



FAITH, FREEDOM, & FITNESS

DAILY BREAD

**Saturday, May 23
Daniel 4:19-23**

Daniel Interprets the Dream

*Then Daniel
(also called Belteshazzar)
was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him.*

*So the king said,
“Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you.”*



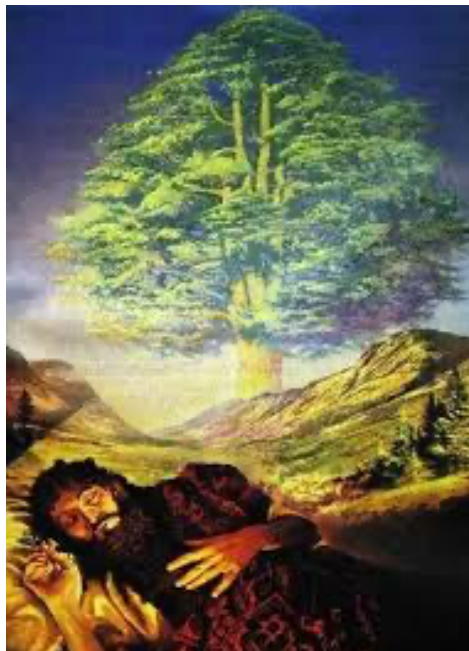
***Belteshazzar answered,
“My lord,
if only the dream applied to your enemies
and its meaning to your adversaries!***

***The tree you saw, which grew large and strong,
with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth,
with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all,
giving shelter to the wild animals,
and having nesting places in its branches for the birds –***

***Your Majesty, you are that tree!
You have become great and strong;
your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky,
and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth.***

***“Your Majesty saw a holy one, a messenger,
coming down from heaven and saying,
‘Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump,
bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field,
while its roots remain in the ground.***

***Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven;
let him live with the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.’***



For the second time, King Nebuchadnezzar has been disturbed by a dream and once again he finds himself speaking with Daniel, a Hebrew captive who has proven able to relay divine interpretation of dreams.

Daniel hesitates to give the king what is certainly bad news. What Daniel sees is dramatic, and it's possible that his delay was in part a reaction of surprise and shock at what was about to happen.

Additionally, Daniel probably paused to choose his words carefully. He speaks to King Nebuchadnezzar with respect and almost gentleness. Daniel immediately wishes the dream had applied to Nebuchadnezzar's enemies, rather than to the king himself.

At Nebuchadnezzar's prodding, Daniel begins his interpretation of the king's dream. Nebuchadnezzar became a strong ruler, who reigned over everyone in the kingdom. Daniel confirms that the tree symbolizes king, and the dream warns that the king will suffer insanity and humiliation.



Nebuchadnezzar humbled by God because of his pride and refusal to honor God's sovereignty

The tree's beautiful leaves and provision of food for all certainly pictured Nebuchadnezzar and all he had done to beautify the city and provide for his people. And just as animals took refuge under the tree and birds took shelter in its branches, Nebuchadnezzar's subjects took a measure of security from his rule. However, the dream included the tree being cut down.

As a strong ruler of worldwide notoriety, Nebuchadnezzar foreshadows the beast of the end times. The beast is the last Gentile ruler in the "times of the Gentiles." His kingdom, like Nebuchadnezzar's, will spread everywhere like the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

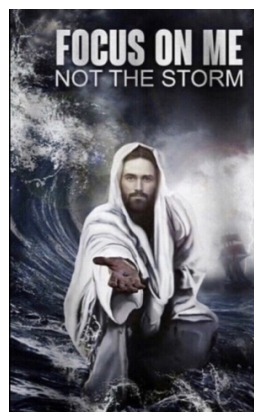
Daniel then moves to the angelic being who orders the cutting down of the tree until only its stump remains. The tree stump is bound, and the person it represents is “bound” in madness and an animalistic mind.



Nebuchadnezzar will suffer this fate. He will become like an animal wallowing and eating as a mindless beast for “seven period of time.” This means that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream predicted not merely a loss of royal position and authority, but also the loss of his mind.

It must have been difficult for Daniel to stand before Nebuchadnezzar and deliver such stunning news. The Babylonian king was infamous for his cruelty and temper, yet Daniel seems to realize he stood before the Lord God, Supreme Ruler of the universe, and determined to be His faithful spokesman.

In Christ, Spero



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