

# A Band of Iron and Bronze

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In King Nebuchadnezzar's second dream, he is compared to a tree of great height (Dan. 4:11-12; cf. 4:20-22). This great height symbolized his position of responsibility over his fellow citizens. However instead of serving them, Daniel's interpretation of the dream and subsequent counsel, confirmed that Nebuchadnezzar exploited them and was proud of it,

Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being <sup>1</sup>righteous, and your <sup>2</sup>iniquities <sup>3</sup>**by showing mercy to the poor**. Perhaps there **may be** a lengthening of your prosperity (Dan. 4:27; ref. <sup>1</sup>Ps. 119:172b; <sup>2</sup>1Jn. 3:4; <sup>3</sup>Isa. 14:16-17; Ed. notes in parentheses; reference numbers and emphasis added; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

Pride is something that Almighty God hates, and will deal with through correction at the judgment, because it prevents an individual's spiritual growth and righteous conduct (Ps. 10:2, 4; 101:5b, Prov. 6:17a, 8:13). It was after Nebuchadnezzar finally acknowledged the serious problem he had with "pride" that repentance was possible. It is only in this humble state of mind that he was capable of acknowledging the sovereignty of Almighty God and His great works,

Now (following repentance) I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And **those who walk in pride He is able to abase** (humble) (Dan. 4:37; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In Nebuchadnezzar's first dream, he was given authority over a kingdom that would be superior to all that followed,

You, O king (Nebuchadnezzar), are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; <sup>38</sup>and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all – you are this head of gold (Dan. 2:37-38; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Every kingdom that followed after Nebuchadnezzar's would be inferior, and eventually all these kingdoms would be superseded by the kingdom of Almighty God,

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break (crush) in pieces and consume (put an end to) all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever (Dan. 2:44; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Explaining the meaning of the events at the end of this dream, to a king who would not be alive at the time of its fulfillment, served no purpose. However, if it was meant to reveal a future time of correction and judgment involving fallen angelic beings, then it would make more sense because they would still be alive and the information would be relevant to them,

...the great God has made known to the king (of Babylon) what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure (Dan. 2:45b; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Going back to Nebuchadnezzar's second dream, a large tree was cut down and only a stump

remained in the ground. Important information is revealed in this symbolic language because a tree is often used to describe an angel (a.k.a. a spirit-being; cf. Eze. 31:16-18). Using this principle, the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream would represent a king in the spirit realm, who rules over a spiritual kingdom named Babylon. In the following text, an angelic being, referred to as a watcher (a holy one who is awake; see Dan. 4:13), makes the following proclamation against Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom,

He cried aloud and said thus: '**Chop down the tree** and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, and the birds from its branches' (Dan. 4:14; emphasis added).

In another prophecy, a holy angel cried aloud at the fall of a future kingdom named Babylon, but it is not a physical place because demons inhabit it,

And he cried with a loud voice, saying, '**Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons**, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! <sup>3</sup>For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance (strengths) of her luxury (Rev. 18:2-3; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Just as Nebuchadnezzar became wealthy and powerful by exploiting his subjects, so the ruler of spiritual Babylon exalts and enriches himself at the expense of others. In fact, he has created the environment where everyone is spiritually bankrupt regarding the correct understanding of God's word (Rev. 12:9). Therefore, Nebuchadnezzar is a "type" of Satan who rules over the spiritual kingdom of Babylon. It is the ways and values of this kingdom that God's servants are to avoid,

And I (John) heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues' (Rev. 18:4; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Going back to the tree that is chopped down in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, at a certain point it is bound with a band of iron and bronze,

Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze... (Dan. 4:15a).

It is important to note that this stump is compared to a "man" who becomes progressively more "base" in his behavior,

...Let it (the stump) be wet with the dew of heaven, and let **him** graze with the beasts on the grass of the earth. <sup>16</sup>**Let his heart be changed from that of a man, let him be given the heart of an animal**, and let seven times pass over him (Dan. 4:15b-16; cf. Eze. 28:2-8; Ed. note in parenthesis, emphasis added).

It is no coincidence that Satan is compared to a man because during his future judgment he will be treated the same as every human being who is resurrected at the end of Christ's millennial rule on earth (cf. Rev. 20:5-6),

Those who see you (Satan during his future judgment) will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: '**Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms**, <sup>17</sup>Who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who would not release the house of his prisoners (both human and fallen host) (Isa. 14:16-17; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In a number of scriptures, Satan is compared to human tyrants (Eze. 28:1), but he is distinguished from them when it comes to his goals and ambitions. In other words, he actually wants to misuse the wisdom that God gave him, with the goal of becoming like Almighty God, having authority over others,

I (Satan) will ascend above the heights of the clouds, **I will be like the Most High** (Almighty God) (Isa. 14:14; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Because your heart is lifted up (in pride), and you say, 'I am a god (*elohim*, SHD 430; a spirit-being), I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the seas (see study: The Seas and Those Who Dwell in Them),' Yet you are a man, and not a god, though **you set your heart as the heart of a god** <sup>3</sup>Behold you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that can be hidden from you! <sup>4</sup>With your wisdom and your understanding you have gained riches for yourself, and gathered gold and silver into your treasuries (see study: Copies of Things in the Heavens); <sup>5</sup>**By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, and your heart is lifted up because of your riches** (Eze. 28:2-5; cf. Rev. 18:9-20; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Satan's "trading activities" will be brought to an end in the future when a mighty angel intervenes to prevent him from conducting "business as usual",

Then I (John) saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup>**He laid hold of the dragon**, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, **and bound him for a thousand years** (Rev. 20:1-2; Ed. notes in parenthesis; emphasis added).

This "binding" of Satan was prophesied in Daniel's account of the tree stump that was bound with a band of iron and bronze (Dan. 4:15). By combining the symbolism in Revelation 20:1-2 with Daniel 4:15, it is apparent that Satan will be restrained from influencing mankind and the fallen host for a thousand years (cf. Rev. 20:3). According to the following scripture, it is no coincidence that God used a band of iron and bronze to picture Satan's future state,

They are all stubborn rebels, walking as slanderers. **They are bronze and iron**. They are all corrupters (Jer. 6:28; emphasis added).

In other words, Satan and his followers, because of their stubborn refusal to obey God's word combined with their habit of slandering and misrepresenting it, are pictured as being prevented from any spiritual growth. Consequently, they are corrupters of the truth. Upon Christ's return, they will be unable to continue their propaganda which has influenced the attitudes of mankind since the time of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:1-13).

In today's metallurgy, C194 is a high performance alloy composed of iron and copper (a primary component of bronze) with high tensile strength. Again, this strength is used in God's figurative language to depict a stubborn refusal to obey His word. Therefore, it is not positive. God applies this figurative language to describe the stubbornness of ancient Israel who were influenced by Satan,

Because I knew that you were obstinate, and **your neck was an iron sinew, and your brow bronze** (Isa. 48:4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

However, the possibility of changing from this stubbornness is still possible because the tree stump mentioned in Daniel's writings had dew around it, which pictured its ability to remain alive,

...Let it (the tree stump) be wet with the dew of heaven... (Dan. 4:15b; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Any tree stump that still has access to moisture can remain alive, and once any form of restraint is removed it can produce new growth,

For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its tender shoots will not cease. <sup>8</sup>Though its root may grow old in the earth, and its stump may die in the ground, <sup>9</sup>Yet at the scent of water it will bud and bring forth branches like a plant (Job 14:7-9).

So the possibility remains that even Satan can repent of his sins and, as the old stump that represented his sinful way of living dies, new growth can occur as a result of his repentance and the action of God's Holy Spirit working in him (see study: The Tree of Life and River of Living Water). To state that Almighty God is not capable of leading the most stubborn individual to correction and repentance is limiting His power, mercy, and deep parental love for his creation. It also demonstrates a lack of understanding regarding some of Christ's parables dealing with this issue (Lk. 15:4-7; 11-32). It is God's will that everyone, including Satan and the fallen host, repent and be part of His family,

**The Lord is** not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance** (2Pet. 3:9; cf. Eze. 33:11; emphasis added).

For we will surely die and become like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away a life; but **He devises means, so that His banished ones are not expelled** (cast out) **from Him** (2Sam. 14:14; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Almighty God allows everyone the freedom to choose His way of living versus the way that mankind has been living for thousands of years under Satan's influence (Dt. 30:19). However, at some point in the future a final choice must be made between everlasting life and ceasing to exist permanently. When Satan has to face this reality, he will be sobered into considering the consequences of doing things his way versus the positive results of living in accordance with God's law and commandments as witnessed during Christ's millennial rule on earth. Ironically, Satan understands that anyone facing everlasting death will be moved to this serious introspection,

So Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life' (Job 2:4).

When Satan reaches this juncture, he will have his last opportunity to "figuratively" remove the band of iron and bronze, which he is responsible for placing on himself by his stubborn refusal to obey God's word.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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