, and let Jerusalem come to your mind."

d. **Isaiah 2** speaks of a future day when the law will go forth from Zion and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.

e. Notice Solomon's prayer in **1 Kings 8:44-45** - "When Your people go out to fight against their enemies, wherever You send them, and they pray to Yahweh in the direction of the city You have chosen and the temple I have built for Your name, may You hear their prayer and petition in heaven and uphold their cause."

f. And also **1 Kings 8:46-49** - "When they sin against You... and You are angry with them and hand them over to the enemy... and when they come to their senses in the land where they were deported and repent and petition you in their captors land... and when they pray to You in the direction of their land that You gave their ancestors, the city You have chosen, and the temple I have built for Your name, may You hear in heaven, Your dwelling place, their prayer and petition and uphold their cause."

g. Yahweh's response to Solomon's prayer (in part) was this in 1 Kings 9:3 - "I have heard you prayer and petition you have made before Me. I have consecrated this temple you have built, to put my name there forever; My eyes and My heart will be there at all times."

9. Now I recognize that at this time in Daniel's life there was no temple in Jerusalem (Neb had destroyed it), but the fact remains that Daniel recognized that to be the city where Yahweh placed his name in a special way and that one day the temple would be there again.

10. Why not do the same today? According to prophecy there will one day be a temple built in Jerusalem where the true worship of Yahweh is taking place (Isaiah 2, Ezekiel 40-48, Isaiah 66, etc.).

C. So we now get back to the account. The men see Daniel praying to his God and approach Darius about it, reminding him that the Medo-Persian law cannot be rescinded.

D. We see that Darius was displeased with the news. He thought highly of Daniel and set his heart the Bible says on rescuing Daniel.

IV. Daniel 6:15-18

A. The three men seem to remind the King again of the unchanging law here, and then what follows must have been heart-wrenching to the King.

B. Daniel was thrown into the lions den. and the stone was placed over the mouth of the den and then sealed with the signet ring of the King.

C. The King spent the night without eating. Diversions probably refers to instrumental music.

V. Daniel 6:19-24

A. The King must have loved Daniel, for he hurried to the lion's Den early in the morning crying out, "Are you okay Daniel!!!???"

B. You can only imagine the face of the King when he hears the voice of Daniel calling out to him from the den. "Yes, oh King, my God sent his angel and shut the lion's mouths." This was so real to Darius, and probably did much in convincing him that Daniel's faith was the true faith.

C. Daniel says that he was found innocent before his God and had not committed a crime against the King.

1. This certainly doesn't mean Daniel was perfect, sinless, etc. But it does mean that Daniel's life was dedicated fully to Yahweh.

2. Notice too that even though Daniel disobeyed the decree King Darius signed and sealed, he still says he had not committed a crime against the King. When you disobey a King's law that violates the law of Yahweh you aren't committing a crime. Daniel was basically saying that in the areas where I am authorized by Yahweh to obey you I have been faithful.

D. Then we read that the men (who had plotted against Daniel) and their families were thrown into the den and eaten before touching the floor!

VI. Daniel 6:25-28

- A. Darius seemed to believe in Yahweh here, especially his statements in verse 25.
- B. Daniel prospered under the reign of Darius and Cyrus. Co-reigns; Darius being a Mede an Cyrus being a Persian.
- C. Daniel prospered under 4 different kings: Neb, Bel, Darius, and Cyrus. Daniel never forsake Yahweh, and at the same time was submissive to the authority of pagans where he could be, recognizing that through his humble, submissive example, the light of the Torah and the supremacy of Yahweh would shine!