

Why Was Daniel So Special? (Part I)

<u>Daniel 2:47</u>: (NASB) The king answered Daniel and said, surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery.

We all want to be inspired. We all want to see or hear a story of someone who was so strong against sin, so courageous against captivity and so trustworthy against temptation that we ourselves become invigorated to follow that example. Daniel the prophet was one such man who lived one such story.

Stay with us as we open the book of Daniel and look upon his life to see why he was so beloved of God.

So, when did Daniel go to the Lion's Den? How old was he? Everyone knows something about that story and it seems as though it is the centerpiece of Daniel's life. It is not...or is it?

Daniel was from the tribe of Judah. He was favored of God and blessed with a heart for God. Without discussing yet the time he was thrown in the lion's den, we will look at other events in his life and see how metaphorically they also were "lion's dens."



<u>Daniel 1:1-4</u>: (NRSV) ¹In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods. ³Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, ⁴young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

(Source: Biblical commentary by A. O. Hudson) It was probably not without design that Daniel used the ancient term "land of Shinar" to describe the country of his captors rather than "and

of Babylon" by which it was more familiarly known in his own day. "Shinar" was the name it bore in those early days soon after the Flood when Nimrod established the first empire there, and impious men built a great tower "whose top should reach unto heaven." The tower was still there and Daniel probably saw it as he entered the city...

"Tower of Babel," by Peter Bruegel the Elder Oil on panel – 1563 Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam





Imagine how overwhelming it must have been for young Daniel to have been taken captive!



Observations thus far:

- Sacred vessels of the Temple were taken and stored in a heathen treasury (that will come into play later!)
- The fear of being so young and being a captive Daniel was probably about 17 years old at this time
- Being a LONG way from home the journey to Babylon would have taken about 30 days
- Being educated, he knew the God-less history of Babylon
- Upon arrival culture shock! Idolatrous gods ruled this land
- Upon arrival awe at the amazing feats of architecture and the massiveness of the city
- Upon arrival the sense of the permanence of his captivity

Captivity in summary was the young and impressionable taken to a foreign land to live, work and serve with no apparent hope of freedom. Although he was there with three named companions (their Babylonian names were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego), Daniel was essentially alone.



The Christian is also called to great favor, the same as Daniel was born into.

2 Corinthians 5:17: (NASB) Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Daniel was under the old Law and upheld that to the best of his ability. What was "old" was good and what was "new" for Daniel (the Babylonian way of life) was not good. For the Christian, we are "new" and can't go back to our old ways of life! Same trick of Satan but in a different order. Satan will tempt us to put aside our new way of life and go back to a place we are not supposed to be.

What is our "Lion's Den Test" of captivity we have to avoid?

1 John 2:16: (NASB) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

We can be "captive" in a world full of sin and death.



Once we are engulfed in captivity (and we all are), our first decision must be to set our intention (and we all are), on fidelity to our spiritual heritage.



Daniel was a captive - so did he live in a jail?

(Source: Biblical commentary by A. O. Hudson) Judged by modern standards, the palace of the king Nebuchadnezzar was colossal...The building, or rather range of buildings, was something like a quarter of a mile square, flanked on one side by the river Euphrates and surrounded on the three other sides by wide canals so that it was virtually a fortress. Here lived the king and his family, the officers of his court, many of the priests and wise men of Babylon, distinguished captives taken as hostages in similar fashion to Daniel and his companions, and a host of servants, guards and soldiers, anxious in abject obedience, to carry out the wishes of this great king who was rapidly making himself master of the world.



Daniel 1:5-7: (NRSV) ⁵The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court. ⁶Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah. ⁷The palace master gave them other names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

(Please refer to the Bonus Material for more information about these names and their meaning.)

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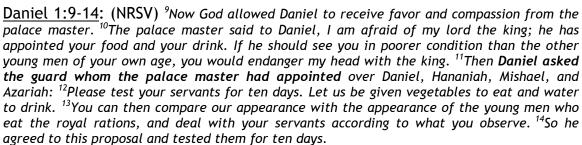
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This hardly seemed like captivity...royal rations of food and wine? ...An education? What was this really? It was the subtle indoctrination of idolatry for the purpose of creating loyal subjects to the idolatrous king himself! It was the removal of their identity and heritage and a replacing with a new name, a new language, and a new belief system - a new life! This is a common tool of Satan.

Daniel 1:8: (NRSV) But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself.

Notice he *asked*!

All is well and good to take a stand - but what happens when that stand could cost someone else?



Daniel didn't give up because of fear. Verses 12-13 display Daniel's remarkable wisdom and his confidence in the Lord's care as he offers a simple test to solve a potentially major dilemma.

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)) A ten-day test, Daniel the Prophet, www.jw.org

- (Palace Master, Ashpenaz) And speak with reason, Belteshazzar, for I fear my Lord the King who had appointed your meat and your drink. Why should he see your faces in worse liking than the other children? So you make me endanger my head to the King.
- (Daniel) Master, prove thy servants I beseech thee ten days and let us eat grains instead of meat. Water in place of wine. Let our countenances be looked upon and the countenance of the children greet the portion of the King's meat, and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

(Note this is not 100% accurate as Daniel bargained with the guard and not the Palace Master.)

<u>Daniel 1:15-17</u>: (NRSV) ¹⁵At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations. ¹⁶So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. ¹⁷To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.

<u>Verses 15-16</u> give the results of the test, and the consequence of such results. Daniel the teenager in his wisdom and courage changed a portion of the "training program!"

How did Daniel and his companions fare through the three-year Babylonian education/indoctrination?

Now the three years of education are accomplished:

<u>Daniel 1:18-21</u>: (NRSV) ¹⁸At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, ¹⁹and the king spoke with them. And among them all, no one was found to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they were stationed in the king's court. ²⁰In every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. ²¹And Daniel continued there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Excellence is the result of three years of faithfulness! They are now stationed in the king's own court.

Our consciences are also tested in many ways.

With what do we allow ourselves to be fed?

<u>Luke 4:4</u>: (NASB) And Jesus answered him, It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone.

Daniel and his friends were living according to the word of God as they knew it through the Law, even when they were not being judged by others according to that Law. They found a way to stand above the fray. Do we?

What is it that we drink?

<u>John 4:10</u>: (NASB) Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, give me a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.

Are we continually driven by our highest spiritual conscience even under poor circumstances?



Hebrews 10:22: (NASB) let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

The "Lion's Den Lesson" of:



We, like Daniel, are strangers. Do we meld into the "foreign country" and draw our nourishment from it, or do we draw our strength from the will of our Father based on principle and promise?



A caller from Connecticut suggests: The book of Daniel is like a beacon of light for prophetic enlightenment and biblical confirmation.

Quick side note: Could there be another lesson regarding the development of the true church while in Babylon? This is a good example of always staying separate from, standing apart from, the temptations of false Christianity, and in the end - after three years - (signifying a complete experience) proving faithful.



This would have been the fourth year that Daniel was in Babylon. The first two years King Nebuchadnezzar reigned alongside his father Nabopolassar, who was an invalid at the time and died after the second year of Daniel's presence in Babylon.

<u>Daniel 2:1-6</u>: (NRSV) ¹In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed such dreams that his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. ²So the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. When they came in and stood before the king, ³he said to them, I have had such a dream that my spirit is troubled by the desire to understand it. ⁴The Chaldeans said to the king (in Aramaic), O king, live

forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will reveal the interpretation. It has been thought (because of translation) that the king forgot the dreams, but rather it seems to be that he simply did not reveal them, wanting to see the true value of his counselors. ⁵The king answered the Chaldeans, this is a public decree: if you do not tell me both the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. ⁶But if you do tell me the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.

Tell me my dream, Daniel the Prophet, www.jw.org

• (Nebuchadnezzar) You will not make known unto me the dream with the interpretation thereof. You shall all be cut in pieces and your houses shall be made a dunghill. You show me the dream and the interpretation thereof. You shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor.



Courage is not the absence of fear; it is the judgment that something else is more important.

-Ambrose Redmoon

That's how Daniel lived. Do we stand up for what we believe in?

Back to the story, the wise men try reasoning with the king. But the king is now angry and stands firm accusing them of trying to buy time.

The wise men seeing the impossibility of their plight:

<u>Daniel 2:10-11</u>: (NASB) ¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king and said, there is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king, inasmuch as no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer or Chaldean. ¹¹Moreover, the thing that the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with mortal flesh.

(1))Only the gods know, Daniel the Prophet, www.jw.org

- (Nebuchadnezzar) Tell me the dream and then I shall know you can tell me the interpretation thereof!
- (The Magicians) There is not a man alive that can show thy master. There is no king, lord or ruler that asks such things of any magician or astrologer or Chaldean. It is a rare thing the King requires, for there is none other that can show the King his dream except the gods.
- (Nebuchadnezzar) Out! Out! Kill them. Kill them all!

Next we see Daniel's bold faith being tested in a new and difficult way:

<u>Daniel 2:12-16:(NRSV)</u> ¹²Because of this the king flew into a violent rage and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. ¹³The decree was issued, and the wise men were about to be executed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, to execute them. ¹⁴Then Daniel responded with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the king's chief executioner, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon; ¹⁵he asked Arioch, the royal official, Why is the decree of the king so urgent? Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. ¹⁶So Daniel went in and requested that the king give him time and he would tell the king the interpretation.

Notice Daniel does not know the dream yet, *nor* does he even know if God will reveal it. He *does* know that God had already given him abilities along these lines.

(1)) I can know the dream, Daniel the Prophet, www.jw.org

- (Daniel) Arioch, what is this decree? What fate awaits the lives of Babylon?
- (Arioch) Death.
- (Daniel) Why is the decree so hasty from the king?
- (Arioch) After all these wars the blood of Judah, Assyria and Asia, the largest battle of Babylon rages in the King this very hour. Your life for a dream. A dream, which the king will not reveal.
- (Daniel) A dream? Arioch wait! These need not be. Bring me before the king.
 I can know the dream!



<u>Daniel 2:17-23</u>: (NRSV) ¹⁷Then Daniel went to his home and informed his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹⁸and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions with the rest of the wise men of Babylon might not perish.

 Daniel's first impulse was to go to his brethren for their prayer and support.

¹⁹Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven. ²⁰Daniel said: Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his. ²¹He changes times and seasons, deposes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. ²²He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with him.

- The king's question came in a dream; Daniel received the answer in a dream.
- That Daniel's response was spoken (<u>verse 20</u>) indicated a conversational kind of prayer.
- Daniel's first impulse was to praise and thank the Almighty for the actual interpretation of the ages and ruling powers to come.

²³To you, O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and power, and have now revealed to me what we asked of you, for you have revealed to us what the king ordered.

- Daniel's second impulse was to praise and thank the Almighty for the wisdom and power needed.
- Daniel exhibited a BOLD HUMILITY and acknowledges a single Almighty God in the midst of a monarchy where there are gods for everything.

So, how does Daniel respond when face to face with the greatest king in all the earth?

<u>Daniel 2:25-30</u>: (NRSV) ²⁵Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king and said to him: I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can tell the king the interpretation. ²⁶The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, are you able to tell me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?

- Arioch was quick to take credit for "finding" Daniel.
- The king was direct in his request.

²⁷Daniel answered the king, no wise men, enchanters, magicians, or diviners can show to the king the mystery that the king is asking, ²⁸but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days.

- Daniel's first words revealed his humility, wisdom and GREAT faith in the One God.
- Daniel connected God's gift of the interpretation of the end of days with the king and not himself. He made the king the centerpiece.



There is a God in heaven, Daniel the Prophet, www.jw.org

- (Arioch) Daniel, may the gods...your God...be with you.
- (Nebuchadnezzar) Belteshazzar, wisest among the young. Art though able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen and the interpretation thereof?
- (Daniel) There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets and maketh known unto the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.

Remember, this is the God the king does not believe in! This takes great faith.

Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed were these: ²⁹To you, O king, as you lay in bed, came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and the revealer of mysteries disclosed to you what is to be. ³⁰But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation may be known to the king and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

- Daniel began with the context that this dream reveals the future.
- Before revealing detail, Daniel restated his humility as being the Almighty's conduit.
- Daniel restated the direct connection between God and the king.

This is a young man in his early 20's!



A caller from Connecticut suggests: Daniel, like Joseph, is an example for the Christian. They are both sons without a father in a strange land, but they survive and thrive by relying upon God. They both showed that trust in God brings wisdom.



To speak of faith and to live in faith when all things are in order is one thing to publicly speak of faith in a hostile environment and to live in that faith in such an environment is faith in action.



The Apostle Paul showed us how to live such a faith by his own actions:

Acts 17:22-24: (NASB) ²²So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. ²³For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God, who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;





The dream:

Daniel 2:31-35: (NRSV) ³¹You were looking, O king, and lo! There was a great statue. This statue was huge; its brilliance extraordinary; it was standing before you, and its appearance was frightening. 32The head of that statue was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴As you looked on, a stone was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were all broken in pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

How did the greatest king in all the earth respond to the faith and wisdom of Daniel?

The interpretation:

Daniel 2:36-45: (NRSV) ³⁶...now we will tell the



king its interpretation. ³⁷You, O king, the king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory, ³⁸into whose hand he has given... And whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold. ³⁹After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. ⁴⁰And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these. ⁴¹As you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the strength of iron shall be in it, as you saw the iron mixed with the clay... ⁴³As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.

(For more information on this dream and other prophecies of Daniel, please refer to the CQ Program from November 3, 2013 entitled, Why Do Historians Hate Daniel So Much?)



Now the interpretation went from merely human events to Godly events:

⁴⁴And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; ⁴⁵just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.

So, Daniel dramatically revealed the dream, its source and its interpretation, which was more than asked for. He basically told the king:



You are being given a look into the future, beginning with your kingdom and ending with the kingdom of God overspreading the earth forever and ever!



Because deep and abiding faith stands on principle, publicity does not stroke the ego. It merely becomes a tool to draw all eyes to the source of its strength the Almighty God and His plan.

Publicity is not to feed an ego; it is to feed the Gospel. All power and glory goes to God. We as Christians are just the conduit.

Mark 5:30-33: (NASB) ³⁰Immediately Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, who touched my garments? ³¹And His disciples said to Him, You see the crowd pressing in on you, and you say, who touched me? ³²And he looked around to see the woman who had done this. ³³But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth.

"In the Lion's Den," from Daniel in Babylon

In the lion's den there's no time to blink
It should be over soon
There's no chance to think
In the lion's den you can be certain
there's real danger
In the lion's den there's no time to cry
Nothing more to say just wave goodbye
In the lion's den blacken the curtains
there's real danger
There is no mercy in the lion's den
No second chances to begin again
Just trust in God right until the end





<u>Daniel 2:46-49</u>: (NRSV) ⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, worshiped Daniel, and commanded that a grain offering and incense be offered to him. ⁴⁷The king said to Daniel, truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery! ⁴⁸Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king's court.

So, Daniel is rewarded as the king recognizes that the God of Daniel is the God of all gods. It is important to remember the king is here expressing a great appreciation of the Almighty and His power, for over time Nebuchadnezzar is destined to forget.

Daniel's heritage rings true! "Daniel" means "judge of God." His Babylonian name, Belteshaz'zar, means "Bel's prince," meaning "whom Bel (the Babylonian god) favors." Daniel truly was the judge of God and NOT Bel's prince!



How old was Daniel when he went into the lion's den? That is for next time!

Daniel lived his life in "lion's den experiences" and showed us how we in our Christian lives can be successful in living in accordance with the will of God and the sacrifice of Jesus. Dare to be a Daniel!

So, why was Daniel so special?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!

And now <u>even more</u> to think about... only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!



First, a sneak peek at what will be coming in Why Was Daniel So Special? (Part II)

The Lion's Den Test of Fame and Fortune: Its lesson - to be continued from Part I

The Lion's Den Test of Power and Comfort: The period between Daniel's elevation to high standing and the fall of king Nebuchadnezzar into madness. A period of about 30 years - the only event recorded is the fiery furnace incident, of which Daniel was not a part, but his influence was certainly there...

The Lion's Den Test of Integrity: The period in which Daniel must tell the King how far he had fallen as a result of his overwhelming pride and the seven years where Daniel must run all of Babylon until the king's recovery.

The Lion's Den Test of Time and Obscurity: Daniel, after the death of the king, is still in Babylon and now merely a citizen. He lives in relative obscurity. He has visions and he writes.

The Lion's Den Test of Courage: The handwriting on the wall and its interpretation...

The Lion's Den Test of Certain Death: The actual lion's den under the reign of Darius the Mede. All of Daniel's life was a precursor for this final drama, for Daniel truly did live his whole life in a series of Lion's Den Experiences.

Second, a little bit more of the descriptive writing of A.O. Hudson regarding the beginning of the captivity that Daniel and his companions would have experienced.

So Daniel and his fellow captives ride by chariot into Babylon, a journey of about 30 days...

(Source: A. O. Hudson) Now he gazes from his chariot at the stately Temple of Marduk, the god of Babylon, set in the midst of wide gardens and paved terraces. He saw the 4 massive gateways, each flanked by 2 huge bronze dragon-serpents gleaming red in the sunlight... His eyes followed the tremendous seven-staged building, which towered into the heavens behind the Temple. He knew what that building was without being told. It was the famous tower, which men had commenced to build in the days when the world was young and the memory of the great Flood had scarcely faded from men's minds. Later generations had gone on building the city, and their kings had each added his contribution to the tower, and now as Daniel gazed upon it, soaring six hundred feet into the sky, the highest building men had ever built or would ever build until this modern day of sky-scrapers. He saw the staircases hugging the sides of each successive stage and the terraces surrounding the top of each stage. The scintillating light at its summit held his attention and right up there he could see the solid gold sanctuary to Marduk, the god to whose honor this great tower was dedicated... The chariot rolled on and Daniel could see the tower no more...

Daniel was traveling now along the royal road, which led from the Temple and the Tower to Nebuchadnezzar's palace, the name of the road meaning "Processional Way" and along that road the idolatrous processions of the worship of Babylon's false gods often passed. The lad looked down upon a gleaming white limestone road with pavements of white and red veined stone slabs on each side, flanked by high walls of glazed enameled colored bricks, sculptured in the form of lions, white lions with yellow manes and yellow lions with red manes, on alternate light and dark blue backgrounds, all seeming as if themselves marching toward the great palace which could clearly be seen in the distance. From his elevated position in the chariot Daniel



could see over those ornate walls into the straight streets and small houses of Merkes, the artisans' and industrial part of the city, and then, looking forward, the place which was to be his own home and that of his three companions, the palace of the great king himself.

Third, a comparison of the names of our heroes, before and after:

(Source: McClintock and Strong's)

Daniel = "judge of God"

Belteshaz'zar = "Bel's prince," that is, "whom Bel favors"

Bel is the name under which the national god of the Babylonians is cursorily mentioned.

Hananiah = "God has favored"

Shadrach = "royal" or "the great scribe"

As to the etymology, this name is identified by some with Hadrach, (<380901> Zechariah 9:1), the name of a Syrian god who represents the seasons... Others profess to trace the name to a Babylonian source, and connect it with the Assyrian Sadhiru or Sadhru, 'the great scribe'

Mishael = "who is what God is"

Meshach = "guest of a king"

Gesenius resolves the name into the Persic miz-shah, 'the guest of the shah' (Thesaur. sav.);

Hitzig (Exeget. Hdb. ad loc.) and Fiurst (Heb. Lex. s.v.) refer it to the Sanscrit Meshah. 'a ram,' and regard it as a name of the sun-god.

Azariah = "Jehovah has helped"

Abed-nego = "servant of Nebo"

Nebo was the god who presided over learning and letters. He is called "the far hearing," "he who possesses intelligence," "he who teaches or instructs."