

Gospel Gleanings, "...especially the parchments"

Volume 25, Number 18

May 10, 2009



God's Book: Always Accurate

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation. Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry? I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing: And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. (Daniel 5:10-28)

In Daniel's writings Belshazzar is listed as the king of Babylon. However, his name does not appear in the historical records as being one of Babylon's kings. His father Nabonidus was the official king of Babylon. However, Nabonidus seems to have preferred living in other parts of the kingdom. He was also engaged in military conflicts during the later years of his reign. Thus in his absence his son Belshazzar would be the de facto king of Babylon. This background explains Daniel's use of "king" in reference to Belshazzar. He was in every functional way Babylon's active king at the time. This situation

also explains Belshazzar's offer to make the man who interpreted the mysterious handwriting the "third ruler" in Babylon. Belshazzar is the second ruler, so he cannot make anyone else the second ruler, but he logically would offer the third position to the person who solved his problem.

This simple historical background explains the precise details of Daniel's writing, and it also serves as yet another in a long list of detailed records that consistently vindicate and affirm the accuracy of the Bible. Time after time skeptics of the Bible ridicule its contents and reject its validity. And time after time the skeptics' allegations are

disproved, and the Bible's accuracy is affirmed. Werner Keller, *The Bible as History*, for the most part devotes his entire book to examples that validate the authenticity of the Bible's information. For example, in one such example, Keller provides details of archaeologists' belittling the Bible's reference to "Ur of the Chaldees." They repeatedly rejected the Bible's reference to this ancient city whose most prominent Biblical citizen was Abraham because they had never found any reference in any archaeological artifacts to such a city. However, Keller goes on to document that for years archaeologists traveled by train to one of their digs. They got off the train and ignored an elevated ridge within clear view of the train stop year after year. Eventually one of the archaeologists took note of this elevation and started investigating it. He discovered some ancient artifacts, became interested in the site and started an excavation of the area. How surprising; his team soon discovered that they had unearthed the ruins of an ancient Chaldean city named Ur!

God did not design or intend the Bible to be a science or archaeological textbook, so its primary purpose is not to present these disciplines in great detail. However, when the Bible refers to things that naturally relate to these or other areas of knowledge, it consistently presents accurate information. Consider just a few examples.

1. "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7, KJV) It is generally believed that Job was written earlier than Moses wrote the first five books of our Old Testament, making Job the oldest book of the Bible. Despite its ancient origin, Job accurately describes the circular shape and orbit of the earth, as well as describing gravity as the force that holds the earth in its stable position. Human science was centuries away from such accurate knowledge.
2. "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:" (Isaiah 40:22, KJV) Approximately eight hundred years before Jesus came, Isaiah affirmed the same point that Job makes. Notice his reference to the "circle of the earth."
3. Moses' rules regarding quarantine. For centuries skeptics ridiculed Moses' quarantine rules as archaic and superstitious. Examples of these rules from Moses' law, the law that God gave to Moses for Israel, include quarantine of someone exposed to a contagious

disease or contact with a corpse. *None of These Diseases*, written by two medical doctors, documents a multitude of Biblical hygiene rules such as these. It was late in the nineteenth century before the medical community began to realize the danger of spreading communicable disease through exposure to a patient with that disease. For example, doctors would visit a dying patient with a communicable disease, or perhaps perform an autopsy on a patient who had died with such a disease, and go immediately into the next room to deliver a baby without washing or changing their clothing. They were mystified at the fact that most of their new mothers and babies died in the hospital, while mothers and babies delivered by midwives in the mother's home survived and were healthy. The first doctor who suggested thorough washing before going to the next patient was ridiculed and disenfranchised from his practice. Around fifteen hundred B. C., Moses provided extensive details of washing and quarantine that would have prevented untold patient deaths at the hands of trained physicians who refused to incorporate God's simple rules into their "scientific" practice. When Moses gave these laws to Israel, he included God's promise of health and disease avoidance if Israel obeyed them, "And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee." (Exodus 15:26, KJV)

4. Another rule that Moses included in the law required that human waste be buried outside the camp at a stipulated depth beneath the surface of the ground. This practice, too, promised that none of Egypt's diseases would plague God's people if they obeyed this simple hygienic rule. "Modern" man during the medieval era in Europe ignored this rule and routinely threw their human waste out onto the city's streets where people walked through it every day. Medieval Europe suffered the dreaded Black Plague because of this filthy habit. Had those medieval cities enforced the simple practice that Moses gave to Israel centuries earlier, the Plague would have never occurred.

These are just a few examples in a very long list that affirm the Bible to be God's supernatural Book, His revelation to His people of His rules, of His laws, and of His blessings on the people who believe and obey His commandments.

In each case the skeptics' scorn falls to the ground in futile ignorance, and God's Book demonstrates its supernatural origin and its supernatural accuracy. When Paul wrestled with the falling status of the Jewish people in his day, he asked a probing question, "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." (Romans 3:1-2, KJV) Paul understood this central truth. The primary blessing of God to ancient Israel had to do with the content of those ancient sacred writings, what we know as the Old Testament. Not only do we have the Old Testament to inform and to enlighten our lifestyle, we also have the New Testament to further enlighten our knowledge of God and to direct our lives so as to enrich and to bless others and ourselves, all the while praising Him whose loving hand has given us such an amazing and accurate Book. How much time have you spent with this Book lately? Will you join ancient Israel, ignoring that Book and its influence on your life, or will you make it your constant companion and begin to discover its amazing enrichment to your life?

Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church
16434 Woodruff
Bellflower, California

Worship service each Sunday 10:30 A. M.
Joseph R. Holder Pastor