

DANIEL, BEL, AND THE SNAKE

¹ And king Astyages was put to his fathers, and Cyrus of Persia took [*or received*] his realm.

² Forsooth Daniel ate with the king, and was honoured above all the friends of him.

³ Also an idol, Bel by name, was at Babylon, and twelve measures of clean flour, of which *measures* each contained three bushels, and forty sheep, and six measures of wine, *that be called amphoras*, were spenden in it each day.

⁴ And the king worshipped that *Bel*, and went each day to honour him; certainly Daniel worshipped his God. And the king said to him, Why worshippesst thou not Bel?

⁵ Which answered, and said to him, For I worship not idols made by hand, but God living [*or but living God*], that made of nought heaven and earth, and hath power of each flesh.

⁶ And the king said to him, Whether it seemeth not to thee, that Bel is a living god? whether thou seest not, how great things he eateth and drinketh each day?

⁷ And Daniel said laughing, King, err thou not; for why this *Bel* is of clay within, and of brass withoutforth, and eateth not, [*neither drinketh*], any time.

⁸ And the king was wroth, and called the priests thereof [*or called the priests of him*], and

said to them, If ye say not to me, who it is that eateth these costs, *either expenses*, ye shall die.

⁹ Forsooth if ye show that Bel eateth these things, Daniel shall die, for he blasphemed Bel. And Daniel said to the king, Be it done by [*or after*] thy word.

¹⁰ Forsooth the priests of Bel were seventy, besides wives, and little children, and sons, *either servants*. And the king came with Daniel into the temple of Bel.

¹¹ And the priests of Bel said, Lo! We shall go out, and thou, king, set [*or put*] meats, and meddle [*or mingle*] wine, and close thou [*or shut*] the door, and aseal *it* with thy ring.

¹² And when thou comest [*in*] early, if thou findest not all things eaten of Bel, we shall die by death, either Daniel *shall die*, that lied against us.

¹³ Soothly they trusted, [*or set at nought*], for they had made a privy [*or hid*] entering under the board, and by it they entered ever[*more*], and devoured those things.

¹⁴ Forsooth it was done, after that they went out, and the king setted meats before Bel, Daniel commanded to his children, *either servants*, and they brought ashes, and he riddled through all the temple, before the king. And they went out, and closed the door, and asealed with the ring of the king, and went forth [*or went away*].

¹⁵ But the priests entered in the night, by their custom, and the wives, and children of them, and ate and drank all things.

16 Forsooth the king rose most early, and Daniel with him.

17 And the king said, Daniel, whether the seals be safe? And he answered, King, *those be safe.*

18 And anon when they had opened the door, the king beheld the board, and he cried on high with a great voice, Bel, thou art great, and no guile is at [*or with*] thee.

19 And Daniel laughed, and he held the king, that he entered not within. And *Daniel* said, Lo! the pavement, perceive thou whose steps these be.

20 And the king said, I see steps of men, and of women, and of young children. And the king was wroth.

21 Then the king took [*or caught*] the priests, and the wives, and children of them; and they showed to him little privy doors, by which they entered, and wasted those things that were on the board.

22 Therefore the king killed them, and betook Bel into the power of Daniel, which destroyed that *Bel*, and his temple.

23 And a great dragon was in that place, and Babylonians worshipped it.

24 And the king said to Daniel, Lo! now thou mayest not say, that this is not a quick god [*or god living*]; therefore worship thou him.

25 And Daniel said to the king, I worship my Lord God, for he is God living. [*And Daniel said to the king, I worship the Lord my God, for he is living God.*]

26 But thou, king, give power to me, and I shall slay the dragon, without sword or staff. And the king said, I give to thee.

27 Therefore Daniel took pitch, and tallow [*or fatness*], and hairs, and seethed together; and he made gobbets, and gave into the mouth of the dragon, and the dragon was all-broken [*or burst*]. And Daniel said, Lo! whom ye worship.

28 And when Babylonians had heard this thing, they had indignation greatly; and they were gathered against the king, and said, The king is made a Jew; he destroyed Bel, and killed the dragon, and slew the priests.

29 And they said, when they were come [*or they came*] to the king, Betake thou [*or Give*] to us Daniel, that destroyed Bel, and killed the dragon; else we shall slay thee, and thine house.

30 Therefore the king saw, that they fell in on him greatly; and he was compelled by need, and he betook [*or gave*] Daniel to them.

31 Which sent him into the pit of lions, and he was there seven days.

32 Certainly seven lions were in the pit, and two bodies and two sheep were given to them each day. And then those were not given to them, that they should devour Daniel.

33 Forsooth Habakkuk, the prophet, was in Judea [*or Forsooth Habakkuk was a prophet in Judea*], and he had sodden pottage, and had set in loaves in a little pannier [*or vessel*]; and he went into the field, to bear to reapers.

³⁴ And the angel of the Lord said to Habakkuk, Bear thou the meat, which thou hast, into Babylon, to Daniel, which is in the pit of lions.

³⁵ And Habakkuk said, Lord, I saw not Babylon, and I knew [*or I know*] not the pit.

³⁶ And the angel of the Lord took him by his top, and bare him by the hair of his head; and set [*or put*] him in Babylon, on the pit, in the fierceness of his spirit.

³⁷ And Habakkuk cried, and said, Daniel, the servant of God, take thou the meat, that God hath sent to thee.

³⁸ And Daniel said, Lord God, thou hast mind on me, and hast not forsaken them that love thee.

³⁹ And Daniel rose, and ate; certainly the angel of the Lord restored Habakkuk anon in his place.

⁴⁰ Therefore the king came in the seventh day to bewail Daniel; and he came to the pit, and looked in, and lo! Daniel sitting in the midst of lions.

⁴¹ The king cried on high with great voice, and said, Lord God of Daniel, thou art great, [*or Great art thou, Lord God of Daniel*];

⁴² and *the king* drew him out of the pit. Certainly he sent into the pit them, that were cause of his perdition, and they were devoured in a moment before him.

⁴³ Then the king said, They that dwell in all the earth, dread the God of Daniel, for he is God living into worlds; he is deliverer, and Saviour [*or the saver*], doing miracles [*or signs*] and marvels in heaven and in earth, that delivered Daniel from the pit of lions.

Wycliffe's Bible with Modern Spelling English: Wycliffe's Bible Modern Spelling (with Deuterocanon)

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Language: English

Dialect: Archaic

Translation by: Terry Noble

Wycliffe's Bible with Modern Spelling, was made in response to requests from readers who wanted my Wycliffe's Old and New Testaments and Apocrypha in one volume. Printing limitations dictated the number of pages available to me and the letter size. In my previous books, Wycliffe's Bible, Wycliffe's Old Testament, Vols. 1 amp 2, Wycliffe's New Testament, and Wycliffe's Apocrypha, I have tens of thousands of rewritten verses, presented in parentheses "()", to provide help in comprehending the 14th century Middle English vocabulary and grammar. In this present volume, with space at a premium, those "helps" had to be eliminated, to make room for the text of the Apocrypha.

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2019-09-26

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 3 Mar 2023 from source files dated 10 Feb 2022

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