

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 spende in it (*or were spent upon 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 worshippest thou not Bel?

⁵ Which answered, and said to him, For I worship not idols made by hand, but God living *[or (the) living God]*, that made (*out*) of nought heaven and earth, and hath power of (*or over*) 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 (*made*) 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 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 (*their*) wives, and little children, *either servants*, and sons. 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 (*forth the*) meats, and meddle (*or mix the*) wine, and close thou the door, and aseal *it* with thy ring.

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

¹³ Soothly they trusted, for they had made a privy [*or an hid*] entering under the board (*or they had made a secret entrance under the table*), and by it they entered ever[*more*](*or repeatedly*), and devoured those things.

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

15 But the priests entered in the night, by their custom, and the wives, and (*the*) 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 (or they) be safe.*

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

19 And Daniel laughed, and he held the king, (*so*) that he entered not with-in. And *Daniel* said, Lo! the pavement, perceive thou whose steps these be.

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

21 Then the king took (*hold of*) the priests, and the wives, and (*the*) children of them; and they showed to him (*the*) little privy (*or secret*) doors, by which they entered, and wasted those things that were on the board (*or consumed those things that were on the table*).

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 (*or a large snake*) was (*also*) in that place, and (*the*) Babylonians worshipped it.

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

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

26 But thou, king, give power to me, and I shall slay the dragon (*or I will kill the snake*), without sword or staff. And the king said, I give (*leave*) to thee.

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

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

29 And they said, when they were come to the king, Betake thou [*or Give*] to us Daniel, that destroyed Bel, and killed [*or slew*] the dragon (*or the snake*); (*or*) 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 [*or into the lake of lions*], and he was there (*for*) 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, (*so*) that they should devour Daniel.

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

³⁴ And the angel of the Lord said to Habakkuk, Bear thou the meat (*or Take the meal*), which thou hast, into Babylon, to Daniel, which is in the pit of (*the*) lions.

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

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

³⁷ And Habakkuk cried, and said, Daniel, the servant of God, take thou the meat (*or the meal*), 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(*to*) his (*own*) place (*again*).

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

⁴¹ (*And*) The king cried on high with (*a*) great (*or a loud*) voice, and said, Lord God of Daniel, thou art great;

⁴² and *the king* drew him out of the pit. Certainly he sent into the pit them, that were (*the*) 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 (*or the living God forevermore*); he is (*the*) deliverer, and (*the*) Saviour, doing miracles and marvels in heaven and in (*or on the*) earth, that delivered Daniel from the pit of (*the*) lions.

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Language: English

Dialect: Archaic

Translation by: Terry Noble

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2019-09-25

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 11 Nov 2022 from source files dated 10 Feb 2022

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