



The Book of Daniel Confronting the Gentile Kings

Interpreting the Text:

1. How do we understand Nebuchadnezzar's madness? Is this a prophecy for some impact to the ruling line, or a literal diagnosis of Nebuchadnezzar?
2. Compare and contrast the figures of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar? Does Daniel appear to feel differently about them? What evidence do we have for this?
3. Are these stories subversive, or are they? Or basically supportive of Gentile rule?

Applying the Text:

1. Are there lessons of lasting value in these stories?
2. This story about the King's dream and predicted madness was probably about another king, but has been reimagined to be about Nebuchadnezzar. Is this important for how we hold this story? How does this information change how you might use it in a worship or bible study context?
3. Think about the idiom "writing on the wall." How can you use this origin from Daniel 5 to help you to understand this phrase? Has the modern meaning of the phrase changed beyond association with this story from Daniel?