

Reflections

reading notes

JANUARY 2006—*Praise God*

The following four statements have something in common.

Of a truth your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou hast been able to reveal this secret.

Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and have yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other god that is able to deliver after this sort.

I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever; for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? ... Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven; for all his works are truth, and his ways justice; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

I make a decree, that in all the dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, And his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed; and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered from the power of the lions.

These statements were made by pagan kings about YHWH. All are found in the book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, made the first three (2:47; 3:28, 29; 4:34-37). Darius, king of the Medes, made the last one (6:26, 27). See also chapter 1:20 and 5:11, 12.

The first six chapters of *Daniel* are hero stories. They all end with pagan kings praising the God of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The lesson these pagan kings learned was one Israel desperately need to learn themselves.

“Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt 5:16).

