

# Dig-a-bit #1 for the Conversations

## Study Month 5 (Jan 2025)

Good morning where I am. It's a cold winter morning. I'm a little bit chilly even at home today. I hope that you are in some warm place studying God's Word. I have been reading this morning the first few chapters of the book of Daniel, and I know that there is a great depth even to the point where there are some things that we are not going to be certain of as we look at the prophecies of Daniel.

And so this morning, I'm not going to go into what I think Daniel 9 means about the beast and the little horn and all of that. And we might do that a little bit later this month, perhaps, but I do want us to talk about Gabriel. We read about that angel that's going to later appear to Mary. We read about Gabriel a couple of times in those chapters and what I want us to notice today is that first of all, it's very important as [00:01:00] we read through Daniel to realize that all of the events recorded are not recorded in chronological order. You'll realize that Daniel served under four kings and as you're reading you will realize that sometimes one of those later kings will be mentioned in some event, and then it will go back, and all of a sudden Daniel's talking about a time when he was serving under a former king.

So it's important to realize that all of those events in Daniel are not chronologically ordered. As a general rule, we know that Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon who came in and besieged Jerusalem and took many people captive, including Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to Babylon. So, as a general rule, Nebuchadnezzar is the key king in chapters 1 through 4 of Daniel.

In [00:02:00] fact, exclusively. But then we start reading about Belshazzar in chapter five and Darius or Rais, and we read about some events in the lives of those two kings that occur out of order. So we have Belshazzar and he, or Belshazzar. He was the son of Nebuchadnezzar, so he was a Babylonian ruler as well.

And then we read about Darius or Darius. I like to call him Darius. And he was also Chaldean, the southern part of Babylonia, so he was the next king. And then we read about Cyrus the Persian. And he's, we read about him mostly beginning in chapter 10. So the Persians took over the Babylonians and thus then Daniel, Abednego, our [00:03:00] key characters in the book, were serving under the Persian king Cyrus.

So we have these four kings, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus in the book of Daniel. What I wanted us to notice today is just something that's really practical for our lives. And I never noticed this until I was really reading through this morning, all through. The first nine chapters of the book of Daniel, there's a great contrast presented in those people who are willing to listen to what God is saying, even at this time in visions and dreams.

There's a great distinction made in the book of Daniel between people whose hearts are tender to the word of God and those who aren't. And I love this because what we're doing is digging deep. And what we're doing is applying tender hearts. to what God says. And I love the fact that in Daniel we really learn lessons about [00:04:00] a great distinction between people who are willing to listen and those people who are not willing to listen to the word of the Lord.

And so quickly today in this dig a bit, I just want us to notice some passages that make that glaringly obvious. In fact, some from each chapter of these nine first chapters of the book of Daniel. You remember in Daniel chapter one, is when Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat.

He wasn't going to eat food that was against his Jewish law, even at the order of the king. And so he contested that and he made his complaint and asked politely for permission to run a test on him and his fellows to see if they ate. just pulse and water if they would not be as healthy or healthier than those people around him who were eating the king's meat so in [00:05:00] daniel 1 verse 20 there's a great distinction made between daniel and the magicians verse 20 in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired of them he found them daniel and his fellows 10 times better than all the magicians and enchanters That we're in all of his realm.

So Daniel proves something in chapter 1. When we listen and obey God, we will in the end be exalted. God will provide a path for us. Then we look at chapter 2 and We here are finding Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the first one that's recorded. And he's presenting that dream to all of his magicians. In fact, he's going to have everyone killed because no one can tell him.

He actually is not presenting the dream. He wants them to tell him what he dreamed. And so, he's about to kill them because they can't tell him what he dreamed. In fact, [00:06:00] Daniel is at risk here. And so, in chapter 2, verse 28, we find the distinction. Daniel is truly tender hearted toward the words of God, not taking any credit for himself.

He says in verse 28, there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets and makes known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Your dream and your visions of your head upon your bed are these. Daniel was open to the revelation of God. We've got to be open to the revelation of God. Then in chapter three,

this is when we're still under Nebuchadnezzar and the three Hebrews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are going to be thrown into the fiery furnace. And they are the fellows of Daniel, there's a great distinction at the fiery furnace made yet again. In verse 29 of chapter three, then Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, blessed be the God of [00:07:00] Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel, that's God's messenger, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any God except their own God.

I love this here again, there's going to be this great distinction and it's not stopping here because Nebuchadnezzar is just about to get into more trouble with his dreams and the, failure to repent when Daniel interprets his dream for him. So here we have the three Hebrews thrown into the fiery furnace and there's a great distinction made.

I mean, they're not burning up and there's an extra man in there and the king recognizes This is the voice to which I need to listen and he says don't let anybody ever Prevent or try to speak against this god because this god's got to be the true god [00:08:00] And he's going to say that even more a little bit later on And then in Daniel chapter 4, this is a great distinction.

When Nebuchadnezzar heeded and when he didn't heed the words of God. So he had this dream and Daniel, was, Let's just begin with, the king Nebuchadnezzar Daniel's going before him to show the signs and wonders that the high God has wrought toward him. And the Nebuchadnezzar says in verse 4, I was at rest in my house and flourishing in my palace, and I saw a dream which made me afraid.

So Nebuchadnezzar has a dream, and thoughts upon my bed, and the visions of my head troubled me. And so I made a decree to bring in all the wise men. These are the people who aren't listening to God. And they all came in. And I told the dream before them, verse 7, but they did not make known to me the [00:09:00] interpretation thereof.

But at the last, Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my God, and in whom is the Spirit of the Holy Gods.

And before him I told the dream, saying, Well, Belteshazzar, of course, is his Babylonian name. And so is that right? Is it, is it his Babylonian name? I'm going to check that in a minute.

Oh, Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you. He's still not recognizing the true God and no secret troubles you. Tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen and the interpretation thereof. So were the visions of my head and my bed, and I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great.

The tree grew and was strong, and the height thereof reached to heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all. The beast of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the air dwelt in the bowels thereof, and all the flesh was fed of it.

And I saw in the [00:10:00] visions of my head upon my bed, and behold, a watcher, and an holy one.

And then he goes on and finishes the dream and Daniel interprets the dream let's look at verse 22. It is you, O king. You are grown and become strong, for your greatness is grown and reaches to the heavens and your dominion to the end of the earth. And the king saw a watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven and saying, Hew the tree down and destroy it.

Yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beast of the field, till seven times pass over him. He's saying, you think you're great, but you are going to be like a beast of the field.

You are going to, be reduced. to a wild beast of the field. You're going to be wet with the dew of heaven. You're going to be out in the fields with the wild beast. And [00:11:00] verse 27, wherefore O King, Daniel says, let my counsel, which is really the counsel of God, be acceptable to you and break off your sins by righteousness and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.

It may be a lengthening of your tranquility. In other words. Not all of these things necessarily have to come to pass. You might not become as a beast of the field. You might have a lengthening of your tranquility and your kingdom. All this came upon the king, Nebuchadnezzar. Listen, at the end of twelve months, he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.

The king spoke and said, Isn't this the great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty? He was so vain. He was so prideful. He was not listening to the [00:12:00] revelation of God. And while the word was in the king's mouth, their fellow voice from heaven sang, O King Nebuchadnezzar, Here's his direct revelation.

To you, it is spoken, the kingdom is departed from you. Now look at verse thirty three. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar, and he was driven from men, and ate grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles feathers, and his nails like birds claws.

At the end of the days, Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes to heaven, and his understanding returned unto him. And he blessed the Most High and he praised and honored him who lives forever. Why didn't he do that at first? Why didn't he listen? Because he already had seen earlier that Daniel could interpret dreams.

He could give the word of the Most High God, but he didn't listen. And you see the difference between the Nebuchadnezzar who's listening and the Nebuchadnezzar [00:13:00] who is Prideful and vain and not listening to the revelation of God. And we see that really well in chapter four. Especially in verse 31.

While the word was in the king's mouth, he was vainly proclaiming his majesty. It reminds me of Herod in the book of Acts about chapter 12, I think, where. Herod came out and let the people worship him, and God let the worms eat him. God did a similar thing here to Nebuchadnezzar, and we see a vast distinction between Daniel, who's living faithfully to God and proclaiming God's message, and Nebuchadnezzar, who is not listening and paying great consequences.

And then in chapter five, we see the difference between the believers and and Belshazzar the king. [00:14:00] He makes this feast and you remember Belshazzar is the son of Nebuchadnezzar. And so, this is the one where we see the handwriting on the wall, meaning Nene Tegelufarsin on the wall. They call in Daniel to interpret that.

And in 5:23, we see the difference between the believer and the king. But, Daniel says to him, And you, his son, Obelshazzar, you have, you knew, he says here, You knew what happened to your dad. You knew he became as a beast.

You saw that when he rejected the words of the Lord, he became as a beast of the field.

You knew this. But you, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this. That's verse 22. But you've lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven, and they brought the vessels of his house before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine in vessels that came [00:15:00] out of the temple.

They were the holy vessels that Nebuchadnezzar brought back from the temple in Jerusalem, the sanctified vessels. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, brass, iron, wood, and stone, and they can't hear, they can't see, they can't know. And the god in whose hand your breath is, the one who makes you live, he says, and whose are all your ways, you have not glorified.

Vast distinction here between the one who is listening and the one who is not, and then the curse. The rest of the chapter is presented upon Belshazzar. All right. Then the next chapter six, this is when Darius listened and there's a great distinction between Darius soldiers and Daniel. In Daniel chapter six is when Darius sets over the kingdom 120 princes and they All [00:16:00] want to get Daniel in trouble. Why do they want to get Daniel in trouble? Because Daniel was preferred, verse 3, above all of the, he was distinguished above all the presidents and princes. And an excellent spirit was in him.

So the presidents and princes and satraps are trying to find occasion against Daniel. They can't find anything. And so they say, well, we'll get him in trouble because of his religion, because his religion is not Babylonian. He bows down to a God. So you remember they went to the king and they said, make a law where nobody can bow down and ask any petition of anybody but you.

And of course, in his vanity, then Darius is going to make this law where no one can bow down to anybody but him. He's going to be sorry he made that law because he liked Daniel. He preferred Daniel. But they tattled on Daniel because they saw him bowing down as he did three times in his window And they went to the king and tattled and you remember this is when Daniel was thrown into the [00:17:00] lion's den But listen to verses 23 to 26 Darius goes out.

He sees that God sent his angel and shut the lion's mouth You know Gabriel is so busy in this book. You wonder if that Gabriel was that angel that was working here, but I really think it was the son of God. I don't have reasons for

that, but God has sent his angel. Daniel says, verse 22, And shut the lion's mouth, and they've not hurt me.

For as much as before him innocency was found in me, and also before you, O king, have I done no harm. Verse 23. Then was the king exceeding glad for him and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no manner of hurt was found upon him because, why?

Because he believed in his God. There's going to be a distinction here. Daniel believed in God [00:18:00] and there were some other men who were fighting against the revelations of God, who were fighting against the words of God. And in verse 24, those men which had accused Daniel, he took and cast them into the den of lions, their children, their wives.

Here's a sad statement, the lions had the mastery over them and broke all their bones and pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den, Nebuchadnezzar. This Chaldean king from the south of Babylon had Daniel thrown in first and Daniel was unharmed, but there's this distinction.

Those people who were rejecting the revelation of God in the end. We're the ones who were destroyed by the lions. They and their families. And then in Daniel 7 verse 28 and 8 verse 27, we see Daniel being so intent, diligent in listening to the revelations of God. In Daniel 7 verse [00:19:00] 28. Hitherto is the end of the matter.

As for me, Daniel, these are, this is Daniel having dreams, and we may talk about what they mean, but listen, as for me, Daniel, my cogitations, my meditations, my thoughts, my dreams, much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me, but I kept this matter in my heart. He took seriously the revelations of God.

And in Daniel 8, Verse 26 the vision of the evening in the morning, which was told is true Wherefore shut up the vision for it shall be for many days. These are some Revelations that have to do with events that are going to occur in New Testament times But listen to Daniel's reaction.

And I, Daniel, fainted and I was sick certain days afterward. I rose up and did the king's business. And I was astonished at this vision, but no one understood it. Daniel takes seriously in every chapter the revelations of the word [00:20:00] of God, God's manifestations, God's words through these dreams. Daniel is intent on knowing what God wants him to do.

Are we intent? As we dig deep, are we intent on knowing what God's Word would have us to do? And then finally, Daniel 9 verse 8 says, Oh Lord, to us belongs confusion of faiths, to our kings, to our princes, to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, even though we have rebelled against him.

Daniel's serious about listening to God and about obeying God. And I think there's a great distinction in these first nine chapters about what we do with the word of God. The same angel Gabriel is bringing the word of God in a couple of these chapters that we've read, the same angel that's going to bring the [00:21:00] word of God to Mary.

And I'm just going to tell you that when I read through the book of Daniel, I see this angel at work. This angel is appearing to people who are ready, whose hearts are prepared for the Word of God, and we are going to see that that is the case with Mary as well when Gabriel comes to do his work in the life of Mary.

All right, now I'm turning back to Daniel 1 just to be sure I was right about that name. Among these were the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Those are their Jewish names. Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names, and he gave to Daniel the name of Belteshazzar, and to Hananiah of Shadrach, and to Mishael of Meshach, and to Azariah Abendigo.

So Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were the Babylonian names that [00:22:00] were given to Daniel and his three very brave fellows who were, eunuchs in the land of Babylon, Jewish eunuchs in the land of Babylon. As we look at these names, we see that every one of them, when we research them, Every one of them is designed to bring honor to the idolatrous gods, to the gods of the Babylonians.

And whereas their Jewish names, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, those names are names that honor Jehovah God. It's interesting to notice also that Daniel's name given by the prince of the phoenix, Belteshazzar, is very, very similar. if not the same name as was given by King Nebuchadnezzar to his own son who ruled after him, Belshazzar.

All right, interesting [00:23:00] things from Daniel, but the one thing that I want us to get as we talk about these first nine chapters is that the book of Daniel, and we can get into what And I think we can pretty much tell mostly what the visions of Daniel meant and that some of them had to do with the church, the kingdom of God here on this earth.



And we may talk about some of those things, but I want us to lay the groundwork that Gabriel and God through the visions know the hearts of people. And they know that Daniel, they knew in these chapters that Daniel was intent on listening and obeying the Word of God. And Gabriel's going to come to Mary in the New Testament knowing that she is intent on following the will of God, even when it's very, very difficult.

as it was for both Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Mary, [00:24:00] who was chosen for the bringing of the Christ child, the Messiah, into the world, which ultimately, of course, would save us from our sins. I want to be on the side that's listening. I want to be on the side that's intent on studying the Word of God, don't you? I hope you have a great day.