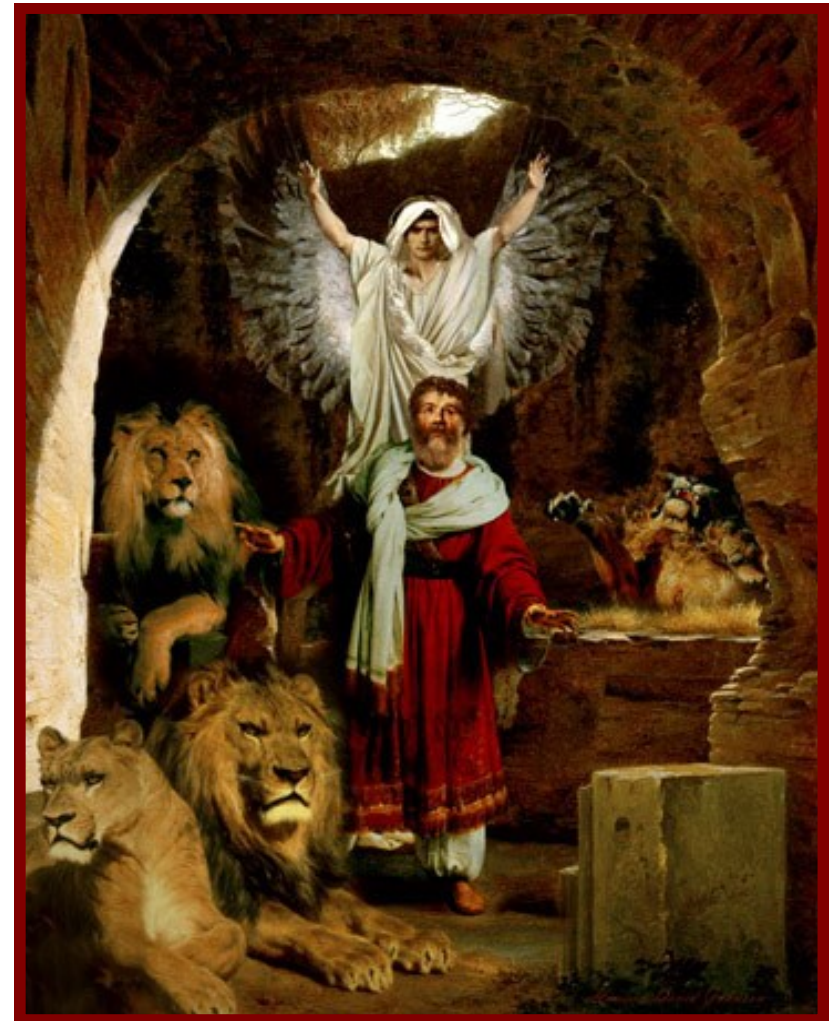


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# The Book of Daniel

## Chapter 14 (Bel and the Dragon)



The Book of Daniel, as it now stands in the ordinary Hebrew Bibles, is generally divided into two main parts. The first includes a series of narratives which are told in the third person and the second, a series of visions which are described in the first person. From its content it readily appears that the Book of Daniel does not have as its objective a summary historical account of the period of the Babylonian Exile, or of the life of Daniel himself. The contents of the Prophecy of Daniel are of a peculiar kind which has no exact parallel in the Bible, except in the Apocalypse of St. John.

Commentary of the Book of Daniel is by Saint Jerome. St. Jerome, who was born Eusebius Hieronymus Sophronius, and is the most learned of the Fathers of the Western Church. The Church regards him as the greatest of all the doctors in clarifying the Divine Word. While at Rome he made a revision of the current Latin New Testament, and of the Psalms. Then he undertook to translate most of the books of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew. The only parts of the Latin Bible, now known as the Vulgate, which were not either translated or worked over by him are the Books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and the two Books of the Maccabees. In the sixteenth century the great Council of Trent pronounced Jerome's Vulgate the authentic and authoritative Latin text of the Catholic Church, without, however, thereby implying a preference for it above the original text or above versions in other languages. In 1907 Pope Pius X entrusted to the Benedictine Order the office of restoring as far as possible the correct text of St. Jerome's Vulgate, which during fifteen centuries of use had naturally become altered in many places. The Bible now ordinarily used by English-speaking Catholics is a translation of the Vulgate, made at Rheims and Douay towards the end of the sixteenth century, and revised by Bishop Challoner in the eighteenth century. The Confraternity Edition of the New Testament appearing in 1950 represents a complete revision.

### **Chapter 1 (Bel and the Dragon)**

*"And as soon as he had opened the door, the king looked upon the table and cried out with a great voice: 'Great art thou, O Bel, and there is no deceit with thee.'"* The statement of Scripture in this passage, "He cried out with a great voice," may seem, because of its reference to an idolater ignorant of God, to refute the observation put forth a little previously, that the expression "great voice" is found only in connection with saints. This objection is easily solved by asserting that

this particular story is not contained in the Hebrew of the Book of Daniel. If, however, anyone should be able to prove that it belongs in the canon, then we should be obliged to seek out some answer to this objection.

End of Chapter 14 (Bel and the Dragon)

--Final Chapter--