

DANIEL (part 2)

Witness, yes --
but not to the Name !

WHY IS DANIEL SO CAREFUL TO AVOID JEHOVAH?

In chapters 2 and 4 Daniel gets the witnessing opportunity very few of us ever will – to give his testimony before the most important person in the world (and Nebuchadnezzar is LISTENING!)

In blatant disregard of the [Aramaic] text of chapter 2, the Society's official 'commentary' on Daniel, "Your Will Be Done on Earth" (1958) says on p.109, "Daniel and his three companions joined in prayer to Jehovah God ... Gratefully Daniel blessed Jehovah, saying 'Blessed be the name of God ...'". Such manipulation of the text and context only makes it MORE difficult for the Witness to distinguish between what he has read in the Bible and what he has seen only in Watchtower literature.

ASK THE WITNESS: Why did Daniel miss his golden opportunity to witness to the NAME?

Which designations does Daniel use for God in chapters 2 and 4? Contrary to the assertion of Fred Franz, whom does Nebuchadnezzar acknowledge? (2:47; 4:2, esp. vv.34, 37) And note even the designation used by the 'watcher' [= angel], vv.13, 32

[on 2:18] God of heaven ... this designation of the true God came into prominence at the time of the exile (Cf. Ezra 1:2; 6:10; 7:12,21; Neh.1:5; 2:4; Ps.136:26.) He is the God who is over the heavens, i.e., over the sun, moon and stars which the Babylonians worshipped.

[Young 65-66]



Watchtower President and 'oracle' Fred Franz (above right), in his work "Babylon the Great has Fallen! God's Kingdom Rules!" (1963), told JW's "Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged JEHOVAH to be 'King of the heavens'" (p.178, emphasis added). Franz's imprecision may have been unintentional. Still, such fudging of the facts is typical of Watchtower literature and amounts to adding to and taking away from the Word. (see Rev.22:18,19; see also "My Book of Bible Stories", story 78, on Daniel ch. 5)

[on 2:21?] In praising "the Name of God" Daniel is speaking of God in His revealed character. [Walvoord 56]

[on 2.21] The saint praises the Name of God, i.e., God in his self-revelation, for his omniscience and omnipotence, attributes revealed in human history. His power is exhibited in his providence over 'times and seasons' ... and in his sovereign determination of all political changes. [Montgomery 157]

The Name the Hebrew youths are reported as using? (3:17) Nebuchadnezzar's response? (vv.26,28,29)

[on 3:26] The king does not rise above the level of paganism. So, the Greeks called Zeus the Most High. Neb. does not acknowledge that the Lord alone is God, but merely that the God of the Confessors is the highest of Gods. Even the performance of this mighty miracle does not convert him. [Young 95]

[Nebuchadnezzar] does not deprecate his own gods but recognizes the fact of the power of the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. He calls upon all the people in his realm not to say anything amiss concerning this God at the threat of being cut to pieces and their houses made a dunghill ... The basis of his decree is the simple statement, "because there in no other God that can deliver after this sort". It is clear at this point that though Nebuchadnezzar is greatly impressed, he has not yet been brought to the place where he is willing to put his trust in the God of Israel. [Walvoord 93]

In admitting that He was "Most High God," Nebuchadnezzar was saying about the same thing that he did earlier to Daniel when he used the phrase "God of gods" (2:47) ... he did not go so far as to command people to worship the Judean God, nor promise to do so even himself. [Wood 94,98]

GOD BY ANY OTHER NAME STILL THE SAME!

Contrary to the misleading wording in *My Book of Bible Stories* -- a book which replaced the Bible for JW children -- what terms does Daniel use for God in chapter 5? And note the intensely personal appellations in ch.6.

The name stands in Holy Scripture for the nature or revealed character of God, and not a mere label or title. It is found in the Old Testament as synonymous with God Himself in relation to man ... [W.H. Griffith Thomas Bibliotheca Sacra 125:262]

The special name of God in the Old Testament is the tetragrammaton [YHWH], which is hence characterized by the Jews as [ha shem, the name] ... How old the dread of uttering the name is, cannot be accurately fixed ... The name ceases to be prominent in some of the latest Old Testament writings, and is regularly rendered [kyrios] by the LXX. (so also in the New Testament) ... Josephus, Ant.xii.5.5, tells us of the Samaritans, that the sanctuary which they founded in Gerizim was ... [a temple without a name]. Josephus himself declares, Ant. ii.12.4, that he was not permitted to speak concerning the name ... [Philo reports] that consecrated persons in the sanctuary were allowed to hear and pronounce the name. According to the tradition in Maimonides ... the name in the early period of the second temple was still uttered in the sanctuary at the pronouncing of the blessing, and by the high priest on the day of atonement; but after the death of Simon the Just, that is, after the first half of the

third century B.C., it was exchanged there also for Adhonai, as had been long the practice outside the temple. Gustav Friedrich Oehler Theology of the Old Testament p. 92

DANIEL'S DESIGNATIONS for GOD (NWT):

THE [TRUE] GOD 1:2,9,17; 2:47 (of you men); 3:28,29 (of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; 5:23; 6:26 (of Daniel); 9:3,4,11; 11:37 (of his fathers)

J E H O V A H 1 : 2 (d i s p u t e d) ; 9:2,3,4(2),7,8,9,10,13,14(2),15,16, 17,19(3),20

GOD OF HEAVEN 2:18,19,37,44

GOD 2:20, 23 (of my forefathers),28; 5:3,26
REVEALER OF SECRETS 2:28,47

THE GRAND GOD 2:45

GOD OF GODS 2:47; 11:36

LORD OF KINGS 2:47

OUR GOD 3:17; 9:9,10,13,14,15,17

MOST HIGH (GOD) 3:26; 4:2,17,24,25,32,34; 5:18,21,25

[4:25,26] The purpose of this experience, therefore, is to bring the king to the knowledge of the truth that God, as the Most High, is sovereign in His providential dealings with men. [Young 107]

THEIR (OWN) GOD 3:28; 11:32

KING OF THE HEAVENS 4:37

LORD OF THE HEAVENS 5:23

HIS GOD 6:5,10,11,23

YOUR GOD 6:16,20; 10:12

THE LIVING GOD 6:20,26

Darius does not rise above his polytheistic background. He does not confess Dan.'s God to be the only true God, but merely raises Him above other gods. [Young 139]

MY (OWN) GOD 6:22; 9:4,19,20(2)

THE ONE LIVING [ENDURING] TO TIME(S)
INDEFINITE 6:26; 12:7

ANCIENT OF DAYS 7:9,13,22

THE SUPREME ONE 7:18,22,25,27

PRINCE OF THE ARMY 8:11

PRINCE OF PRINCES 8:25

THE GREAT ONE 9:4

THE FEAR-INSPIRING ONE 9:4

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