

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## Jews at the court of Nebuchadnezzar

**1**<sup>1</sup>IN THE THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and laid siege to it. <sup>2</sup>The Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his power, together with all that was left of the vessels of the house of God; and he carried them off to the land of Shinar, to the temple of his god, where he deposited the vessels in the treasury. <sup>3</sup>Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to take certain of the Israelite exiles, of the blood royal and of the nobility, <sup>4</sup>who were to be young men of good looks and bodily without fault, at home in all branches of knowledge, well-informed, intelligent, and fit for service in the royal court; and he was to instruct them in the literature and language of the Chaldeans. <sup>5</sup>The king assigned them a daily allowance of food and wine from the royal table. Their training was to last for three years, and at the end of that time they would [at the end.., would: or all of them were to] enter the royal service.

<sup>6</sup>Among them there were certain young men from Judah called Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; <sup>7</sup>but the master of the eunuchs gave them new names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah Shadrach, Mishael Meshach and Azariah Abed-nego. <sup>8</sup>Now Daniel determined not to contaminate himself by touching the food and wine assigned to him by the king, and he begged the master of the eunuchs not to make him do so. <sup>9</sup>God made the master show kindness and goodwill to Daniel, <sup>10</sup>and he said to him, 'I am afraid of my lord the king: he has assigned you your food and drink, and if he sees you looking dejected, unlike the other young men of your own age, it will cost me my head.' <sup>11</sup>Then Daniel said to the guard whom the master of the eunuchs had put in charge of Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah and himself, <sup>12</sup>'Submit us to this test for ten days. Give us only vegetables to eat and water to drink; <sup>13</sup>then compare our looks with those of the young men who have lived on the food assigned by the king, and be guided in your treatment of us by what you see [be guided ... see: or treat us as you see fit].' <sup>14</sup>The guard listened to what they said and tested them for ten days. <sup>15</sup>At the end of ten days they looked healthier and were better nourished than all the young men who had lived on the food assigned them by the king. <sup>16</sup>So the guard took away the assignment of food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them only the vegetables.

<sup>17</sup>To all four of these young men God had given knowledge and understanding of books and learning of every kind, while Daniel had a gift for interpreting visions and dreams of every kind. <sup>18</sup>The time came which the king had fixed for introducing the young men to court, and the master of the eunuchs brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>19</sup>The king talked with them and found none of them to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the royal service. <sup>20</sup>Whenever the king consulted them on any matter calling for insight and judgement, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and exorcists in his whole kingdom. <sup>21</sup>Now Daniel was there till the first year of King Cyrus.

**2**<sup>1</sup>In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar had dreams, and his mind was so troubled that he could not sleep. <sup>2</sup>Then the king gave orders to summon the magicians, exorcists, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to tell him what he had dreamt. They came in and stood in the royal presence, <sup>3</sup>and the king said to them, 'I have had a dream and my mind has been troubled to know what my dream was.' <sup>4</sup>The Chaldeans, speaking in Aramaic, said, [*The Aramaic text begins here and continues to the end of chapter 7*] 'Long live the king! Tell us what you dreamt and we will tell you the interpretation.' <sup>5</sup>The king answered, 'This is my declared intention. If you do not tell me both dream and interpretation, you shall be torn in pieces and your houses shall be forfeit. <sup>6</sup>But if you can tell me the dream and the interpretation, you will be richly rewarded and loaded with honours. Tell me, therefore, the dream and its interpretation.' <sup>7</sup>They answered a second time, 'Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will tell him the interpretation.' <sup>8</sup>The king answered, 'It is clear to me that you are trying to gain time, because you see that my intention has been declared. <sup>9</sup>If you do not make known to me the dream, there is one law that applies to you, and one only. What is more, you have agreed among yourselves to tell me a pack of lies to my face in the hope that with time things may alter. Tell me the dream, therefore, and I shall know that you can give me the interpretation.' <sup>10</sup>The Chaldeans answered in the presence of the king, 'Nobody on earth can tell your majesty what you wish to know; no great king or prince has ever made such a demand of magician, exorcist, or Chaldean. <sup>11</sup>What your majesty requires of us is too hard; there is no one but the gods, who dwell remote from mortal men, who can give you the answer.' <sup>12</sup>At this the king lost his temper and in a great rage ordered the death of all the wise men of Babylon. <sup>13</sup>A decree was issued that the wise men were to be executed, and accordingly men were sent to fetch Daniel and his companions for execution.

<sup>14</sup>When Arioch, the captain of the king's bodyguard, was setting out to execute the wise men of Babylon, Daniel approached him cautiously and with discretion <sup>15</sup>and said, 'Sir, you represent the king; why has his majesty issued such a peremptory decree?' Arioch explained everything; <sup>16</sup>so Daniel went in to the king's presence and begged for a certain time by which he would give the king the interpretation. <sup>17</sup>Then Daniel went home and told the whole story to his companions, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. <sup>18</sup>They should ask the God of heaven in his mercy, he said, to disclose this secret, so that they and he with the rest of the wise men of Babylon should not be put to death. <sup>19</sup>Then in a vision by night the secret was revealed to Daniel, and he blessed the God of heaven <sup>20</sup>in these words:

Blessed be God's name from age to age,  
for all wisdom and power are his.

<sup>21</sup>He changes seasons and times;  
he deposes kings and sets them up;  
he gives wisdom to the wise  
and all their store of knowledge to the men who know;

<sup>22</sup>he reveals deep mysteries;  
he knows what lies in darkness,  
and light has its dwelling with him.

<sup>23</sup>To thee, God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,  
for thou hast given me wisdom and power;

thou hast now revealed to me what we asked,  
and told us what the king is concerned to know.

<sup>24</sup>Daniel therefore went to Arioch who had been charged by the king to put to death the wise men of Babylon and said to him, 'Do not put the wise men of Babylon to death. Take me into the king's presence, and I will now tell him the interpretation of the dream.' <sup>25</sup>Arioch in great trepidation brought Daniel before the king and said to him, 'I have found among the Jewish exiles a man who will make known to your majesty the interpretation of your dream.' <sup>26</sup>Thereupon the king said to Daniel (who was also called Belteshazzar), 'Can you tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?' <sup>27</sup>Daniel answered in the king's presence, 'The secret about which your majesty inquires no wise man, exorcist, magician, or diviner can disclose to you. <sup>28</sup>But there is in heaven a god who reveals secrets, and he has told King Nebuchadnezzar what is to be at the end of this age. This is the dream and these the visions that came into your head: <sup>29</sup>the thoughts that came to you, O king, as you lay on your bed, were thoughts of things to come, and the revealer of secrets has made known to you what is to be. <sup>30</sup>This secret has been revealed to me not because I am wise beyond all living men, but because your majesty is to know the interpretation and understand the thoughts which have entered your mind.

<sup>31</sup>As you watched, O king, you saw a great image. This image, huge and dazzling, towered before you, fearful to behold. <sup>32</sup>The head of the image was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze [*Or copper*], <sup>33</sup>its legs of iron, its feet part iron and part clay. <sup>34</sup>While you looked, a stone was hewn from a mountain, not by human hands; it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay and shattered them. <sup>35</sup>Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were all shattered to fragments and were swept away like chaff before the wind from a threshing-floor in summer, until no trace of them remained. But the stone which struck the image grew into a great mountain filling the whole earth. <sup>36</sup>That was the dream. We shall now tell your majesty the interpretation. <sup>37</sup>You, O king, king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom with all its power, authority, and honour; <sup>38</sup>in whose hands he has placed men and beasts and birds of the air, wherever they dwell, granting you sovereignty over them all – you are that head of gold. <sup>39</sup>After you there shall arise another kingdom, inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom, of bronze, which shall have sovereignty over the whole world. <sup>40</sup>And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; as iron shatters and destroys all things, it shall break and shatter the whole earth [*the whole earth: prob. rdg, Aram and like iron which shatters all these*]. <sup>41</sup>As, in your vision, the feet and toes were part potter's clay and part iron, it shall be a divided kingdom. Its core shall be partly of iron just as you saw iron mixed with the common clay; <sup>42</sup>as the toes were part iron and part clay, the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. <sup>43</sup>As, in your vision, the iron was mixed with common clay, so shall men mix with each other by intermarriage, but such alliances shall not be stable: iron does not mix with clay. <sup>44</sup>In the period of those kings the God of heaven will establish a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; that kingdom shall never pass to another people; it shall shatter and make an end of all these kingdoms, while it shall itself endure for ever. <sup>45</sup>This is the meaning of your vision of the stone being hewn from a mountain, not by human hands, and then shattering the iron, the bronze, the clay, the

silver, and the gold. The mighty God has made known to your majesty what is to be hereafter. The dream is sure and the interpretation to be trusted.'

<sup>46</sup>Then King Nebuchadnezzar prostrated himself and worshipped Daniel, and gave orders that sacrifices and soothing offerings should be made to him. <sup>47</sup>'Truly,' he said, 'your god is indeed God of gods and Lord over kings, a revealer of secrets, since you have been able to reveal this secret.' <sup>48</sup>Then the king promoted Daniel, bestowed on him many rich gifts, and made him regent over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. <sup>49</sup>Moreover at Daniel's request the king put Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in charge of the administration of the province of Babylon. Daniel himself, however, remained at court.

**3**<sup>1</sup>KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR MADE AN IMAGE OF GOLD, ninety feet high and nine feet broad. He had it set up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. <sup>2</sup>Then he sent out a summons to assemble the satraps, prefects, viceroys, counsellors, treasurers, judges, chief constables, and all governors of provinces to attend the dedication of the image which he had set up. <sup>3</sup>So they assembled – the satraps, prefects, viceroys, counsellors, treasurers, judges, chief constables, and all governors of provinces – for the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up. <sup>4</sup>Then the herald loudly proclaimed, 'O peoples and nations of every language, you are commanded, <sup>5</sup>when you hear the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, music, and singing of every kind, to prostrate yourselves and worship the golden image which King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not prostrate himself and worship shall forthwith be thrown into a blazing furnace.' <sup>7</sup>Accordingly, no sooner did all the peoples hear the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, music, and singing of every kind, than all the peoples and nations of every language prostrated themselves and worshipped the golden image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

<sup>8</sup>It was then that certain Chaldeans came forward and brought a charge against the Jews. <sup>9</sup>They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, 'Long live the king! <sup>10</sup>Your majesty has issued an order that every man who hears the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, music, and singing of every kind shall fall down and worship the image of gold. <sup>11</sup>Whoever does not do so shall be thrown into a blazing furnace. <sup>12</sup>There are certain Jews, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, whom you have put in charge of the administration of the province of Babylon. These men, your majesty, have taken no notice of your command; they do not serve your god, nor do they worship the golden image which you have set up.' <sup>13</sup>Then in rage and fury Nebuchadnezzar ordered Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to be fetched, and they were brought into the king's presence. <sup>14</sup>Nebuchadnezzar said to them, 'Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my god or worship the golden image which I have set up? <sup>15</sup>If you are ready at once to prostrate yourselves when you hear the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, music, and singing of every kind, and to worship the image that I have set up, well and good. But if you do not worship it, you shall forthwith be thrown into the blazing furnace; and what god is there that can save you from my power?' <sup>16</sup>Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego said to King Nebuchadnezzar, 'We have no need to answer you on this matter. <sup>17</sup>If there is a god who is able to save us from the blazing furnace, it is our God whom we serve, and he will save us from your power,

O king; <sup>18</sup>but if not, be it known to your majesty that we will neither serve your god nor worship the golden image that you have set up.'

<sup>19</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage with Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, and his face was distorted with anger. He gave orders that the furnace should be heated up to seven times its usual heat, <sup>20</sup>and commanded some of the strongest men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego and throw them into the blazing furnace. <sup>21</sup>Then those men in their trousers, their shirts, and their hats and all their other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. <sup>22</sup>Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace exceedingly hot, the men who were carrying Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were killed by the flames that leapt out; <sup>23</sup>and those three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell bound into the blazing furnace.

<sup>24</sup>Then King Nebuchadnezzar was amazed and sprang to his feet in great trepidation. He said to his courtiers, 'Was it not three men whom we threw bound into the fire?' They answered the king, 'Assuredly, your majesty.' <sup>25</sup>He answered, 'Yet I see four men walking about in the fire free and unharmed; and the fourth looks like a god.' <sup>26</sup>Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the blazing furnace and said to the men, 'Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, come here.' Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out from the fire. <sup>27</sup>And the satraps, prefects, viceroys and the king's courtiers gathered round and saw how the fire had had no power to harm the bodies of these men; the hair of their heads had not been singed, their trousers were untouched, and no smell of fire lingered about them.

<sup>28</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke out, 'Blessed is the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He has sent his angel to save his servants who put their trust in him, who disobeyed the royal command and were willing to yield themselves to the fire rather than to serve or worship any god other than their own God. <sup>29</sup>I therefore issue a decree that any man, to whatever people or nation he belongs, whatever his language, if he speaks blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, shall be torn to pieces and his house shall be forfeit [*Or made into a dunghill (meaning of Aram. word uncertain)*], for there is no other god who can save men in this way.' <sup>30</sup>Then the king advanced the fortunes of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in the province of Babylon.

**4<sup>1</sup>KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR TO ALL PEOPLES AND NATIONS** of every language living in the whole world: May all prosperity be yours! <sup>2</sup>It is my pleasure to recount the signs and marvels which the Most High God has worked for me:

<sup>3</sup>How great are his signs,  
and his marvels overwhelming!  
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
his sovereignty stands to all generations.

<sup>4</sup>I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living peacefully at home in the luxury of my palace. <sup>5</sup>As I lay on my bed, I saw a dream which terrified me; and fantasies and visions which came into my head dismayed me. <sup>6</sup>So I issued an order summoning into my presence all the wise men of Babylon to make known to me the interpretation of the dream. <sup>7</sup>Then the magicians, exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners came in, and in their presence I related my dream. But they could not interpret it. <sup>8</sup>And yet another came into my presence,

Daniel, who is called Belteshazzar after the name of my god, a man possessed by the spirit of the holy gods. To him, too, I related the dream: <sup>9</sup>Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, whom I myself know to be possessed by the spirit of the holy gods, and whom no secret baffles, listen to the vision I saw in a dream, and tell me its interpretation.

<sup>10</sup>Here is the vision which came into my head as I was lying upon my bed:

As I was looking,  
I saw a tree of great height at the centre of the earth;

<sup>11</sup>the tree grew and became strong,  
reaching with its top to the sky  
and visible to earth's farthest bounds.

<sup>12</sup>Its foliage was lovely,  
and its fruit abundant;  
and it yielded food for all.  
Beneath it the wild beasts found shelter,  
the birds lodged in its branches,  
and from it all living creatures fed.

<sup>13</sup>Here is another vision which came into my head as I was lying upon my bed:

As I was watching, there was a Watcher,  
a Holy One coming down from heaven.

<sup>14</sup>He cried aloud and said,  
"Hew down the tree, lop off the branches,  
strip away the foliage, scatter the fruit.  
Let the wild beasts flee from its shelter  
and the birds from its branches,  
<sup>15</sup>but leave the stump with its roots in the ground.

So, tethered with an iron ring,  
let him eat his fill of the lush grass;  
let him be drenched with the dew of heaven  
and share the lot of the beasts in their pasture;

<sup>16</sup>let his mind cease to be a man's mind,  
and let him be given the mind of a beast.  
Let seven times pass over him.

<sup>17</sup>The issue has been determined by the Watchers  
and the sentence pronounced by the Holy Ones.

Thereby the living will know that the Most High is sovereign in the kingdom of men: he gives the kingdom to whom he will and he may set over it the humblest of mankind."

<sup>18</sup>This is the dream which I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have dreamed; now, Belteshazzar, tell me its interpretation; for, though all the wise men of my kingdom are unable to tell me what it means, you can tell me, since the spirit of the holy gods is in you.'

<sup>19</sup>Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar, was dumbfounded for a moment, dismayed by his thoughts; but the king said, 'Do not let the dream and its interpretation dismay you.' Belteshazzar answered, 'My lord, if only the dream were for those who hate you and its interpretation for your enemies! <sup>20</sup>The tree which you saw grow and become strong,

reaching with its top to the sky and visible to earth's farthest bounds, <sup>21</sup>its foliage lovely and its fruit abundant, a tree which yielded food for all, beneath which the wild beasts dwelt and in whose branches the birds lodged, <sup>22</sup>that tree, O king, is you. You have grown and become strong. Your power has grown and reaches the sky; your sovereignty stretches to the ends of the earth. <sup>23</sup>Also, O king, you saw a Watcher, a Holy One, coming down from heaven and saying, "Hew down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump with its roots in the ground. So, tethered with an iron ring, let him eat his fill of the lush grass; let him be drenched with the dew of heaven and share the lot of the beasts until seven times pass over him." <sup>24</sup>This is the interpretation, O king – it is a decree of the Most High which touches my lord the king. <sup>25</sup>You will be banished from the society of men; you will have to live with the wild beasts; you will feed on grass like oxen and you will be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass over you until you have learnt that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will. <sup>26</sup>The command was given to leave the stump of the tree with its roots. By this you may know that from the time you acknowledge the sovereignty of heaven your rule will endure. <sup>27</sup>Be advised by me, O king: redeem your sins by charity and your iniquities by generosity to the wretched. So may you long enjoy peace of mind.'

<sup>28</sup>All this befell King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup>At the end of twelve months the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace at Babylon, <sup>30</sup>and he exclaimed, 'Is not this Babylon the great which I have built as a royal residence by my own mighty power and for the honour of my majesty?' <sup>31</sup>The words were still on his lips, when a voice came down from heaven: 'To you, King Nebuchadnezzar, the word is spoken: the kingdom has passed from you. <sup>32</sup>You are banished from the society of men and you shall live with the wild beasts; you shall feed on grass like oxen, and seven times will pass over you until you have learnt that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.' <sup>33</sup>At that very moment this judgement came upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was banished from the society of men and ate grass like oxen; his body was drenched by the dew of heaven, until his hair grew long like goats' hair and his nails like eagles' talons [goats' hair ... eagles' talons: *prob. rdg, Aram eagles' and his nails like birds*'].

<sup>34</sup>At the end of the appointed time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes to heaven and I returned to my right mind. I blessed the Most High. praising and glorifying the Ever-living One:

His sovereignty is never-ending  
and his rule endures through all generations;  
<sup>35</sup>all dwellers upon earth count for nothing  
and he deals as he wishes with the host of heaven [*prob. rdg, Aram adds and the dwellers upon earth*];  
no one may lay hand upon him  
and ask him what he does.

<sup>36</sup>At that very time I returned to my right mind and my majesty and royal splendour were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom. My courtiers and my nobles sought audience of me. I was established in my kingdom and my power was greatly increased.

<sup>37</sup>Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven; for all his acts are right and his ways are just and those whose conduct is arrogant he can bring

low.

## **Belshazzar's feast**

**5**<sup>1</sup>BELSHAZZAR THE KING GAVE A BANQUET for a thousand of his nobles and was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. <sup>2</sup>Warmed by the wine, he gave orders to fetch the vessels of gold and silver which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the sanctuary at Jerusalem, that he and his nobles, his concubines and his courtesans, might drink from them. <sup>3</sup>So the vessels of gold and silver from the sanctuary in the house of God at Jerusalem were brought in, and the king and his nobles, his concubines and his courtesans, drank from them. <sup>4</sup>They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze and iron, and of wood and stone. <sup>5</sup>Suddenly there appeared the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster of the palace wall opposite the lamp, and the king could see the back of the hand as it wrote. <sup>6</sup>At this the king's mind was filled with dismay and he turned pale, he became limp in every limb and his knees knocked together. <sup>7</sup>He called loudly for the exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners to be brought in; then, addressing the wise men of Babylon, he said, 'Whoever can read this writing and tell me its interpretation shall be robed in purple and honoured with a chain of gold round his neck and shall rank as third in the kingdom.' <sup>8</sup>Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or interpret it to the king. <sup>9</sup>King Belshazzar sat there pale and utterly dismayed, while his nobles were perplexed.

<sup>10</sup>The king and his nobles were talking when the queen entered the banqueting-hall: 'Long live the king!' she said. 'Why this dismay, and why do you look so pale?' <sup>11</sup>There is a man in your kingdom who has in him the spirit of the holy gods, a man who was known in your father's time to have a clear understanding and godlike wisdom. King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, appointed him chief of the magicians, exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners. <sup>12</sup>This same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, is known to have a notable spirit, with knowledge and understanding, and the gift of interpreting dreams, explaining riddles and unbinding spells [*Or and solving problems*]; let him be summoned now and he will give the interpretation.' <sup>13</sup>Daniel was then brought into the king's presence and the king said to him, 'So you are Daniel, one of the Jewish exiles whom the king my father brought from Judah. <sup>14</sup>I have heard that you possess the spirit of the holy gods and that you are a man of clear understanding and peculiar wisdom. <sup>15</sup>The wise men, the exorcists, have just been brought into my presence to read this writing and tell me its interpretation, and they have been unable to interpret it. <sup>16</sup>But I have heard it said of you that you are able to give interpretations and to unbind spells [*Or and to solve problems*]. So now, if you are able to read the words and tell me what they mean, you shall be robed in purple and honoured with a chain of gold round your neck and shall rank as third in the kingdom.' <sup>17</sup>Then Daniel answered in the king's presence, 'Your gifts you may keep for yourself; or else give your rewards to another. Nevertheless I will read the writing to your majesty and tell you its interpretation. <sup>18</sup>My lord king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom and power and glory and majesty; <sup>19</sup>and, because of this power which he gave him, all peoples and nations of every language trembled before him and were afraid. He put to death whom he would and spared whom he would, he promoted them at will and at will degraded them. <sup>20</sup>But, when he became haughty, stubborn and presumptuous,



he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken from him. <sup>21</sup>He was banished from the society of men, his mind became like that of a beast, he had to live with the wild asses and to eat grass like oxen, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he came to know that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdom of men and sets up over it whom he will. <sup>22</sup>But you, his son Belshazzar, did not humble your heart, although you knew all this. <sup>23</sup>You have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. The vessels of his temple have been brought to your table; and you, your nobles, your concubines, and your courtesans have drunk from them. You have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze and iron, of wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor know, and you have not given glory to God, in whose charge is your very breath and in whose hands are all your ways. <sup>24</sup>This is why that hand was sent from his very presence and why it wrote this inscription. <sup>25</sup>And these are the words of the writing which was inscribed: **Mene mene tekel u-phasin.** <sup>26</sup>Here is the interpretation: **mene** [*That is numbered*]: God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; <sup>27</sup>**tekel** [*That is shekel or weight*]: you have been weighed in the balance and found wanting; <sup>28</sup>**u-pharsin** [*prob. rdg, Aram pheres. There is a play on three possible meanings halves or divisions or Persians*]: and your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.' <sup>29</sup>Then Belshazzar gave the order and Daniel was robed in purple and honoured with a chain of gold round his neck, and proclamation was made that he should rank as third in the kingdom.

<sup>30</sup>That very night Belshazzar king of the Chaldaeans was slain, <sup>31</sup>and Darius the Mede took the kingdom, being then sixty-two years old.

## Daniel in the lions' pit

**6**<sup>1</sup>IT PLEASED DARIUS TO APPOINT SATRAPS over the kingdom, a hundred and twenty in number in charge of the whole kingdom, <sup>2</sup>and over them three chief ministers, to whom the satraps should send reports so that the king's interests might not suffer; of these three, Daniel was one. <sup>3</sup>In the event Daniel outshone the other ministers and the satraps because of his ability, and the king had it in mind to appoint him over the whole kingdom. <sup>4</sup>Then the chief ministers and the satraps began to look round for some pretext to attack Daniel's administration of the kingdom, but they failed to find any malpractice on his part; for he was faithful to his trust. Since they could discover no neglect of duty or malpractice, <sup>5</sup>they said, 'There will be no charge to bring against this Daniel unless we find one in his religion.' <sup>6</sup>These chief ministers and satraps watched for an opportunity to approach the king, and said to him, 'Long live King Darius! <sup>7</sup>All we, the ministers of the kingdom, prefects, satraps, courtiers, and viceroys, have taken counsel and agree that the king should issue a decree and bring an ordinance into force, that whoever within the next thirty days shall present a petition to any god or man other than the king shall be thrown into the lions' pit. <sup>8</sup>Now, O king, issue the ordinance and have it put in writing, so that it may be unalterable, for the law of the Medes and Persians stands for ever.' <sup>9</sup>Accordingly King Darius issued the ordinance in written form.

<sup>10</sup>When Daniel learnt that this decree had been issued, he went into his house. He had had windows made in his roof-chamber looking towards Jerusalem; and there he knelt down three times a day and offered prayers and praises to his God as his custom had

always been. <sup>11</sup>His enemies watched for an opportunity to catch Daniel and found him at his prayers making supplication to his God. <sup>12</sup>Then they came into the king's presence and reminded him of the ordinance. 'Your majesty,' they said, 'have you not issued an ordinance that any person who, within the next thirty days, shall present a petition to any god or man other than your majesty shall be thrown into the lions' pit?' The king answered, 'Yes, it is fixed. The law of the Medes and Persians stands for ever.' <sup>13</sup>So in the king's presence they said, 'Daniel, one of the Jewish exiles, has ignored the ordinance issued by your majesty, and is making petition to his god three times a day.' <sup>14</sup>When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed. He tried to think of a way to save Daniel, and continued his efforts till sunset; <sup>15</sup>then those same men watched for an opportunity to approach the king, and said to him, 'Your majesty must know that by the law of the Medes and Persians no ordinance or decree issued by the king may be altered.' <sup>16</sup>So the king gave orders and Daniel was brought and thrown into the lions' pit; but he said to Daniel, 'Your own God, whom you serve continually, will save you.' <sup>17</sup>A stone was brought and put over the mouth of the pit, and the king sealed it with his signet and with the signets of his nobles, so that no one might intervene to rescue Daniel.

<sup>18</sup>The king went back to his palace and spent the night fasting; no woman was brought to him and sleep eluded him. <sup>19</sup>At dawn, as soon as it was light, he rose and went in fear and trembling to the pit. <sup>20</sup>When the king reached it, he called anxiously to Daniel, 'Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you serve continually been able to save you from the lions?' <sup>21</sup>Then Daniel answered, 'Long live the king! <sup>22</sup>My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they have done me no injury, because in his judgement I was found innocent [in his judgement ... innocent: *or before him success was granted me*], and moreover, O king, I had done you no injury.' <sup>23</sup>The king was overjoyed and gave orders that Daniel should be lifted out of the pit. So Daniel was lifted out and no trace of injury was found on him, because he had put his faith in his God. <sup>24</sup>By order of the king Daniel's accusers were brought and thrown into the lions' pit with their wives and children, and before they reached the floor of the pit the lions were upon them and crunched them up, bones and all.

<sup>25</sup>Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: 'May your prosperity increase! <sup>26</sup>I have issued a decree that in all my royal domains men shall fear and reverence the God of Daniel;  
for he is the living God, the everlasting,  
whose kingly power shall not be weakened,  
whose sovereignty shall have no end –  
<sup>27</sup>a saviour, a deliverer, a worker of signs and wonders  
in heaven and on earth,  
who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.'

<sup>28</sup>So this Daniel prospered during the reigns of Darius and Cyrus the Persian.

## **Daniel 's visions**

**7**<sup>1</sup>IN THE FIRST YEAR OF BELSHAZZAR king of Babylon, as Daniel lay on his bed,

dreams and visions came into his head. Then he wrote down the dream, and here his account begins:

<sup>2</sup>In my visions of the night I, Daniel, was gazing intently and I saw a great sea churned up by the four winds of heaven, <sup>3</sup>and four huge beasts coming up out of the sea, each one different from the others. <sup>4</sup>The first was like a lion but had an eagle's wings. I watched until its wings were plucked off and it was lifted from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; it was also given the mind of a man. <sup>5</sup>Then I saw another, a second beast, like a bear. It was half crouching and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. The command was given: 'Up, gorge yourself with flesh.' <sup>6</sup>After this as I gazed I saw another, a beast like a leopard with four bird's wings on its back; this creature had four heads, and it was invested with sovereign power. <sup>7</sup>Next in my visions of the night I saw a fourth beast. dreadful and grisly, exceedingly strong, with great iron teeth and bronze claws [and bronze claws: *prob. rdg, cp v19; Aram omitted*]. It crunched and devoured, and trampled underfoot all that was left. It differed from all the beasts which preceded it in having ten horns. <sup>8</sup>While I was considering the horns I saw another horn, a little one, springing up among them, and three of the first horns were uprooted to make room for it. And in that horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth that spoke proud words. <sup>9</sup>I kept looking, and then

          thrones were set in place and one ancient in years took his seat,  
          his robe was white as snow and the hair of his head like cleanest wool.  
          flames of fire were his throne and its wheels blazing fire;

<sup>10</sup>a flowing river of fire streamed out before him [*Or it*].

          Thousands upon thousands served him  
          and myriads upon myriads attended his presence.  
          The court sat, and the books were opened.

<sup>11</sup>Then because of the proud words that the horn was speaking, I went on watching until the beast was killed and its carcass destroyed: it was given to the flames. <sup>12</sup>The rest of the beasts, though deprived of their sovereignty, were allowed to remain alive for a time and a season. <sup>13</sup>I was still watching in visions of the night and I saw one like a man coming with the clouds of heaven; he approached the Ancient in Years and was presented to him. <sup>14</sup>Sovereignty and glory and kingly power were given to him, so that all people and nations of every language should serve him; his sovereignty was to be an everlasting sovereignty which should not pass away, and his kingly power such as should never be impaired.

<sup>15</sup>My spirit within me was troubled, and, dismayed by the visions which came into my head, <sup>16</sup>I, Daniel, approached one of those who stood there and inquired from him what all this meant; and he told me the interpretation. <sup>17</sup>'These great beasts, four in number,' he said, 'are four kingdoms which shall rise from the ground. <sup>18</sup>But the saints [*Or holy ones*] of the Most High shall receive the kingly power and shall retain it for ever, for ever and ever.' <sup>19</sup>Then I desired to know what the fourth beast meant, the beast that was different from all the others, very dreadful with its iron teeth and bronze claws, crunching and devouring and trampling underfoot all that was left. <sup>20</sup>I desired also to know about the ten horns on its head and the other horn which sprang up and at whose coming three of them fell – the horn that had eyes and a mouth speaking proud words and appeared larger than the others. <sup>21</sup>As I still watched, that horn was waging

war with the saints and overcoming them <sup>22</sup>until the Ancient in Years came. Then judgement was given in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints gained possession of the kingly power. <sup>23</sup>He gave me this answer: 'The fourth beast signifies a fourth kingdom which shall appear upon earth. It shall differ from the other kingdoms and shall devour the whole earth, tread it down and crush it. <sup>24</sup>The ten horns signify the appearance of ten kings in this kingdom, after whom another king shall arise, differing from his predecessors; and he shall bring low three kings. <sup>25</sup>He shall hurl defiance at the Most High and shall wear down the saints of the Most High. He shall plan to alter the customary times and law; and the saints shall be delivered into his power for a time and times and half a time. <sup>26</sup>Then the court shall sit, and he shall be deprived of his sovereignty, so that in the end it may be destroyed and abolished. <sup>27</sup>The kingly power, sovereignty, and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. Their kingly power is an everlasting power and all sovereignties shall serve them and obey them.'

<sup>28</sup>Here the account ends. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts dismayed me greatly and I turned pale; and I kept these things in my mind.

**8**<sup>1-2</sup>[*Here the Hebrew text resumes (see note at 2.4)*] In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, while I was in Susa the capital city of the province of Elam, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, similar to my former vision. In this vision I was watching beside the stream of the Ulai. <sup>3</sup>I raised my eyes and there I saw a ram with two horns standing between me and the stream. The two horns were long, the one longer than the other, growing up behind. <sup>4</sup>I watched the ram butting west and north and south. No beasts could stand before it, no one could rescue from its power. It did what it liked, making a display of its strength. <sup>5</sup>While I pondered this, suddenly a he-goat came from the west skimming over the whole earth without touching the ground; it had a prominent horn between its eyes. <sup>6</sup>It approached the two-horned ram which I had seen standing between me and the stream and rushed at it with impetuous force. <sup>7</sup>I saw it advance on the ram, working itself into a fury against it, then strike the ram and break its two horns; the ram had no strength to resist. The he-goat flung it to the ground and trampled on it, and there was no one to save the ram.

<sup>8</sup>Then the he-goat made a great display of its strength. Powerful as it was, its great horn snapped and in its place there sprang out towards the four quarters of heaven four prominent horns. <sup>9</sup>Out of one of them there issued one small horn, which made a prodigious show of strength south and east and towards the fairest of all lands. <sup>10</sup>It aspired to be as great as the host of heaven, and it cast down to the earth some of the host and some of the stars and trod them underfoot. <sup>11</sup>It aspired to be as great as the Prince of the host, suppressed his regular offering and even threw down his sanctuary. <sup>12</sup>The heavenly hosts were delivered up, and it raised itself [*and it raised itself: prob. rdg, Heb omitted*] impiously against the regular offering and threw true religion to the ground; in all that it did it succeeded. <sup>13</sup>I heard a holy one speaking and another holy one answering him, whoever he was. The one said, 'For how long will the period of this vision last? How long will the regular offering be suppressed, how long will impiety cause desolation [*will impiety cause desolation: prob. rdg, Heb obscure*], and both the Holy Place and the fairest of all lands [*fairest of all lands: prob. rdg, cp v9; Heb host*] be given over to be trodden down?' <sup>14</sup>The answer came, 'For two thousand three hundred

evenings and mornings; then the Holy Place shall emerge victorious.'

<sup>15</sup>All the while that I, Daniel, was seeing the vision, I was trying to understand it. Suddenly I saw standing before me one with the semblance of a man; <sup>16</sup>at the same time I heard a human voice calling to him across the bend of the Ulai, 'Gabriel, explain the vision to this man.' <sup>17</sup>He came up to where I was standing; I was seized with terror at his approach and threw myself on my face. But he said to me, 'Understand, O man: the vision points to the time of the end.' <sup>18</sup>When he spoke to me, I fell to the ground in a trance; but he grasped me and made me stand up where I was. <sup>19</sup>And he said, 'I shall make known to you what is to happen at the end of the wrath; for there is an end to the appointed time. <sup>20</sup>The two-horned ram which you saw signifies the kings of Media and Persia, <sup>21</sup>the he-goat is the kingdom [*prob. rdg, Heb king*] of the Greeks and the great horn on his forehead is the first king. <sup>22</sup>As for the horn which was snapped off and replaced by four horns: four kingdoms shall rise out of that nation, but not with power comparable to his.

<sup>23</sup>In the last days of those kingdoms,  
when their sin is at its height,  
a king shall appear, harsh and grim, a master of stratagem.

<sup>24</sup>His power shall be great, he shall work havoc untold;  
he shall succeed in whatever he does.  
He shall work havoc among great nations and upon a holy people.

<sup>25</sup>His mind shall be ever active,  
and he shall succeed in his crafty designs;  
he shall conjure up great plans  
and, when they least expect it, work havoc on many.  
He shall challenge even the Prince of princes  
and be broken, but not by human hands.

<sup>26</sup>This revelation which has been given  
of the evenings and the mornings is true;  
but you must keep the vision secret,  
for it points to days far ahead.'

<sup>27</sup>As for me, Daniel, my strength failed me and I lay sick for a while. Then I rose and attended to the king's business. But I was perplexed by the revelation and no one could explain it.

**9**<sup>1</sup>IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REIGN OF DARIUS son of Ahasuerus (a Mede by birth, who was appointed king over the kingdom of the Chaldaeans) <sup>2</sup>I, Daniel, was reading the scriptures and reflecting on the seventy years which, according to the word of the LORD to the prophet Jeremiah, were to pass while Jerusalem lay in ruins. <sup>3</sup>Then I turned to the Lord God in earnest prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. <sup>4</sup>I prayed to the LORD my God, making confession thus:

'Lord, thou great and terrible God who faithfully keepest the covenant with those who love thee and observe thy commandments, <sup>5</sup>we have sinned, we have done what was wrong and wicked; we have rebelled, we have turned our backs on thy commandments and thy decrees. <sup>6</sup>We have not listened to thy servants the prophets, who spoke in thy name to our kings and princes, to our forefathers and to all the people of the land. <sup>7</sup>O

Lord, the right is on thy side; the shame, now as ever, belongs to us, the men of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem, and to all the Israelites near and far in every land to which thou hast banished them for their treachery towards thee. <sup>8</sup>O LORD, the shame falls on us as on our kings, our princes and our forefathers; we have all sinned against thee. <sup>9</sup>Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled against him. <sup>10</sup>We have not obeyed the LORD our God, we have not conformed to the laws which he laid down for us through his servants the prophets. <sup>11</sup>All Israel has broken thy law and not obeyed thee, so that the curses set out in the law of Moses thy servant in the adjuration and the oath have rained down upon us; for we have sinned against him. <sup>12</sup>He has fulfilled all that he said about us and about our rulers, by bringing upon us and upon Jerusalem a calamity greater than has ever happened in all the world. <sup>13</sup>It was all foreshadowed in the law of Moses, this calamity which has come upon us, yet we have done nothing to propitiate the LORD our God; we have neither repented of our wrongful deeds nor remembered that thou art true to thy word. <sup>14</sup>The LORD has been biding his time and has now brought this calamity upon us. In all that he has done the LORD our God has been right; yet we have not obeyed him.

<sup>15</sup>And now, O Lord our God who didst bring thy people out of Egypt by a strong hand, winning for thyself a name that lives on to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. <sup>16</sup>O Lord, by all thy saving deeds we beg that thy wrath and anger may depart from Jerusalem, thy city, thy holy hill; through our own sins and our fathers' guilty deeds Jerusalem and thy people have become a byword among all our neighbours. <sup>17</sup>And now, our God, listen to thy servant's prayer and supplication; for thy own sake, O Lord, make thy face shine upon thy desolate sanctuary. <sup>18</sup>Lend thy ear, O God, and hear, open thine eyes and look upon our desolation and upon the city that bears thy name; it is not by virtue of our own saving acts but by thy great mercy that we present our supplications before thee. <sup>19</sup>O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, listen and act; for thy own sake do not delay, O God, for thy city and thy people bear thy name.'

<sup>20</sup>Thus I was speaking and praying, confessing my own sin and my people Israel's sin, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God on behalf of his holy hill. <sup>21</sup>While I was praying, the man Gabriel, whom I had already seen in the vision, came close to [*Or touched*] me at the hour of the evening sacrifice, flying swiftly [*flying swiftly: prob. rdg, Heb thoroughly wearied*]. <sup>22</sup>He spoke clearly to me and said, 'Daniel, I have now come to enlighten your understanding. <sup>23</sup>As you were beginning your supplications a word went forth; this I have come to pass on to you, for you are a man greatly beloved. Consider well the word, consider the vision: <sup>24</sup>Seventy weeks are marked out for your people and your holy city; then rebellion shall be stopped [*Or restrained*], sin brought to an end [*Or sealed*], iniquity expiated, everlasting right ushered in, vision and prophecy sealed, and the Most Holy Place anointed. <sup>25</sup>Know then and understand: from the time that the word went forth that Jerusalem should be restored and rebuilt, seven weeks shall pass till the appearance of one anointed, a prince; then for sixty-two weeks it shall remain restored, rebuilt with streets and conduits. At the critical time, after the sixty-two weeks, <sup>26</sup>one who is anointed shall be removed with no one to take his part; and the horde of an invading prince shall work havoc on city and sanctuary. The end of it shall be a deluge, inevitable war with all its horrors. <sup>27</sup>He shall make a firm league with the mighty [*Or many*] for one week; and, the week half spent, he shall put a stop to sacrifice and offering. And in the train of

these abominations shall come an author of desolation; then, in the end, what has been decreed concerning the desolation will be poured out.'

**10**<sup>1</sup>IN THE THIRD YEAR OF CYRUS king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel who had been given the name Belteshazzar. Though this word was true, it cost him [him: *prob. rdg, Heb omitted*] much toil to understand it; nevertheless understanding came to him in the course of the vision.

<sup>2</sup>In those days I, Daniel, mourned for three whole weeks. <sup>3</sup>I refrained from all choice food; no meat or wine passed my lips, and I did not anoint myself until the three weeks had gone by. <sup>4</sup>On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, I found myself on the bank of the great river, that is the Tigris; <sup>5</sup>I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen with a belt of gold from Ophir round his waist. <sup>6</sup>His body gleamed like topaz, his face shone like lightning, his eyes flamed like torches, his arms and feet sparkled like a disc of bronze; and when he spoke his voice sounded like the voice of a multitude. <sup>7</sup>I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while those who were near me did not see it, but great fear fell upon them and they stole away, <sup>8</sup>and I was left alone gazing at this great vision. But my strength left me; I became a sorry figure of a man, and retained no strength. <sup>9</sup>I heard the sound of his words and, when I did so, I fell prone on the ground in a trance. <sup>10</sup>Suddenly a hand grasped me and pulled me up on to my hands and knees. <sup>11</sup>He said to me, 'Daniel, man greatly beloved, attend to the words I am speaking to you and stand up where you are, for I am now sent to you.' When he addressed me, I stood up trembling <sup>12</sup>and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the very first day that you applied your mind to understand and to mortify yourself before your God, your prayers have been heard, and I have come in answer to them. <sup>13</sup>But the angel prince of the kingdom of Persia resisted me for twenty-one days, and then, seeing that I had held out there, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me against the prince of the kingdom of Persia. <sup>14</sup>And I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in days to come; for this too is a vision for those days.'

<sup>15</sup>While he spoke to me I hung my head and was struck dumb. <sup>16</sup>Suddenly one like a man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth to speak and addressed him as he stood before me: 'Sir, this has pierced me to the heart, and I retain no strength. <sup>17</sup>How can my lord's servant presume to talk with such as my lord, since my strength has failed me and no breath is left in me?' <sup>18</sup>Then the figure touched me again and restored my strength. <sup>19</sup>He said, 'Do not be afraid, man greatly beloved; all will be well with you. Be strong, be strong.' When he had spoken to me, I recovered strength and said, 'Speak, sir, for you have given me strength.' <sup>20</sup>He said, 'Do you know why I have come to you? I am first going back to fight with the prince of Persia, and, as soon as I have left, the prince of Greece will appear: <sup>21</sup>**11**<sup>1</sup>I have no ally on my side to help and support me, except Michael your prince [*prob. rdg, Heb adds and as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede*]. However I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. <sup>2</sup>Here and now I will tell you what is true:

'Three more kings will appear in Persia, and the fourth will far surpass all the others in wealth; and when he has extended his power through his wealth, he will rouse the whole world against the kingdom of Greece. <sup>3</sup>Then there will appear a warrior king. He

will rule a vast kingdom and will do what he chooses. <sup>4</sup>But as soon as he is established, his kingdom will be shattered and split up north, south, east and west. It will not pass to his descendants, nor will any of his successors have an empire like his; his kingdom will be torn up by the roots and given to others as well as to them. <sup>5</sup>Then the king of the south will become strong; but another of the captains will surpass him in strength and win a greater kingdom. <sup>6</sup>In due course the two will enter into a friendly alliance; to redress the balance the daughter of the king of the south will be given in marriage to the king of the north, but she will not maintain her influence and their line will not last. She and her escort, her child, and also her lord and master, will all be the victims of foul play. Then <sup>7</sup>another shoot from the same stock as hers will appear in his father's place, will penetrate the defences of the king of the north and enter his fortress, and will win a decisive victory over his people. <sup>8</sup>He will take back as booty to Egypt even the images of their gods cast in metal and their precious vessels of silver and gold. Then for some years he will refrain from attacking the king of the north. <sup>9</sup>After that the king of the north will overrun the southern kingdom but will retreat to his own land.

<sup>10</sup>His sons will press on to assemble a great armed horde. One of them will sweep on and on like an irresistible flood. And after that he will press on as far as his enemy's stronghold. <sup>11</sup>The king of the south, his anger roused, will march out to do battle with the king of the north who, in turn, will raise a great horde, but it will be delivered into the hands of his enemy. <sup>12</sup>When this horde has been captured, the victor will be elated and he will slaughter tens of thousands, yet he will not maintain his advantage. <sup>13</sup>Then the king of the north will once more raise a horde even greater than the last and, when the years come round, will advance with a great army and a large baggage-train. <sup>14</sup>During these times many will resist the king of the south, but some hotheads among your own people will rashly attempt to give substance to a vision and will come to disaster. <sup>15</sup>Then the king of the north will come and throw up siege-ramps and capture a fortified town, and the forces of the south will not stand up to him; even the flower of their army will not be able to hold their ground. <sup>16</sup>And so his adversary will do as he pleases and meet with no opposition. He will establish himself in the fairest of all lands and it will come wholly into his power. <sup>17</sup>He will resolve to subjugate all the dominions of the king of the south; and he will come to fair terms with him [and he ... with him: *prob. rdg, Heb obscure*], and he will give him a young woman in marriage, for the destruction of the kingdom; but she will not persist nor serve his purpose. <sup>18</sup>Then he will turn to the coasts and islands and take many prisoners, but a foreign commander [*Or consul or legate*] will put an end to his challenge by wearing him down [by wearing him down: *prob. rdg, Heb obscure*], thus he will throw back his challenge on to him. <sup>19</sup>He will fall back upon his own strongholds; there he will come to disaster and be overthrown and be seen no more.

<sup>20</sup>He will be succeeded by one who will send out an officer with a royal escort to extort tribute; after a short time this king too will meet his end, yet neither openly nor in battle.

<sup>21</sup>A contemptible creature will succeed but will not be given recognition as king; yet he will seize the kingdom by dissimulation and intrigue in time of peace. <sup>22</sup>He will sweep away all forces of opposition as he advances, and even the Prince of the Covenant will be broken. <sup>23</sup>He will enter into fraudulent alliances and, although the people behind him



are but few, he will rise to power and establish himself in time of peace. <sup>24</sup>He will overrun the richest districts of the province and succeed in doing what his fathers and forefathers failed to do, distributing spoil, booty, and property to his followers. He will lay his plans against fortresses, but only for a time.

<sup>25</sup>He will rouse himself in all his strength and courage and lead a great army against the king of the south, but the king of the south will press the campaign against him with a very great and numerous army; yet the king of the south will not persist, for traitors will lay their plots. <sup>26</sup>Those who eat at his board will be his undoing; his army will be swept away, and many will fall on the field of battle. <sup>27</sup>The two kings will be bent on mischief and, sitting at the same table, they will lie to each other with advantage to neither. Yet there will still be an end to the appointed time. <sup>28</sup>Then one will return home with a long baggage-train, and with anger in his heart against the Holy Covenant; he will work his will and return to his own land.

<sup>29</sup>At the appointed time he will once more overrun the south, but he will not succeed as he did before. <sup>30</sup>Ships from the west will sail against him, and he will receive a rebuff. He will turn and vent his fury against the Holy Covenant; on his way back he will take due note of those who have forsaken it. <sup>31</sup>Armed forces dispatched by him will desecrate the sanctuary and the citadel and do away with the regular offering. And there they will set up "the abominable thing that causes desolation". <sup>32</sup>He will win over by plausible promises those who are ready to condemn the covenant, but the people who are faithful to their God will hold firm and fight back. <sup>33</sup>Wise leaders of the nation will give guidance to the common people; yet for a while they will fall victims to fire and sword, to captivity and pillage. <sup>34</sup>But these victims will not want for help, though small, even if many who join them are insincere. <sup>35</sup>Some of these leaders will themselves fall victims for a time so that they may be tested, refined and made shining white. Yet there will still be an end [Yet ... end: *prob. rdg, Heb has different word order*] to the appointed time. <sup>36</sup>The king will do what he chooses; he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and against the God of gods he will utter monstrous blasphemies. All will go well for him until the time of wrath ends, for what is determined must be done. <sup>37</sup>He will ignore his ancestral gods, and the god beloved of women; to no god will he pay heed but will exalt himself above them all. <sup>38</sup>Instead he will honour the god of the citadel, a god unknown to his ancestors, with gold and silver, gems and costly gifts. <sup>39</sup>He will garrison his strongest fortresses with aliens, the people of a foreign god. Those whom he favours he will load with honour, putting them in office over the common people and distributing land at a price.

<sup>40</sup>At the time of the end, he and the king of the south will make feints at one another, and the king of the north will come storming against him with chariots and cavalry and many ships. He will overrun land after land, sweeping over them like a flood, <sup>41</sup>amongst them the fairest of all lands, and tens of thousands shall fall victims. Yet all these lands {including Edom and Moab and the remnant of the Ammonites} will survive his attack. <sup>42</sup>He will reach out to land after land, and Egypt will not escape. <sup>43</sup>He will gain control of her hidden stores of gold and silver and of all her treasures; Libyans and Cushites will follow in his train. <sup>44</sup>Then rumours from east and north will alarm him, and he will depart in a great rage to destroy and to exterminate many. <sup>45</sup>He will pitch his royal

pavilion between the sea and the holy hill, the fairest of all hills; and he will meet his end with no one to help him.

**12**<sup>1</sup>At that moment Michael shall appear,  
Michael the great captain,  
who stands guard over your fellow-countrymen;  
and there will be a time of distress  
such as has never been  
since they became a nation till that moment.  
But at that moment your people will be delivered [*Or will escape*],  
every one who is written in the book:  
<sup>2</sup>many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will wake,  
some to everlasting life  
and some to the reproach of eternal abhorrence.  
<sup>3</sup>The wise leaders shall shine like the bright vault of heaven,  
and those who have guided the people in the true path  
shall be like the stars for ever and ever.

<sup>4</sup>But you, Daniel, keep the words secret and seal the book till the time of the end. Many will be at their wits' end, and punishment will be heavy.'

<sup>5</sup>And I, Daniel, looked and saw two others standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on the opposite bank. <sup>6</sup>And I said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river, 'How long will it be before these portents cease?' <sup>7</sup>The man clothed in linen above the waters lifted to heaven his right hand and his left, and I heard him swear by him who lives for ever: 'It shall be for a time, times, and a half. When the power of the holy people ceases to be dispersed, all these things shall come to an end.'  
<sup>8</sup>I heard but I did not understand, and so I said, 'Sir, what will the issue of these things be?' <sup>9</sup>He replied, 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words are kept secret and sealed till the time of the end. <sup>10</sup>Many shall purify themselves and be refined, making themselves shining white, but the wicked shall continue in wickedness and none of them shall understand; only the wise leaders shall understand. <sup>11</sup>From the time when the regular offering is abolished and "the abomination of desolation" is set up, there shall be an interval of one thousand two hundred and ninety days. <sup>12</sup>Happy the man who waits and lives to see the completion of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days! <sup>13</sup>But go your way to the end and rest, and you shall arise to your destiny at the end of the age.'