

## Lesson 6-7

### Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd Dream, Writing on the Wall, Lion's Den: Chapters 4-6

#### STUDY GUIDE

1. We are continuing in the second section of the book of Daniel. What was accomplished in the 1st section (chap.1)? What is the theme of this section? Review chapters 2 and 3. What is God doing there? What has He used to accomplish this?
2. Read 4:1-3. How is this chapter different in form from the others? Read verses 4-18 for the dream. Get the outstanding facts clearly in mind. Now study Daniel's interpretation (verses 19-27). Why was Daniel troubled? What is the problem with which God is going to deal here? (vs. 28-33) How difficult is it? What does God do about it? Notice carefully the effect of this on Nebuchadnezzar in verses 34-37. Compare the details of this response with those of chapter 2 and chapter 3.
3. Read 5:1-9. What new characteristic of the Gentile nations is brought to light here? What was the outstanding characteristic of Babylon as seen in Nebuchadnezzar? What problem appears here? What verses indicate the difficulty of it? Read verses 10-28 to see how God deals with this problem. What was the result?
4. With whom is God dealing in chapter 6? What nation? As you go through this chapter, watch for indications of the nature of this nation. What problem arises in verses 1-18? How difficult? Read verses 19-24 to see how God dealt with this problem. What was the result?
5. Chapters 1-6 are filled with material regarding the character of Daniel. Go back through these chapters and list all the qualities referred to about this one "beloved of God". Notice chapters one and six especially.
6. To summarize and review this section (2-6), reread the passages at the end of each chapter, which show the exaltation of Jehovah and His servants and the humiliation of the kings. List some conclusions you might make from this section as to the nature of the "times of the Gentiles". What about the power of these nations, the moral conditions, their treatment of God's people, God's care of His own, etc

#### NOTES

##### Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd Dream: Chapter 4

This is written in the form of a letter from the king to the people. The purpose was that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdoms of men.

In the first section (Daniel 1) we see that Daniel and his friends were established as men of God and they also found favor in the eyes of the king because of God's blessings in granting them wisdom so that they were ten times better than the other wise men in the kingdom. God, through his servants, revealed Himself to the pagan kings in the second section. Daniel and his friends were always being humble and letting God show through them, so that He is glorified and not self. We can note four things about each situation in the second section:

1. A situation develops where a pagan king does something to affect God's people,
2. God works some type miracle through His servants,
3. We see the miracles as being very special as revealed to pagan kings in authority in the world,
4. The kings respond to God.

Chapter two begins with a troubled Nebuchadnezzar. His spirit has left him in a condition where he could not sleep. In chapter three, he comes up with the great idea (?) to build a golden image—not unlike the vision of chapter two—to which all the people were to bow down and worship since God had exalted him with blessings. Through the fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar was humbled a bit. At the beginning of chapter four, he is praising God in what seems to be a letter issued by him to all the people, nations, and men of every language on earth (verse 1).

Once again, Nebuchadnezzar turned to the magicians, etc., but they, of course, failed and Daniel was called to give the king the meaning to the dream. Nebuchadnezzar told the dream to Daniel, and Daniel was greatly alarmed with this vision, but the king told him not to be, which shows the respect that Daniel had attained in the eyes of the king. Daniel responds with the same attitude of respect, which he has shown before in wishing that the vision would be of his adversaries. We see in verses 28-33 that God is dealing with the pride of Nebuchadnezzar. God had blessed him and his kingdom, but suddenly Nebuchadnezzar forgot the source of the blessings and said it was of himself and not God. Nebuchadnezzar is then cast from humanity and goes insane eating grass with the cows for seven periods of time.

At the end of this time, Nebuchadnezzar really sees that God has supreme sovereignty over all things. He offers great praise to God in verses 34-37, quite different from those in chapters two and three in feeling them in his heart rather than just speaking praises. His praise ends with, “all His ways are just and His works true and He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”

### **The Writing on the Wall: Chapter 5**

The king is Belshazzar. In chapter five, Belshazzar is throwing a great party for a thousand people. Here we see a great custom, which has passed through the ages and is seen even today. Undoubtedly, the goings on at this gathering was not of the highest morals and extended a bit beyond drinking. We note in verse 2 that he committed the sacrilegious act of using the vessels of the temple to drink wine. These vessels were apparently unused and perhaps in storage since they were taken from Jerusalem. We also note the character of the party in the mention of the king's concubines. These were women who lived with the king, but were not wives and have a recognized position in the household. Babylon was a great and strong nation under Nebuchadnezzar as we could see in chapter one with the training of Daniel and his friends, and in chapter two with the vision of Nebuchadnezzar with God showing him as a head of gold. Nebuchadnezzar had listened to God, but Belshazzar, knowing the things which his forefather had encountered, chose to ignore these things of God and even defile the holy vessels. In verse four we see that those of the party began to worship things and the pagan gods of riches.

God spoke to Belshazzar through the handwriting on the wall telling him of his downfall. This was, of course, interpreted for him by Daniel who also reminded him of the things which had happened to Nebuchadnezzar. There was no reaction by Belshazzar to God's speaking to him as Nebuchadnezzar had reacted to God. Belshazzar was slain the very night of the warning and the kingdom was received by Darius the Mede.

### **Daniel in the Lions' Den: Chapter 6**

The king is Darius. In chapter 6, we change empires, but Daniel is still in a position of authority in the Media-Persian Empire under Darius the Mede.

We see in this empire a highly organized form of government with the kingdom divided into 120 regions with a leader over each and three rulers over those rulers with the king at the top. Daniel was one of the top three and distinguished himself in such a way in good service, that the king was considering appointing him over the entire kingdom. The other rulers tried to find fault with him because of his position, but could not. They then plotted against him by appealing to the king's pride in asking him to issue a decree that everyone should bow down to no other than a statue that he erected, or be thrown into the lions' den. Daniel knew the situation, but continued to pray as he always had done. The law of the empire was firm and could not be changed, so that when Daniel was reported as worshipping God, the sentence had to be carried out. Darius himself commented, “Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you.” This, of course, showing the respect that Darius had for Daniel. We can see in verse 18 that the night Daniel was in the lions' den, was indeed a very restless one for Darius.

God delivered Daniel from the lions, and the leaders who plotted against him were thrown to the lions. It is very important to note the response of Darius in verses 25-28 in a decree issued to all peoples, nations, and men of every language.

## **Character of Daniel**

Daniel was indeed a man of God who would not falter in his faith. When placed in a position of choice between God and the world, and even between life or death in God, he chose to remain faithful. He realized that the leaders over him were there only by the authority of God so he should honor and respect the leaders of the country. Daniel was honorable in the work for the king, and witnessed of his faith by doing a good job for the king and always being honest.

The nations during the times of Daniel ruled over the world and their leaders had supreme rule over the people. The leaders of these gentile nations used their position to gain the desires of the flesh from parties to wives and concubines. God's people were used for the convenience of the gentile rulers, but God delivered them from adversity.