

Daniel

(k) They were not only restored to their former authority, as prefects *over the works. ch. 2. v. 49.* but were also more advance, as this place insinuateth.

wit, of Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago, who hath sent his Angel, and hath delivered his servants that believed in him: and they changed the kings word, & delivered their bodies that they might not serve, and might not adore any god, except their own God.

96 By me therefore this decree is made, that every people, tribe, and tongue, whatsoever shall speak blasphemy against the God of Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago, he perish, and his house be wasted: for there is none other God, that can so save.

97 Then did the king (k) promote Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago in the province of Babylon.

98 Nabuchodonosor the king, to all peoples, nations, and tongues, that dwell in the whole earth, peace be multiplied unto you.

99 The high God hath wrought signs and marvelous things with me. It hath pleased me therefore to publish

100 his signs, because they are great: and his marvels, because they are strong: and his kingdom an Everlasting kingdom, & his power in generation and to generation.

Chapter 4

King Nabuchodonosor having another dream, telleth it to Daniel, demanding of him the interpretation: 16. who encouraged and warranted to speak freely, showeth that the king shall become like a beast in form seven years: 28. the same is confirmed by a voice from heaven: 30. and being fulfilled, he is at last restored to his own form, and state.

(a) It seemeth that Daniel inserted this particular history as the king in his own person and words reported it after his restoration It is also probable that the king had this dream about the 34. year of his reign. For he reigning in all 43. years, lived seven years among beasts into which state he fell one year after this dream, v. 26. and lived about a year more or less after his restoration.

1 I (a) Nabuchodonosor was quiet in my house, and flourishing in my palace.

2 I saw a dream that made me sore afraid: and my cogitations in my bed, and the visions of my head disturbed me.

3 And by me there was a decree set forth, that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought into my sight, and that they should show me the solution of the dream.

4 Then came in the soothsayers, magicians, Chaldees, and Diviners, and I told the dream in their sight: & the solution thereof they showed me not:

5 till their colleague Daniel came into my sight, whose name is Baltassar, according to the name of my God, who hath the spirit of the holy gods in himself: and I told the dream before him.

6 Baltassar prince of the soothsayers, because I know that thou hast the spirit of the holy gods in thee, and no secret is impossible to thee: tell thou the visions of my dreams, which I have seen, and the solution of them.

7 The vision of my head in my bed, I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof exceeding.

8 A great tree, and strong: and the height thereof touching the heaven: the sight thereof was even to the ends of all the earth.

9 The leaves thereof most fair, and the fruit thereof exceeding much: and the food of all things in it: under it dwelt cattle, and beasts, and in the boughs

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thereof conversed the fowls of heaven: and of it all flesh did eat.

10 I saw in the vision of my head upon my bed, & behold a watchman, and an holy one descended from heaven.

11 He cried mightily, and thus he said: Cut ye down the tree, & chop of the boughs thereof: shake of the leaves thereof, and scatter the fruits thereof: let the beasts fly that are under it, and the fowls from the boughs thereof.

12 But yet leave the spring of the roots thereof in the earth, and let it be tied with iron, and brazen band among the grass, that is without, and let it be dipped with the dew of heaven, and with wild beasts his portion in the grass of the earth.

(b) Seven times signify seven years, because all Ordinary Varieties of times are in one year.v

13 Let his heart be changed from human, & let the heart of a wild beast be given him: and let seven (b) times be changed over him.

14 In the sentence of the watchman is the decree, and the word of saints, and the petition, till the living know, that the high one ruleth in the kingdom of men; and to whom soever it shall please him, he will give it, & the basest man he will appoint over it.

15 This dream saw I Nabuchodonosor the king: thou therefore o Baltassar tell the interpretation quickly: because all the wise men of my kingdom can not declare the solution unto me: but thou canst, because the spirit of holy gods is in thee.

(c) No marvel that the prophet was troubled in mind being loath to declare the calamity which should fall unto the king, and yet must needs utter the truth.

16 Then Daniel, whose name was Baltassar, began secretly to think within himself as it were for one hour: & (c) his cogitations troubled him. But the king answering said: Baltassar, let not the dream and the interpretation thereof trouble thee. Baltassar answered, and said: My Lord, the dream be to them, that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof be thine enemies.

17 The tree which thou sawest high and strong, whose height reacheth to the heaven, and the sight thereof into all the earth:

18 and the bough thereof most fair, and the fruit thereof exceeding much, and the food of things in it, under it the beasts of the field inhabiting, & in the boughs thereof the fowls of heaven abiding:

(d) And therefore with mild words, wishing the king might escape the evil, which was decreed against him, he maketh his entrance to the true interpretation of the dream.

19 It is thou king, which art magnified, & become mighty: & thy greatness hath grown, and is come even to heaven, and thy power unto the ends of the earth. (d)

20 But in that the king saw a watchman, and an holy one descend from heaven, and say: Cut ye down the tree, and dissipate it, but leave the spring of the roots thereof in the earth, and let it be bound with iron and brass among the grass without, and let it be sprinkled with the dew of heaven, and let his fodder be with the wild beasts, till seven times be changed over him.

21 This is the interpretation of the sentence of the Highest, which is come upon my Lord the king.

22 They shall cast thee out from men, and with beasts and wild beasts shall thy habitation be, and grass thou shalt eat as an ox, & with the dew of heaven thou shalt be wet: seven times also shall be changed over thee, till thou know that the High one ruleth over the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

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(e) Gods threats being conditional that if sinners truly repent he will pardon all, or part of the punishment, the prophet proposeth the most sovereign remedy of Alms deeds that by works of mercy this sinful king, or any other sinner may procure the mercy of God. As in deed this king found mercy after some punishment: the prophet proposeth the sovereign remedy of Alms deeds, that by works of mercy, he might procure Gods mercy.

(f) Being restored to his wits he went up right, cut his hair & nails, & so appeared to himself as returned to his former figure or shape.

23 But whereas he commanded, that the spring of the roots thereof, that is, of the tree, should be left: thy kingdom shall remain to thee after thou shalt have known that power is heavenly.

24 Wherefore o king let me counsel thee, and (e) redeem thou thy sins with alms, & thine iniquities with the mercies of the poor: perhaps he will forgive thine offences.

25 all these things came upon Nabuchodonosor the: king.

26 After the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of Babylon.

27 And the king answered, & said: Is not this Babylon the great city, which I have built to be the house of the kingdom, in the strength of my power, and in the Glory of my beauty?

28 And when the word was yet in the kings mouth, a voice came down from heaven: To thee it is said Nabuchodonosor: Thy kingdom shall pass from thee,

29 and from men they shall cast thee out, and with beasts and wild beasts shall thy habitation be: grass as an ox shalt thou eat, and seven times shall be changed over thee till thou know that the High one ruleth in the kingdom of men, & to whom soever he will, he giveth it.

30 The self same hour was the word accomplished upon Nabuchodonosor, and he was cast away from among men, & as an ox did he eat grass, and with the dew of heaven his body was imbrued: till his hairs grew into the similitude of eagles, & his nails as it were of birds.

31 Therefore after the end of the days, I Nabuchodonosor lifted up mine eyes to heaven, and my sense was restored to me: and I blessed the Highest, and praised him that liveth forever, and glorified him: because his power is an Everlasting power, and his kingdom in generation and generation.

32 And all the inhabitants of the earth with him are reputed for nothing: for he doth according to his will, as well in the powers of heaven, as in the inhabitants of the earth: & there is none that can resist his hand, and say to him: Why didst thou it?

33 In the very same time did my sense return to me, & I came to the honor, and beauty of my kingdom: and my (f) figure returned to me: and my nobles, & my magistrates sought for me, and I was restored in my kingdom: and more ample magnificence was added to me.

34 Now therefore I Nabuchodonosor praise, and magnify, and glorify the king of heaven: because all his works are true, and his ways judgments, and them that walk in pride he can humble.

ANNOTATIONS

Chapter 4

Nabuchodonosor was not changed in substance; but became mad, and lived seven years like a beast.

13. *Let his heart be changed.*) In what manner king Nabuchodonosor was changed is hard to explicate. But omitting other opinions, the most probable and common is, that he was not deprived of his reasonable soul, nor the form and parts of his body substantially changed from the nature of a man: but he was distracted losing the use of reason, and in his own melancholy imagination and fantasy, thought that he was a beast. And therefore easily refused the conversation of men, and consorted himself

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with beasts; went naked; his hair growing very much, and covering all his body; his nails likewise extreme long; he went on his hands together with his feet, like four-footed beasts; did eat grass as an ox, putting his mouth to the ground, to shear and swallow it, the space of seven years. Then God restoring to him the use of reason, and inspiring him with grace, he lifted up his eyes to heaven (v. 31.) and in perfect sense blessed God, the Highest, and praised him; was again received, yea sought for by his nobles and magistrates: so was restored to his kingdom, and had more magnificence then before.

v. 13.

It is probable that he died shortly after his restoration.

And most like that he is eternally saved.

34. *Now therefore I Nabuchodonosor praise, magnify, and glorify God*) Albeit holy Scripture doth not report, when and how king Nabuchodonosor died, yet by this last thing written of him, it is very like he lived not long after his great Chastisement: for if he had, it is probable that Daniel would have written more of him, & that he being so fully converted to God, would have delivered Joachin king of Juda, out of prison (which his next successor Evilmerodach did. 4. Reg. 25. v. 27.) and all the Jews from captivity, if God had longer spared him life, he being now well affected towards them. And that he died in state of salvation, may with great reason be supposed, Seeing his repentance and conversion to God is so fully expressed in holy Scripture, and no mention that he fell again. Which is also the judgment of most learned writers. Namely of Josephus. *li. 10. Antiq.* Dorotheus in *Synopsi.* St. Epiphanius, in *vita Danielis.* St. Jerome. *epist. 7. ad Letam.* St. Augustine *epist. 122. ad Victoriam.* & *li. de predest. & gratia c. 15.* Where he compareth Pharao with Nabuchodonosor, and their *diverse ends*, by Gods grace moving the one to penance for his iniquity, the other willfully fighting against Gods merciful verity. as we have noted. *Exo. 7. pag. 174.*

Chapter 5

* After Nabuchodonosor, & before Baltassar, Evilmerodach reigned in Babylon,

who delivered Joachin king of Juda out of prison, and used him with great respect in the 37. year of the transmigration. 4. Reg. 25. There reigned also before Baltassar other two of another lineage, called Niglissar and Labosardach: as testify. *Euse. St. Jerome. St. Beda.* and others.

(a) The ruin of this Baltassar happened in the 17. and last year of his reign: when Daniel was near an hundred years old.

*King * Baltassar making a great banquet, with his nobles drink in the holy vessels, which were taken from the Temple of Jerusalem. 5. Fingers appear writing on the wall: 10. which only Daniel readeth, and interpreteth: 18. signifying the ruin of the king: 30. happening the same night.*

1 **BALTASSAR** (a) the king made a great feast to his nobles a thousand: and every one drank according to his age.

2 He commanded therefore now being drunk that the vessels of gold & silver, should be brought, which Nabuchodonosor his father had carried away out of the temple, that was in Jerusalem, that the king, and his Nobles might drink in them, and his wives, and concubines.

3 Then were the golden and silver vessels brought, which he had carried away out of the temple, that was in Jerusalem: and the king and his nobles drank in them, his wives and concubines.

4 They drank wine, and praised their gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, and of wood, and of stone.

5 In the very same hour there appeared fingers, as it were of the hand of a man, writing over against the candlestick in the utter part of the wall of the kings palace: and the king beheld the joints of the hand that wrote.

6 Then was the kings face changed, and his cogitations troubled him: and the junctures of his reins were loosed, and his knees were stricken one against the other.

7 The king therefore cried out mightily that they should bring in the magicians, Chaldees, and soothsayers. And the king speaking said to the wise men of