

CURRENT TEACHING SERIES

EPIC TALES

A dramatic scene of a whale's tail fluke breaching the surface of a turbulent, dark blue ocean under a stormy sky with rain falling. The whale's tail is dark and glistening with water, creating a powerful focal point on the left side of the frame.

**RELEARNING THE ANCIENT BIBLE
STORIES IN A BRAND-NEW WAY**

Daniel and the Lions' Den

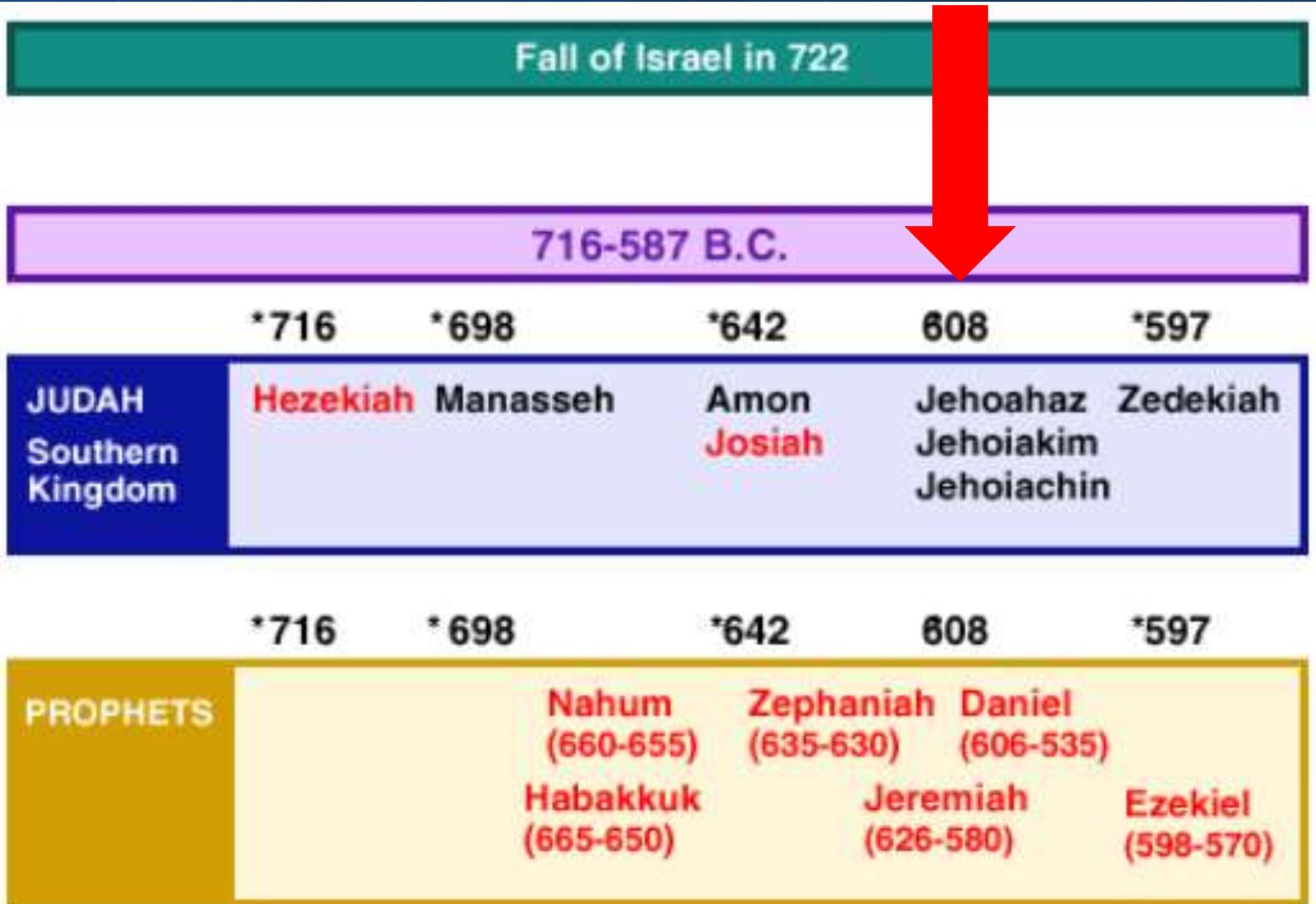
Daniel chapter 1

EPIC TALES



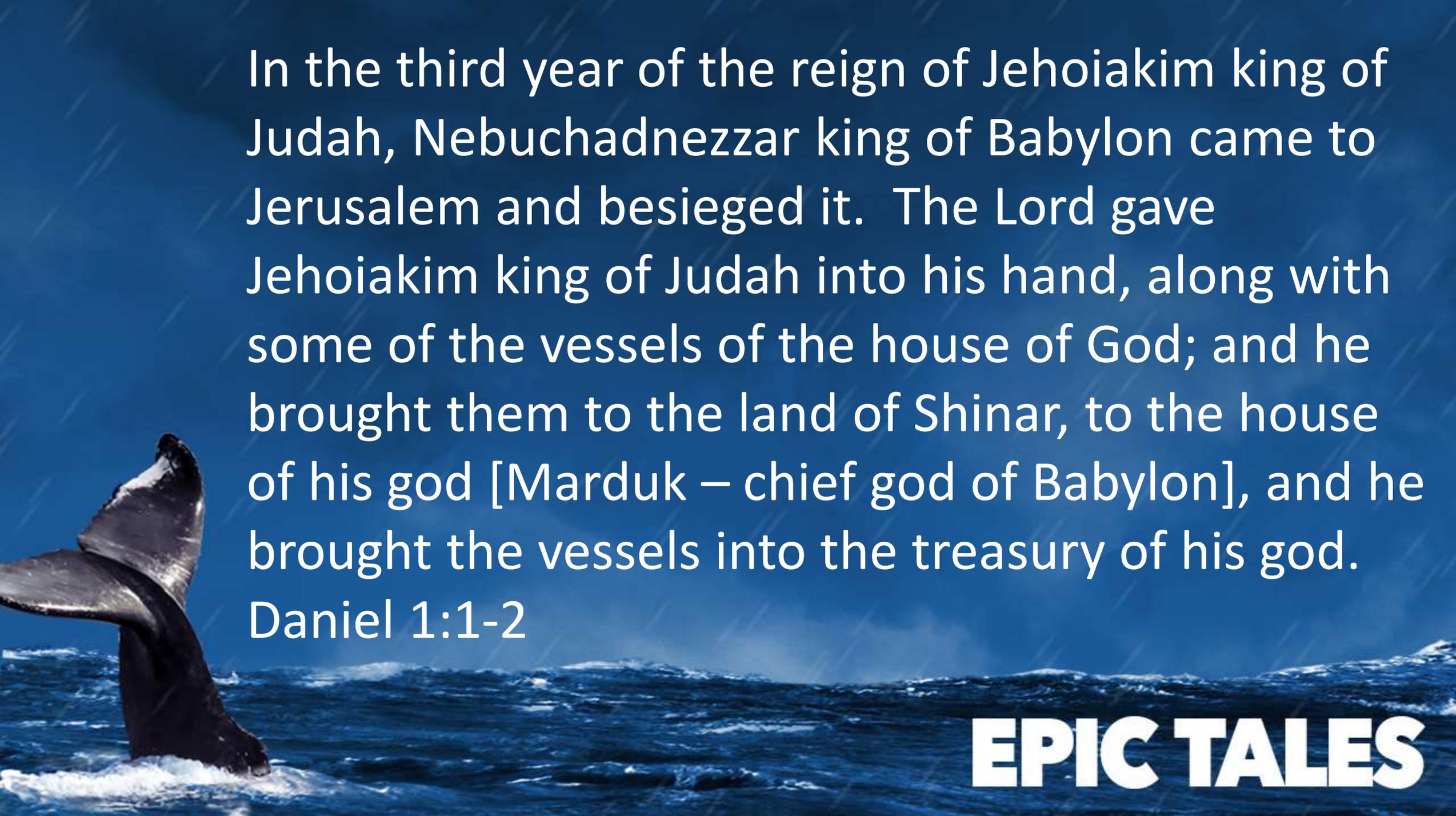
Bible Timeline

By Genelle Austin-Lett and Mary Jane Chaignot



- As the book of Daniel begins, the year is 605 B.C.
- Jehoiakim is the 17th king of Judah and the eldest son of King Josiah

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background. The whale's tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the base where it meets the water. The ocean is a deep blue with white-capped waves.

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god [Marduk – chief god of Babylon], and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.
Daniel 1:1-2

EPIC TALES



Turkey

Iraq

Iran

Syria

Tigris River

Euphrates River

Babylon

Mediterranean Sea

Jerusalem

Israel

Jordan

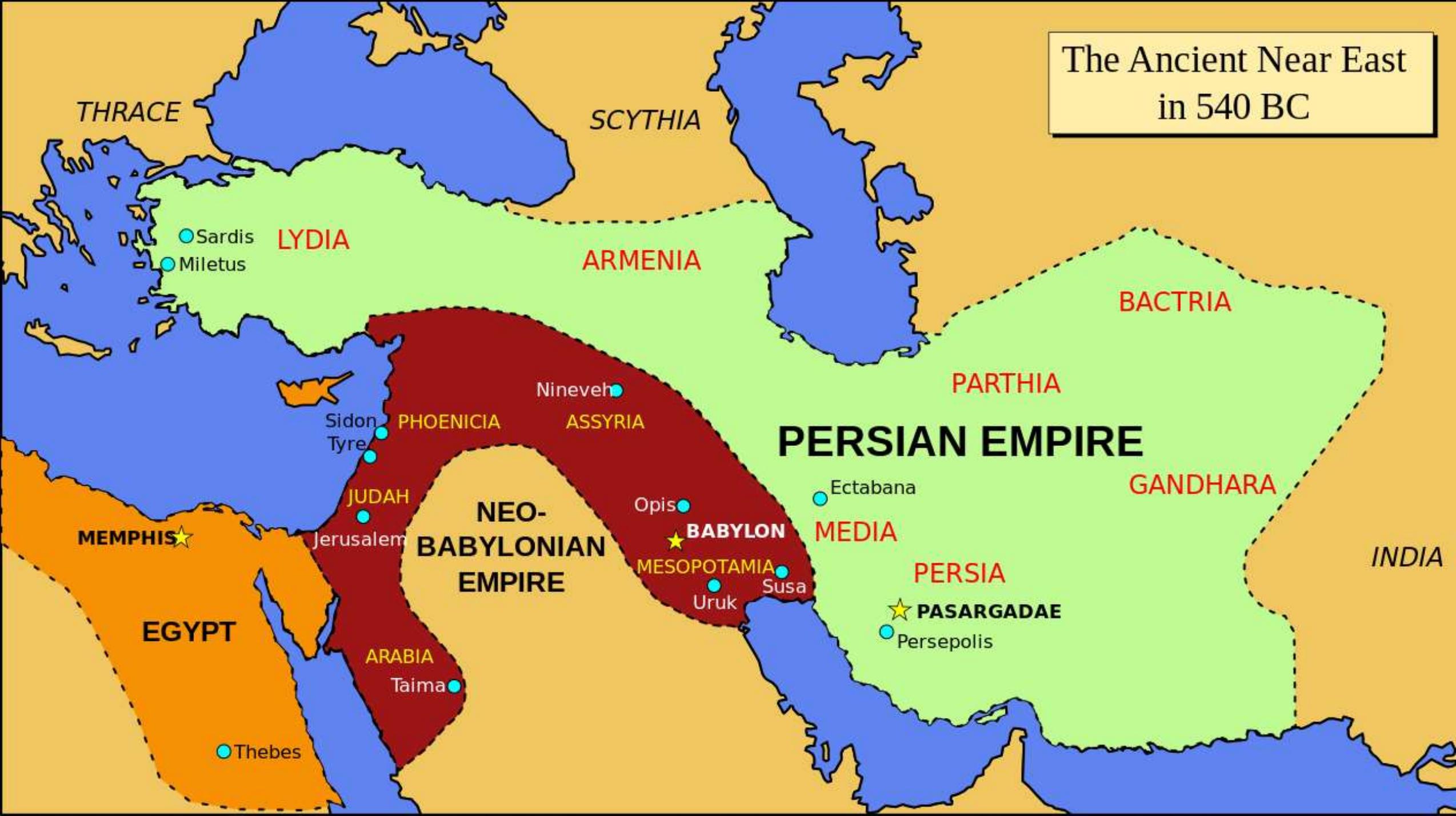
The Babylonian Empire

606-536 BC

Egypt

Persian

The Ancient Near East
in 540 BC



THRACE

SCYTHIA

Sardis
Miletus

LYDIA

ARMENIA

BACTRIA

PARTHIA

PERSIAN EMPIRE

GANDHARA

INDIA

Sidon
Tyre

PHOENICIA

Nineveh

ASSYRIA

Ectabana

MEMPHIS

JUDAH

Jerusalem

NEO-BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

Opis

BABYLON

MEDIA

MESOPOTAMIA

Uruk

Susa

PERSIA

PASARGADAЕ

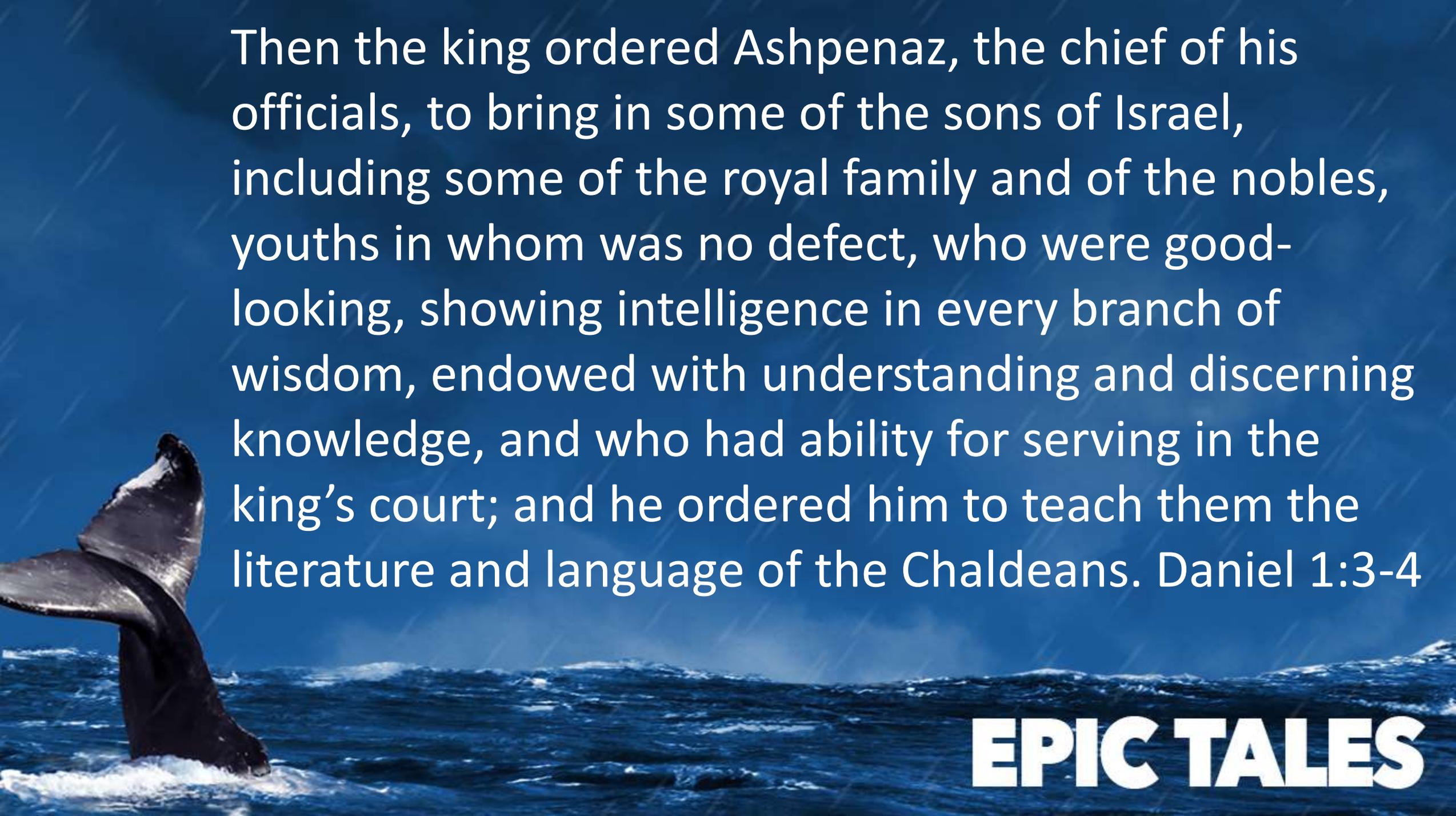
Persepolis

EGYPT

ARABIA

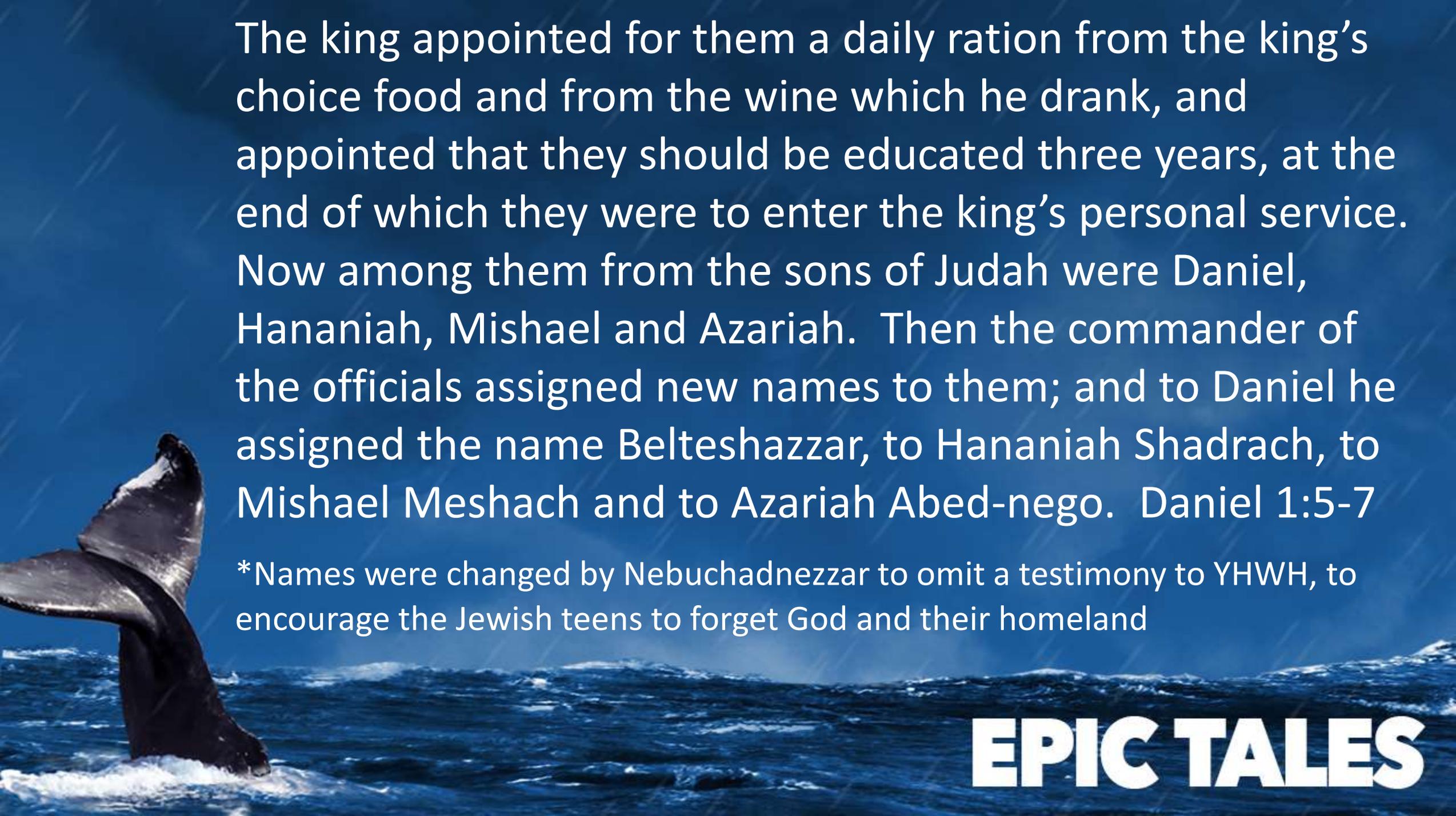
Taima

Thebes

A photograph of a whale's tail breaching the surface of the ocean. The tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the point of exit. The water is a deep blue with white-capped waves. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles, youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. Daniel 1:3-4

EPIC TALES

The background of the slide is a photograph of a whale's tail breaching the surface of the ocean. The water is a deep blue with white foam at the base of the tail. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service. Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Then the commander of the officials assigned new names to them; and to Daniel he assigned the name Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach and to Azariah Abed-nego. Daniel 1:5-7

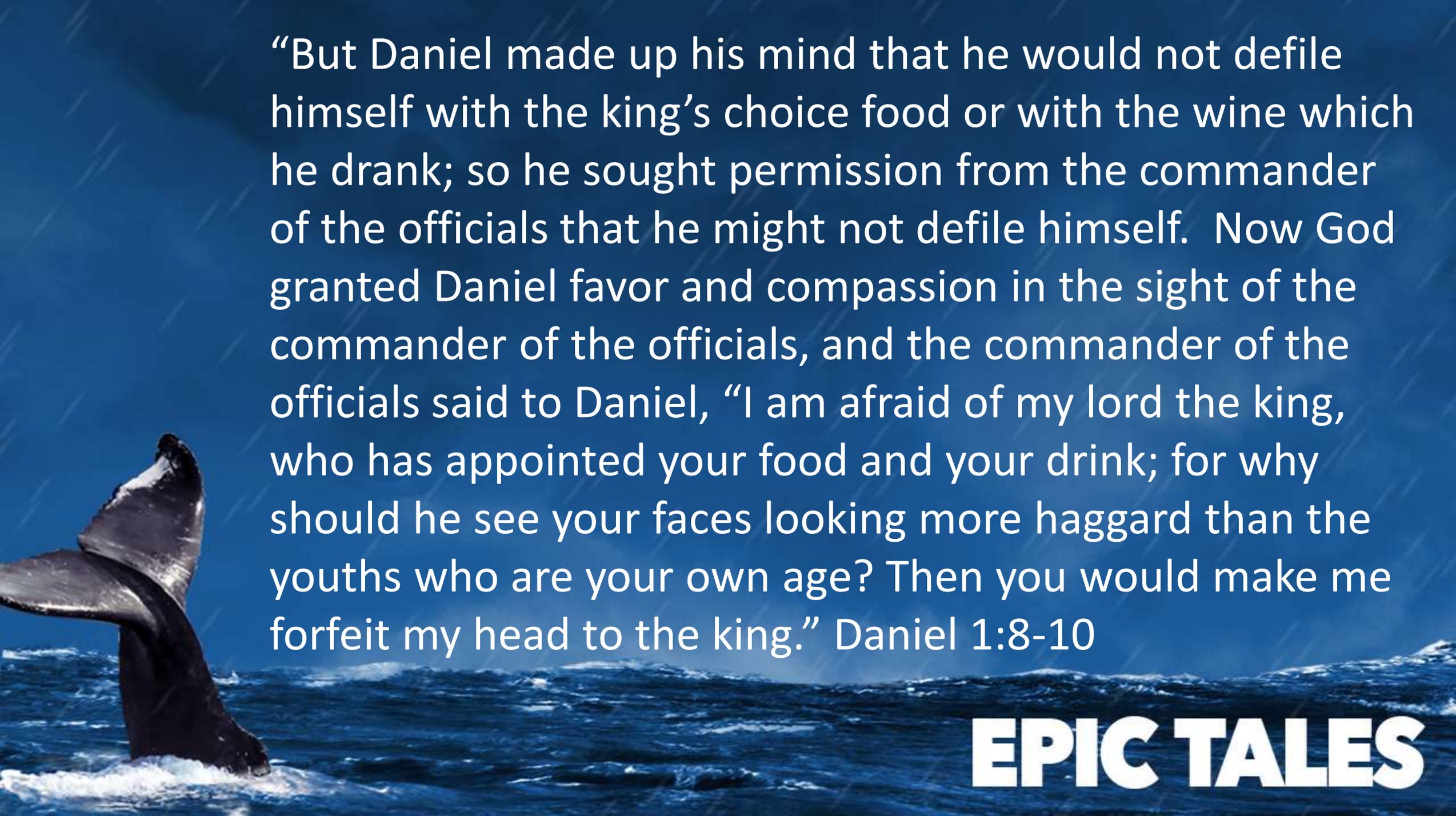
*Names were changed by Nebuchadnezzar to omit a testimony to YHWH, to encourage the Jewish teens to forget God and their homeland

EPIC TALES

Hebrew Names → Babylonian Names

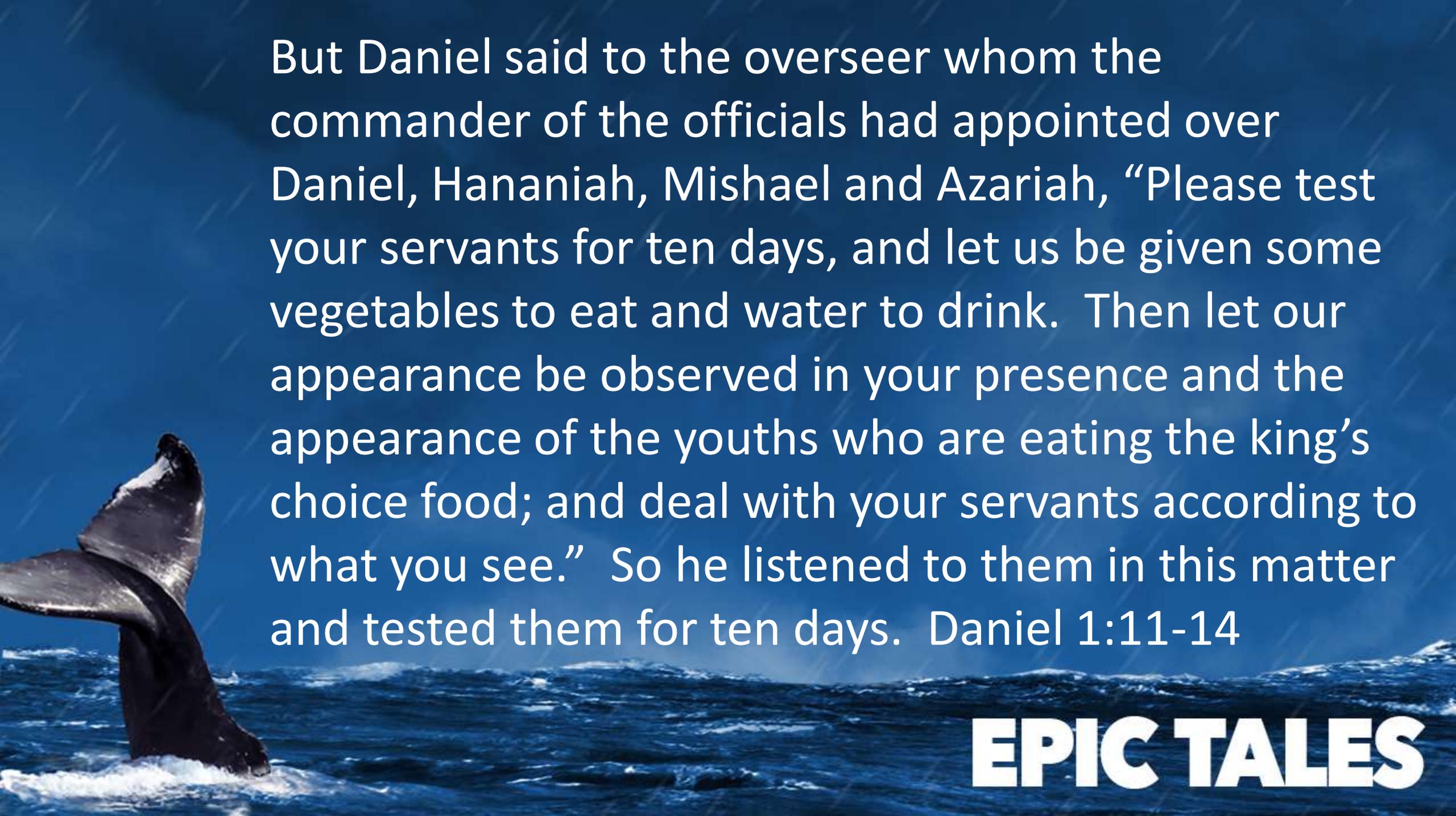
- Daniel means “Elohim has judged?”
- Hananiah means “YHWH has been gracious”
- Mishael means “Who is what Elohim is?”
- Azariah means “YHWH has helped”
- Belteshazzar means “Bel, protect the king”
- Shadrach means “I am fearful of a god”
- Meshach means “I am humbled before my god”
- Abed-nego means “servant of (god) Nebo”

EPIC TALES

A whale tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean on the left side of the image. The water is a deep blue with white foam from the splash. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

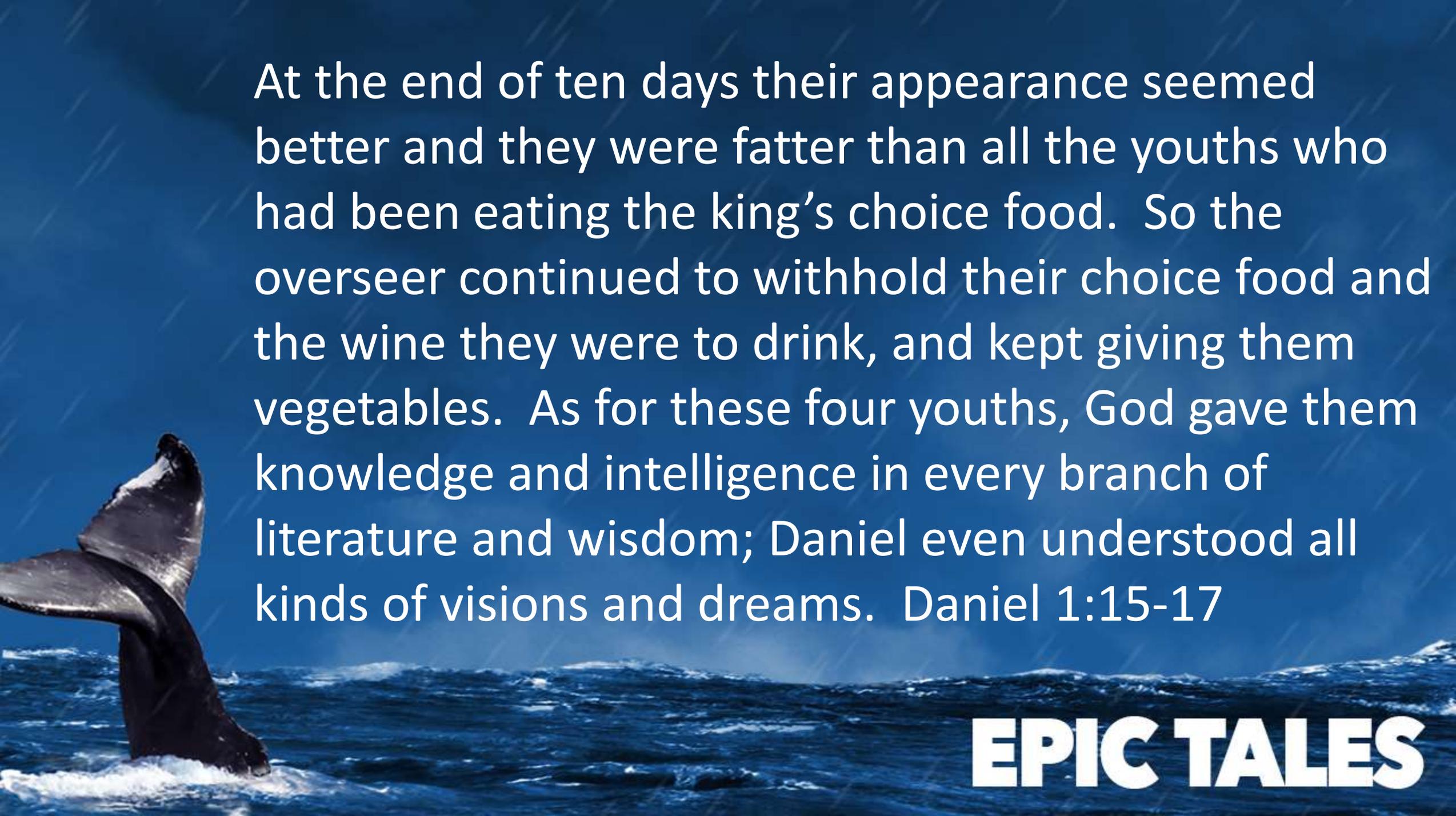
“But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king’s choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials, and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, “I am afraid of my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king.” Daniel 1:8-10

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the blue ocean. The tail is dark and has a white patch on its underside. The water is a deep blue with white foam from the whale's movement.

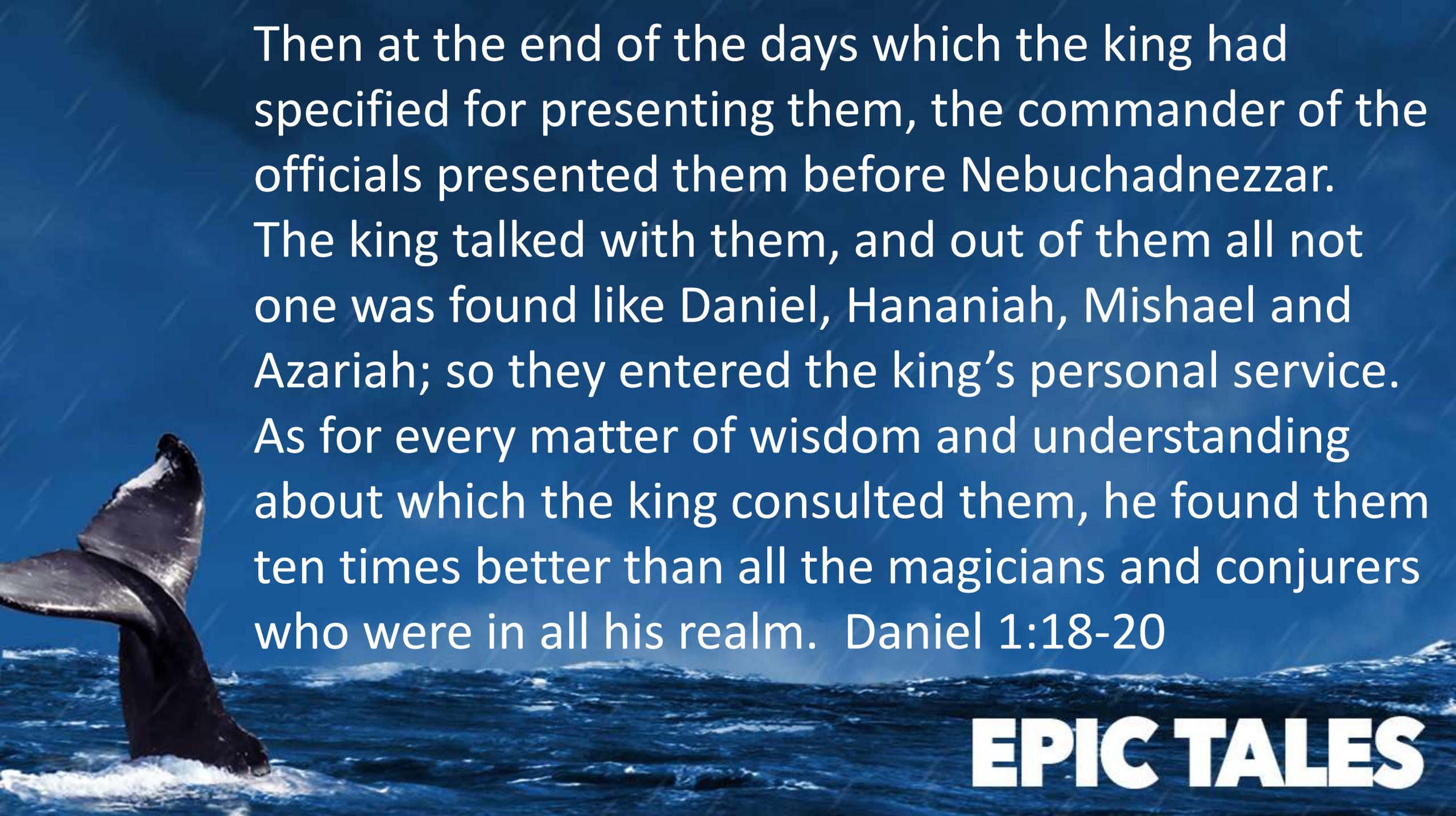
But Daniel said to the overseer whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, “Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king’s choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see.” So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days. Daniel 1:11-14

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean. The tail is dark grey and is positioned on the left side of the frame. The ocean is a deep blue with white-capped waves. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food. So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables. As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams. Daniel 1:15-17

EPIC TALES

A whale's tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean, creating a splash of white water. The background is a clear, deep blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them, the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service. As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm. Daniel 1:18-20

EPIC TALES

Daniel chapter 6



EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the blue ocean, positioned on the left side of the frame. The background is a deep blue sky with light rays filtering through.

It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom [of Babylon], that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom, and over them three commissioners [viziers] (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss. Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. Daniel 6:1-3

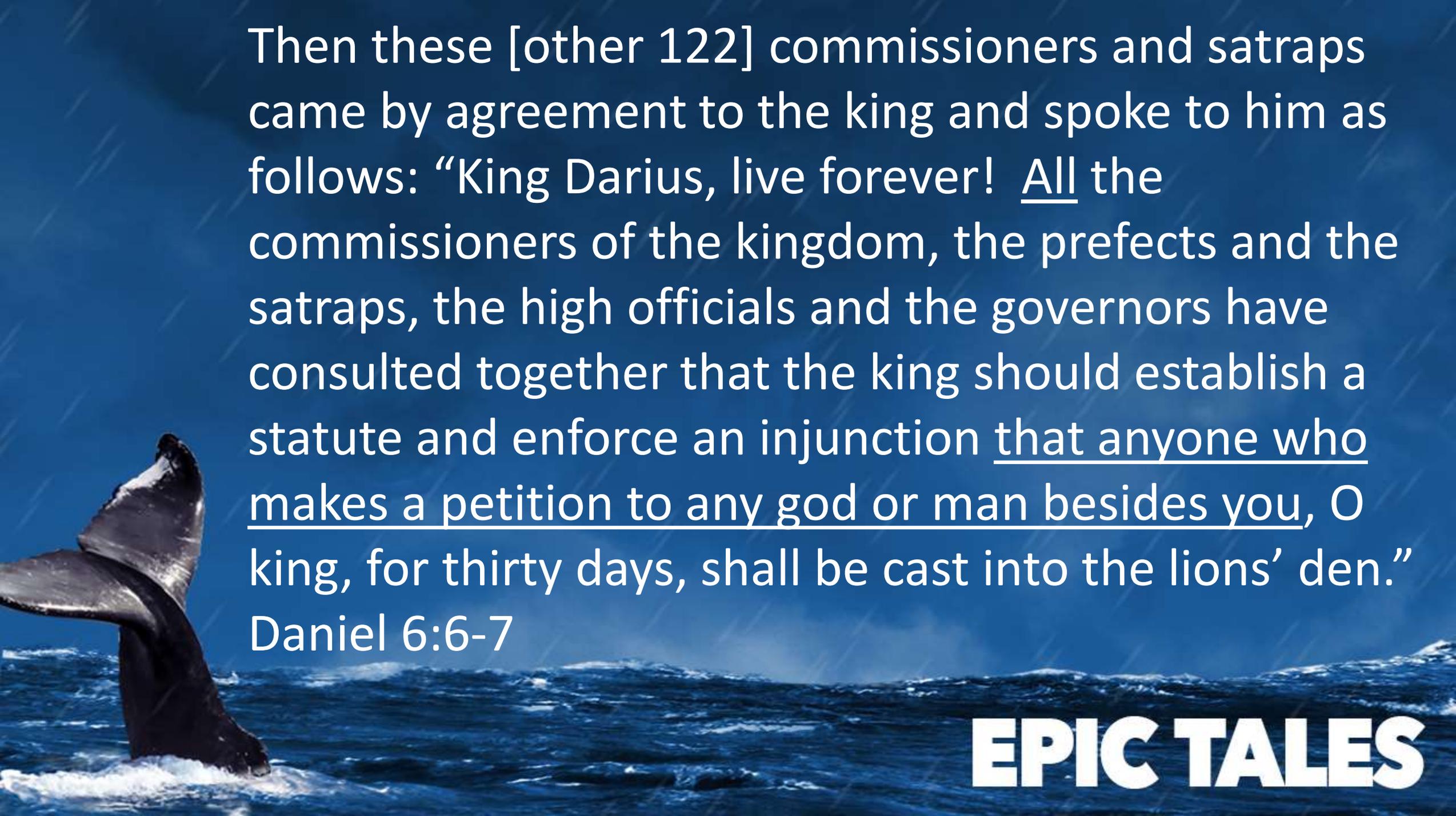
EPIC TALES

In Daniel chapter 6, the year is now 539 BC... 66 years after Daniel 1:1

Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption [Daniel served under King Nebuchadnezzar for 39 years], inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him. Then these men said, “We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God.” Daniel 6:4-5

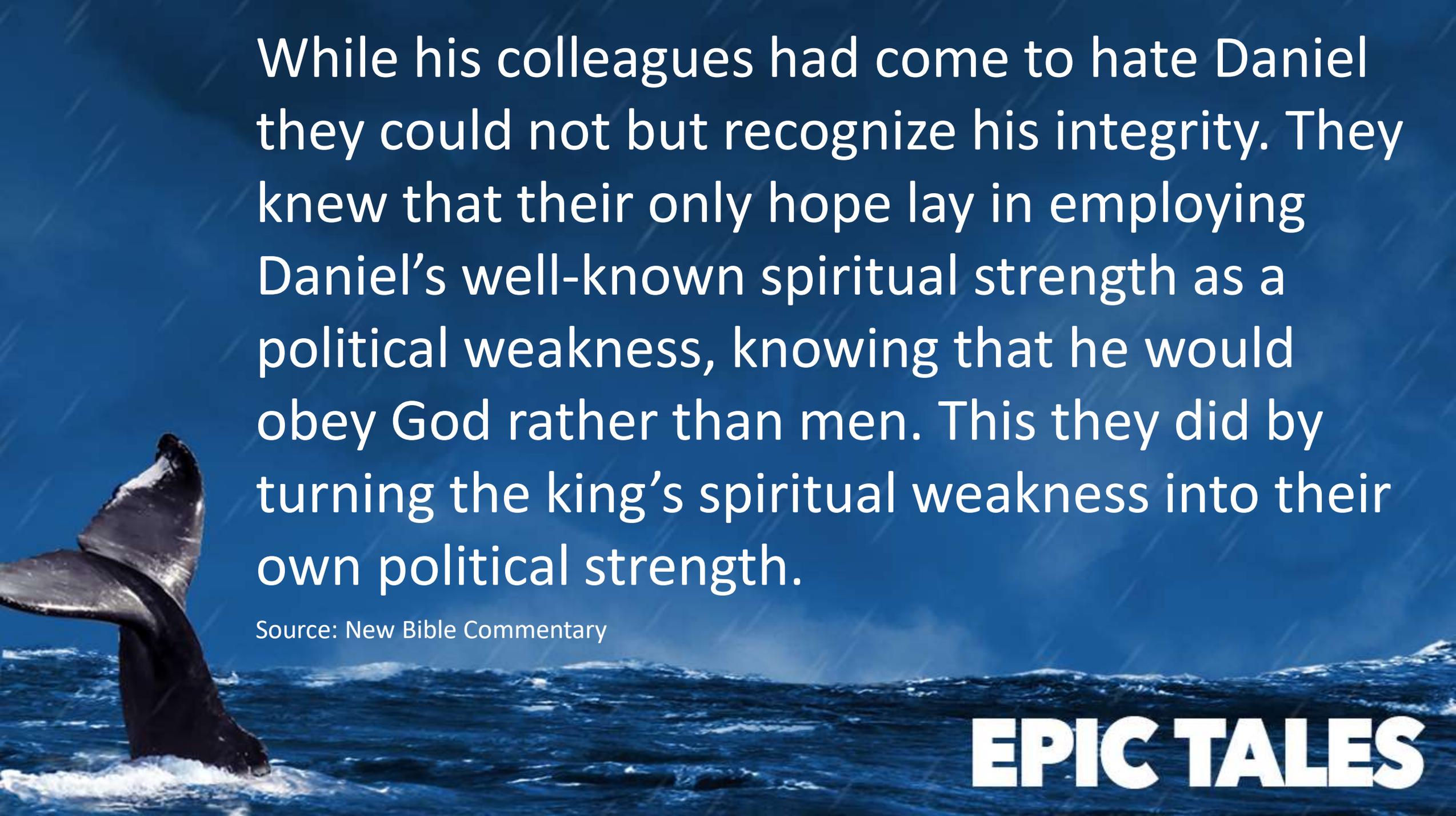
A whale's tail is visible on the left side of the image, emerging from the blue ocean. The background is a deep blue sky with a subtle pattern of light rays.

EPIC TALES

A whale tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean, creating a splash of white water. The background is a clear, deep blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Then these [other 122] commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: “King Darius, live forever! All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions’ den.”
Daniel 6:6-7

EPIC TALES

A whale tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean, creating a splash of white water. The background is a deep blue sky with some light clouds. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

While his colleagues had come to hate Daniel they could not but recognize his integrity. They knew that their only hope lay in employing Daniel's well-known spiritual strength as a political weakness, knowing that he would obey God rather than men. This they did by turning the king's spiritual weakness into their own political strength.

Source: New Bible Commentary

EPIC TALES

“Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.” Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction. Daniel 6:8-9

A whale's tail is visible on the left side of the image, emerging from the dark blue ocean. The background is a deep blue sky with a subtle pattern of white diagonal lines.

EPIC TALES

Now when Daniel knew [found out] that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously. Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. Daniel 6:10-11

*Daniel is more than 80 years old

EPIC TALES



Do we have consistency in our prayer life?

Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.

Daniel 6:10

Evening and **morning** and at **noon**, I will complain and murmur, and He will hear my voice. Psalm 55:17

EPIC TALES

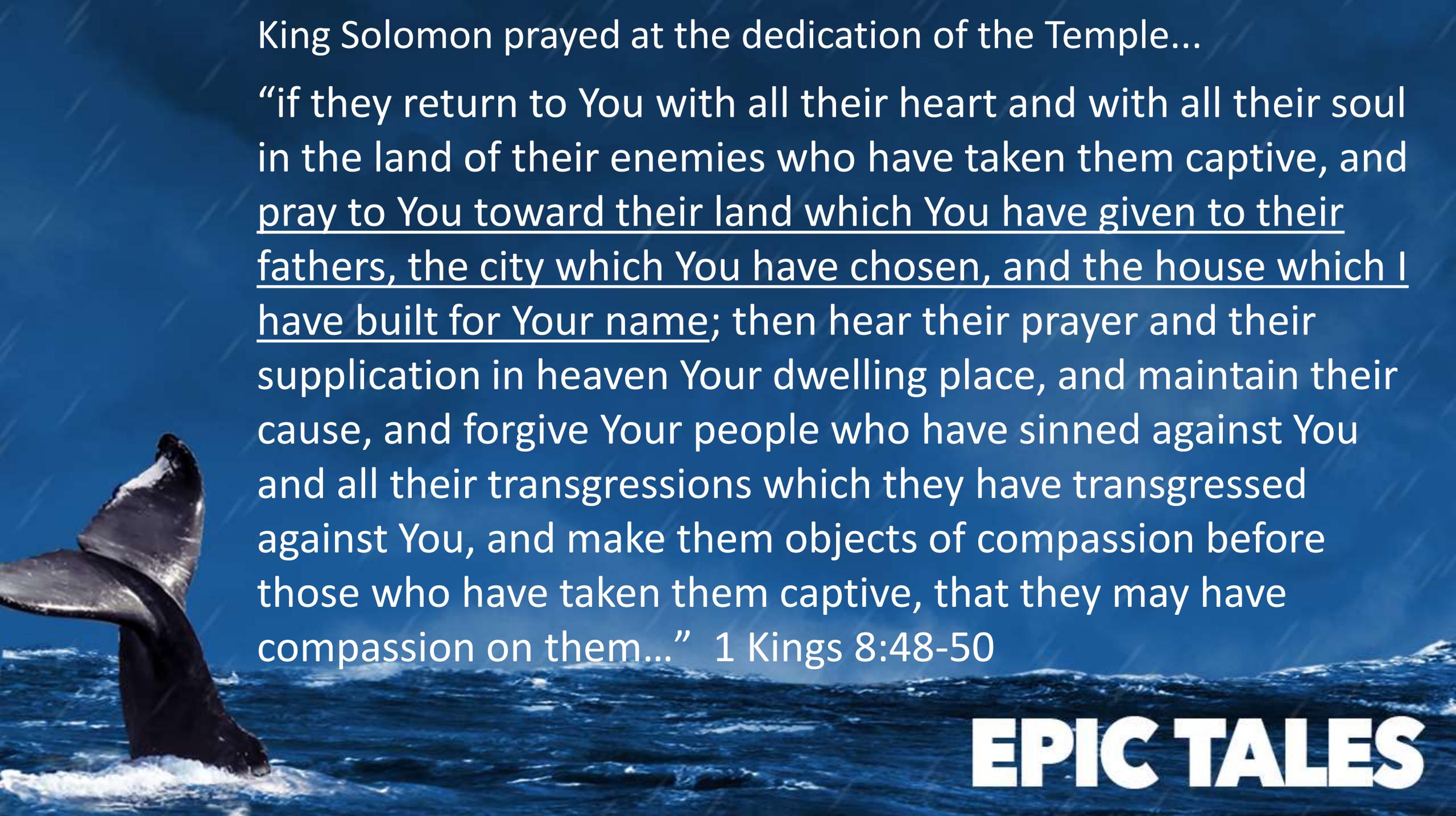
Do we have routine in our prayer life?

- **Direction** of Prayer (upstairs room where the windows opened towards Jerusalem in Daniel 6:10)
- **Regularity** of Prayer (“as he had been doing previously” in 6:10)
- **Thanksgiving** in Prayer (giving thanks in 6:10, even in the context of grave personal danger)
- **Posture** of Prayer (“on his knees” in 6:10)
- **Earnestness** of Prayer (“petition and supplication” in 6:11)

Source: New Bible Commentary

EPIC TALES

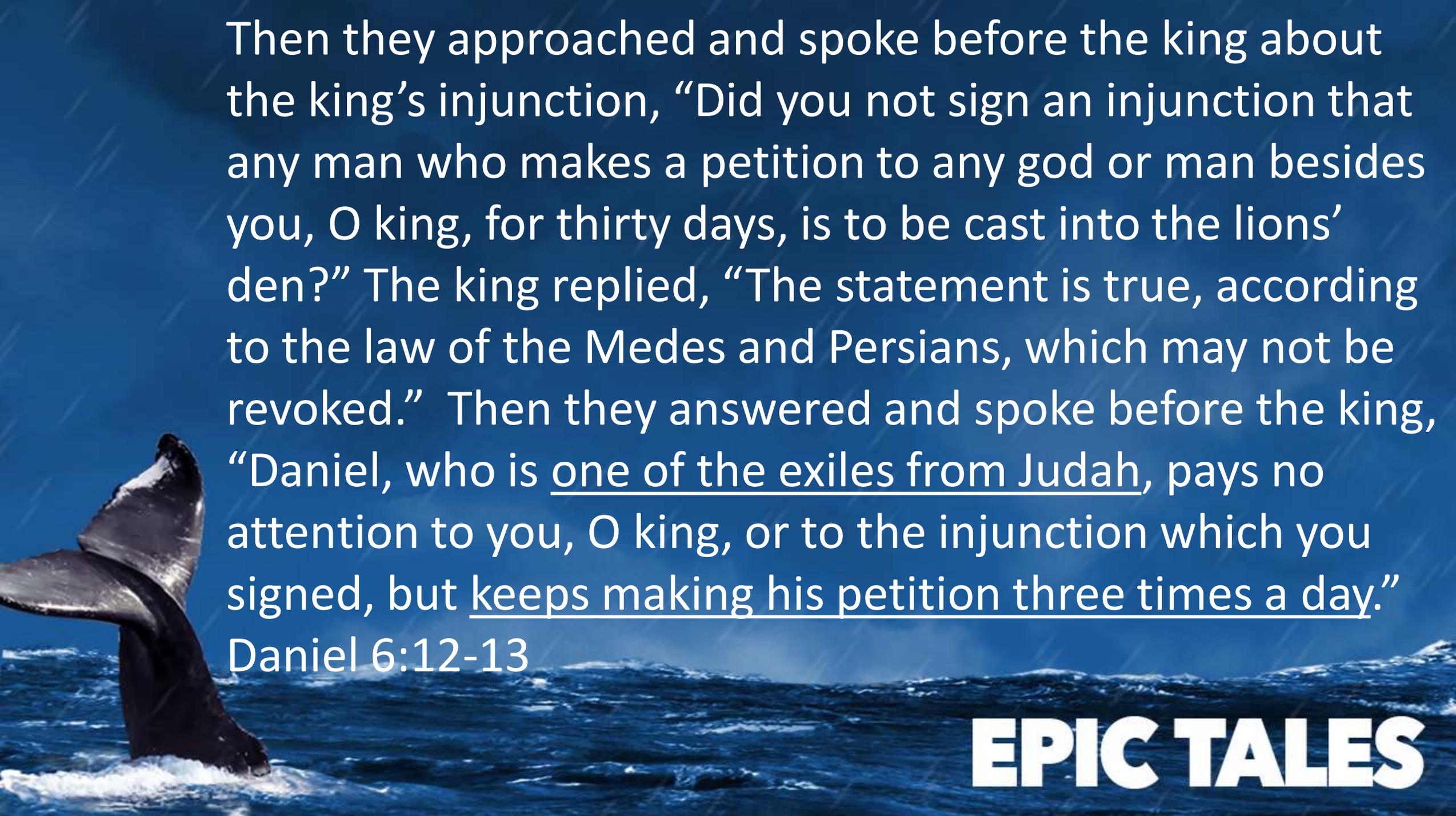


A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the blue ocean, set against a background of a blue sky with light rays. The whale's tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the base where it meets the water.

King Solomon prayed at the dedication of the Temple...

“if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name; then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Your dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive Your people who have sinned against You and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You, and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive, that they may have compassion on them...” 1 Kings 8:48-50

EPIC TALES

A whale's tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean, creating a splash of white water. The background is a clear, deep blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king's injunction, "Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions' den?" The king replied, "The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked." Then they answered and spoke before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day."

Daniel 6:12-13

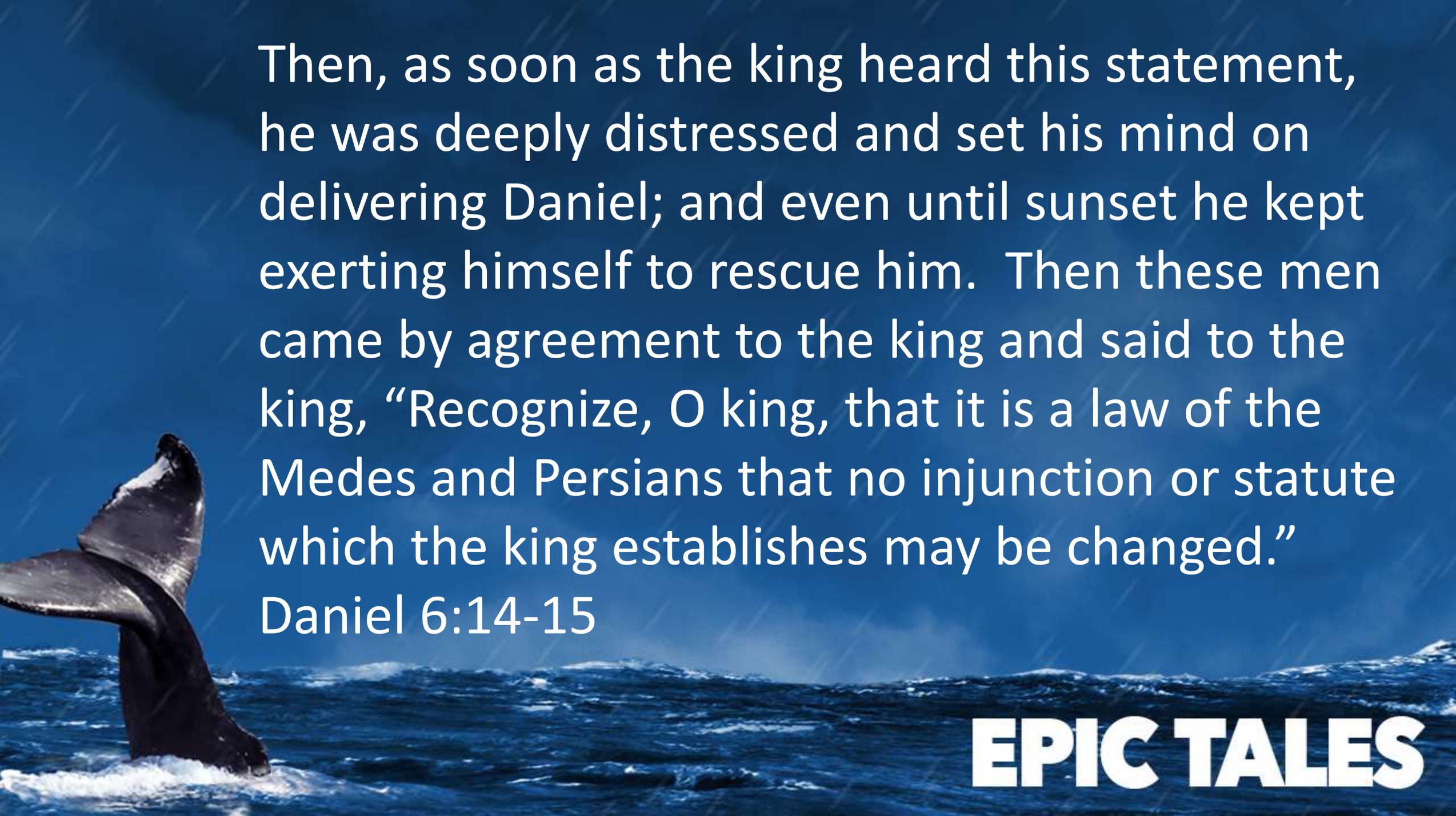
EPIC TALES

What would Jesus say to Daniel?

Jesus said, “Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:10

A large whale tail is visible on the left side of the image, emerging from the dark blue ocean. The background is a deep blue sky with a subtle pattern of white diagonal lines, suggesting rain or a digital effect.

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail breaching the surface of the ocean. The tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the point of exit. The water is a deep blue with white-capped waves. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Then, as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed and set his mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him. Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, “Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed.”

Daniel 6:14-15

EPIC TALES

The law of the Medes and Persians

“Now you write to the Jews as you see fit, in the king’s name, and seal it with the king’s signet ring; for a decree which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king’s signet ring may not be revoked.” Esther 8:8

EPIC TALES



Trusting God's Sovereignty

Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you." Daniel 6:16

*What have non-believers learned about trusting God by observing the faithfulness of believers?

EPIC TALES

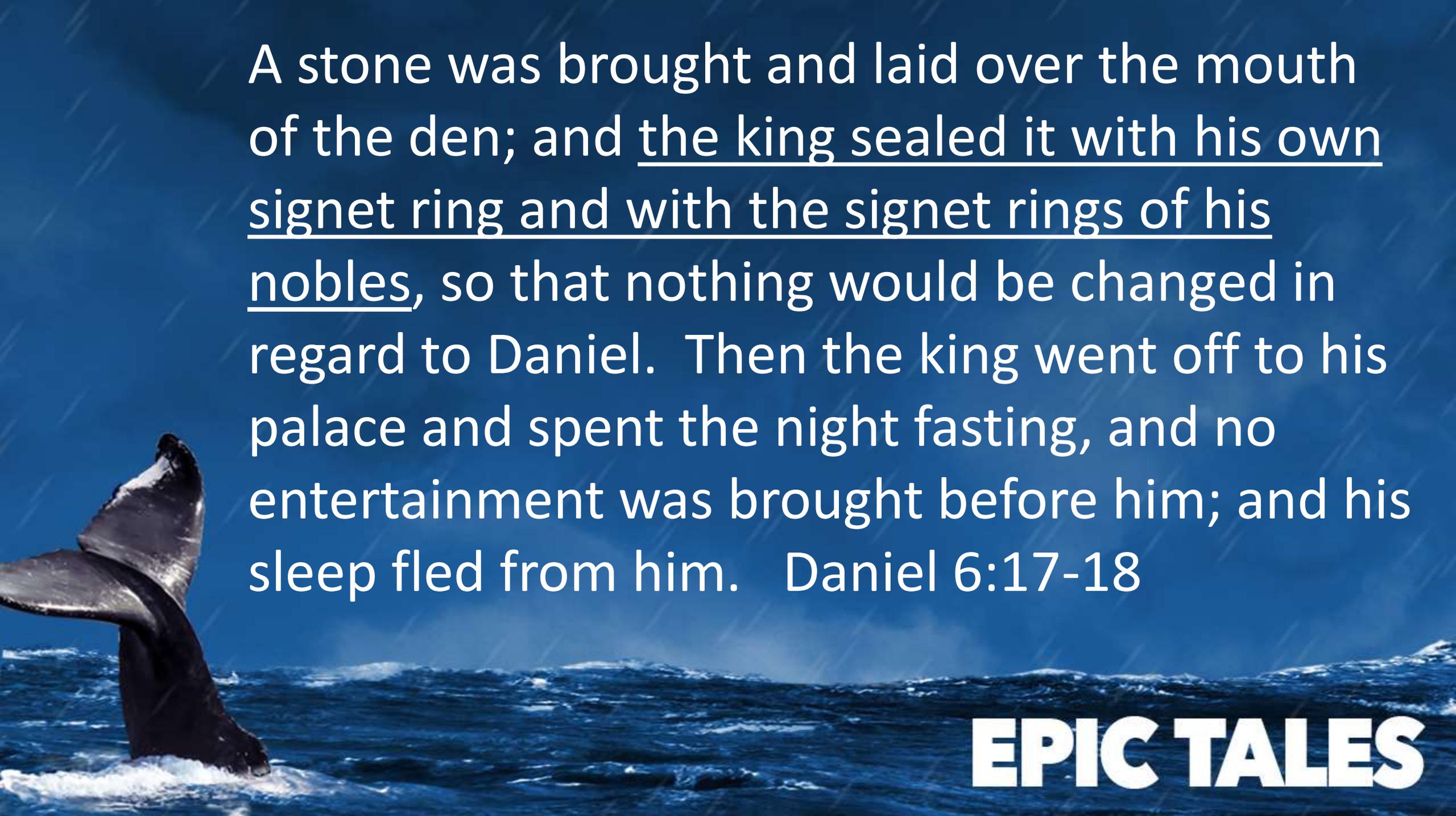
A dramatic scene of a whale's tail fluke breaching the ocean surface. The water is dark blue and turbulent, with white foam from the whale's splash. The sky is a deep, dark blue, suggesting a storm or late evening. The overall mood is epic and powerful.

Daniel and the Lions' Den in Art

EPIC TALES



John James 51

A whale tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean, creating a splash of white water. The background is a clear, deep blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel. Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him. Daniel 6:17-18

EPIC TALES





How does it feel in the lions' den?

- Frightening
- Dark
- Loud
- Smelly
- Lonely
- Defeated
- Abandoned
- Unsettled
- Attacked
- Targeted
- Hated
- Confusing



EPIC TALES

What would Jesus say to Daniel?

And looking at them Jesus said to them,
“With people this is impossible, but
with God all things are possible.”

Matthew 19:26

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background.

A close-up photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the dark blue ocean. The tail is dark grey and has a white patch near the top. The water is choppy with white foam at the base of the tail.

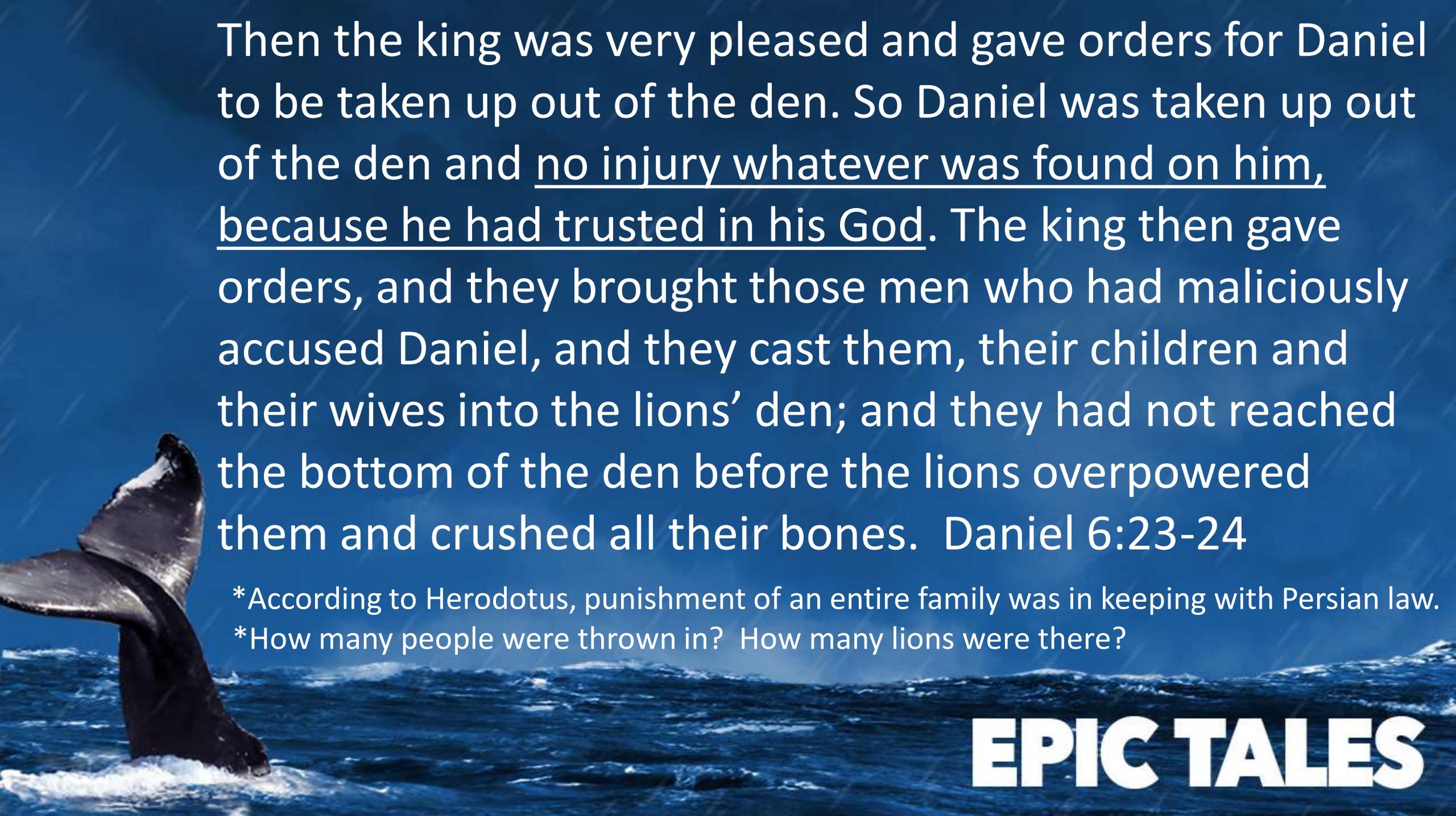
Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den. When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled [sad] voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"

Daniel 6:19-20

EPIC TALES



Then Daniel spoke to the king, “O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime.”
Daniel 6:21-22

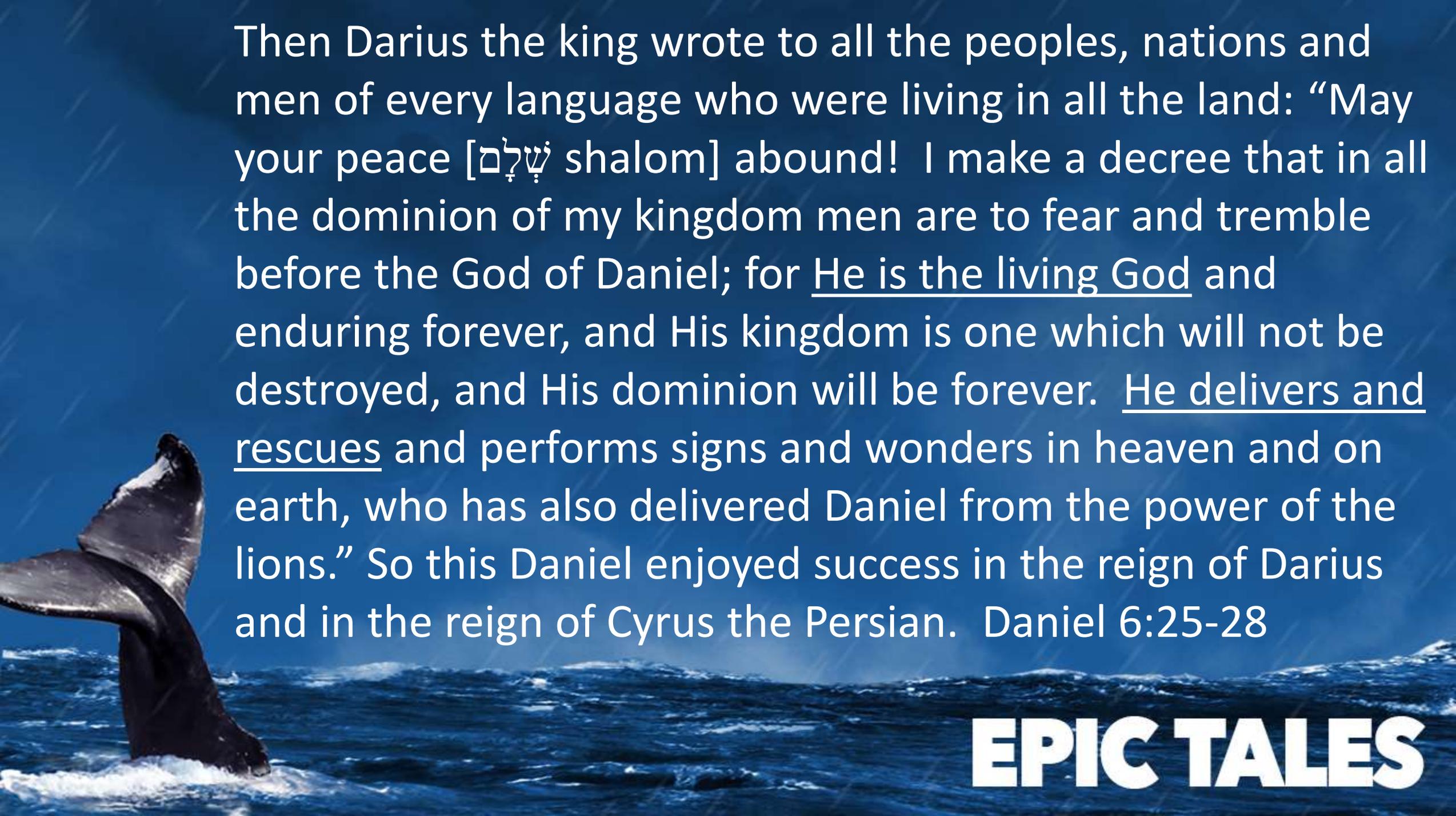
A whale tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean on the left side of the image. The water is a deep blue with white foam from the whale's splash. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image in white font.

Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones. Daniel 6:23-24

*According to Herodotus, punishment of an entire family was in keeping with Persian law.

*How many people were thrown in? How many lions were there?

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the blue ocean, set against a background of a blue sky with light rays. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language who were living in all the land: “May your peace [שָׁלוֹם shalom] abound! I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; for He is the living God and enduring forever, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and His dominion will be forever. He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has also delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.” So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. Daniel 6:25-28

EPIC TALES

Lessons from Daniel's Life

- God blesses your diligence and others may resent it.
- Is serving God privately and faithfully the routine of your spiritual life?
- Past faithfulness to God does not ensure present ease in life.
- Faithfulness in younger years does not guarantee “spiritual ease” in later years.
- Will you stand up for God and His Word when surrounded or threatened by non-believers?

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background.

EPIC TALES

Lessons from Daniel's Life

- Those who hate God also hate God's faithful people.
- Non-believers notice when believers serve God faithfully in the midst of painful struggles (like the lions' den).
- Growing old does not mean that God is finished with you.
- Daniel was shielded by the power of God through faith.
 - “And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions...” Hebrews 11:32-33

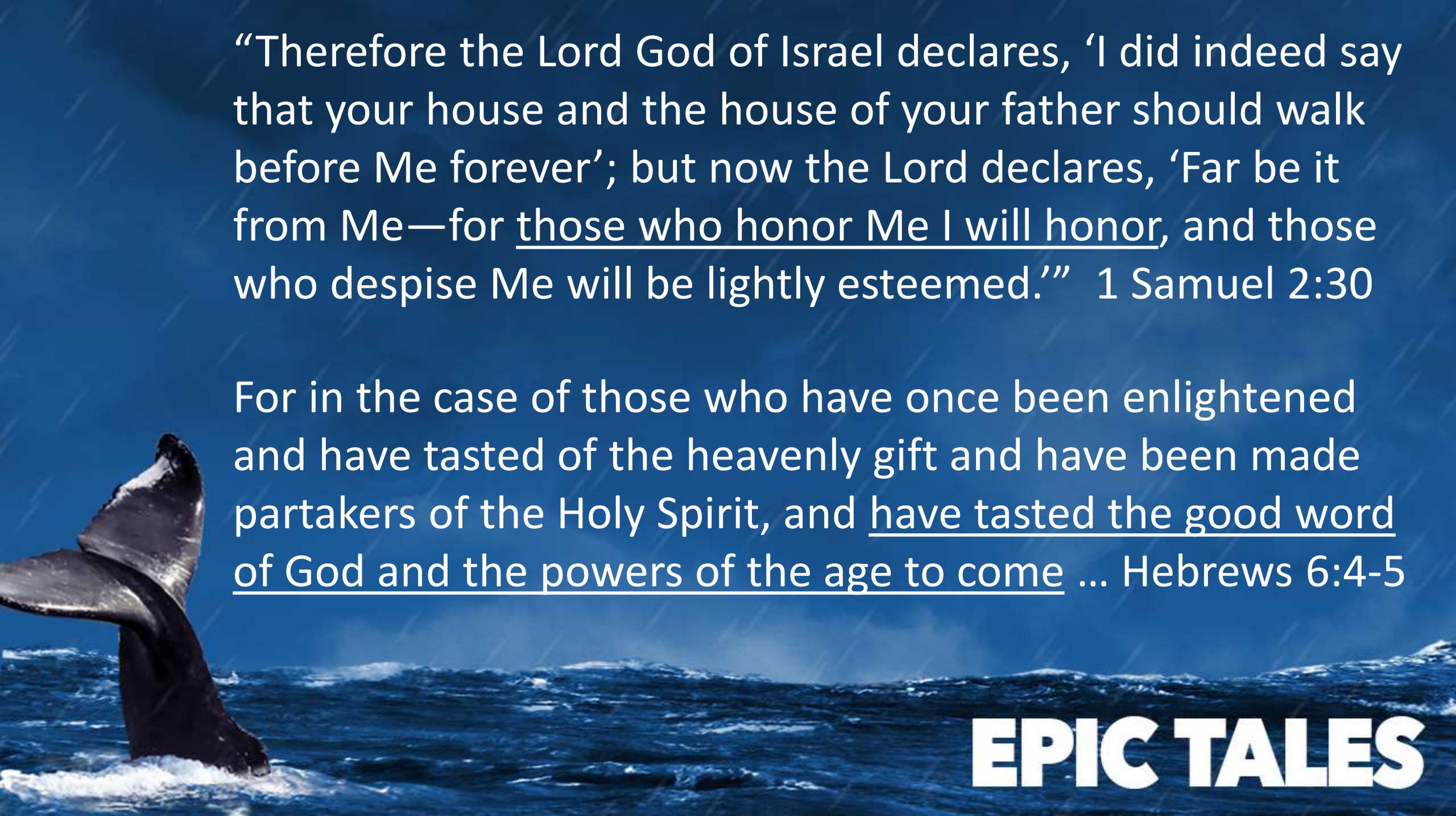
A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background.

EPIC TALES

Daniel's life is a
demonstration that
Blessing Follows Obedience



EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the blue ocean, set against a background of a blue sky with light rain or mist. The whale's tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the base where it meets the water.

“Therefore the Lord God of Israel declares, ‘I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever’; but now the Lord declares, ‘Far be it from Me—for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed.’” 1 Samuel 2:30

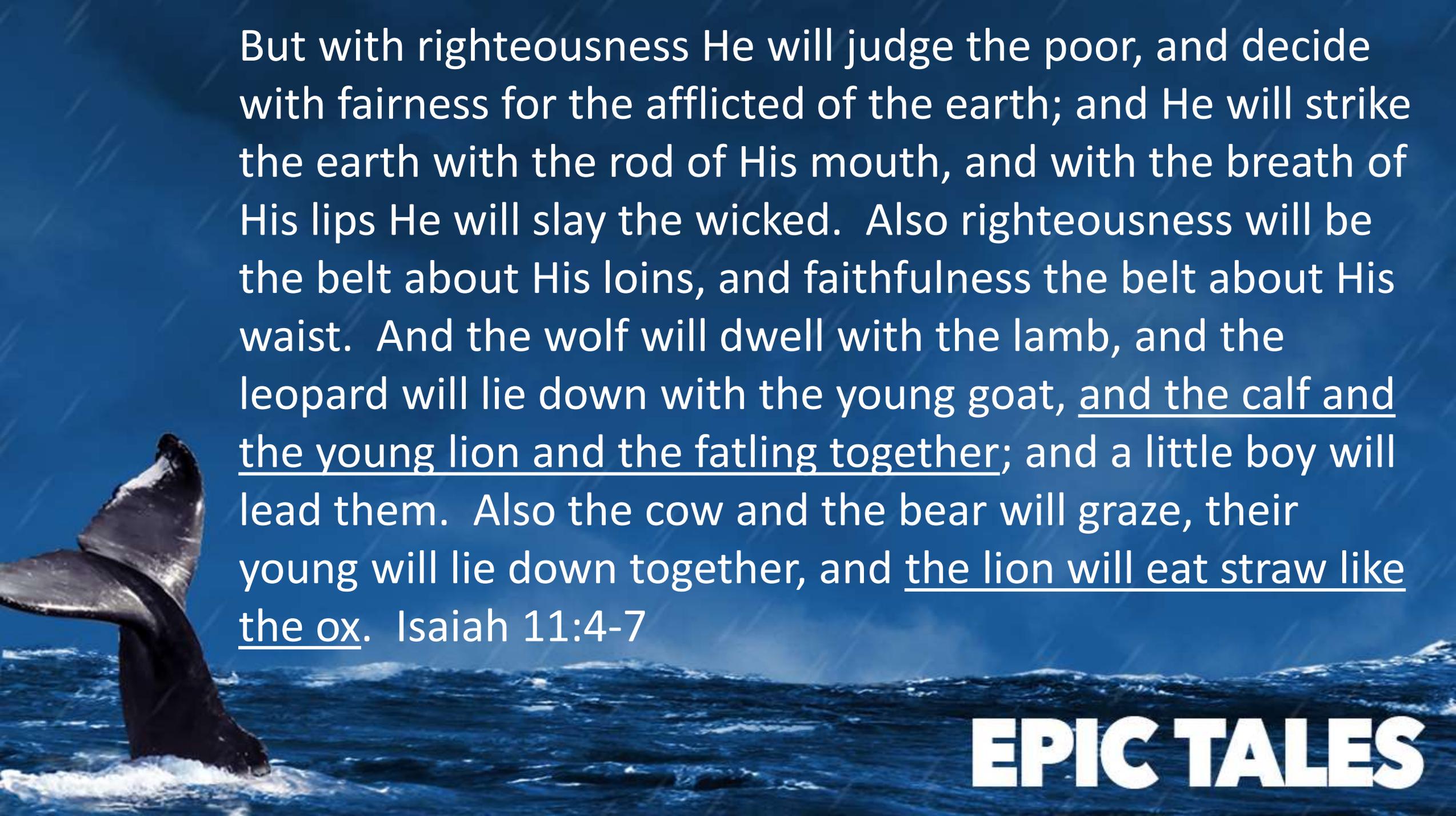
For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come ... Hebrews 6:4-5

EPIC TALES

Prophecy about the coming Messiah...

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse [father of King David], and a branch [נֶצֶר netser] from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And He will delight in the fear of the Lord, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; Isaiah 11:1-3

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail breaching the surface of the ocean. The tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the base where it meets the water. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist. And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. Isaiah 11:4-7

EPIC TALES

Messiah Jesus has come and is
coming again soon.

Have you given your heart to the
God who is greater than the
lions you face?

EPIC TALES