

Through the Bible

DANIEL

Zac Poonen



Illustrations by Vinay Kuruville

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CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

69 PARADISE ENCLAVE, BELAHALLI
KANNUR POST, BANGALORE - 562 149
INDIA

DANIEL

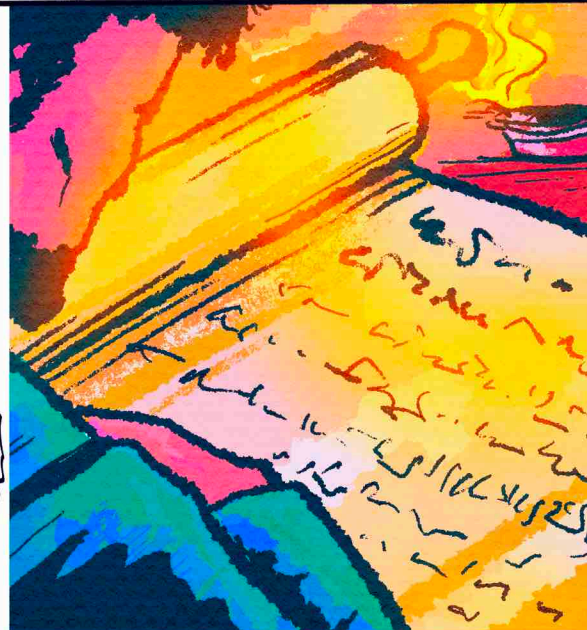
DANIEL IS A BOOK THAT HAS A SPECIAL RELEVANCE FOR TIMES OF PERSECUTION



IT SHOWS US HOW A MAN OF GOD SHOULD CONDUCT HIMSELF IN TIMES OF PERSECUTION. WE ALSO SEE HERE THE BEGINNING OF THE MOVEMENT FROM BABYLON TO JERUSALEM -- SYMBOLICALLY, FROM CORRUPT, COMPROMISING CHRISTENDOM TO GOD'S NEW COVENANT CHURCH. IT BEGAN WITH ONE UPRIGHT, UNCOMPROMISING MAN, WHO WAS CONCERNED ABOUT GOD'S PURPOSES AND WHO FASTED AND PRAYED FOR THEIR FULFILMENT. DANIEL NEVER KNEW, WHEN HE STARTED OUT BEING FAITHFUL AS A YOUNG MAN, WHAT A TREMENDOUS MINISTRY HE WAS GOING TO HAVE. HE JUST REMAINED FAITHFUL TO GOD IN LITTLE THINGS AND BIG, AND GOD ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT MINISTRY THROUGH HIM. HE WAS PROBABLY AROUND 17 YEARS OLD WHEN THE BOOK BEGINS, AND ABOUT 90 YEARS OLD BY THE TIME THE BOOK ENDS. HE LIVED THROUGH THE ENTIRE 70 YEARS OF CAPTIVITY, AND HE WAS FAITHFUL ALL THE WAY THROUGH. THAT WAS WHY GOD COULD USE HIM TO BEGIN THIS MOVEMENT FROM BABYLON TO JERUSALEM.

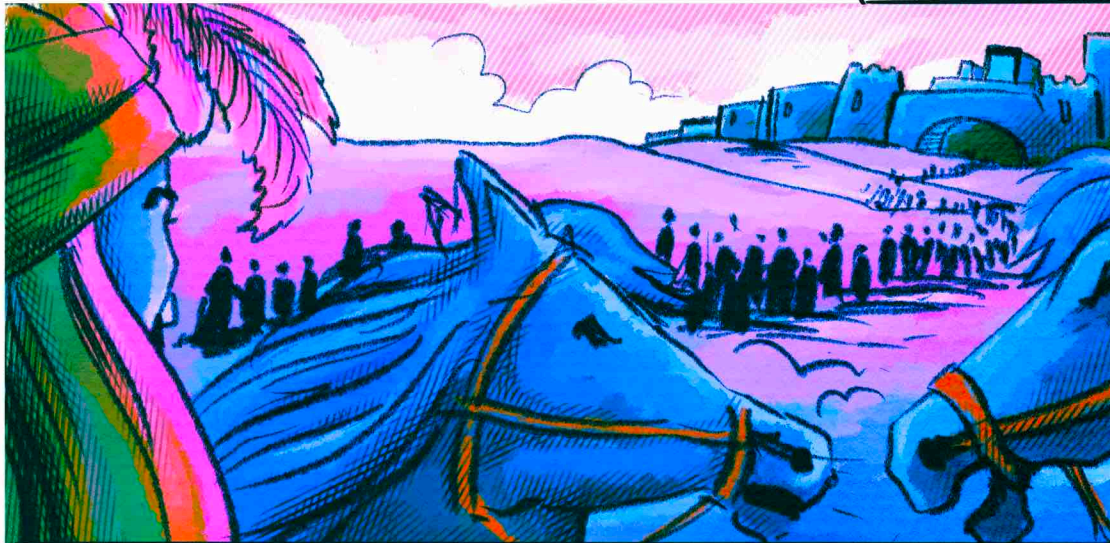


DANIEL CARRIED A BURDEN BEFORE LORD. THIS RESULTED IN OTHERS ALSO BEGINNING TO SHARE HIS BURDEN IN LATER YEARS -- HAGGAI, ZERUBBABEL, JOSHUA, ZECHARIAH, EZRA, NEHEMIAH AND OTHERS. GOD HIMSELF WILL ADD OTHERS TO YOU WHO SHARE YOUR BURDEN, AND TOGETHER WITH THEM YOU WILL BE ABLE TO BUILD GOD'S NEW COVENANT CHURCH.



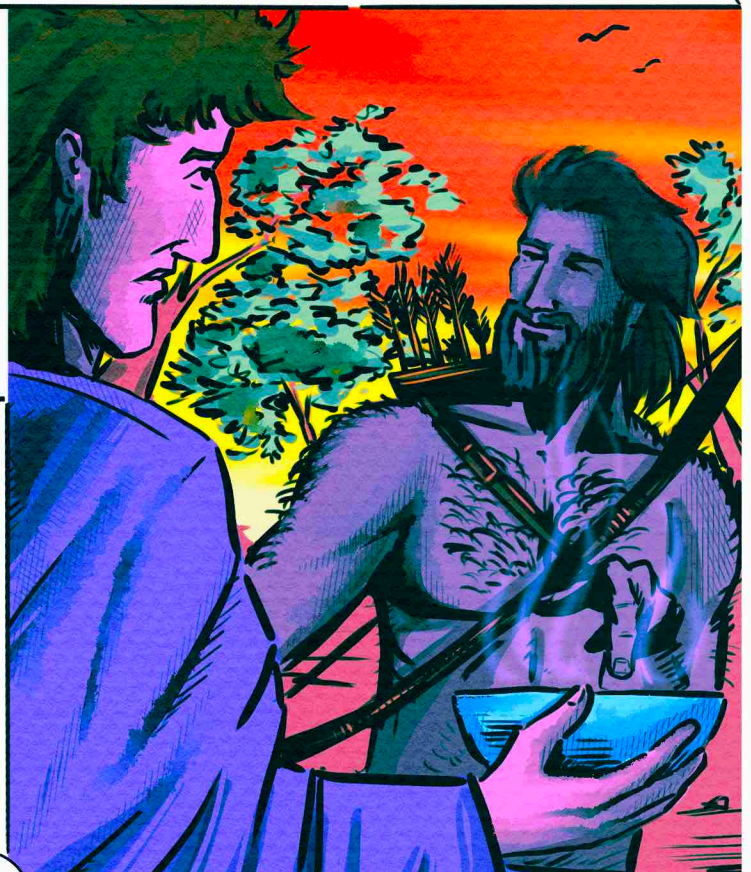


DANIEL LIVED IN A HEATHEN LAND. SO HE IS AN **EXAMPLE** ESPECIALLY FOR US IN INDIA. HE COULD GATHER ONLY THREE **WHOLE- HEARTED** PEOPLE, HANANIAH, MISHAEL AND AZARIAH (WHO ARE BETTER KNOWN BY THEIR BABYLONIAN NAMES -- SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO). BUT THOSE YOUNG MEN WERE A POWERFUL WITNESS FOR GOD RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF **BABYLON**, THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE WORLD'S SUPERPOWER -- A SMALL CHURCH OF **FOUR** PEOPLE. THOSE FOUR PEOPLE **INFLUENCED** THAT COUNTRY **MORE** THAN ALL THE OTHER HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS OF JEWS WHO WERE IN BABYLON BECAUSE OF ONE REASON: WHILE THE OTHERS **COMPROMISED**, THESE FOUR DID NOT.

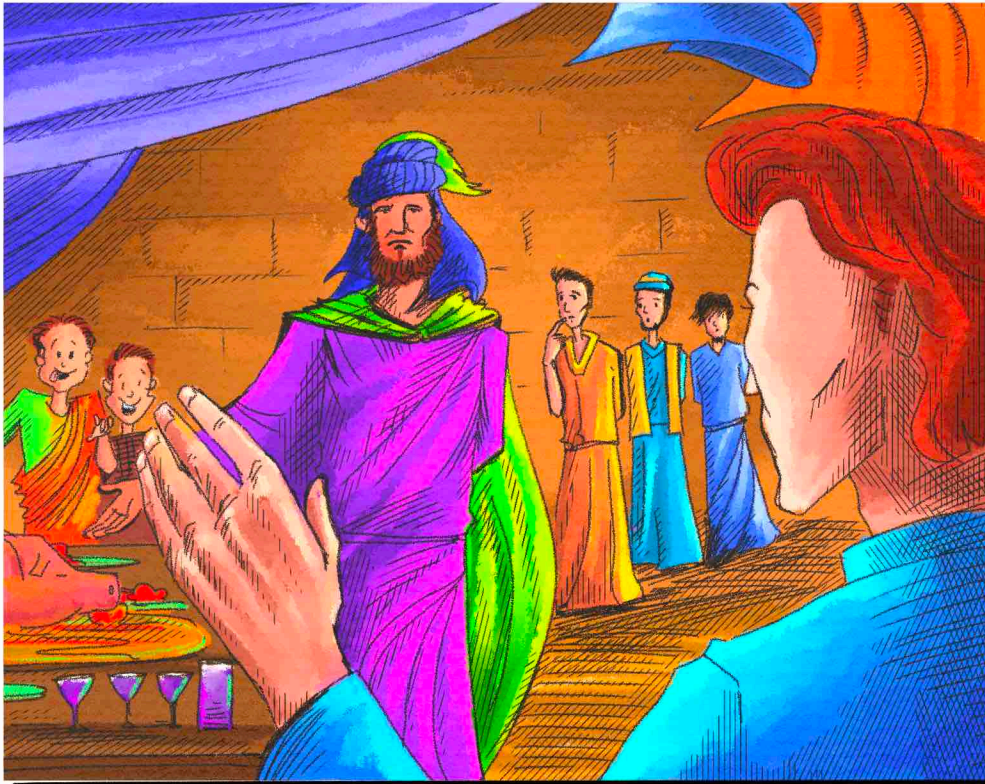


THE SECOND PHRASE IS "DANIEL MADE UP HIS **MIND** NOT TO **DEFILE** HIMSELF" (1:8). DANIEL'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS MAN WAS ONE OF "NO **COMPROMISE** WHATSOEVER". WE MUST **REFUSE** TO **DEFILE** OUR **CONSCIENCE** WITH ANY SIN.

THERE ARE TWO PHRASES THAT DESCRIBE DANIEL'S ATTITUDE TO GOD AND TO MAN. THE FIRST PHRASE IS "THE LORD **GAVE**" (1:2) -- REFERRING TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S **CAPTURE** OF JERUSALEM. DANIEL SAW THE LORD AS THE ONE WHO **GAVE** NEBUCHADNEZZAR VICTORY OVER JERUSALEM, TO TEACH THE JEWS A **LESSON**. SO, DANIEL'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS **GOD** WAS ONE OF **FAITH** IN GOD'S **ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY** OVER ALL MATTERS ON THE EARTH.



AFTER DANIEL MADE UP HIS MIND TO KEEP HIMSELF **UNDEFILED**, HIS FIRST TEST CAME IN RELATION TO FOOD. THE FIRST TEST THAT CAME TO **ADAM** AND EVE WAS ALSO IN RELATION TO FOOD. AND THE FIRST TEST THAT CAME TO **JESUS** IN THE WILDERNESS WAS IN RELATION TO FOOD TOO. **ESAU** LOST HIS BIRTHRIGHT BECAUSE OF FOOD. ISAAC LOST HIS SPIRITUAL VISION BECAUSE OF HIS LOVE FOR THE TASTY FOOD THAT ESAU COULD BRING HIM. BUT DANIEL'S ATTITUDE WAS, "GOD HAS SAID IN HIS WORD THAT THIS TYPE OF FOOD MUST NOT BE EATEN AND SO I WILL NOT EAT IT." DANIEL HAD STUDIED THE SCRIPTURES AS A **YOUNG** MAN, AND HE KNEW THAT THE LAW OF **MOSES** FORBADE THE EATING OF CERTAIN **MEATS** AND THAT THE BOOK OF **PROVERBS** FORBADE THE DRINKING OF ALCOHOLIC WINE. HE DECIDED TO **OBEY** GOD, WHATEVER IT MAY COST HIM.



DANIEL ALSO HAD **FAITH**. HE TOLD THE KING'S OVERSEER, "YOU CAN TEST US FOR TEN DAYS. WE WILL HAVE ONLY **VEGETABLES** AND **WATER**. AND WE BELIEVE THAT WE'LL BE PHYSICALLY **BETTER** OFF THAN THESE OTHER JEWS WHO ARE EATING THE RICH FOOD." GOD IS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WHO WILL **BOLDLY** CONFESS THEIR **FAITH**, AND NOT KEEP THEIR LIGHT **HIDDEN** UNDERNEATH A BED. AT THE END OF TEN DAYS, JUST AS DANIEL HAD SAID, THEY ALL LOOKED **HEALTHIER** AND **STRONGER** THAN THE OTHERS(1:11--15). THIS SELF-DENIAL IN A **SIMPLE** MATTER LIKE FOOD **PREPARED** THEM FOR THE **GREATER** TESTS OF THE FIERY FURNACE AND THE DEN OF **LIONS** LATER ON. HERE WE SEE HOW GOD GAVE THEM **SUPERNATURAL HEALTH** FOR THEIR **BODY**.

IN THE BEGINNING HE HAD TO STAND **ALONE**, WHILE ALL THE OTHER JEWS **COMPROMISED**. BUT WHEN HANANIAH, MISHAEL AND AZARIAH **SAW** ONE YOUNG MAN TAKING A STAND FOR GOD, THEY GOT THE **COURAGE** TO JOIN HIM (1:11). IF DANIEL HAD **NOT** TAKEN A STAND FOR THE LORD, WE MIGHT NEVER HAVE **HEARD** ABOUT HANANIAH, MISHAEL AND AZARIAH.

I FIND THAT THERE ARE **THREE** TYPES OF PEOPLE AMONG GOD'S CHILDREN: FIRST, THE **COMPROMISERS** WHO SEEK WHAT IS GOOD FOR **THEM** AND HAVE NO PRINCIPLES. THERE ARE MILLIONS OF SUCH PEOPLE IN CHRISTENDOM TODAY. THEN THERE IS A **SECOND** GROUP LIKE HANANIAH, MISHAEL AND AZARIAH WHO DON'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO TAKE A STAND ON THEIR **OWN**, BUT WHO ARE WILLING TO TAKE A STAND IF THEY SEE SOMEONE **ELSE** WHO IS WILLING TO TAKE A STAND FOR THE LORD. THAT IS A MUCH SMALLER NUMBER. THEN THERE IS THE **THIRD** GROUP OF PEOPLE LIKE DANIEL, WHO WILL TAKE A STAND FOR THE LORD, EVEN IF **NO-ONE** ELSE TAKES A STAND. THIS GROUP IS VERY MUCH **SMALLER**. THERE MAY BE JUST **ONE** PERSON HERE AND ANOTHER PERSON THERE, IN THIS CATEGORY. THIS **DIVISION** IS SOMEWHAT LIKE THE OUTER COURT, THE HOLY PLACE AND THE MOST HOLY PLACE IN THE **TABERNACLE**.



LATER, WE READ HOW GOD GAVE THEM **SUPERNATURAL INTELLIGENCE** FOR THEIR **MIND**. HE GAVE THESE **FOUR** YOUNG MEN A SPECIAL **APTITUDE** FOR **LEARNING LITERATURE** AND **SCIENCE**. GOD GAVE DANIEL **SUPERNATURAL UNDERSTANDING** IN HIS **SPIRIT** TOO, TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF **VISIONS** AND **DREAMS**. SO WE SEE GOD ENABLING THEM **SUPERNATURALLY** IN **BODY**, **SOUL** AND **SPIRIT**. WE ALSO NEED TO LEARN TO **TRUST** GOD TO GIVE US **HEALTH** FOR OUR **BODY**, **INTELLIGENCE** FOR OUR **MIND** AND **SPIRITUAL VISION** AND **UNDERSTANDING** OF HIS **WAYS** BY THE **HOLY SPIRIT**.



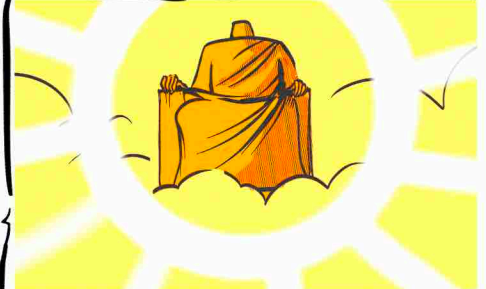
IN CHAPTER 2, WE READ ABOUT A **DREAM** THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR HAD. NEBUCHADNEZZAR CALLED HIS WISE MEN AND TOLD THEM, "TELL ME WHAT I **DREAMT** AND ITS **MEANING**." THOSE WISE MEN ARE A PICTURE OF PREACHERS WHO HAVE NO TOUCH WITH **GOD**, BUT WHO ARE **DECEIVERS**. SUCH PREACHERS CANNOT INTERPRET GOD'S WORD OR THE TIMES **CORRECTLY**.



THOSE WISE MEN SAID, "ONLY THE **GODS** CAN SHOW YOU WHAT YOU DREAMT. NO HUMAN BEING CAN DO THAT. IT IS **IMPOSSIBLE**. BUT IF YOU TELL US THE DREAM, THEN WE WILL INTERPRET IT FOR YOU." NOW, WE KNOW THAT IF SOMEONE TELLS US HIS DREAM IT IS EASY TO **COOK UP AN INTERPRETATION** AND TO **PRETEND** THAT WE GOT IT FROM GOD! THAT'S WHAT A LOT OF PREACHERS DO TODAY. BUT NEBUCHADNEZZAR WAS A **SHREWD** MAN. HE SAID, "IF YOU ALL ARE **REALLY** IN TOUCH WITH GOD, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TELL ME THE DREAM AS **WELL**."



A **TRUE** SERVANT OF GOD WILL EXPERIENCE SOME **SUPERNATURAL** THINGS IN HIS MINISTRY. WHEN DANIEL HEARD ABOUT THIS PROBLEM, HE WAS **CALM**. HE HANDLED THE SITUATION WITH GREAT **WISDOM** (2:14). IF YOU **HUMBLE** YOURSELF AND LIVE IN THE FEAR OF GOD AND SUBMIT TO **AUTHORITIES** GOD PLACES OVER YOU, YOU CAN LEARN FROM YOUR **YOUTH** WITHOUT DOING THE **FOOLISH** THINGS THAT OTHERS DO. DANIEL IS A WONDERFUL **EXAMPLE** OF THAT.



IN 2:18, WE READ THAT THEY PRAYED TO THE "**GOD OF HEAVEN**", INDICATING THAT DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS BEGAN THEIR PRAYER BY **EXALTING** AND PRAISING THE "**GOD OF HEAVEN**" FIRST OF ALL. THIS IS HOW **JESUS** ALSO TAUGHT US TO BEGIN OUR PRAYERS: "OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN..." (MATTHEW 6:9), WHEREBY WE **EXALT** GOD FIRST, BEFORE BRINGING OUR REQUESTS TO HIM. BEGINNING PRAYER WITH **EXALTING** GOD WAS DANIEL'S **HABIT**, AS WE CAN SEE IN CHAPTER 9:4 ALSO.

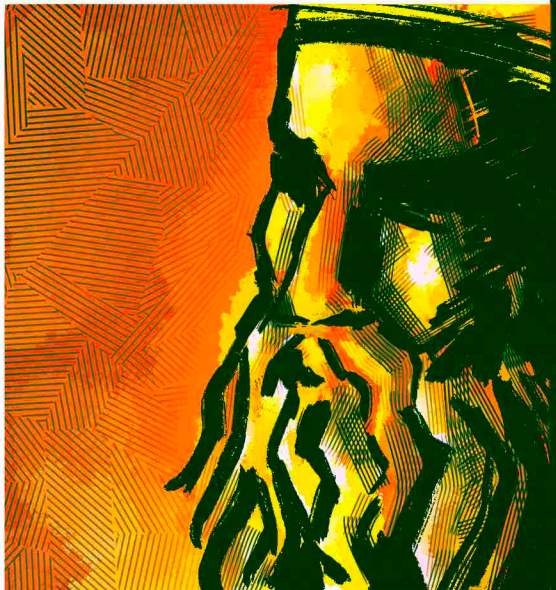
HOW DID DANIEL GET THE ANSWER TO THE DREAM THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR HAD? FIRST OF ALL, HE HAD **FAITH** THAT GOD WOULD REVEAL IT TO HIM. HE WENT TO **GOD**. HE CALLED HIS FRIENDS (2:17). THERE IS A TREMENDOUS VALUE IN **FELLOWSHIP** IN PRAYER WHEN WE FACE A PROBLEM THAT IS TOO **DIFFICULT** FOR US. DANIEL UNDERSTOOD THE PRINCIPLE OF FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. HE WAS A **NEW COVENANT** MAN LIVING IN OLD COVENANT TIMES.



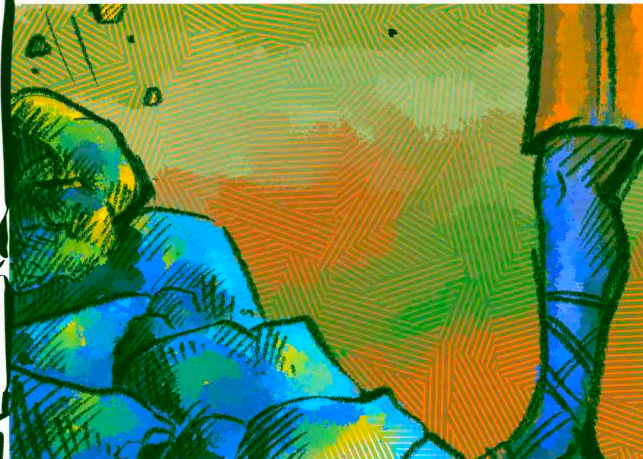
IT IS A GOOD HABIT TO BEGIN EVERY TIME OF PRAYER WITH **PRAISE**. WHENEVER YOU CAN'T GET THROUGH IN PRAYER, START **PRAISING** THE LORD. THINK OF GOD'S **GREATNESS** AND PRAISE HIM -- AND YOU WILL FIND THE ATMOSPHERE **CLEARING UP** IMMEDIATELY.



ONCE GOD HAD REVEALED THE DREAM AND ITS MEANING TO DANIEL, HE WENT AND GAVE THE KING THE ANSWER, **ACKNOWLEDGING**, "THIS IS **NOT** DUE TO MY **CLEVERNESS**. IT IS BECAUSE **GOD** REVEALED IT TO ME" (2:30). DANIEL WAS A **HUMBLE** YOUNG MAN WHO WAS WILLING TO GIVE GOD ALL THE **GLORY**. GOD REVEALS HIS **TRUTHS** TO SUCH MEN.



NEBUCHADNEZZAR SAW A STATUE WITH A HEAD OF GOLD, CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER, STOMACH AND THIGHS OF BRONZE, LEGS OF IRON, AND FEET OF A COMBINATION OF IRON AND CLAY (2:31--33). THE HEAD OF GOLD SYMBOLISED THE **BABYLONIAN** EMPIRE THAT WOULD LAST FOR ABOUT 70 YEARS.



AFTER THAT WOULD COME THE **MEDO-PERSIAN** EMPIRE (CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER) WHICH WOULD LAST FOR ABOUT 200 YEARS. THE BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRONZE SYMBOLISED THE **GRECIAN** EMPIRE OF **ALEXANDER THE GREAT** (AND HIS FATHER) WHICH WOULD LAST FOR ABOUT 200 YEARS.



THE LEGS OF IRON REPRESENTED THE **ROMAN** EMPIRE (THAT WOULD RULE THE WORLD IN THE TIME OF **CHRIST**) AND THAT WOULD LAST FOR ABOUT 600 YEARS.



THE FEET OF IRON AND CLAY REPRESENT COUNTRIES GOVERNED BY **Dictatorship** (IRON) AND **Democracy** (CLAY), AND REPRESENT THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD IN THE LAST DAYS. THE TEN TOES OF THE FEET SPEAK OF TEN KINGDOMS THAT WILL COME TOGETHER AT THE **END-TIME** (POSSIBLY IN EUROPE) THAT WILL BE HEADED BY THE **ANTICHRIST**, IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE RETURN OF JESUS TO EARTH.



SO GOD GAVE NEBUCHADNEZZAR A **VISION** OF WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN ON **EARTH** RIGHT UNTIL THE RETURN OF **CHRIST**.

THEN HE SAW A **STONE** COMING DOWN AND **SHATTERING** ALL THESE **KINGDOMS** TO **BITS**. THIS WAS A PICTURE OF THE REIGN OF **CHRIST** (2:44). "THE GOD OF HEAVEN WILL THEN SET UP A **KINGDOM** WHICH WILL **NEVER** BE **DESTROYED**."



SO WHEN NEBUCHADNEZZAR MADE A **STATUE** ENTIRELY OF GOLD, WHAT HE WAS SAYING THEREBY WAS, "I AM GOING TO BE THERE UNTIL THE **END**.
CHAPTER 3:1: HERE WE READ THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR COMPELLED EVERYONE TO **WORSHIP** HIS GOLDEN STATUE. DANIEL WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT IN TOWN AT THIS TIME. HE MUST HAVE BEEN AWAY SOMEWHERE IN RELATION TO HIS WORK. SO SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO WERE BY THEMSELVES. ALL THE JEWS DISOBEYED GOD'S COMMANDMENT AND **BOWED** DOWN TO THE IDOL TO SAVE THEIR LIVES. GOD HAD ALLOWED SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO TO BE BY THEMSELVES AT THIS TIME TO **TEST** THEM AND TO **STRENGTHEN** THEM.



AT TIMES IT IS **GOOD** FOR US, IF A MAN OF GOD IS **NOT** AVAILABLE NEARBY, SO THAT WE CAN LEARN TO **DEPEND** ON **GOD** HIMSELF. THE DANGER OF HAVING GODLY MEN NEARBY IS THAT WE TEND TO **LEAN** ON THEM. THE DANGER OF ALWAYS **LISTENING** TO A GOOD BIBLE TEACHER IS THAT WE MAY NEVER **STUDY** THE **WORD** OURSELVES. THAT WILL MAKE YOU MORE DEPENDENT ON THE HOLY SPIRIT TO TEACH YOU HIS WORD AND TO **STRENGTHEN** YOU TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.



NEBUCHADNEZZAR WAS **FURIOUS** WHEN THEY **REFUSED** TO BOW BEFORE HIS STATUE AND SAID "IF YOU DON'T BOW DOWN, I WILL HEAT THE FURNACE **SEVEN** TIMES AND THROW YOU IN" (3:19). THEY **STILL** DID **NOT** BOW DOWN.

I CAN **IMAGINE** THAT SOME OF THE **OTHER** JEWS WOULD HAVE COME TO THEM AND SAID, "JUST **COMPROMISE** A LITTLE.



JUST NOD YOUR HEAD A LITTLE TOWARDS THE STATUE." BUT THEY **STEADFASTLY** **REFUSED** TO DO SO. THE OTHER JEWS MAY EVEN HAVE **SUGGESTED**, "WHY DON'T YOU BOW DOWN, AND **THEN** GO TO GOD AND ASK HIM TO **FORGIVE** YOU FOR DOING IT."



THERE ARE CHRISTIANS WHO DO THAT TODAY. THEY THINK THEY ARE **CLEVER** BECAUSE THEY GET WHAT THEY WANT AND THEN GET THEIR SIN **FORGIVEN** TOO. BUT IF YOU GET AN ADMISSION OR A VISA OR A JOB BY TELLING A **LIE**, YOU CANNOT POSSIBLY **END** UP IN THE PLACE WHERE **GOD** WANTS **YOU** TO BE



WE ALSO SEE HERE THE TOTAL **CONTEMPT** FOR DEATH THAT THESE THREE MEN HAD. THEY TOLD THE KING, "OUR GOD IS ABLE TO DELIVER US FROM YOUR **FIERY FURNACE**. BUT IF HE CHOOSES NOT TO DO SO, WE WILL **STILL** NOT WORSHIP YOUR IMAGE."

WHAT WAS THE RESULT? WHEN THEY WERE THROWN INTO THE FURNACE, ONLY THE **ROPES** GOT **BURNT**. WHEN SATAN HARASSES US, WHAT CAN HE BURN UP IN US? ONLY THE THINGS THAT **BIND** US!! HE **CANNOT** BURN UP ANYTHING **VALUABLE** IN US.



WHEN WE ARE THROWN INTO THE FIRE, THE THINGS THAT BIND US GET **BURNT** AND WE COME OUT **FREE**. IT IS **GOOD** IF A FIRE HAS SUCCEEDED IN FREEING YOU FROM **ATTACHMENT** TO **EARTHLY** THINGS. WE COULD SEE SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO HERE AS A PICTURE OF OURSELVES TIED TO EARTHLY THINGS WITH ROPES. THEN GOD PUTS US INTO A FIRE (SOME DIFFICULT **TRIAL**) AND VERY SOON OUR ATTACHMENT TO THE THINGS OF EARTH IS **GONE**. **THANK** GOD FOR SUCH FIRES. **THANK** GOD FOR SUCH TRIALS.

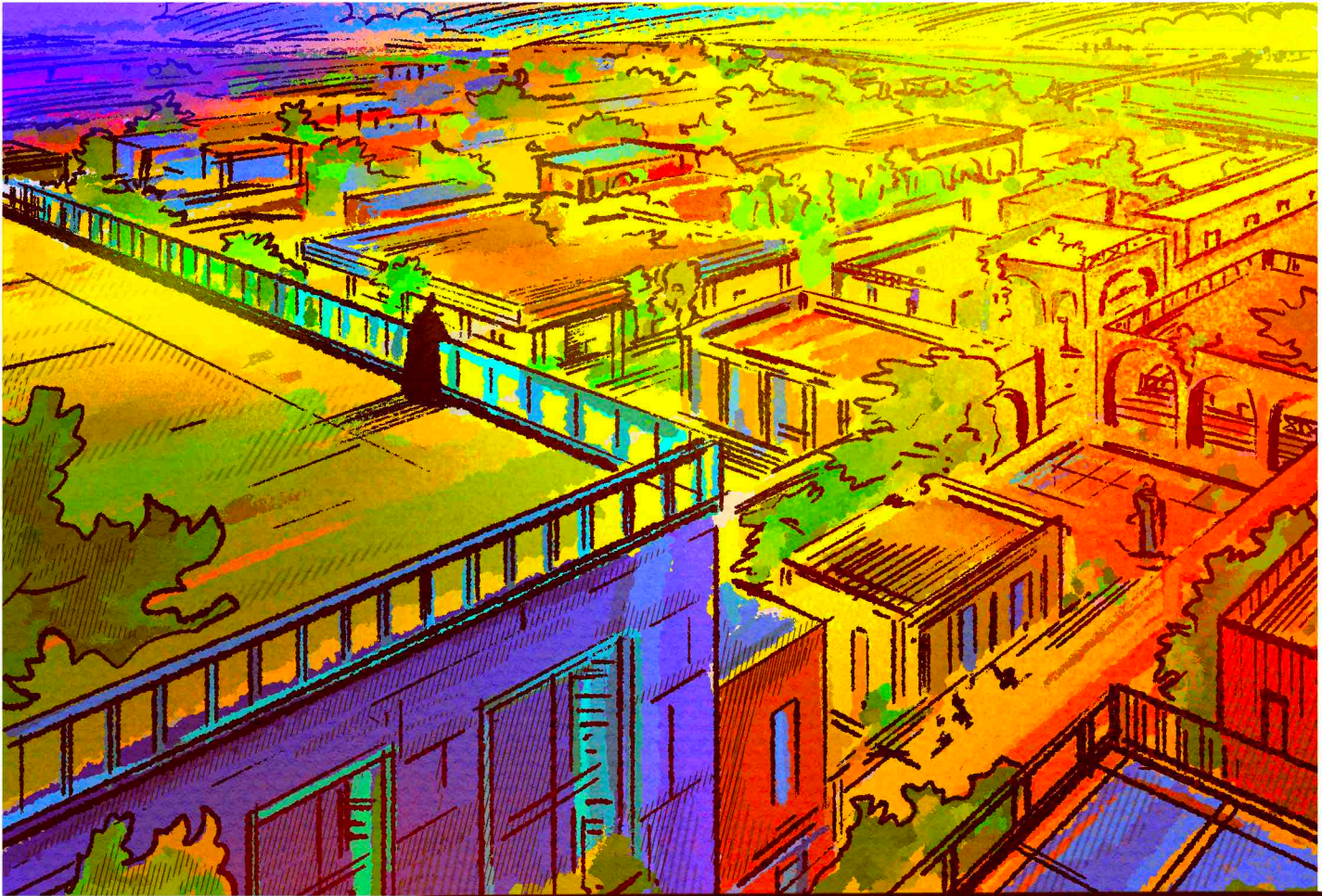


IF I WERE TO ASK YOU WHAT THE **GREATEST** MIRACLE IN CHAPTER 3 WAS, YOU WOULD PROBABLY SAY, "THAT THE **FIRE** COULD NOT KILL THEM." BUT I SEE THE **GREATEST** MIRACLE HERE AS THIS, THAT WHEN EVERYBODY **BOWED DOWN** TO THE STATUE, THESE THREE MEN DID NOT



CHAPTER 4:6, 7:
NEBUCHADNEZZAR AGAIN HAD A **DREAM** THAT FRIGHTENED HIM. HE CALLED THE WISE MEN AGAIN. 32 YEARS EARLIER WHEN HE HAD HIS FIRST DREAM, THE WISE MEN **COULDN'T** HELP HIM. THIS TIME WAS THE SAME. **DANIEL** EXPLAINED THIS DREAM TOO AND TOLD HIM HOW GOD WAS GOING TO **JUDGE** HIM.

"THE TREE IS A PICTURE OF **YOU**," DANIEL SAID, "AND BECAUSE OF YOUR **PRIDE** GOD IS GOING TO **CUT** YOU DOWN." BUT NEBUCHADNEZZAR DID NOT **LISTEN** TO DANIEL. DANIEL URGED HIM TO **STOP SINNING**, TO DO WHAT WAS RIGHT, TO BREAK FROM HIS **WICKED** PAST AND TO BE MERCIFUL TO THE **POOR**, SO THAT THIS DREAM OF JUDGEMENT WOULD NOT BE FULFILLED (4:27). BUT NEBUCHADNEZZAR **WOULDN'T** LISTEN.



A YEAR LATER (4:29) NEBUCHADNEZZAR WAS WALKING ON THE ROOF OF HIS PALACE IN **BABYLON** AND HE BEGAN TO MEDITATE ON WHAT HE HAD BUILT. HERE WAS BABYLON BUILT **BY HIM**, BY HIS **POWER** AND **FOR HIS GLORY** (4:30). **BY MAN**, **THROUGH MAN** AND **TO MAN** -- THAT IS THE **ESSENCE** OF BABYLON. WHEN A CHURCH IS BUILT WITH HUMAN WISDOM, BY HUMAN POWER, AND FOR HUMAN GLORY, THAT BECOMES BABYLON, EVEN IF ITS **DOCTRINES** ARE ALL **CORRECT**. WHEN CHRISTIAN WORK IS DONE BY **HUMAN CLEVERNESS** AND **ABILITY**, BY THE POWER OF **MONEY**, AND FOR **MAN'S** GLORY, THEN WHATEVER DOCTRINES THE LEADERS MAY BELIEVE, WHAT THEY BUILD WILL BE BABYLON. A GENUINE WORK OF GOD IS ALWAYS DONE ACCORDING TO **GOD'S** PLAN THAT IS DISCOVERED THROUGH **WAITING** ON GOD IN PRAYER. IT IS DONE BY THE **POWER** OF THE **HOLY SPIRIT** -- WITH SUPERNATURAL HELP FROM GOD; AND IT IS DONE 100% FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. REMEMBER THIS **ALWAYS** AND IT WILL SAVE YOU FROM BUILDING WITH WOOD, HAY AND STRAW.



GOD WARNED NEBUCHADNEZZAR THREE TIMES (4:31). HE DID NOT LISTEN, AND SO HE WAS **PUNISHED**. HE BECAME **MAD** AND STARTED EATING **GRASS** LIKE A COW (4:32).

AT LAST HE REPENTED. THEN GOD **HEALED** HIM OF HIS MADNESS. NEBUCHADNEZZAR THEN MADE ONE OF THE MOST **COMPLETE** STATEMENTS ABOUT THE **SOVEREIGNTY** OF **GOD** FOUND ANYWHERE IN THE BIBLE.



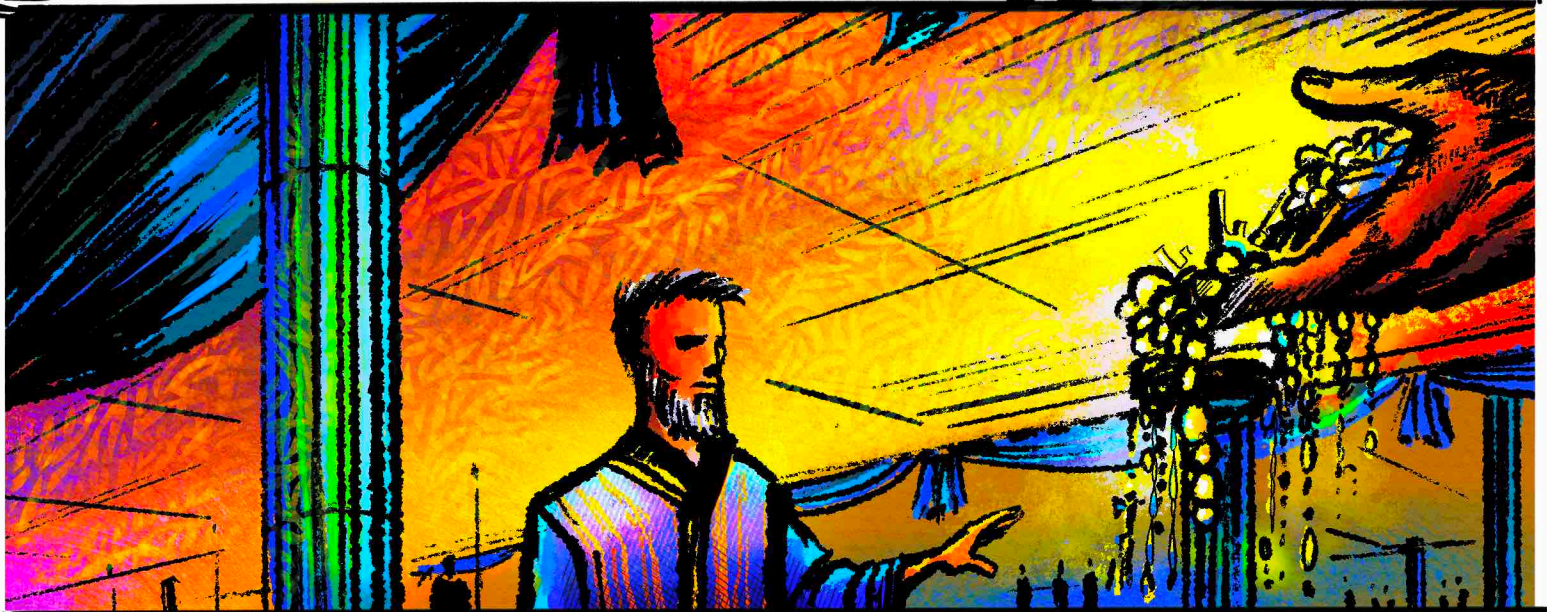
HE SAID, "HIS **DOMINION** IS AN EVERLASTING DOMINION AND HIS KINGDOM **ENDURES** FOREVER. **ALL** THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH ARE ACCOUNTED AS **NOTHING** AND HE DOES ACCORDING TO HIS **WILL** IN THE HOST OF HEAVEN AND AMONG THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH. **NO** ONE CAN WARD OFF HIS HAND OR SAY TO HIM, 'WHAT HAVE YOU **DONE?**' ALL HIS WORKS ARE TRUE AND HIS WAYS ARE **JUST** AND HE IS ABLE TO **HUMBLE** THOSE WHO WALK IN **PRIDE**" (4:34--37).



MANY YEARS LATER, NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S SON BELSHAZZAR HAD A GREAT FEAST IN BABYLON. HE SUDDENLY SAW SOMEONE'S HAND WRITING WORDS ON THE WALL OF THE PALACE (5:5).



THERE ARE ONLY TWO INSTANCES IN THE BIBLE WHERE WE READ OF GOD ACTUALLY WRITING SOMETHING. THE FIRST IS HIS WRITING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ON TABLETS OF STONE. THE SECOND IS HERE. NONE OF THE WISE MEN COULD INTERPRET WHAT WAS WRITTEN ON THE WALL.



WHEN THE QUEEN-MOTHER HEARD OF THIS, SHE REMINDED THE KING OF DANIEL WHO HAD INTERPRETED DREAMS IN THE DAYS OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR. DANIEL WAS BROUGHT IN AND THE KING OFFERED HIM PURPLE ROBES AND A GOLD CHAIN AND A PLACE OF HONOUR IN THE KINGDOM. DANIEL TOLD THE KING TO KEEP HIS GIFTS OR TO GIVE THEM TO SOMEONE ELSE (5:17). DANIEL'S ATTITUDE TO GIFTS AND HONOUR FROM THE HEATHEN WAS EXACTLY THE SAME AS THAT OF ELISHA (WHO REFUSED NAAMAN'S GIFTS) AND ABRAHAM (WHO REFUSED THE GIFTS OFFERED BY THE KING OF SODOM).



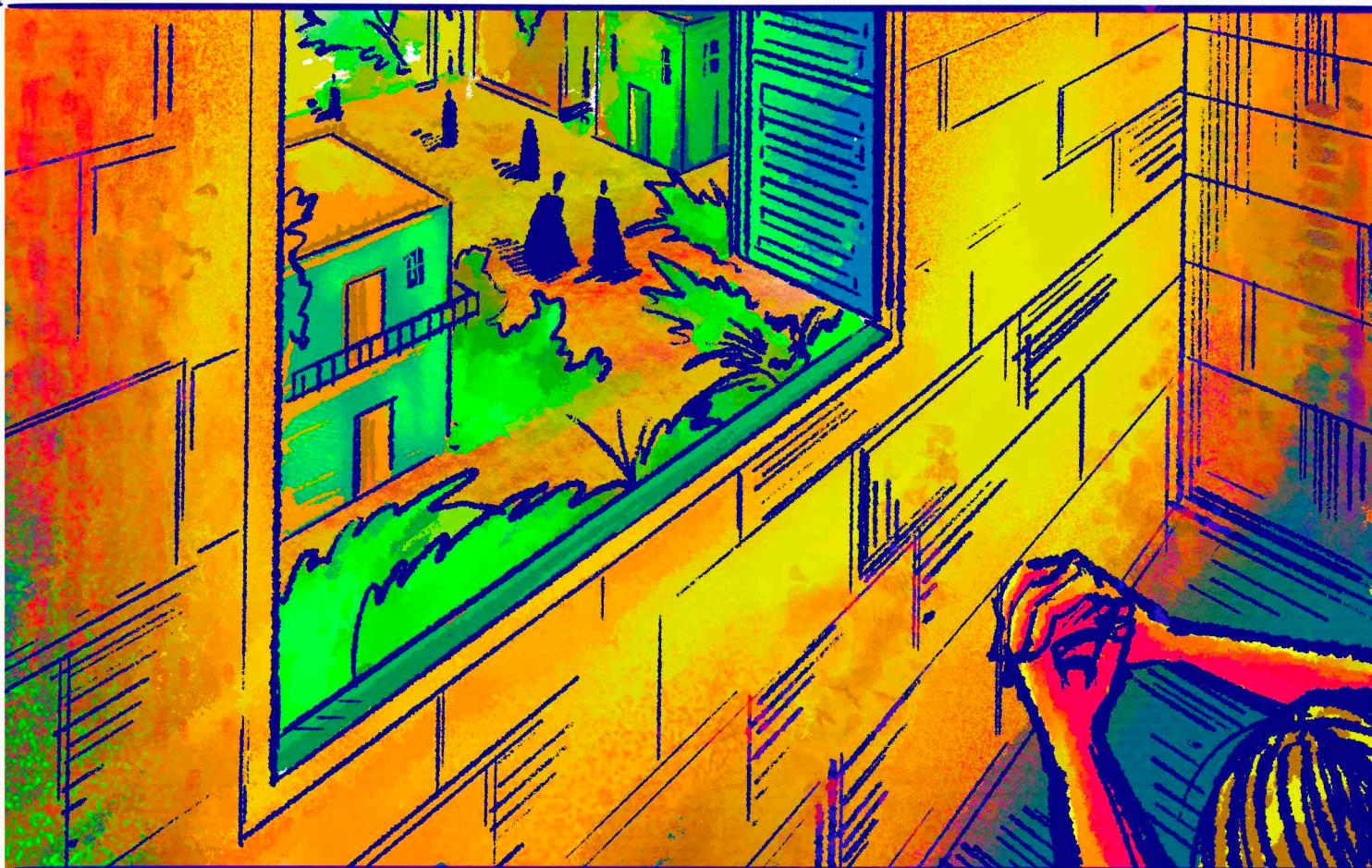
A GENUINE MAN OF GOD CAN BE IDENTIFIED BY HIS ATTITUDE TO EARTHLY GIFTS AND HONOUR. MANY SERVANTS OF THE LORD HAVE DESTROYED THEMSELVES BY RECEIVING GIFTS FROM PEOPLE FROM WHOM THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE RECEIVED ANYTHING. IT IS RIGHT TO RECEIVE A GIFT FROM GOD'S PEOPLE -- IF THE GIFT IS GIVEN VOLUNTARILY, AND IF THOSE PEOPLE ARE FINANCIALLY BETTER OFF THAN YOU ARE. BUT IT IS TOTALLY WRONG TO RECEIVE MONEY FOR YOUR PERSONAL NEEDS FROM ANYONE WHO IS POORER THAN YOU -- EVEN IF THEY ARE BELIEVERS.





DANIEL THEN TOLD BELSHAZZAR, "YOU KNOW EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED. YET YOU HAVE **NOT HUMBL**ED YOURSELF. YOU HAVE DEFIED GOD BY TAKING **CUPS** FROM HIS **TEMPLE** TO DRINK." (5:22, 23). DANIEL WAS A **FEARLESS** PROPHET AND HE WARNED THE KING OF DANGER. AND THEN HE READ THE WORDS, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN" AND INTERPRETED THEM (5:25). THE MESSAGE WAS, "GOD HAS **NUMBERED** YOUR KINGDOM AND PUT AN END TO IT. YOU HAVE BEEN WEIGHED ON THE SCALES AND FOUND **DEFICIENT**. YOUR KINGDOM HAS BEEN DIVIDED AND GIVEN OVER TO THE **MEDES** AND **PERSIANS**" (5:26--28).

THAT IS GOD'S WORD TO BABYLONIAN RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS TODAY AS WELL. "GOD HAS **NUMBERED** YOUR DAYS AND THEY ARE COMING TO AN **END**. GOD HAS **WEIGHED** YOU AND FOUND NOTHING OF **ETERNAL** WEIGHT IN YOU. YOU ARE FULL OF **WORLDLINESS**, AND THEREFORE YOUR KINGDOM IS **DIVIDED**."



DANIEL WAS NOW MORE THAN 80 YEARS OLD -- BUT HE WAS STILL THE **SAME UNCOMPROMISING** MAN THAT HE HAD ALWAYS BEEN -- AND GOD HONoured HIM. THERE WERE **EVIL** PEOPLE IN THAT KINGDOM HOWEVER WHO WERE **JEALOUS** OF DANIEL AND WHO WANTED TO DESTROY HIM. THEY WENT TO THE KING AND GOT HIM TO PASS A **LAW** THAT WAS PRIMARILY **DIRECTED** AGAINST DANIEL. WHEN DANIEL HEARD THAT THE KING HAD PASSED THIS LAW, WHAT DID HE DO? HE KNELT DOWN AND **PRAYED**. HE FEARED **GOD** MORE THAN HE FEARED ANY KING OR GOVERNMENT. AND LIKE THE **APOSTLES** WOULD SAY IN A FUTURE DAY, DANIEL'S ATTITUDE TOO WAS, "WE OUGHT TO **OBEY GOD** RATHER THAN **MEN**" (ACTS 5:29). SO THE VERY THING THAT THE KING'S EDICT SAID HE WAS NOT TO DO, HE DID. NO LAW WAS GOING TO STOP HIM FROM PRAYING TO HIS GOD. HE USED TO PRAY ALWAYS WITH HIS WINDOWS **OPEN** TOWARDS JERUSALEM. HE **COULD** NOW HAVE **CONSIDERED** PRAYING WITH HIS WINDOWS **CLOSED**. BUT HE WAS **NOT ASHAMED** TO BE SEEN PRAYING TO THE ONLY **TRUE** GOD AND SO HE KEPT THE WINDOWS OPEN. WE TOO MUST **NEVER** BE ASHAMED TO BE **OPENLY** KNOWN AS **DISCIPLES** OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.



THOSE **JEALOUS** OFFICIALS WERE JUST WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT -- AND AS SOON AS THEY SAW DANIEL PRAYING, THEY **REPORTED** HIM TO THE KING. IN DANIEL'S TIME, THE FIRE AND THE LIONS WERE **NOT** PERMITTED TO TOUCH GOD'S SERVANTS. BUT UNDER THE NEW COVENANT, GOD GIVES HIS CHILDREN THE **HONOUR** TO DIE AS **MARTYRS** FOR THE **FAITH** AND SO THE LIONS ARE PERMITTED TO EAT THEM UP AND THE FIRE IS **PERMITTED** TO **BURN** THEM. MILLIONS OF CHRISTIANS HAVE BEEN MARTYRED FOR THEIR FAITH IN THESE TWENTY CENTURIES. BUT THERE IS ONE **LION** THAT **CANNOT** HURT US -- **SATAN**. AND THERE IS ONE **FIRE** THAT CANNOT TOUCH US -- THE FIRE OF **HELL**. NOTHING OF THE SPIRIT OF HELL -- HATRED OR BITTERNESS ETC. -- CAN EVER COME INTO OUR HEARTS. LIKE JESUS, WE TOO WILL BE ABLE TO SAY, "WHEN THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD COMES, HE WILL FIND **NOTHING** IN ME" (JOHN 14:30).



IN CHAPTER 7, WE SEE THE SAME **FIVE** KINGDOMS THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR SAW IN HIS DREAM -- BABYLON, MEDO-PERSIA, GREECE, ROME AND THE FINAL WORLD EMPIRE -- BUT FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. NEBUCHADNEZZAR SAW THEM AS **PRECIOUS** METALS, GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE AND IRON. DANIEL SAW THEM AS **WILD BEASTS**, WHICH WAS HOW **GOD** SAW THEM! THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD SEE **EARTHLY** KINGDOMS AS **VALUABLE**, **PRECIOUS** METALS. **GOD** DOESN'T.

WE READ A PROPHECY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S WINGS BEING **CLIPPED**. THE **SECOND** BEAST WHICH LOOKED LIKE A BEAR REFERRED TO MEDO-PERSIA (7:5). THE **THIRD** BEAST LOOKED LIKE A LEOPARD WITH FOUR WINGS AND FOUR HEADS AND REPRESENTED GREECE UNDER ALEXANDER THE GREAT (7:6). WHEN HE DIED, HIS KINGDOM WAS DIVIDED INTO FOUR PARTS. FINALLY DANIEL SAW A BEAST WITH **TEN** HORNS AND A LITTLE HORN THAT AROSE FROM AMONG THOSE TEN. THIS REFERRED TO THE **ROMAN** EMPIRE FIRST OF ALL (THAT RULED THE WORLD WHEN JESUS CAME TO EARTH). THE HORNS REFERRED TO AN EMPIRE THAT WOULD ARISE IN THE **LAST** DAYS ENDING IN THE RULE OF THE **ANTICHRIST** (THE LITTLE HORN), JUST BEFORE CHRIST RETURNS TO EARTH (7:7, 8).



IN CHAPTER 8, WE ARE GIVEN A LITTLE MORE DETAIL AGAIN ABOUT THESE KINGDOMS. THE FIRST VISION IS ABOUT THE GRECIAN EMPIRE (8:5--8). THE **GOAT** (THE **GRECIAN EMPIRE** UNDER ALEXANDER) BECAME VERY **POWERFUL** AND CONQUERED NATIONS WITH "GREAT SPEED" (8:8). GREECE BECAME A WORLD RULER UNLIKE BABYLON AND MEDO-PERSIA. BUT AT THE HEIGHT OF ITS POWER, WHEN **ALEXANDER THE GREAT** WAS JUST 33 YEARS OLD, HE DIED **SUDDENLY** (THE HORN WAS SUDDENLY **BROKEN OFF**). WHEN HE DIED, HIS FOUR GENERALS DIVIDED THE KINGDOM AMONG THEM- SELVES (THE FOUR HORNS OF THE GOAT). AT THE END OF THEIR RULE, A FIERCE KING, A MASTER OF **INTRIGUE**, ROSE TO **POWER**. THIS REFERS TO THE KING WHO RULED **SYRIA** -- A DESCENDANT OF ONE OF ALEXANDER'S GENERALS. HIS NAME WAS **ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES**. "EPIPHANES" MEANS "GOD MADE MANIFEST" AND HE IS A TYPE OF THE **ANTICHRIST** WHO WILL "**DISPLAY HIMSELF AS GOD**" (2 THESSALONIANS 2:4).



IN CHAPTER 9, WE SEE DANIEL **PRAYING** FOR HIS PEOPLE. IT WAS DANIEL'S **PRAYER** THAT STARTED THE MOVEMENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE FROM BABYLON BACK TO JERUSALEM. DANIEL WAS **87 YEARS OLD** NOW AND HE WAS STILL **STUDYING** GOD'S WORD AND FASTING AND PRAYING, JUST LIKE HE DID IN HIS **YOUNGER DAYS** (9:3). IT IS WONDERFUL TO SEE A MAN OF GOD AT THE AGE OF 87, STILL AS MUCH ON **FIRE** AS HE WAS IN HIS TEENAGE YEARS, STUDYING THE WORD AS MUCH AS HE DID IN HIS YOUTH, FASTING AND **PRAYING** AS MUCH AS HE DID IN HIS **YOUNGER DAYS**, AND STILL BEING A **SERVANT** OF THE PEOPLE AS HE WAS WHEN HE WAS YOUNG. WHAT A WONDERFUL EXAMPLE DANIEL IS FOR ALL OF US.



DANIEL DIDN'T **CRITICISE** THE OTHER JEWS. HE **DIDN'T** SAY, "LORD, THESE JEWS AROUND ME ARE ALL BACKSLIDERS." INSTEAD HE SAID, "LORD, **WE** HAVE SINNED, **WE** HAVE REBELLED, **WE** HAVE **REFUSED** TO LISTEN TO YOUR MESSAGES. LORD, YOU ARE RIGHT AND **OUR** FACES ARE COVERED WITH **SHAME**" (9:7). WE SEE THERE HOW DANIEL IDENTIFIED HIMSELF WITH HIS **BACKSLIDDEN** FELLOW-JEWS. HE DID NOT SAY, "**THEY**", BUT "**WE**".



THEN GOD TOLD HIM THAT 490 YEARS HAD BEEN DETERMINED FOR HIS PURPOSES FOR JERUSALEM (9:24, 25). 7 SETS OF 7 YEARS (49 YEARS) AND 62 SETS OF 7 YEARS (434 YEARS) -- MAKING A TOTAL OF 483 YEARS -- WOULD PASS FROM THE TIME THE COMMAND IS GIVEN TO REBUILD JERUSALEM UNTIL THE ANOINTED ONE (CHRIST) COMES THERE. AND THAT WAS FULFILLED EXACTLY. IN 445 B.C., THE COMMAND WENT FORTH TO REBUILD JERUSALEM. 483 YEARS LATER IN 29 A.D. JESUS CAME TO JERUSALEM AND WAS CRUCIFIED. OUT OF THE 490 YEARS, A PERIOD OF 7 YEARS STILL REMAINS. THAT 7-YEAR-PERIOD WOULD BE AT THE END OF TIME. THE **ANTICHRIST** WILL RULE THE EARTH DURING THAT TIME AND CHRISTIANS WILL FACE TREMENDOUS PERSECUTION. THEN **CHRIST** WILL RETURN.



IN CHAPTER 10, WE READ OF DANIEL **PRAYING** FOR **THREE** WEEKS. DURING THIS TIME A GREAT **STRUGGLE** WENT ON IN THE **HEAVENLIES**. DANIEL FASTED PARTIALLY DURING THIS TIME. HE ABSTAINED FROM EATING **RICH** MEATS AND ATE SIMPLE FOOD. AT THE END OF THE THREE WEEKS, AN ANGEL CAME TO DANIEL AND TOLD HIM HE WAS "HIGHLY ESTEEMED" BY GOD (10:11). HE ALSO TOLD HIM THAT HE HAD BEEN TRYING TO COME TO HIM, BUT WAS **HINDERED** BY THE EVIL SPIRIT THAT RULES OVER **PERSIA** FOR 21 DAYS. FROM THE MOMENT THAT DANIEL BEGAN TO PRAY, HIS REQUEST HAD BEEN HEARD. BUT IT TOOK 21 DAYS FOR THE ANSWER TO COME (10:12, 13). GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS ANSWER OUR PRAYERS IMMEDIATELY. BUT IF WE **PERSIST** IN PRAYER, THE ANSWER WILL DEFINITELY COME.



REMEMBER, HOWEVER, THAT THIS INCIDENT OF AN **EVIL SPIRIT** RESISTING MICHAEL TOOK PLACE **BEFORE** JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS. AT THAT TIME SATAN AND HIS DEMONS HAD **NOT YET** BEEN **DEFEATED**. TODAY WE DON'T NEED 21 DAYS TO OVERCOME A DEMON. **JESUS NEVER** TOOK 21 DAYS TO **CAST** OUT ANY DEMON. NOW THAT EVERY DEMON HAS BEEN DEFEATED BY OUR LORD, WE OPERATE FROM A COMPLETELY **DIFFERENT** POSITION THAN DANIEL DID. TODAY, IF WE **SUBMIT** TO GOD AND **RESIST** THE DEVIL, HE WILL **FLEE** FROM US IMMEDIATELY (JAMES 4:7). HIS ACTIVITIES CAN BE RESTRAINED AND HE HIMSELF WILL BE UNDER OUR FEET VERY SOON (ROMANS 16:20).



MANY THINGS WRITTEN IN CHAPTER 11 HAVE A **DUAL** FULFILMENT. IT WAS FIRST FULFILLED IN THE TIME OF **ANTIOCHUS** EPIPHANES AROUND 170 B.C. IT WILL BE **FULFILLED** AGAIN IN THE TIME OF THE **ANTICHRIST** IN THE LAST DAYS. IN 11:2, 11:6 REFERS TO THE EGYPTIAN KING PTOLEMY'S DAUGHTER BERNICE BEING MARRIED KING ANTIOCHUS II OF SYRIA. 11:10 REFERS TO ANTIOCHUS III. 11:16 REFERS TO SYRIA'S CONQUEST OF PALESTINE. IN 11:18 WE READ OF SYRIA'S DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF ROME. 11:21 REFERS TO ANTIOCHUS IV ALSO KNOWN AS ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES (THE TYPE OF THE **ANTICHRIST**). 11:31 REFERS TO THIS ANTIOCHUS SACRIFICING A **PIG** ON THE **ALTAR** IN THE TEMPLE IN **JERUSALEM**.



11:32 IS A VERY SIGNIFICANT VERSE THAT TEACHES THAT IN THE LAST DAYS THERE WILL BE **COMPROMISERS** AS WELL AS **WHOLEHEARTED** DISCIPLES OF THE LORD. THE **COMPROMISERS** WILL, WITH "**SMOOTH** WORDS, TURN TO **GODLESSNESS** THOSE WHO ACT **WICKEDLY** TOWARD THE COVENANT". BUT THE **WHOLEHEARTED** WILL "KNOW GOD AND BE **STRONG** AND DO **EXPLOITS** FOR GOD."



IN THOSE DAYS, "THOSE WHO HAVE **INSIGHT** WILL GIVE **UNDERSTANDING** TO MANY. MANY TEACHERS WILL BE **KILLED** BY THE **FIRE** AND BY THE **WORD** AND WILL SUFFER IN **OTHER** WAYS TOO. SOME WILL FALL VICTIM TO **PERSECUTION** AND WILL BE REFINED AND **CLEANSED** AND MADE **PURE**" (11:32--35).



11:36 REFERS TO THE **ANTICHRIST** AGAIN: "THE KING WILL DO AS HE PLEASES, AND HE WILL **EXALT** AND **MAGNIFY** HIMSELF ABOVE EVERY GOD AND WILL SPEAK MONSTROUS THINGS AGAINST THE **GOD** OF GODS; AND HE WILL **PROSPER** UNTIL THE INDIGNATION IS FINISHED.



11:38 REFERS TO THE **WORSHIP OF POWER AND WEALTH** THAT WILL BE PREVALENT EVERYWHERE IN THE LAST DAYS. 11:39 REFERS TO THE HELP THE ANTICHRIST WILL GET FROM DEMONS. HE WILL RULE IN JERUSALEM BUT HIS **END** WILL COME VERY **QUICKLY**



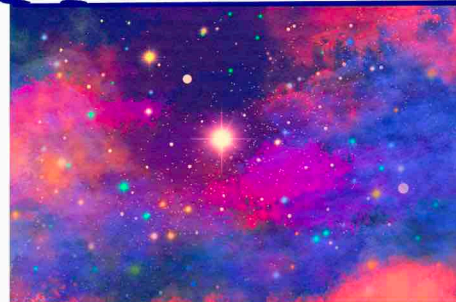
THEN WE READ ABOUT THE **GREAT TRIBULATION** IN TIME OF THE ANTICHRIST IN (12:1).



THEN OF THE **TWO RESURRECTIONS** -- ONE TO **EVER-LASTING** LIFE AND ONE TO **DISGRACE AND SHAME** (12:2).



THOSE WHO ARE **WISE** IN THIS WORLD ARE ASSURED THAT THEY WILL **SHINE AS BRIGHT AS THE NOONDAY SKY** IN THE **FINAL DAY**.



AND THOSE WHO **TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS** IN THIS WORLD WILL **SHINE AS THE STARS FOREVER** (12:3).



THE BOOK OF DANIEL WILL BE A **SEALED BOOK**, **NOT CAPABLE OF BEING UNDERSTOOD** UNTIL THE **LAST DAYS** (12:4, 9).

TWO SIGNIFICANT PROPHECIES ABOUT THE LAST DAYS ARE FOUND HERE IN 12:4: "**MANY** WILL GO BACK AND FORTH, AND **KNOWLEDGE** WILL INCREASE." **TRAVEL** WILL INCREASE CONSIDERABLY IN THE LAST DAYS. FROM THE TIME OF ADAM UNTIL THE MID-19TH CENTURY MAN'S SPEED OF TRAVEL WAS THE SPEED OF A HORSE.

IT IS PROPHESED HERE THAT **KNOWLEDGE** ALSO WILL INCREASE IN THE LAST DAYS. WE SEE THAT BEING FULFILLED IN OUR LIFETIME TOO. ALL THE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE THAT MAN ACCUMULATED OVER A PERIOD OF 5900 YEARS (FROM THE TIME OF ADAM TO 1939), INCREASED BY **TWENTY** TIMES WITHIN 40 YEARS (FROM 1939 TO 1979). AND SINCE THEN IT HAS BEEN INCREASING AT AN **ASTOUNDING** PACE. A GRAPH OF MAN'S **INCREASE** IN KNOWLEDGE WOULD SHOW A VERY FLAT GRADIENT FOR 99% OF HIS HISTORY AND THEN A **SUDDEN** SHARP RISE UPWARDS TO ABOUT HUNDRED TIMES THE HEIGHT IN THIS LAST PERIOD OF MAN'S HISTORY.

KNOWLEDGE

ADAM

TIME

1939



NOW **WORLD-TRAVELLERS** NUMBER IN THE **MILLIONS** AND MAN HAS TRAVELLED EVEN TO THE **MOON!**



DANIEL HIMSELF COULD NOT **UNDERSTAND** WHAT HE **PROPHESED** (12:9) BUT HE WAS TOLD TO GO HIS WAY **FAITHFULLY** UNTIL THE END OF HIS LIFE AND HE WOULD THEN BE **REWARDED** WITH THE PLACE APPOINTED FOR HIM (12:9, 13).