

Daniel

translated by Charles W. Kennedy

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In Jerusalem, as I have heard, the Hebrews prospered, dispensing treasure and holding kingly sway, as well was meet, when by the might of God the host and all the battle legion were given into Moses' hand, and in a multitude they got them forth from Egypt. That was a valiant race so long as they might rule their realm and sway their cities! As long as they kept the covenant of their fathers, great was their prosperity!

And God, the Warden of the heavenly kingdom, the Holy Lord, the Prince of glory, the Lord of every creature, watched over them, and gave them strength and courage, so that in war they conquered many nations who rose against them, until at last pride came upon them at their wine-feasts, drunken thoughts and devilish deeds, and they forsook the teachings of their law, and the might of God. So should no man sunder his soul's love from God.

Then I beheld that nation walking in ways of error, the tribe of Israel following after sin, and doing evil. That was a grief to God! The Warden of the heavenly kingdom oft sent His holy prophets, proclaiming knowledge to the people, and wisdom to the host. A little time they trusted in His counsels, till longing for the joys of earth defrauded them of lasting wisdom, and in the end they turned them from the laws of God, and chose the Devil's craft.

Then the Lord became displeased and angered with that people whom He had prospered. To them, a wandering folk, who once were dearest of mankind to God, dearest of all peoples and best loved of the Lord, He had showed a highway to their lofty city and their native land, where Salem stood, walled round about and girt with battlements.

Thither the wise men, the Chaldean people, came up against the city within whose walls their wealth was stored. A host rose up to smite them, a great army, eager for deeds of blood. Nebuchadnezzar, the lord of men and prince of Babylon, stirred up strife against them in his city. In enmity he searched the thoughts of his heart how he most easily could smite the Israelites and take them captive. From south and north he mustered savage legions, faring westward with a band of heathen princes against that lofty town. The rulers of Israel prospered as long as the Lord would let them!

Then, as I have heard, these mortal foes, a host of unbelievers, sacked their city. From Solomon's temple, that glorious building, they took red gold and jewels and silver. They plundered the treasure under the walls of stone, all such as those earls possessed, till they had razed and wasted every stronghold which stood for a protection to that people. They carried off as spoil the treasure of princes, as much as was found there, cattle and men; and so returned, with great possessions, over the eastern roads, leading the tribe of Israel, a countless host, on a long journey unto Babylon, into the power of heathen judges. And Nebuchadnezzar showed no pity on the tribe of Israel, but made them subject unto him to be his slaves, all such as had escaped the sword. And he sent a great host of his thanes into the west to take possession of their kingdom and their wasted realm, after the Hebrews.

He bade his prefects seek among the wretched remnant of the tribe of Israel which of the young men they had brought there were wisest in the books of the law. He wished the youths to grow in knowledge, that they might teach him wisdom, but not at all because he could or would be mindful to thank God for all the gifts which He had given him to his comfort.

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And they found three wise and noble youths, devout and young, and with the fear of God. One was Hananiah; the second, Azariah; the third was Mishael, chosen of the Lord. Stout of heart and thoughtful-minded the young men came before the king, where the heathen ruler sat rejoicing in his splendour in the city of the Chaldeans. And the Hebrew men with holy hearts spake words of wisdom and great learning unto the proud prince. Then the lord of Babylon, the haughty king, bade his thanes and princes on their lives see to it that the three youths knew no lack of food or raiment all their life long.

Now the famous lord of Babylon was great and glorious over all the earth, and terrible to the sons of men. He lived in insolence and heeded not the law. And there came to the great king in his slumber, when the prince had gone to his rest, a terrible dream that hovered about his heart, how wondrously the world was wrought, unlike for men, until the world's redemption. Truth was revealed as he slumbered, that there would come a bitter end to every rule and to the joys of earth.

Then the wolf-hearted lord of Babylon awoke from his wine-flushed slumber. His heart was not blithe; but a fear was upon him, and dread of the dream. Yet he could not recall what the vision had been. And he summoned his people, all such as were skilled in magic, and asked the men so gathered what his dream had been, while men lay sleeping. He was shaken with terror and knew no beginning nor word of the dream; but he bade them tell it to him. Troubled, the sorcerers answered (for wisdom was not given them to tell his dream unto the king):

"How may we divine so secret a thing in thy soul, O king! how thy dream hath run, or knowledge come to thee of Fate's decrees, except thou tell us first the beginning of thy dream?"

And the wolf-hearted king was vexed, and answered his wise men:

"Ye were not so wise above all men as ye told me, saying ye knew my fate as it should fall, or I should find it in the future, nor do ye know the dream that bringeth wisdom before this people. Ye shall die the death except I know the import of the dream that lieth heavy on my heart."

But the company there gathered might not divine or search out knowledge, for it was denied them to tell the king his dream or the mysteries of fate, until Daniel, the prophet, wise and righteous, and beloved of God, came to the palace to interpret the vision. He had pre-eminence among that wretched remnant who needs must serve the heathen king. God gave him grace from heaven through the communion of the Holy Spirit; and an angel of the Lord rehearsed to him all the dream, even as the king had dreamed it.

Then went Daniel at the dawn of day to tell the dream unto his lord, recounting wisely the decrees of fate; and soon the haughty king knew all the dream, its end and its beginning, that he had dreamed. And Daniel had great honour and reward in Babylon among the scribes, after he showed the dream unto the king which the prince of Babylon had not been able to remember because of his sins. Yet could not Daniel bring him to believe in the might of God; but he began to build an idol in the plain which men called Dura, which was in the land of the mighty Babylonians. The city-warden, the ruler of the realm, reared an idol before men, a golden image displeasing unto God; he was not wise, but redeless, reckless, heeding not the right...

The warriors listened; and when the sound of the voice of the trumpet came to the city dwellers, the heathen people fell upon their knees before the image, and bowed them down before the idol, and worshipped it, knowing no better wisdom. Wickedness they wrought and sin, with hearts perverted, even as their king. As their lord before them, the people turned to folly. Grim the reward that came on him thereafter! For he had sinned.

Now there were three men of Israel in the city of the king who would not heed their lord's decree, nor offer up their prayers unto the idol, though trumpets sang aloud among the host. They were of the stock of Abraham's children, faithful men who served Almighty God, the Everlasting Lord in heaven above. The royal youths gave men to know they would not have or hold the golden image as a god, but only the Great King, Shepherd of souls,

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who granted them His grace. Oft they said boldly that they recked naught of the idol, nor could the leader of the heathen people constrain them unto prayer, nor compel them to go before the golden image which he had set up as a god. These thanes said unto their lord that this was their resolve: that they were subject to a higher power in this lofty city, "nor will we ever work idolatry, nor worship the image which thou hast made to be thy god."

Then the prince of Babylon was angered with them, and in wrath gave them savage answer: grimly said that they should quickly worship, or suffer pain and torture, the cruel surge of flame, except they sought protection of that worst of demons, the golden image which he had made his god. Yet would the youths not hearken in their hearts unto his heathen counsels. They were resolved to keep the law of God and not forsake the Lord of hosts, lest that their virtue turn to heathen folly.

They had no longing to seek shelter with false gods, though bitter the death proclaimed!

Then the fierce king was moved to anger, and bade them kindle a furnace to torture the youths to death, because they withstood his will.

The furnace was heated, as fiercely as might be, with cruel flames of fire.

And the lord of Babylon, savage and grim, assembled the people, and bade his servants bind the prophets of God, and cast the young men in the flames. But He was ready who wrought them help! Though the prince so fiercely thrust them into the heart of the flame, yet a mighty messenger of God preserved their lives, and brought them help from heaven, as many learned. From heaven above the Gracious Lord of men sent unto them His Holy Spirit. An angel passed within the furnace, wherein they suffered torment, and covered the noble youths with sheltering arms under the roof of fire. And the heat of the quivering flame could not mar their beauty; but God preserved them.

Then the heart of the heathen prince was hardened; he bade them quickly be burned with fire. The flame rose high, the furnace was heated; through and through the iron glowed. Many a slave cast wood therein according to command. Brands they bore to the ruddy blaze. The ruthless king would fain have built an iron wall about those righteous men, but the flame passed over them, beloved of God, and with joy slew more than was meet.

The flame passed by the holy men and fell upon their heathen foes.

The youths were blithe of heart! Round about the furnace burned the slaves; the fire took hold upon those evil men to their hurt, and the prince of Babylon beheld it. Blithe were the Hebrew earls, praying to God with zeal and gladness in the furnace, offering their accustomed praise, because their lives were spared. With joyful hearts they worshipped God, in whose protection the fierce heat of the flame was turned away. The noble youths were sheltered from the flames' assault, and suffered naught of evil. The roaring furnace was no more grievous unto them than the shining of the sun. The fire harmed them not, but in their hour of danger the flames passed over them, and fell on those who did them evil. The heathen slaves departed from the holy youths. And the beauty of those cursed men was lessened, whoso had rejoiced in that work!

Now when the haughty king beheld how in that torture a miracle was come to pass, and believed his senses, it seemed to him a wondrous thing. The righteous men, all three ... were walking unharmed in the fiery furnace, and one was seen there walking with them, an angel of Almighty God. No whit of harm had come upon them, but within the furnace it was most like as when in the summer season the sun shineth, and the dew-fall cometh at dawn, scattered by the wind. It was the God of glory who saved them from that peril.

Then in the hot flame the holy Azariah, eager-hearted, sang an inspired hymn. The sinless man praised God and spake this word:

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"O Lord of all! Thy might is strong to save! Excellent is Thy name in all the earth, sublime and great in glory! Thy laws are always sure and just and mighty, even as Thou art mighty. . . . Wise and righteous is Thy will, O Lord of heaven! O God of spirits, grant us help and favour! Save us, O Holy Lord! Wrapped in flame, we pray Thee for Thy mercy on our woe, our thraldom and humiliation.

"As we have wrought, so hath it come to pass. Our fathers also, city-dwellers, in pride have sinned, and broken Thy commandments, and scorned a holy life. We are scattered over all the spacious earth and driven asunder, cast out from grace. In many lands and under many peoples our life is infamous and vile, and we are subject to the worst of earthly kings, and captive to grim-hearted men; in heathen lands we suffer thraldom.

"Thanks be to Thee, O Lord of hosts! that Thou hast laid this punishment upon us. Forsake us not, O Lord Eternal, for Thy mercy's sake which men attribute unto Thee, and for the covenant, O Lord of glory, Shaper of spirits, Saviour of men! which Thou didst give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Thou didst promise them in days of old that Thou wouldest bless their seed, and that a mighty nation should be born of them, a race to be exalted as the stars of heaven that trace their wandering courses even to the strand of ocean, and the sands of the sea-shore that form the foundations of the deep throughout the salt sea; even so should they be numberless for untold years. Fulfil Thine ancient promise now, though few are living! Show forth Thy glory and Thy word upon us! Make known Thy strength and power, that the Chaldean race and many nations living heathen lives may learn Thy glory under heaven, and know Thou only art Eternal God, Wielder of victory, Lord of hosts and all creation, the Righteous God."

So the holy men praised the loving-kindness of the Lord, rehearsing the strength of His might. Then was a gleaming angel sent from heaven above with shining face and clothed in glory, who came to comfort and deliver them with loving favour. Holy and heavenly bright, he cast aside the blaze of the hot flame; with mighty strength he swept away and quenched the flame of fire so that their bodies were not harmed a whit.

But in his wrath he hurled the fire upon their foes, because of their deeds of evil.

Then in the furnace, when the angel came, the air was cool and pleasant, most like the weather in the summer season, when rain falleth during the day and warm showers from the clouds. As is the best of weather, so was it in the furnace for their comfort through the holy might of God. The burning flame was quenched and scattered where Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, with brave hearts, were walking in the furnace, and the angel with them who preserved their lives, who was the fourth. Devout of heart, the three youths praised the Lord, and called upon the sons of Israel and all created things of earth to bless the Everlasting God, the Lord of nations. With understanding hearts they spake with one accord:

"O let the beauty of the world, and all Thy works, bless Thee, our Gracious Father, the heavens and all the angels, and the shining waters!

Let all, who in Thy great creation dwell in heavenly glory, bless the Lord of might! Let all things made, the shining orbs that circle through the heavens, the sun and moon, praise Thee in their degree. Let the stars of heaven, and dew and the fierce storm, praise Thee. O let the souls of men bless the Lord of might! Let burning fire and radiant summer praise Thee. Let night and day and all lands, light and darkness, heat and cold, praise Thee in their degree. Let frost and snow and wintry weather and the flying clouds bless the Lord of might! Let the swift, shining lightnings bless Thee! Let all the earth, the hills and plains and lofty mountains, the salt sea-waves and ocean, and the welling springs, praise the Everlasting God, the Righteous Lord! Let the whales, and the birds of the air that fly in the heavens praise Thee. Let all that move in the waters, wild beasts and all cattle, bless Thy name! Let all men praise Thee, yea! let Israel bless the Lord, who giveth all good things. Let holy men of heart, the spirits and souls of the righteous, praise the Everlasting God, the Lord of life, who giveth a reward to all. Let Hananiah and Azariah and Mishael praise the Lord! We worship Thee and bless Thee, Lord of men, Almighty Father, and Thee, True Son of God, Saviour of souls and Helper of mankind, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, the God of

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wisdom. We praise Thee, Holy Lord, and worship Thee with prayer.

Blessed art Thou, and adorned with holy might for ever, above the world's roof reigning King of heaven, and Lord of life in every land."

Then Nebuchadnezzar, the lord of that people, spake unto the princes who stood nigh unto him and said: "Ye beheld, my princes, how we cast three men to a fiery death in the blazing flames. And now, in truth, I see four men therein, except my sense deceive me."

Then spake a counsellor of the king, wise of heart and prudent of speech: "This is some marvel which we behold with our eyes. Bethink thee now, my lord, of what is fitting. Know who it is hath showed this grace upon the youths. They worship One Eternal God, and call on Him with zeal by every name. With eager words they praise His Majesty, and say that He alone is God Almighty, Wise King of glory, of earth and heaven. Call these men forth from out the furnace, prince of the Chaldeans! In no wise is it well that they should linger in that torture longer than thou hast need."

Then the king bade the young men come before him. Boldly the noble youths obeyed his word and came as they were bidden. The young men rose and went before the heathen king. Their fetters were burned away and the bonds of the king which were laid upon them, but their bodies were saved from harm. For their beauty was no wise injured, nor was any harm come upon their garments, nor their hair singed by the fire, but in God's protection they came forth gladly from that gruesome horror, wise of heart and favoured by the Holy Ghost.

Then the angel, a faithful servant to the Holy Lord, departed up to seek eternal bliss on the high roof of the heavenly kingdom. And by that marvel he had honoured those who had deserved it. The young men praised the Lord before the heathen host, exhorting them with words of truth, rehearsing many truthful tokens before the king, until he too believed this was a God of wonders who freed them from the darkness.

And the mighty lord of Babylon, the haughty king, decreed among his people that he was guilty unto death whoso denied this was a glorious God of might who freed them from that death. He gave back unto God the remnants of His captive people and granted favour to his olden foes.

And their prosperity in Babylon was great and their fame was known throughout the nation, after they endured that trial by fire, and obeyed their Lord. Mighty were their counsels after God, the Holy Warden of the heavenly kingdom, had shielded them from harm.

Then, as I have hoard, when the lord of Babylon perceived the marvel that was come to pass within the flames, he was fain to know how the youths had passed through the blaze of fire, and overwon the terror of the heated furnace and the flames, so that the fury of the burning brands and raging furnace had wrought God's prophets naught of harm, but His defence had shielded them against that fearful peril.

And the prince commanded a council, and summoned his people, and there, before the multitude so gathered, rehearsed the event as it had come to pass, and the miracle of God made known upon the youths:

"Consider now the holy might and wondrous works of God. We saw how He shielded the young men in the furnace from death and the leaping flames, because they served Him. He only is the Lord, Eternal and Almighty, who gives them glory and abundant weal who preach His gospel. And He reveals Himself by many a wonder to holy hearts who seek His favour. It is well known that Daniel showed me the interpretation of a secret dream, which formerly perplexed the minds of many men among my people, because Almighty God had given him an understanding spirit in his heart, and strength of wisdom."

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So spake the leader of the host, the lord of Babylon, when he perceived the miracle and God's clear token. And yet he wrought no whit the better; pride ruled the prince. His heart was insolent and the thoughts of his heart were thoughts of pride, more than was meet, until the Lord Almighty humbled him, as He humbleth many who walk with arrogance.

Now a dream came unto Nebuchadnezzar in his sleep and troubled him. It seemed to him that there stood a tree upon the earth, wondrous fair, deeply rooted and gleaming with fruit. Nor was it like to other trees, but it towered unto the stars of heaven, so that it overshadowed the regions of the world and all the earth with its boughs and branches, even unto the shores of the sea. And as he gazed it seemed to him that the tree made shelter for the wild beasts, and that it held food for them all, and likewise that the birds of the air found sustenance in the fruit of the tree. And it seemed to him that an angel descended from the heavens, and spake with a loud voice, commanding the tree to be cut down, and the wild beasts and the birds to flee away, when its fall should come. And he bade that its fruit be cut off and its branches and boughs, but that the roots of the tree should abide fast in the earth as a token, until green shoots should spring again when God granted. And he bade bind the mighty tree with brazen fetters and fetters of iron, and thus bound cast it into torment, that his heart might know that a mightier than he had power of correction, against whom he might not prevail.

Then the earthly king awoke from his slumber, and his dream was ended. But fear of it was upon him, and terror of the vision which God had sent him. And the haughty king bade summon his people together, and the leaders of the people, and asked them all the import of his dream, in no wise thinking that they knew; but he made trial of them how they would answer. Then Daniel, the prophet of God, was called unto judgment, and the Holy Ghost was sent to him from heaven to strengthen his heart. In him the lord of men perceived an understanding spirit and depth of counsel, strength of wisdom, words of judgment.

And once again he showed forth many a wonder, the mighty works of God, before the eyes of men.

Then the proud, heathen leader of the host began to tell his fearful dream, and all the horror of the vision that had vexed him, and bade him tell the import of this secret thing, bidding him speak in holy words and search his heart to tell with truth the meaning of the tree which he saw gleaming, and declare to him the decrees of fate. Then he fell silent. Yet Daniel clearly saw in the assembly that his prince, the lord of men, was guilty before God. The prophet paused; then God's herald, skilled in the law, made answer to the king:

"This O prince of men, is no little wonder, which thou hast seen in thy dream, a tree as high as heaven, and the holy words, wrathful and full of terror, which the angel spake that the tree should be stripped of its branches and fall, where formerly it stood fast, lying joyless with the beasts, abiding in a desert place, its roots to remain fast in the earth in stillness for a season where it stood, as the Voice declared, and then after seven years to receive increase again! So shall thy fortune be brought low! As the tree grew high unto heaven so art thou lord and ruler over all the dwellers of earth, and there is none on earth to withstand thee save God alone. He shall cut thee off from thy kingdom and drive thee into exile without friends, and thy heart shall be changed so that there shall be no thought in thy heart of worldly joys, nor any reason in thy mind save the ways of the wild beasts, but thou shalt live a long time in the forest ranging with the deer. Thou shalt have no food save the grass of the field, nor any fixed abiding-place, but the showers of rain shall drench thee and harass thee even as the wild beasts, until after seven winters thou shalt believe there is One God for all mankind, a Lord and Ruler dwelling in the heavens.

"Yet is it pleasing unto me that the roots remained fixed in the earth, as the Voice declared, and after seven seasons received increase. So shall thy kingdom stand unharmed of men until thou come again. Take now, my lord, firm counsel in thy heart; give alms; defend the needy, and make atonement before God, ere yet the hour cometh when He shall drive thee from thine earthly kingdom. Oft for many peoples God abateth pain and woe, if they but earnestly repent them of their sins, ere His avenging wrath, with fatal doom, hath laid them low."

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But Daniel was not able to speak these many words of truth, with craft of wisdom, to his lord, so that the mighty ruler of the world would heed; but pride ruled his heart. And bitter was his atonement!

And as the king of the Chaldeans ruled his realm, and beheld the city of Babylon in its prosperity towering up to heaven, the city which the prince had built with many a wonder for his people, and the fields of the Shinarites wide—stretching round about, then the king began to utter boastful words. He became perverse and arrogant of heart, beyond all men, because of the special gifts which God had given him, a mighty kingdom and the world to rule in the life of men:

"Thou art the mighty city, famed afar, which I have builded to my honour, a spacious kingdom. I will have rest in thee, a dwelling and a home."

Then the lord of men was smitten for his boasting, and driven into exile, arrogant of heart beyond all men. Even as in the days of strife, when God's swift wrath and anger smote him from the heavens, Nebuchadnezzar trod the bitterest path unto God's vengeance that ever living men have trod. Seven winters together the king of that fair city suffered torment, a desert—life with beasts.

Then the wretched man, companion of the beasts, looked up through the flying clouds; and he knew in his heart that there was a Lord and King of heaven, and one Eternal Spirit ruling over the sons of men. And he was recovered from the madness which long had been upon him, vexing the heart and soul of the king. His heart was turned again unto men and his mind unto thoughts of God, after he came to know Him.

And the wretched man rose up and came again among men, a naked wanderer acknowledging his sin, a strange exile without clothing, and of humbler heart than the lord of men had been in his boasting. Behind its lord the world had stood, behind the prince his home and native land, unchanged for seven winters together, so that his kingdom had not lessened under heaven until its ruler came again.

Then was the lord of Babylon once more seated upon his throne; he had a better heart, a clearer faith in the Lord of life, knowing that God dealeth unto every man weal or woe as He desireth. The lord of nations was not slow to heed the counsels of his wise men, but far and wide rehearsed the might of God, where he had power of proclamation. He told his people of his wanderings, his far journeys with the beasts, until the spirit of the Lord God came upon him and thoughts of wisdom, when he looked up to heaven. Fate was fulfilled, the wonder come to pass, the dream come true, the punishment endured, the doom awarded, even as Daniel said aforetime that the king would suffer downfall for his pride, and earnestly proclaimed it before men, by the might of God.

Then for a long time Daniel gave judgment and counsel in Babylon unto the city—dwellers. And after Nebuchadnezzar, comrade and companion of the wild beasts, returned from his wandering exile, the prince of the Chaldeans, the wise and mighty leader of the folk, ruled his spacious kingdom, guarding his treasure and the lofty city, until death came upon him. And there was no man to withstand him upon earth till God through death took his high kingdom from him. Thereafter his descendants prospered greatly in that mighty stronghold, in the city of earls, enjoying wealth and twisted gold, a mighty treasure, when their lord lay dead.

And after him among that people arose a third generation, and Belshazzar ruled the city and the kingdom until his heart grew great with insolence and hateful pride. And the Chaldean rule was ended! For the Lord bestowed the kingdom upon the Medes and Persians for a space of time, and let the might of Babylon diminish, which the heroes should have held. But He knew that they were sinful men who would have ruled the realm.

The lord of the Medes, as he sat in his stronghold, resolved on that which none had done before him, that he would lay waste Babylon, the city of earls, where the princes within the walls dispensed the treasure.

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Now the city of Babylon was the most famous of all the fortresses of men, the mightiest and most widely known of all that men inhabit, until Belshazzar in his boasting tempted God. They sat at wine within their walls, fearing not the hate of any foe, though a hostile folk with mighty hosts in armour were coming up against them, even against the city of Babylon to destroy it. And the Chaldean king and his kinsmen sat feasting on the last day.

Now when the leader of the host was drunk with wine he bade them bring the treasure of Israel, the holy vessels of the sacrifice, and the gold which the Chaldean warriors and their legions had captured in Jerusalem, when they destroyed the might of Judah with the sword, boasting exceedingly, with tumult seizing on the kindly folk and gleaming treasure, as they plundered the temple and the shrine of Solomon.

Then was the lord of cities blithe in his heart, boasting fiercely and defying God, and said his gods were mightier to save, and greater, than the Eternal Lord of Israel. But, as he gazed, there came a dreadful token before men within the hall, that he had spoken a lie before his people.

The hand of an angel of God appeared within the lofty hall, a sight of terror, and wrote before the eyes of men upon the wall in scarlet letters and words of mystery. Then the heart of the king was troubled within him and sore afraid because of the sign; within the hall he beheld the hand of an angel writing the doom of the Shinarites.

But the multitude, the host within the hall, debated what the hand had written for a sign to the city-dwellers. And many came to see the wonder. They searched the thoughts of their hearts to know what the hand of the angel had written. Nor could the nobles and magicians read the angel's message till Daniel, wise and righteous, loved of God, came to the hall. And his heart was filled with wisdom sent from God.

Then, as I have heard, the city-dwellers sought to tempt Daniel with gifts to read the writing and tell the import of the mystery. But the prophet of God, skilled in the law and wise of heart, made answer to them:

"Not for gain do I pronounce God's judgments to the people, nor of mine own strength, but freely will I tell thy fate, and the meaning of the words thou shalt not change. In thine insolence thou hast given into the hands of men the vessels of the sacrifice, and in them drunk to devils, which formerly the Israelites employed in holy rites before the ark of God, till pride seduced them and drunken thoughts. So shall it be with thee! Never would thy lord before thee lay hands of insolence upon God's golden vessels, nor boast thereof, although it was his legions that plundered Israel's treasure. But after the Lord of glory showed forth His wonders upon him, the lord of nations often spake before his people in words of truth, and said that He alone was Lord and Ruler of creation who gave him blameless glory in his earthly kingdom and great prosperity. But thou deniest that He is the Living God who ruleth over devils."