



Highlights from Psalms



Highlights from Daniel



# OLD TESTAMENT LESSONS

*Review*

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM  
DANIEL 2:31-37; EZEKIEL 26:7

- Nebuchadnezzar I—reigned c. 1121–1100 BC; not related to Nebuchadnezzar II
- Nabopolassar — 626–605 BC
- Nebuchadnezzar II — 605–562 BC; 2 Kings 24; Daniel 1–5





“I am Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the exalted prince, the favourite of the god Marduk, the beloved of the god Nabu, the arbiter, the possessor of wisdom, who reverences their lordship, the untiring governor who is constantly anxious for the maintenance of the shrines of Babylonia and Borsippa...By thy command, merciful Marduk, may the temple I have built endure for all time and may I be satisfied with its splendor.”

## Jehoiakim at his death with son, Jehoiachin



Jehoiakim was killed by Nebuchadnezzar during siege.

- Jehoiakim
- Jehoiachin or Jeconiah (1 Chronicles 3:16; Jeremiah 24:1) or Coniah (Jeremiah 22:28)
- 2 Kings 24:8—18 years old when he began to reign or 2 Chronicles 36:9

- ***Eight years old.*** This is obviously a scribal error. The Syriac, several versions of the LXX, and 2 Kings 24:8, read “eighteen.” Jehoiachin was married and already had five children in 592, five years after going to Babylon, as we know from cuneiform records excavated in Babylon.

- The parallel passage in 2 Chronicles 36:9 reads “eight years.” In that reference, however, the Syriac and several of the versions of the LXX read “eighteen.” Jehoiachin was not a child-king. When he was taken to Babylon he already had children (Jeremiah 22:28). Babylonian cuneiform documents of the year 592 BC also mention Jehoiachin and five of his sons. He is called Coniah, a shortened form of Jeconiah.

After a brief three-month reign, Jehoiachin surrendered Jerusalem to the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar II in 597 BCE to avoid the city's destruction. He was taken prisoner to Babylon and remained in captivity for 37 years.



- 605 BC: Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah during the reign of King Jehoiakim. He took a small group of royal and noble captives back to Babylon to assimilate them into his court. This group included the prophet **Daniel** and his companions.
- Daniel 1:1–2; 2 Kings 24:1–2

Kingdom  
of Israel  
fell to  
Assyrian  
Empire in  
722 BC.



- Nebuchadnezzar II didn't need to fight Assyria to control the land of old Israel because Babylon already had conquered the remains of the Assyrian state. Prior to Nebuchadnezzar's reign, his father Nabopolassar led a coalition with the Medes to crush the Assyrian Empire, destroying its capital of Nineveh in 612 BC and seizing its former territories, which included the Levant (eastern Mediterranean) and the land of Israel.

- By the time Nebuchadnezzar ascended to power, he fought the Egyptians to solidify his power over the region.
- The Assyrian Empire conquered the northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC, exiling the ten northern tribes. The southern Kingdom of Judah remained as a tributary state, paying heavy taxes to Assyria to avoid the same fate.
- The Babylonians and their allies completely dismantled the Assyrian Empire (612–609 BC), taking over its northern and western territories.

- Pharaoh Necho II of Egypt marched north to claim the weakened lands of the former Assyrian Empire in the Levant. Nebuchadnezzar intercepted the Egyptian forces at Carchemish, ousted Egypt from the region and established Babylon as the supreme power, giving Nebuchadnezzar undisputed control over all of Israel, but not over Judah.

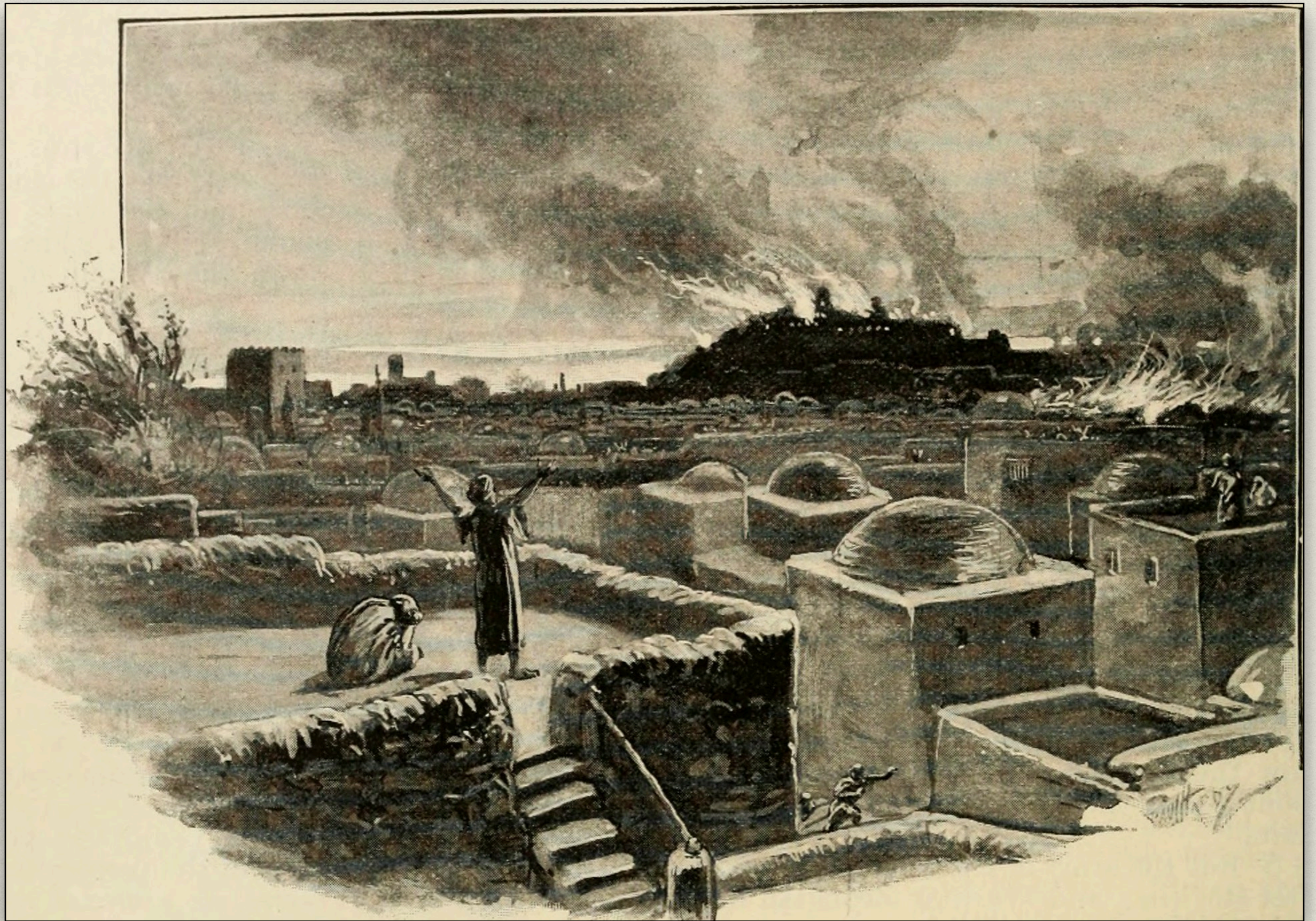
- So he turned his attention to the Kingdom of Judah. Because Judah repeatedly rebelled or allied with Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, ultimately destroying the Temple and exiling the population to Babylon.



- **605** BC: Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah during the reign of King Jehoiakim. He took a small group of royal and noble captives back to Babylon to assimilate them into his court. This group included the prophet **Daniel** and his companions.
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- 597 BC: Following a rebellion, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Babylonian tablets (the Babylonian Chronicles) pin the exact date of Jerusalem's surrender to March 16, 597 BC. Nebuchadnezzar looted the Temple, deposed King Jehoiachin, and exiled roughly 10,000 elite citizens, including the prophet **Ezekiel**.

- **586** BC: King Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon, leading to a two-year siege. In the summer of 586 or 587 BC), the Babylonians breached the walls. They burned Solomon's Temple, leveled Jerusalem, and forced the vast majority of the remaining population into exile.



- 582 BC: Mentioned in Jeremiah 52:30, a final small deportation took place five years after the fall of Jerusalem, likely triggered by the assassination of Gedaliah, the governor appointed by the Babylonians.

So, when Nebuchadnezzar said, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? (Daniel 4:30), you could understand from man’s point of view.



- He was a king of kings
- Daniel 2:37; Ezekiel 26:7

Exalted to the pinnacle of worldly honor, and acknowledged even by Inspiration as “a king of kings” (Ezekiel 26:7). Nebuchadnezzar nevertheless at times had ascribed to the favor of Jehovah the glory of his kingdom and the splendor of his reign. Such had been the case after his dream of the great image. His mind had been profoundly influenced by this vision and by the thought that the Babylonian Empire, universal though it was, was finally to fall, and other kingdoms were to bear sway, until at last all earthly powers were to be superseded by a kingdom set up by the God of heaven, which kingdom was never to be destroyed. (*PK 514.1*)

An idolater by birth and training, and at the head of an idolatrous people, he had nevertheless an innate sense of justice and right . . . it was given Nebuchadnezzar, after years of patient and wearing labor, to conquer Tyre; Egypt also fell a prey to his victorious armies; and as he added nation after nation to the Babylonian realm, he added more and more to his fame as the greatest ruler of the age.

*(PK 514.2)*

In the intervals between his wars of conquest he gave much thought to the strengthening and beautifying of his capital, until at length the city of Babylon became the chief glory of his kingdom, “the golden city,” “the praise of the whole earth.” His passion as a builder, and his signal success in making Babylon one of the wonders of the world, ministered to his pride . . . (*PK 515.1*)

In mercy God gave the king another dream, to warn him of his peril and of the snare that had been laid for his ruin. . . . (*PK 515.2*)

# Daniel 4:9–18

Then Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. . . . (Daniel 4:19)

*Astonied*—to be distressed, appalled, astonished, struck with dread or consternation; *SDA BC* even mentions embarrassment

To Daniel the meaning of the dream was plain, and its significance startled him. (*PK* 517.2)

Having faithfully interpreted the dream, Daniel urged the proud monarch to repent and turn to God, that **by rightdoing** he might avert the threatened calamity. “O king,” the prophet pleaded, “let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by **showing mercy to the poor**; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.” (*PK 518.2*)

Daniel 4:27

At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? (Daniel 4:29–30)

The God of heaven read the heart of the king and heard its whisperings of self gratulation. “While the word was in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: The kingdom is departed from thee. . . . (10LtMs, Ms 29, 1895, par. 20)

In a moment the reason that God had given him  
was taken away; the judgment that the king  
thought perfect, the wisdom on which he prided  
himself, was removed . . . (*PK 520.1*)

For seven years Nebuchadnezzar was an astonishment to all his subjects; for seven years he was humbled before all the world. Then his reason was restored and, looking up in humility to the God of heaven, he recognized the divine hand in his chastisement. In a public proclamation he acknowledged his guilt and the great mercy of God in his restoration. (*PK 520.2*)

The once proud monarch had become a humble child of God; the tyrannical, overbearing ruler, a wise and compassionate king. He who had defied and blasphemed the God of heaven, now acknowledged the power of the Most High and earnestly sought to promote the fear of Jehovah and the happiness of his subjects. Under the rebuke of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, Nebuchadnezzar had learned at last the lesson which all rulers need to learn—that **true greatness consists in true goodness**. He acknowledged Jehovah as the living God, saying, “I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.” (*PK* 521.2)

Under the rebuke of God, his proud heart was humbled. He acknowledged Jehovah as the living God: Come, all ye that fear God, and I will make known what he hath done for my soul. I have seen the greatness, I have tasted the goodness of God. It is now my wish that all the people of my realm shall learn what I have learned, that the God that they should worship is no golden image, but He who made the heavens and the earth. (10LtMs, *Ms 29, 1895*, par. 27)

Thus the king upon the Babylonian throne became a witness for God. He presents himself as a living epistle, giving his testimony, warm and eloquent from a grateful heart, that was partaking of the mercy and grace and righteousness and peace of the divine nature. ( 10LtMs, *Ms 29, 1895, par. 29*)

God's purpose that the greatest kingdom in the world should show forth His praise was now fulfilled. This public proclamation, in which Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the mercy and goodness and authority of God, was the last act of his life recorded in sacred history. (*PK 521.3*)

The last dream which God gave to Nebuchadnezzar, and the experience of the king in connection with it, contain lessons of vital importance to all those who are connected with the work of God. (10LtMs, *Ms 29, 1895*, par. 13)

We have here the workings of the great I AM to change even the heart of an heathen king. There is a Watcher just as really taking cognizance of all the works of the children of men, but in a special sense of those who are to represent God by receiving His sacred truth into the heart and revealing it to the world. The workers in our institutions are **far more accountable** than was the king of Babylon, for his course of action is laid out before us, and we may learn therefrom the lesson God desires to teach us. (10LtMs, *Ms 29, 1895*, par. 16)

There are those who need to learn that the heavenly universe is acquainted with all the works of the children of men. I pray that the Lord God of Israel may impress it upon our responsible men that if they turn from His word to their human ideas and plans, they are without excuse. A spirit has been coming in that God abominates—a spirit of selfishness, self-exaltation, pomposity. It is time that there was a change in the program. He that sitteth in the heavens requires that a different spirit shall control the proceedings of councils and committees. The principles practiced are not only detrimental to all within the sphere of their action, but they will lead to development of character so objectionable that its possessor cannot find a place among the redeemed. **In all your assemblies there is present a Watcher who will not long bear with the perversity of men that have had so great light and so great opportunities.** (10LtMs, Ms 29, 1895, par. 17)

# Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah

By the deliverance of His faithful servants, the Lord declared that He takes His stand with the oppressed, and rebukes all earthly powers that rebel against the authority of Heaven. The three Hebrews declared to the whole nation of Babylon their faith in Him whom they worshiped. They relied on God. **In the hour of their trial they remembered the promise**, “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” Isaiah 43:2. And in a marvelous manner their faith in the living Word had been honored in the sight of all. The tidings of their wonderful deliverance were carried to many countries by the representatives of the different nations that had been invited by Nebuchadnezzar to the dedication. Through the faithfulness of His children, God was glorified in all the earth. (*PK 511.1*)

Important are the lessons to be learned from the experience of the Hebrew youth on the plain of Dura. In this our day, many of God's servants, though innocent of wrongdoing, will be given over to suffer humiliation and abuse at the hands of those who, inspired by Satan, are filled with envy and religious bigotry. Especially will the wrath of man be aroused against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; and at last a universal decree will denounce these as deserving of death. (*PK 512.1*)

The season of distress before God's people will call for a faith that will not falter. His children must make it manifest that He is the only object of their worship, and that no consideration, not even that of life itself, can induce them to make the least concession to false worship. To the loyal heart the commands of sinful, finite men will sink into insignificance beside the word of the eternal God. Truth will be obeyed though the result be imprisonment or exile or death. (*PK 512.2*)

As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble—trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him. (*PK 513.1*)