

**THE HISTORY OF THE
DESTRUCTION
OF
BEL AND THE DRAGON,
CUT OFF FROM THE END OF DANIEL.**

¹ AND king Astyages was gathered to his fathers, and Cyrus of Persia received his kingdom.

² And Daniel conversed with the king, and *was* honoured above all his friends.

³ Now the Babylonians had an idol, called Bel, and there were spent upon him every day twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and six vessels of wine.

⁴ And the king worshipped it, and went daily to adore it: but Daniel worshipped his own God. And the king said unto him, Why dost not thou worship Bel?

⁵ Who *answered and* said, Because I *may* not worship idols made with hands, but the living God, who hath created the heaven and the earth, and hath sovereignty over all flesh.

⁶ Then said the king unto him, Thinkest thou not that Bel is a living god? seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every day?

⁷ Then Daniel smiled, and said, O king, be not deceived: for this is *but* clay within, and brass without, and did never eat or drink *any thing*.

⁸ So the king was wroth, and called for his priests, and said unto them, If ye tell me not who *this is that* devoureth these expences, ye shall die.

⁹ But if ye can certify *me* that Bel devoureth them, *then* Daniel shall die: for he hath spoken blasphemy against Bel. And Daniel said unto the king, Let it be according to thy word.

¹⁰ Now the priests of Bel were threescore and ten, beside *their* wives and children: and the king went with Daniel into the temple of Bel.

¹¹ So Bel's priests said, Lo, we go out: but thou, O king, set on the meat, and make ready the wine, and shut the door fast, and seal *it* with thine own signet;

¹² and to morrow when thou comest *in*, if thou findest not that Bel hath eaten *up* all, we will suffer death; or *else* Daniel, that speaketh falsely against us.

¹³ And they little regarded *it*: for under the table they had made a privy entrance, whereby they entered in continually, and consumed those *things*.

¹⁴ So when they were gone forth, the king set meats before Bel. Now Daniel had commanded his servants to bring ashes, and *those* they strewed *throughout* all the temple in the presence of the king alone: then went they out, and shut the door, and sealed *it* with the king's signet, and *so* departed.

¹⁵ Now in the night came the priests with their wives and children, (as they were wont to do,) and did eat and drink up all.

¹⁶ In the morning betime the king arose, and Daniel with him.

¹⁷ And the king said, Daniel, *are* the seals whole? And he said, *Yea*, O king, they *be* whole.

18 And as soon as *he* had opened the door, the king looked upon the table, and cried with a loud voice, Great art thou, O Bel, and with thee is no deceit at all.

19 Then laughed Daniel, and held the king that he should not go in, and said, Behold now the pavement, and mark *well* whose footsteps *are* these.

20 And the king said, I see the footsteps of men, women, and children. And then the king was angry,

21 and took the priests with their wives and children, who shewed him the privy doors, where they came in, and consumed such *things* as were upon the table.

22 Therefore the king slew them, and delivered Bel into Daniel's power, who destroyed him and his temple.

23 And in *that same* place there was a great dragon, which they of Babylon worshipped.

24 And the king said unto Daniel, Wilt thou also say that this is of brass? lo, he liveth, he eateth and drinketh; thou canst not say that he is no living god: therefore worship him.

25 Then said Daniel *unto the king*, I will worship the Lord my God: for he is the living God.

26 But give me leave, O king, and I shall slay *this* dragon without sword or staff. The king said, I give thee *leave*.

27 Then Daniel took pitch, and fat, and hair, and did see the *them* together, and made lumps *thereof*: this he put in the dragon's mouth, and so the dragon burst in sunder: and *Daniel* said,

Lo, *these are* the gods you worship.

²⁸ When they of Babylon heard *that*, they took great indignation, and conspired against the king, saying, The king is become a Jew, *and* he hath destroyed Bel, he hath slain the dragon, and put the priests to death.

²⁹ So they came to the king, and said, Deliver us Daniel, or else we will destroy thee and thine house.

³⁰ Now when the king saw that they pressed him sore, being constrained, he delivered Daniel unto them:

³¹ who cast him into the lions' den: where he was six days.

³² And in the den there were seven lions, and they had given them every day two carcasses, and two sheep: which then were not given to them, to the intent they might devour Daniel.

³³ Now there was in Jewry a prophet, called Habacuc, who had made pottage, and had broken bread in a bowl, and was going into the field, for to bring *it* to the reapers.

³⁴ But the angel of the Lord said unto Habacuc, Go, carry the dinner that thou hast into Babylon unto Daniel, *who is* in the lions' den.

³⁵ And Habacuc said, Lord, I never saw Babylon; neither do I know where the den is.

³⁶ Then the angel of the Lord took him by the crown, and bare *him* by the hair of his head, *and* through the vehemency of his spirit set him in Babylon over the den.

³⁷ And Habacuc cried, saying, O Daniel, Daniel, take the dinner which God hath sent thee.

³⁸ And Daniel said, Thou hast remembered me, O God: neither hast thou forsaken them that seek thee and love thee.

³⁹ So Daniel arose, and did eat: and the angel of the Lord set Habacuc in his own place again immediately.

⁴⁰ Upon the seventh day the king went to bewail Daniel: and when he came to the den, he looked in, and behold, Daniel *was* sitting.

⁴¹ Then cried the king with a loud voice, saying, Great art thou, O Lord God of Daniel, and there is none other besides thee.

⁴² And he drew him out, and cast those that were the cause of his destruction into the den: and they were devoured in a moment before his face.

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