

**A COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL  
CONTAINING A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION  
WITH CHAPTER QUESTIONS  
AND SPECIAL STUDIES**

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### *Dedication*

*To Judy, my faithful wife of 64 happy years and four wonderful children Bruce, Ramona, Rachel and Rebecca, who have supported and encouraged me in preaching the gospel of Christ, serving as the first Director of the West Virginia School of Preaching and being privileged to teach the Book of Daniel as a faculty member. Without their love and support my efforts would not have been so rewarding and satisfying.*

## *Author's Preface*

It has been a great joy to my life to be able to study and teach from the prophets of the Old Testament. My particular fields of study have been the Minor Prophets, Isaiah, and Daniel. One would think that a book of only twelve chapters would not contain enough to hold one's interest. But this is surely not the case! Daniel is a book of great thoughts and themes—a history of the world as overseen by the God of heaven, the rise and fall of the great kingdoms of ancient history, the coming of the kingdom of the Messiah, the redemptive work of the Messiah, his Ascension and Coronation. The prophet Daniel is one of the truly wonderful characters of the Bible—living his entire adult life in captivity and in service to foreign kings. Through all this he maintained an exemplary, courageous faith.

Little is said about Daniel's contact with his own people, the captive Hebrews. But where would they be without him? It is evident as one reads through the Book of Daniel that God needed a man who could stand in the presence of heathen kings and be his representative, and to teach them that they are not the controllers of history, God is! They were to learn that "God rules in the kingdoms of men and gives it to whom he will" (4:25).

The Book of Daniel has suffered much at the hands of Modernists and Bible Critics. The visions and prophecies of the book are so exacting that the critics have strenuously objected to the integrity of the book as having been written by Daniel of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. An Introduction is included to help Bible readers and students deal with some of the objections of the critics. Many religionists have allowed their imaginations to run wild in Daniel's book. They have used them as their "prophecy playground." Comments in the text and in special studies have dealt with some of these errors. An attempt has been made in the comments of the book to be as historically careful and biblically accurate as possible, taking great pains to interpret Daniel's words in light of New Testament teaching as it unfolds the eternal plan of salvation.

No book on subjects like this comes without help from others and the study of other's books and commentaries. I am indebted to Charles Pledge, my first teacher of this great book at the Memphis School of Preaching, and to Curtis Cates who taught a course on the Book of Daniel at Alabama Christian School of Religion (now Southern Christian University). Helpful commentaries have been those of Rex Turner, Sr., Homer Hailey, and many others of our brethren, plus those from the broad field of conservative authors. I am in the debt of these great students of God's word and the encouragement of students and fellow faculty members at West Virginia School of Preaching. My gracious thanks to them all.

I have used the American Standard Version of 1901 as the text for this commentary.

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Emanuel Daugherty

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# THE HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

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## Part One

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Although there have been many who have questioned the authorship of the Old Testament through the ages (e.g. Porphyry, 332 A.D., Julian the Apostate, 331 A.D., Theodore of Mopuestia, 428 A.D., Ibn Hazm of Cordoba, Spain 994 A.D., Thomas Hobbes, Spinoza, 1632 A.D., etc.), generally speaking, there was no criticism of a concentrated nature until the 18th century and the rise of deistic philosophy.<sup>1</sup> The Documentary Hypothesis--the theory that the Pentateuch was a compilation of selections from several different written documents composed at different places and times over a period of five centuries, long after Moses--was first espoused by Jean Astruc, a French physician.<sup>2</sup> Astruc, in his studies, noted that God was referred to as Elohim in Genesis 1 and Jehovah in Genesis 2. He supposed then that Moses must have used previously written accounts of the Creation passed down by his ancestors, and that he, Moses, was only the compiler or editor and not the author of the Pentateuch.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after this men such as Eichhorn, DeWette, and Geddes began dissecting the Pentateuch and concluded that Moses wrote none of it, but that it was written no earlier than the time of David (1,000 B.C.) and the book of Deuteronomy was written during the time of Hilkiyah and Josiah (621 B.C.) in an effort to solidify the kingdom of Judah and it was “found” at just the right “psychological moment” to accomplish this feat.<sup>4</sup> This fragmenting, dissecting and late-dating of the Old Testament books continued until the time of Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen. With these three men as the leading exponents, the Documentary Hypothesis was now restated with great “skill and

The Documentary Hypothesis was popularized in England and America by such men as

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<sup>1</sup>Edward J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 113-120

<sup>2</sup>Gleason L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 73

<sup>3</sup>Young, *Introduction*, 119-120

<sup>4</sup>Archer, *Introduction*, 74

persuasiveness"<sup>5</sup> supporting the J E P D sequence upon an evolutionary basis.

“This was the age in which Charles Darwin’s Origin of Species was capturing the allegiance of the scholarly and scientific world, and the theory of development from primitive animism to sophisticated monotheism as set forth by Wellhausen and his followers fit admirably into Hegelian Dialecticism (Philosophy) and Darwinian Evolutionism. The age was ripe for the Documentary Theory.”<sup>6</sup>

The Documentary Hypothesis was popularized in England and America by such men as William Robertson Smith, Samuel R. Driver, George Adam Smith, and Charles Augustus Briggs.<sup>7</sup> Following are the dates suggested for the writing of the Pentateuch by the Higher Critics:

**J - Jehovah Code**, written about 850 B.C. by an unknown writer.

**E - Elohim Code**, written about 750 B.C. by an unknown writer. About 650 B.C. an unknown redactor combined J and E into a single document.

**D - Deuteronomy**, composed possibly under the direction of the high priest Hilkiah as an instigation of reform during the days of King Josiah in 621 B.C. Members of this same Deuteronomic school later reworked the historical accounts recorded in Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings.

**P - Priestly Code**, composed in various stages, all the way from Ezekiel with his Holiness Code (Lev. 17-26) ca. 570 B.C. (known as "H") to Ezra, “the ready scribe” in the Law of Moses.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, the critics dated the books of Moses and other historical books 600 to 1,000 years after the traditional dates, always to unknown writers, compilers, and redactors. Theirs is an effort to completely do away with any hint of inspiration and make the Bible a purely human book, a product of the evolution of religion. When these critics finished with the Pentateuch and books of history they proceeded on to the rest of the Old Testament ripping and tearing until it looked like so much confetti.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 79,

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 79,

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 79,

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 81

<sup>9</sup>Young, *Introduction*, 209-210



In spite of the fact that the Documentary Theory has been completely and fully answered by such scholars as Hengstenburg, Haevernick, C.F. Kiel, and William Henry Green, it still persists and will do so until some other fanciful theory is strong enough to replace it.<sup>10</sup>

### **THE HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL**

The Book of Daniel is described by many modernist scholars as "vaticinium ex eventu," a prophecy written after the event.<sup>11</sup> It is their contention that a "pious and learned Jew"<sup>12</sup> of the second century B. C. wrote the book in an effort to encourage the Maccabees in their overthrow of the wicked and hated Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>13</sup> Oesterley and Robinson in their Introduction are highly critical of the author of Daniel. After citing several alleged criticisms of the book, they go on to say, "It is, therefore, extremely difficult to believe that any writer could be so ignorant of the history of his times as this writer would have been had he lived in the sixth century; so that when he represents himself as having lived at that time he does so for a particular purpose."<sup>14</sup>

Driver takes the position that Daniel was a "real historical person, one of the Jewish exiles in Babylon, who with his three companions was noted for his staunch adherence to the principles of his religion, who attained a position of influence at the court of Babylon who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream and foretold, as a seer, something of the future fate of the Chaldean and Persian empires." He then goes on to state that the unknown writer of the third century B.C. probably had access to some materials written about Daniel, or some history (e.g., Berossus, ca. 300 B.C.) dealing with the events of Babylon in the 6th century. "These traditions are cast by the author into a

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<sup>10</sup>Archer, *Introduction*, 80

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 367

<sup>12</sup>R.A.Torrey and A.C.Dixon *The Fundamentals*, Vol. 1 (Los Angeles: Bible Institute, 1917; reprint edition, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1972) 260

<sup>13</sup>R.K.Harrison *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1969) 1110

<sup>14</sup>W.O.E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson *An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1963) 335

literary form with a special view to the circumstances of his own time."<sup>15</sup> All of this is done to avoid any concession to the idea of the supernatural, predictive element in prophecy.

The destructive critics argue for a late date on the basis of three alleged evidence: historical, linguistic, and theological.<sup>16</sup>

## **ALLEGED HISTORICAL EVIDENCE AGAINST THE TRADITIONAL AUTHORSHIP OF DANIEL**

### **Position in the Hagiographa**

It is alleged that Daniel is of late date because it is listed with the sacred writings instead of the prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, this does nothing to prove a late date since the other books of this grouping are of great antiquity--Job (perhaps the most ancient of all the Old Testament books), Psalms, Proverbs, etc.<sup>17</sup> Harrison points out that his being listed in the Hagiographa instead of the Prophets only shows that Daniel may not have been regarded as having occupied the prophetic office as such. He was not in the classic sense associated with Isaiah, Jeremiah or Hosea, etc. "He did not function as a spiritual mediator between God and the theocratic community, despite the fact that he was endowed with certain conspicuous prophetic gifts. Like Joseph of old, he was a Hebrew statesman in a heathen court."<sup>18</sup> Archer suggests, "It was doubtless because of the mixed character of this book partaking partly of the historical narratives and partly of prophetic vision that the Jewish scribes relegated it to the third or miscellaneous category of the canon."<sup>19</sup> "It is more probable that the book was placed in this part of the Hebrew Canon because Daniel is not called a NABHI (prophet), but was rather a HOZEH (seer) and a HAKHAM (wise man). None but the works of the NEBHIIIM were put in the second part of the Jewish Canon, the third being reserved for the heterogeneous works of seers, wise men, and priests, or for those that do

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<sup>15</sup>S.R. Driver *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1899) 11

<sup>16</sup>Paul T. Butler *Commentary on Daniel* (Joplin: College Press, 1970) 5

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 5

<sup>18</sup>Harrison, *Introduction*, 1123

<sup>19</sup>Archer, *Introduction*, 369

not mention the name or work of a prophet, or that are poetical in form." <sup>20</sup> However, consider the following: (1) Little is known of the actual process involved in the formation of the Hebrew canon, to which the higher critics admit. (2) The order of the books in the Hebrew canon has nothing to do with the date of the composition of the books. (3) The earliest evidence of Daniel's inclusion in the Hagiographa is to be placed somewhere between the fifth and eighth centuries A.D. (4) After giving forty-three different lists containing the books of the Old Testament Robert D. Wilson stated:

"No two present exactly the same order for the books comprising the Old Testament canon; so that it can be affirmed positively that the order of those books was never fixed by any accepted authority of either the Jewish or Christian church."<sup>21</sup>

### **Daniel 1:1 An Historical Misstatement**

Daniel 1:1 is said to be an error because it "seemingly" is at odds with Jeremiah 25:1; there is a year difference in the date in the two passages. "As Daniel was writing primarily to Jews of Babylon, he would naturally use the system of dating that was employed there; and this system differed in its method of denoting the first year of a reign from that used by the Egyptians and by the Jews of Jerusalem for whom Jeremiah wrote."<sup>22</sup>

Harrison says the Babylonians computed time from the year of the accession to the kingdom, the year in which their king ascended the throne. In Palestine there was no accession year as such and the period of one's rule was computed with the year of accession figured in as the first year of the particular reign. Daniel then reckoned according to the Babylonian system while Jeremiah followed the Palestinian system. Thus, the third year of Daniel is equal to the fourth year of Jeremiah, and the difficulty is resolved. It is unlikely that a Jew of the second century B.C. would use a method of keeping time that was (1) completely foreign to him living in Palestine and (2) that had

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<sup>20</sup>James Orr, editor *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1939) Vol.2, 783

<sup>21</sup>Robert D. Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1959. Note: In his book *Studies in the Book of Daniel*, R.D. Wilson devotes 64 pages to The Book of Daniel and the Canon, giving exhaustive evidence to prove Daniel of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. is the writer of the entire book and its place in the canon of the O.T. is not to be denied.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 785-786

been obsolete for over three centuries.<sup>23</sup>

### **Use of the Term "Chaldean"**

This term is used by Daniel to ethnically describe the wise men or soothsayers. The critics allege that this term would not have been used during Nebuchadnezzar's time and this shows Daniel to be of late composition. Young cites several references from the ancient history of Herodotus to show that this term was used to describe priests and soothsayers since the time of Cyrus.<sup>24</sup> "It is strange that none of the critics consulted Herodotus, the historian nearest to Daniel in time. He visited Babylon in the same century with Daniel and uses the word in the same sense as Daniel and in no other."<sup>25</sup>

### **Belshazzar**

Several criticisms have centered around Belshazzar. Earlier critics thought chapter 5 to be unhistorical because Nabonidus was known to be the last king of Babylon. Cuneiform tablets have since been discovered calling Belshazzar "the son of the king" thus serving to discredit this criticism.<sup>26</sup> Also the fact that Nebuchadnezzar is called in Daniel "the father" of Belshazzar (Daniel 5:2 ASV) causes the critics to challenge this portion of the book. They say that only a late author would have supposed that he was Nebuchadnezzar's son. "This argument overlooks the fact that by ancient usage the term 'son' often referred to a successor in the same office whether or not there was a blood relationship."<sup>27</sup> This practice is common in the Bible. Matthew 1:1 says, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham," yet there were many centuries separating Jesus from these ancestors. As to Belshazzar being referred to as 'king' offers no problem. Nabonidus was the king in absentia while Belshazzar his son acted as co-regent running the affairs

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<sup>23</sup>Harrison, *Introduction*, 1112-1113

<sup>24</sup>Young, *Introduction*. 366

<sup>25</sup>Torry and Dixon, *The Fundamentals*, 268

<sup>26</sup>Archer, *Introduction*, 370

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 371

of government.<sup>28</sup> Also, the mother of Belshazzar, Nicotris, was the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar which would make for the lineal descent as given by Daniel.<sup>29</sup>

### **Darius the Mede**

It is contended that Darius the Mede is confused by the author of Daniel with Darius the son of Hystaspes the third in succession from Cyrus and was really a Persian instead of a Mede. Whitcomb in his book points out that two persons, Ugbaru and Gubaru, are mentioned in the Nabonidus Chronicle, and that Ugbaru, governor of Gutium, was associated with the fall of Babylon and died shortly thereafter. Upon this, Gubaru was appointed governor of Babylon and the region beyond the River, and it is he who is now regarded as the most suitable individual for the designation of Darius the Mede.<sup>30</sup> This ties in with the internal evidence (1) Darius was “made king over the realm of the Chaldeans (Daniel 9:1). Since he was “made” king, someone with higher authority must have appointed him (Cyrus). (2) Also, Darius received the kingdom at age sixty-two (Daniel 5:31); yet the other Darius was a relatively young man according to the historians. (3) There is no valid explanation for calling Darius the son of Hystaspes a Mede when he is known to be a descendent of an ancient Persian royal line.<sup>31</sup>

### **ALLEGED LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE AGAINST THE TRADITIONAL AUTHORSHIP OF DANIEL**

S. R. Driver drives home the critics point on the linguistic evidence: “The verdict of the language of Daniel is thus clear. The PERSIAN words presuppose a period after the Persian empire had been well established: the Greek words DEMAND, the Hebrew SUPPORTS, and the Aramaic PERMITS, a date AFTER THE CONQUEST OF PALESTINE BY ALEXANDER THE GREAT (B.C. 332).”<sup>32</sup> Let us examine the evidence.

### **Three Greek Words**

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<sup>28</sup>Harrison, *Introduction*, 1120

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 1120

<sup>30</sup>Archer, *Introduction*, 372; also see Harrison, 1122

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 372

<sup>32</sup>Driver, *Introduction* ǀ

It is alleged that these three Greek terms referring to instruments of music would not have been used by a Jewish writer until after the time of Alexander the Great. However, the Greeks were slaves of the Assyrians as early as Sargon II (722-705 B.C.), and there were Greek soldiers serving in the Assyrian army. On the Neo-Babylonian ration tablets published by E.F. Weidner, Grecian carpenters and shipbuilders are mentioned among the recipients of rations from Nebuchadnezzar's commissary--along with musicians from Ashkelon and elsewhere.<sup>33</sup> A Greek coin, the drachma, is mentioned in Ezra 2:69 and Nehemiah 7:70,72 as used in Persian times.<sup>34</sup> □ □

When all things are considered the presence of these three Greek words are outstanding evidence for the early date of Daniel. If the book of Daniel was written during the time of the Maccabees (170 B.C.), Palestine had been under influence of the Greeks for 160 years and Greek terms would certainly have been in common usage. The Books of Maccabees are filled with terms from Greek culture and custom.<sup>35</sup> If the book of Daniel was written, as they say, at the very height of Greek influence in Palestine, why are there only three Greek words used?

“This is especially significant in view of the fact that the Aramaic of Daniel was a linguistic medium which readily absorbed foreign terminology. It includes approximately fifteen words of Persian origin, almost all of which relate to government and politics. It is hard to conceive, therefore, how after Greek had been the language of government for over 160 years, no single term pertaining to politics or administration had ever intruded into Palestinian Aramaic. The same generalization holds good for the Hebrew portions as well. . . The Hebrew chapters contain not a single word of Greek origin (even though, according to some critics, Daniel's Hebrew is later than his Aramaic sections).”<sup>36</sup>

### **Aramaic Sections of Daniel**

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<sup>33</sup>Archer, *Introduction*, 375

<sup>34</sup>R. Laird Harris, *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, (1957), 148

<sup>35</sup>W. A. Criswell, *Expository Sermons on the Book of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing, 1969) 45

<sup>36</sup>Archer, *Introduction*, 378

Many object to an early date for Daniel based on the Aramaic section, chapters 2-7, and the rest of the book, 1, 8-12 in Hebrew. Yet the Jews took no exception to the Aramaic sections of Ezra and the critics accept it as an authentic document of the middle of the fifth century. Why, then, should the six Aramaic chapters in Daniel be dated at least two centuries later?<sup>37</sup>

"As to the question of why half the book was written in Aramaic and half in Hebrew, the reason for the choice is fairly obvious. Those portions of Daniel's prophecy which deal generally with Gentile affairs (the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the humiliation of that king in the episode of the fiery furnace and by his seven years of insanity, and also the experiences of Belshazzar and Darius the Mede) were put into a linguistic medium which all the public could appreciate whether Jew or Gentile. But those portions which were of particularly Jewish interest (Chaps. 1, 8-12) were put into Hebrew in order that they might be understood by the Jews alone. This was peculiarly appropriate because of the command in chapter 12 to keep these later predictions more or less secret and seal them up until the time of fulfillment.<sup>38</sup>

The Hebrew of Daniel shows definite Persian influence; with fifteen Persian terms relating to government indicating its origin during the period of Persian domination. "There is no trace whatsoever of Greek influence in the language" as there is with books written during the time of the Maccabees.<sup>39</sup>

## **ALLEGED THEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE AGAINST THE TRADITIONAL AUTHORSHIP OF DANIEL**

### **Angels, Resurrection, Judgment, Messiah**

The Higher Critics assign the book of Daniel theologically to the period of the Maccabees because of their predetermined evolutionary attitude toward the word of God. Daniel, they say, if written in the 6th century B.C., was too far advanced theologically because of his descriptions of angels, the resurrection, the judgment, and the Messiah. The religious evolution of Israel was not that far advanced, in their view, until the second century B.C. This disregards any shadow of inspiration and relegates the Bible wholly to the mind of man.

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 378

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 378

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 378

It can easily be demonstrated that the Bible speaks of these things throughout, but if the theory of theological evolution were true, we would have none of these concepts developed until after the book of Malachi. But consider: Genesis 3:24; Ezekiel 1, the cherubim, an order of angels; Isaiah 6, the seraphim. Angels are described throughout the Old Testament as messengers revealing God's will and protecting his people. Job 19:25-26 speaks of the resurrection; also, Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37; and Elijah and Elisha raised the dead. Scenes of the judgement are found in nearly every prophetic book; see also Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Exodus 32:32-33; and Psalms 69:28. The first announcement about the Messiah goes back to the Garden of Eden, Genesis 3:15. See also Genesis 49:10; Deuteronomy 18:15; Isaiah 9:1-7; 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 33:11-17; Micah 5:2; and so on...<sup>40</sup> "The glories which had connected with the return in the foreshortened vision of earlier prophets were now felt to be far off, and a more special revelation may have been necessary as a preparation for a period of silence and conflict. The very character of the Babylonian exile seems to have called for some signal exhibition of divine power. . . A new era was inaugurated by fresh signs."<sup>41</sup>

#### **No Interest in the Welfare of His Contemporaries<sup>42</sup>**

This can be answered by pointing out that Daniel as a statesman did not deal with the people, but with kings. His contemporary prophets, Ezekiel in Babylon, and Jeremiah in Judea, dealt on a more personal basis with the common people. Daniel's book has to do with events connected directly to his ordeals and trials in the palace and service of the kings and the coming kingdom of God.

#### **The Minuteness of the Predictions**

The critics contend "the main argument for the Maccabean date is that the history of the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian Empires is given in accurate detail until the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, the "vile person" of Daniel 11:21, and thereafter the prediction becomes hazy. This argument of course, assumes that detailed predictive prophecy is impossible."<sup>43</sup> However, when one

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 381

<sup>41</sup>McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968 reprint.) Vol 2 66

<sup>42</sup>Driver, *Introduction*, 509-510

<sup>43</sup>Harris, *Inspiration and Canonicity*, 149



looks at Daniel 9:24ff it is seen that there is accurate information bringing the reader right to the death of the Messiah and beyond. This can hardly be described as “hazy predictions.”

### **Objections to Miracles**

“Some are inclined to object to the miracles as such, inasmuch as they feel that a certain mania for miracles pervades the book. Any reader must concede that the miracles are more common in Daniel than in many other portions of the Scriptures. But that is merely in harmony with the fact that, according to the Scriptures, miracles predominate in certain eras, are bunched together for a time and then for a time fail to put in their appearance. Only the wisdom of God can determine when such eras have arrived, and why just during such times miracles are in order, and why they are not allowed to come to the forefront at another time. Some of the ages marked by miracles are those of Moses and the Exodus, Elijah and Elisha, and the age of the blessed Savior and His holy apostles. The only time comparable to these is the time of Daniel. But since it pleased God to stress both His omnipotence and His omniscience in an unusual way, it must be conceded that there is a propriety about having them appear in this age. Miracles speak a language that the duller ear of the heathen can comprehend.”<sup>44</sup>

## **ARGUMENTS FOR THE TRADITIONAL AUTHORSHIP OF DANIEL**

### **Daniel Says He Wrote It**

"In chapters 7:28; 8:1, 15, 27; 9:2; 12:5, the writer speaks of himself as 'I Daniel,' that is the same Daniel whose history is given in chapter 1. . .this is prima facie evidence, and is good evidence until it is set aside by substantial reasons. . . It cannot be doubted that the book bears on its face the appearance and the claim of having been written by the Daniel of the Captivity. . There is a certain air of simplicity, honesty and sincerity about it, which we expect to find in a genuine production."<sup>45</sup>

### **Daniel is Quoted by Jesus Christ (cf. Matthew 24:15 with Daniel 9:27)**

Some say Jesus was simply referring to “current tradition.” But this casts doubt on the character of Jesus. If Daniel did not say it, then the Lord should not have attributed this to him. Jesus would be guilty of deception and thus his trustworthiness in other areas would be in doubt.<sup>46</sup> . .it is impossible to doubt its genuineness without suspecting at the same time a willful cheat in its

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<sup>44</sup>H.C.Leupold, *Commentary on Daniel* (Columbus: Wartburg Press, 1949) 18-19

<sup>45</sup>Albert Barnes, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol.1, (Grand Rapids: Baker Pub., 1970) 48

<sup>46</sup>Young, *Introduction*, 360-361

contents; so that the accommodation in this case to national views would be tantamount to willfully confirming and sanctioning an unpardonable fraud.”<sup>47</sup> “Furthermore, and this is decisive, the usage of the NT shows that the NT writers did not look upon this book as a romance. It was none other than our LORD, the incarnate Son of God, Who spoke of Himself in terms taken from the book of Daniel. In the light of the decisive and authoritative usage of the NT, one is compelled to reject the idea that Daniel is a mere romance.”<sup>48</sup>

### **Daniel is Verified by Ezekiel (14:14-20; 28:3)**

This provides a very important testimony to the authenticity of the prophet. Daniel is represented as a character of unusual righteousness, ranking with the likes of Noah and Job, and as a model of justice and wisdom to whom had been allotted superior divine insight and revelation.<sup>49</sup> He is also a younger contemporary of Daniel!

### **Daniel is in the Septuagint Version**

The Septuagint was translated from Hebrew to Greek in Alexandria, Egypt about 270 B.C. The order of the books in the Septuagint places Daniel in the prophetic books. This is an interesting development since according to the critics, Daniel was not written until the time of Antiochus Epiphanes in 170-163 B.C. How could it be listed in the Septuagint before it was written!?!?

### **Daniel is Quoted in 1 Maccabees**

First Maccabees was composed about 160 B.C. and refers to Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11, “the abomination of desolation” as does Jesus in Matthew 24:15. If Daniel was written only five years before, would it have been recognized in this fashion so quickly? Further, in 1 Maccabees 2:49-70, Mattathias, encourages his sons by holding up Daniel and his three friends as heroic examples.<sup>50</sup> But if Daniel was written in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., when the book purports Daniel and his friends to have lived, then they most certainly could have been heroes to the generations to follow.

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<sup>47</sup>McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, Vol 2, 669

<sup>48</sup>Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 25

<sup>49</sup>McClintock and Strong, Vol 2, 669

<sup>50</sup>Criswell, *Sermons on Daniel*, 45 This passage from 1 Macc. 2 is a most stirring message from the faithful priest to his sons just prior to his death. To read it is to see the mighty impact of Daniel and the encouragement of his example in former years upon Mattathias and his sons.

## **Daniel and Josephus**

Josephus, the Jewish historian, wrote his *Antiquities of the Jews* in about 84 A.D. He tells of Alexander the Great coming into Jerusalem receiving a great welcome from Jaddua the high priest and being shown the prophecies of Daniel which tell of Alexander's destruction of the Persians, he worshiped God.<sup>51</sup> Of course the critics disallow testimony of this kind; however, there is no explanation as to why Alexander's armies destroyed the cities of Syria friendly to Darius of Persia, yet he not only spared Jerusalem but highly favored it.

## **Daniel is in the Dead Sea Scrolls**

The Dead Sea Scrolls found in 1948 in caves around the Dead Sea date back to almost the time the critics say Daniel was written. Yet the scrolls of Daniel are the same as the Masoretic texts from which the latest Bibles are translated--written partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic, and the Aramaic is not that of the Maccabean period but the eastern Aramaic of the 6th century B.C.<sup>52</sup> "The question may be raised as to whether the Dead Sea Scrolls help to substantiate the sixth century authorship of the book of Daniel. Charles Pfeiffer offers this thought:

The presence of the Book of Daniel at Qumran has been hailed as evidence for the sixth century date of the Biblical book. Accepting A.D.68 as the last date when manuscripts were copied (assuming that the scrolls were hidden then from the advancing Roman legions), it is unwise to appeal to the scrolls as affording 'proof' of the early date of Daniel. Daniel is in the Septuagint and is quoted in the New Testament. Its presence among the scrolls indicates it was among the books studied at Qumran. All the evidence accords with the traditional sixth century date. A Maccabean date would allow little time for its canonization presence in the Septuagint, the New Testament--and Qumran."<sup>53</sup>

## **Internal Evidence Demands A Sixth Century Author**

"The book betrays such an intimate acquaintance with Chaldean manners, customs, history, and religion as none, but a contemporary writer can fairly be supposed to possess. The scene and characters of the book are Oriental. . .The religious views, the ardent belief in the Messiah, the purity of that belief, the absences of all the notions and ceremonial practices of later Judaism, etc., the agreement of the book in these respects, with the genuine prophetic books, and more especially with the prophets in and after the exile--all this testifies to the

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<sup>51</sup>Flavius Josephus, *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, translated by William Whiston (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co. nd), 345

<sup>52</sup>Criswell, *Sermons on Daniel*, 46

<sup>53</sup>Charles F. Pfeiffer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing, 1969) 114

genuineness of Daniel.”<sup>54</sup>

The book must be treated as a unit, written by one author.<sup>55</sup>

### Concluding Statements

“To bring this matter of the treatment of the so-called historical inaccuracies to a close, since we have touched upon at least those issues which are most frequently mentioned, we would remind the reader that these are in no sense dead issues. One of the most recent introductions to the Old Testament (Robert Pfeiffer’s 753-758) within the space of five pages has the following criticisms to make under the head of the ‘Historical Background’ alone. We merely list phrases and sentences at random: ‘deliberately obscure language;’ ‘some verses defy interpretation;’ ‘historical recapitulations in obscure oracular language;’ ‘information sketchy and erroneous;’ ‘the first historical reference (1:1) is incorrect;’ ‘the writer has confused the statement;’ ‘contradiction with facts;’ ‘another anachronism;’ ‘to add to the confusion;’ ‘in the author’s muddled mind;’ ‘the author concluded that the kings of Persia from Cyrus to Alexander were only four, where they were eleven;’ ‘author’s misconceptions;’ ‘this unhistorical tale seems to be a confused reminiscence;’ ‘the author’s information is extremely vague.’”<sup>56</sup>

“The evidence derived from recent extra-biblical studies shows that there is no sufficient ground for holding that the Book of Daniel was not written at or near Babylon in the latter part of the sixth century B.C., as the prima-facie evidence of the book it-self indicates.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, Vol 2, 669

<sup>55</sup>Young, *Commentary*, 19-20 for a point, by point discussion of the unity of Daniel.

<sup>56</sup>Leupold, *Commentary*, 2656

<sup>57</sup>Robert Dick Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1959) 146

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## INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL

1. Why is the book of Daniel so heavily criticized?
  
2. What date do the higher critics fix on the authorship of Daniel?
  
3. Using that date, give three avenues of reasoning that would refute the late date?
  - 1)
  
  - 2)
  
  - 3)
  
4. Who in the O.T. authenticates Daniel as a real person?
  
5. Who in the N. T. authenticates Daniel?
  
6. What other evidence do we have for the early date of the book of Daniel?

## **AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL**

Emanuel Daugherty  
51<sup>st</sup> Annual Ohio Valley Lectures  
Harmar Hill Church of Christ, Marietta, OH  
Monday, August 12, 1996

I am thankful to the elders of the Harmar Hill church, to brother Varner and the lectureship committee for the kind invitation extended to me to speak on this the 51st Annual Ohio Valley Lectureship. There are not many lectureships in our brotherhood that have endured for this long and none that I know of insofar as church sponsored lectureships are concerned. You are to be commended for carrying on this great faith-building tradition.

My assignment is to give an overview of the wonderful and precious book of Daniel. The book of Isaiah, because of its great length, contains more messianic prophecies than Daniel. Much of Zechariah is shrouded in deep mystery. But Daniel's prophecies are filled with specific, pinpoint information that open up great detailed testimony of the coming Messiah and his kingdom. Sir Isaac Newton made the observation that "Christianity itself might be said to be founded on the prophecies of Daniel" (2nd Annual Ft. Worth Christian College Lectures, 1961, 348).

### **Historical Background**

It is almost impossible for one to have an adequate appreciation of the prophets without a good working knowledge of Old Testament history. The history of the kings of Israel and Judah after the death of Solomon is crucial to the understanding of the prophets. Additionally, for a study of the book of Daniel, it is very helpful to have a good general view of ancient secular history, especially from the time of the Babylonian Empire to the coming of Christ.

After the death of Solomon, the nation of Israel was divided into northern and southern kingdoms; Israel, consisting of 10 tribes, and Judah, made up of 2 tribes. Israel in the north was served by nineteen kings and eight dynasties. There were no good kings in the northern kingdom. Jeroboam, their first king, had corrupted the worship to such an extent that they never recovered from their path of idolatry and rebellion against God. The recurring words in the books of the Kings state "...and he did evil in the sight of the Lord... and walked in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat" (1 Kings 22:52). The northern kingdom went into captivity to the Assyrians in 721 B.C. and were "scattered among the nations" never returning as a body of people. The kingdom of Israel lasted a little over 200 years.

Judah was served by 19 kings and one usurper (Queen Athaliah). Like her sister in the north, Judah became idolatrous and very immoral. There were a few kings in Judah who attempted reforms to put away the idols from the land and improve the spiritual climate of the country, but by far the best were Hezekiah and Josiah. Through their efforts they were able to stave off God's wrath and judgment for a little while. During a time when King Hezekiah was ill, delegates from Babylon came paying a courtesy visit. King Hezekiah showed them all his treasure, whereupon the prophet Isaiah warned him that the time would come when the Babylonians would carry away all his treasure "and of thy sons that issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget shall they take away and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" (Isaiah 39:6-7). However, all the labors of good kings, priests and prophets were to no avail, and Judah, too, was taken captive by the Babylonians for a



period of seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11, 29:10)

Isaiah preceded Daniel by 100 years. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were Daniel's contemporaries although these three great prophets were separated by many miles and prophetic assignments. Daniel was among the first to go into captivity to Babylon (606 B.C.). He served God and his people as a statesman in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon, and on into the reign of Cyrus the Great of Persia. Ezekiel was taken in the second wave of captives (597 B.C.) and prophesied to the Hebrew captives in Babylon in the area of the River Chebar. Jeremiah was in Jerusalem preaching until Nebuchadnezzar overthrew the city and destroyed the temple (586 B.C.). Soon after, Jeremiah was taken by rebel Jews and forced to accompany them to Egypt where he died.

### **The Book of Daniel**

The Book of Daniel is laid out for us in basically two sections: Historical (1-6) and Prophetic (7-12). Overall, it is described as *apocalyptic*. Apocalyptic comes from a word which means revelation or unveiling. Daniel is written in highly figurative and symbolic language. It contains several accounts of visions and dreams concerning angels and great images, wild animals, warfare, and extended periods of time. Thus, God, through the prophet Daniel, is unveiling and revealing His scheme of the coming Messiah and His kingdom covering a period of the next 670 years. The reason for the hidden language becomes obvious when we understand the purpose of the book. Daniel's prophecies come at a time when his people are beginning a period of humiliation, suffering and bondage under a world-conquering foreign power. Though they would come back to their homeland after this ordeal, they would continue under the domination of a succession of world powers until the coming of God's own kingdom (See 2:31-46). This purposely obscure "code language" is used to convey events which would surely come to pass and encourage the readers, yet not arouse further antagonism from those under whose dominion they serve. The book of Revelation in the New Testament is written in the same way. Daniel speaks to the people of God of the rise and fall of pagan nations with fullness and definiteness as does no other prophetic book.

### **Criticism of the Book of Daniel**

The Book of Daniel comes under great criticism because of the exactness and detail of its prophecies. Critics of the book of Daniel, because of their anti-supernatural bias, say that a person of the 6th century B.C. could not have predicted future events with such accuracy.

They say that Daniel is a fictitious person; that the book is merely a romance written to bolster the faith of Jews undergoing persecution at the hands of Antiochus Epiphanes. They claim that the book contains incredible miracles, wild and fanciful visions and dreams; that the amazing accuracy of his prophecies is too accurate; that the book had to have been written after the events described had already taken place. Therefore, Daniel was written after the time of the Maccabees, circa 150 B.C.

But let us concede for the sake of argument that Daniel was written by an unknown scribe sometime after the time of Antiochus IV (165-160 B.C.) [*Please note, this is not my position*]. The critics are still left with an insurmountable dilemma, for Daniel's pinpoint prophecies did not stop with the era of Antiochus but went on into the Roman era. Thus, they are still faced with the problem of how a Jew in the Grecian Period could predict the rise of the Roman Empire and so accurately describe their ruthlessness and power over the people of God (7:19-28). Also, how would this late-

date writer be able to describe so precisely the nature and work of the Messiah in the prophecy of the 70 weeks (9:24-27)? Men are not able to predict with any accuracy even a year in the future let alone over 100 years into the future! Higher criticism has been ably refuted over the last century. There are several lines of reasoning that help us to see their bias against the supernatural. Briefly, we shall look at a few of them.

**First** and foremost, Jesus validates the authorship of Daniel (Matt 24:15). Would the Son of God give credence to a fictitious person? Would he call him a prophet if he wrote after the fact?

**Second**, Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel, speaks of him in his book twice. Ezekiel speaks of him as though he is well known to his readers and a model of virtue, ranking him with such worthies as Noah and Job (Ezek. 14:14,20). Later he implies that Daniel's wisdom is well known (28:3).

**Third**, Daniel is in the Septuagint Version translated in 270 B.C. Daniel would have to have been in existence for some time in order that it appear in the canon.

**Fourth**, Josephus, a Jewish historian of the 1st century A.D., tells of Alexander the Great coming to Jerusalem, and upon being shown the book of Daniel and events therein relating to him, he did not plunder the city but bestowed benefits upon them (**Antiquities of the Jews**, Book XI, chapter 8, p.345). What other reason would there have been for Alexander to leave Jerusalem unharmed as he conquered all the important cities as he went into Egypt?

**Fifth**, the book proves to be a unit throughout, the work of one man. The historical section blends into the prophecies with no strain whatsoever. The virtuous character of Daniel is constant throughout.

Many other evidence could be given, but these will have to suffice. When men deny that predictive prophecy is possible, their anti-scriptural prejudice is showing. There is no reason whatsoever for one to doubt the authenticity of this great book and its author, nor the time frame for the historical dating of the book.

### **Daniel the Man**

The name Daniel means "God is Judge" or "God is my Judge." The earliest information we have of Daniel is that he was a youth (12-20 years old) when taken as a captive to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim (1:1). He was of the royal seed which means that he was a prince in the line of the kings of Judah. It is probable that he was made a eunuch along with other captives (1:3). Chapter ten, verse 1 tells us that Daniel lived through the total of the seventy years' captivity and into at least the third year of the reign of Cyrus, king of Persia. This would make his age somewhere near ninety. It is likely that he did not return to his homeland but died in the land of his captivity.

Daniel is likened to Joseph, the great statesman serving in the court of the Pharaohs. Daniel was a man of integrity, purity, courage, and unexcelled devotion to God. He is described repeatedly as a man "greatly beloved" (9:23, 10:11,19).

Daniel was a great statesman to two of the greatest kings the world has known—Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus. He served in a position which gave honor and respect to these great kings without compromising his faith in God.

The scope of the Book of Daniel is well stated by that great defender of the faith, Foy Wallace, Jr.

“The history of Daniel is pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic; that is, concerning developments in the history of the Jews before and during and after the exile, together with the experiences of Daniel himself as a captive of the king’s court in Babylon. The prophetic portion relates, first, to the destinies of the existing monarchy and the successive monarchies of the world; and second, to the advent of the Messiah, the coming of Christ into the world; and third, to the course of future events that brought an end to the nation of Israel, and which resulted in the conversion of the Gentiles” (*God’s Prophetic Word*, 509).

### Daniel Chapter by Chapter

**One.** Daniel and his three friends were taken into captivity in Babylon where they were educated for three years in the language and learning of the Chaldeans. The youths were to be fed from the king's table, but Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself with this unclean food. Given permission by the steward to prove himself by eating vegetables and drinking only water, Daniel and his friends then were found to be more handsome and in better physical condition than the others. God was with them and blessed them with all learning and wisdom. Additionally, Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Daniel and his friends were promoted to service of King Nebuchadnezzar. The key to chapter one is Daniel's faith in God and purpose of heart (1:8).

**Two.** Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of an image in the form of a man with a head of gold, chest of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and feet of iron and clay mixed. Moreover, he saw a stone cut out of a mountain without hands that struck the image in the feet and destroyed it. Daniel interpreted this as four world empires, beginning with Babylon, who would rise up in succession. The stone cut out of the mountain represented the kingdom God which would be set up during the days of the fourth kingdom and would never be destroyed. The key is the eternal kingdom of God that would be established according to this prophecy (2:44-45).

**Three.** In this chapter is an account of Daniel's friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego who were put in a fiery furnace because they would not pay homage to a great idol. Under threat of death they maintained their faith and God delivered them. The key words are "our God is able" (3:17).

**Four.** Nebuchadnezzar, at the height of his power and glory, had a dream of a great tree in whose branches birds and animals dwelt and abode under, and partook of the abundance that came from the tree. The tree then was described as cut down, but a brass band was around the stump; he would be given a beast’s heart. This dream was interpreted as Nebuchadnezzar being the tree representing him as the great benefactor of all the earth. The tree cut down meant that the king would be humbled and become beast-like but would be restored to his throne. The key: Nebuchadnezzar was to learn that "God rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever he will" (4:25).

**Five.** The events of this chapter occur in last days of the Babylonian empire. Belshazzar, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, and co-regent with his father Nabonidus, was engaging in a drunken feast in which the sacred vessels from the temple in Jerusalem were being used for these profane activities. Belshazzar saw a handwriting these words upon the wall which said "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN" which Daniel interpreted as "God has numbered thy kingdom and brought it to an end; thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting; thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." The key in this chapter signals the end of the Babylonian empire and

identifies the beginning of the second world kingdom as that of the Medes and Persians (5:30-31).

**Six.** Events of this chapter take place during the time of Darius the Mede. Enemies of Daniel conspired a plot to get rid of him. Knowing that he prayed to the God of heaven, they devised a law and had it signed by the king that no petition could be made to any god or man other than king Darius for a period of thirty days. Daniel prayed in his window facing Jerusalem as he had always done and was thrown in a den of lions (Daniel by this time is nearly 90 years old). An angel of the Lord delivered him. The key is that Daniel maintained his trust and integrity. The threat of death did not alter his spiritual behavior (6:22-23).

**Seven.** Daniel had a dream and visions of four beasts rising up from the sea: a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a very fierce "diverse beast," with ten horns, and a judgment/coronation scene following. Daniel's interest was fixed on the fourth beast and wanted to know more about it. An angel interpreted the dream, telling him that the four beasts represent four kingdoms (note chapter 2), that the fourth beast would make war on the saints but will be judged. In the chapter the key thought is that the kingdom of the Messiah will be established, and the saints shall "*receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever*" (7:18).

**Eight.** Again, Daniel sees a vision of two animals: a ram with two horns, one higher than the other, and a he-goat with one great horn that was broken off and four horns grew up in its place. These two beasts represent the second and third kingdoms and are identified as the Medo/Persian empire and the Grecian empire. The great horn represents Alexander the Great and the four horns his four generals who divided his kingdom among themselves at his death. From among these four kings would come a king who would make great warfare against the people of God. At his hands they would suffer greatly. The key: Daniel was told that the vision pertained to many days in the future (8:26).

**Nine.** This chapter is one the great pivotal chapters of the Bible containing the most detailed prophetic information having to do with the work of the Messiah. Daniel, in reading the Book of Jeremiah, understood that the seventy years of the captivity were ended. He then prayed, confessing his sins and the sins of his people, and called upon the Lord to remember the destroyed city and the desolate temple and his people. The angel Gabriel was sent to answer his prayer, telling of things to take place over a period of "seventy weeks." During these prophetic seventy weeks the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt, the Messiah would come and accomplish his work, and then be killed in the midst of the seventieth week. After these events the city would again be destroyed. Key: God hears prayer and remembers his people (9:20-23).

**Ten, Eleven and Twelve.** These chapters form a unit and tell of a great warfare that would take place between kings from elements of the Grecian kingdom with the land of the Jews, and God's people being affected by this warfare. Much of chapter eleven tells of the terrible persecution to be brought on the Jews by a king from the north (the little horn of chapter 8:9-14, 21-26). Chapter twelve tells of the deliverance of the righteous and cleansing of the temple due to the desecration described in 11:31. The key: Great wisdom and faith would be required to survive (12:2-3).

A study of the Book of Daniel will prove to be enjoyable, exciting, enlightening, and encouraging to one's faith.

# **COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL**

## **DANIEL CHAPTER ONE**

**Captives in a Foreign Land**

**Daniel Chapter One Outlined**

**Introduction: Historical Setting**

**I. Nebuchadnezzar's Expedition Against Jerusalem (1-2)**

**II. The Royal Seed and Education in Babylon (3-7)**

**III. The Purpose of Daniel (8-16)**

**IV. Faith's Reward (17-21)**

## Chapter One

### Historical Setting

Under Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon had successfully rebelled against the Assyrians, conquering Nineveh (612 B.C.), which for all practical purposes brought the Assyrian Empire to an end and defeating them again at Carchemish (May-June 606-605 B.C.); Assyria's "last stand." Nebuchadnezzar continued the conquest of Assyrian territory by advancing on down the coast of the eastern Mediterranean to Jerusalem.

### Nebuchadnezzar's Expedition Against Jerusalem (1:1-2)

Critics are fond of looking for mistakes and errors in the Divine text. They begin with Daniel in the very first verse, claiming Daniel is in contradiction with Jeremiah when he says that it was Jehoiakim's *third* year; Jeremiah says it was the *fourth* year. The "error" is explained when we realize that Daniel and Jeremiah are using two different calendar systems (see *Daniel Introduction*, 7-8).

The Bible is a book of dates and places; in fact, it gives prominence to them. This ought to be of great interest and encouragement to the student of the Word of God, for this is actually great testimony of its truthfulness and integrity. It describes events that really happened, established in a time context.

"It is not an existential source book but rather God's inerrant record of His works in heaven and on earth. When our Lord told His disciples to 'understand' the book of Daniel (Matt 24:15), He must have included the chronological references of the book, since its chronology is the backbone of its historical (and thus theological) credibility. To study biblical chronology can thus be as 'spiritual' an activity as to study its theology, for everything God put into His written Word sheds light on its total message to mankind" (John C. Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Eerdmans's Bible Commentary, 21).

King Jehoiakim (Eliakim), the son of Josiah by Zebudah (2 Kings 23:34-36) began reigning at age 25 and reigned 11 years (608-597 B.C.) at Jerusalem. It was in his "third year" (606 B.C., Babylonian time, Daniel 1:1) and "fourth year" Judean time (Jeremiah 25:1), when Nebuchadnezzar came against him. His son, Jehoiachin (Jeconiah, 1 Chronicles 3:16, Coniah, Jeremiah 22:24-30), began ruling at age 18 and reigned 3 months and 10 days (2 Chronicles 36:9).

Another so-called error is the claim that Nebuchadnezzar did not lay siege to Jerusalem. Perhaps there was little bloodshed, but there was enough of a "siege" that captives were taken, and the treasures of the temple of Jehovah were carried off to Shinar, the ancient name of the land of Babylon (Genesis 10:8-9; 2 Kings 24:1-6; 2 Chronicles 36:6-7). The first appearance of Nebuchadnezzar to Jerusalem in 606 was broken off by the sickness and death of his father Nabopolassar, whereupon he hurried back to Babylon, no doubt to secure his throne. Nebuchadnezzar returned two more times: in 597 B.C., during which time he carried off 10,000 captives to Babylon, among who were King Jehoiakim, other princes and leaders of the people,

and Ezekiel, the prophet (2 Kings 24:14-16). He returned again in 586 when he burned the city, broke down the walls, destroyed the temple, and carried off other captives leaving only the poorest people in the land. In recompense for his rebellion against Babylon, King Zedekiah's two sons were slain before his eyes, then his eyes were put out, and he was led away in chains (2 Kings 25:8-12; Jeremiah 52:28-30).

Thus ended the earthly kingdom beginning with Saul, David, and Solomon, and the 18 kings of the division of Judah from Israel, the Lord preserving the seed of David to bring the Messiah into the world at a later time. The kingdom had lasted about 465 years (1050 to 586 B.C.).

Part of the golden vessels of the temple were carried into the treasure house of Nebuchadnezzar's god – *Marduk* – the chief deity of Babylon. He named his son after this god, calling him Evil-Marduk (Amel-Marduk). Marduk is sometimes called *Bel* which is the equivalent of *Baal*, or 'Lord.' Nebuchadnezzar himself was named after another deity, Nebo. Isaiah prophesied of the humiliating deportation of these idols when Babylon would be defeated by the Persians in 539 B.C. "Bel bows down, Nebo stoops; their idols are upon the beasts and upon the cattle...they are a burden to the weary beasts" (Isa 41:1).

### **The Royal Seed and Education in Babylon (3-7)**

Among the children of Israel carried away captive in the first invasion were youths "*of the seed royal and of the nobles.*" These young men, descendants of the kings and princes of Judah, would have had the advantages of rank and privilege in their homeland—grooming, education, training for service in the courts of their kings, etc. Thus these who were the fairest and brightest in the land, found themselves captives in a strange, far-off country with a different language, customs, morals, life styles, clothing, food, strange sights, sounds, and smells, images and idols, many of which were fierce-looking and overlaid with gold (Babylon had 53 temples, and 180 altars to Ishtar); in a city elaborate with temples, massive walls, and later, one of the wonders of the ancient world, the Hanging Gardens (imitations of the mountains of Elam from which one of Nebuchadnezzar's wives had come).

Think how bitter, sad, and frightening this must have been for these young men, perhaps in their early teens—away from their beloved homeland of Judah and familiar surroundings, their native tongue, their fathers and mothers, the wealth and prestige they enjoyed as children of royalty; away from their religion—the priests and sacrifices, the learning of God's word, the temple dedicated to the One True God, away from familiar foods authorized by God's law.

Lest one gets the idea that things couldn't have been too bad for Daniel and his friends, consider:

"Teenage captives at the dissolute court of a heathen, altogether barbarous despot who, in cold blood, would not hesitate to kill another king's sons before his eyes and then put those eyes out (Jer. 39:6-7), or roast another of his victims in a slow fire (Jer. 29:22), and ultimately command his own chief officers to be "cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" (Dan 3:15) (Philip R. Newell, *Daniel*, 22).

### **Daniel and Friends: Education in Babylon**

"Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs" was to select the best of the best among the boys

of the royal family to be trained as representatives of Israel in the court of Babylon. These youths were to have (1) **No blemishes**, but well favored, i.e., they were to have a good complexion, handsome, good looking, with no physical defects. (2) **Skillful in all wisdom and endowed with knowledge**. These were *present* aptitudes and not that which they would acquire at some future time. Thus, they were to be already intelligent enough that they could apply themselves to learn the knowledge, customs, wisdom, and language of the Chaldeans in whose land they were to serve. (3) They were to be understanding in science i.e., having perception and discernment in knowledge. Specific sciences of the Babylonians may have been astronomy—the study of the stars and planets. It is thought that the Babylonians were among the first to make a study of these. Another subject of study was astrology—the bearing of the movements of the heavenly bodies on the fates and fortunes of men; also, magic, including soothsaying, interpretation of dreams; divination, discerning future events, etc. All these phrases simply serve to emphasize the fact that these young men from Judah were skilled in various kinds of knowledge. (4) Such as had **ability to stand in the king’s palace**. Their aptitudes and abilities would enable them to perform their duties successfully in the court and in and around the palace of the king and to be obedient to his commands. (5) Further, Ashpenaz was to teach them **the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans**. Thus, they were to learn the literary knowledge, letters, and language—the cuneiform languages of Babylonia, possibly the cuneiform scripts of all the Semitic nations round about. The Semitic dialect of Babylon was similar to Akkadian (Whitcomb, 28). It was “wise men (magi) from the east” following a star who came seeking Jesus (Matthew 2:1 ff).

There is a question as to whether the term *eunuch* should be taken in its literal meaning (“a castrated man...a man or boy deprived of the testes or external genitals” *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*) or whether it simply means any important official near the king; (Hebrew word, *saris*, used of Potiphar, Genesis 37:36, even though he was a married man). It is certain that the experience of Daniel and his friends is a direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah during the time of Hezekiah’s recovery from his sickness (Isa 39:7). “Eunuchs often held positions of great power in ancient Near Eastern kingdoms because they served as power links between the king and the harem (where most palace intrigues and plots on the king’s life seemed to be hatched).” (*Ibid*, 27).

“As for God’s people, eunuchs were not allowed to enter the assembly of Jehovah. Moses wrote at the behest of Jehovah: ‘He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the assembly of Jehovah’ (Deut. 23:1). Nonetheless, there would be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon, and there would be a place for eunuchs in the new kingdom. In anticipation of the new kingdom, Isaiah wrote: ‘Neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree’ (Isa 56:3) (Rex A. Turner, Sr. *Daniel, A Prophet of God*, 10-11).

(I am in agreement with Rex Turner Sr., that the word *eunuch* is to be taken in its literal usage. See additional comments, pp 10-12. This is also the belief of Josephus, *Antiquities* 10:10:1).

### **To Be Schooled Three Years.**

*5And the king appointed for them a daily portion of the king’s dainties, and of the wine which he*



*drank, and that they should be nourished three years; that at the end thereof they should stand before the king.*

What a great privilege to eat and drink from the king’s table—one couldn’t do better than this! This would be the best food and drink; what the king himself would eat. This diet would accomplish several things: (1) It would offset the rigors of the march as prisoners to Babylon, a trek of about 500 miles. (2) It would obligate them to their conquerors, making them more willing to carry out whatever duties were required of them. (3) This special treatment would make them healthy in body and mind and in personal beauty.

For three years they were to be fed, groomed, and schooled in the culture and ways of the Babylonians. At the end of this period of time they would be prepared to minister before king Nebuchadnezzar.

### **The Children of Judah Specified By Name and New Names Given (6-7)**

According to Butler (*Daniel*, 30) the names and their meanings are:

<b>Daniel</b> - God is my Judge	<b>Hananiah</b> - Jehovah has been gracious	<b>Mishael</b> - Who is as God?	<b>Azariah</b> - Jehovah has helped
<b>Beltshazzar</b> - Protect his life	<b>Shadrach</b> - Command of Aku (moon-god)	<b>Meshach</b> - Who is what Aku is?	<b>Abed-nego</b> - Servant of Nebo

The name changes would help to assimilate them into the Babylonian culture, paganizing them, disassociating them completely from Hebrew ways, even from their God.

### **The “Purpose” of Daniel (8-16)**

The will and solemn resolve of Daniel must be seen as deriving from godly parents and faithful teaching of the Law of God by perhaps a godly priest. Here was a son who had been raised in “the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph 6:4). He had learned the principles of righteousness and holiness.

Butler, quoting from Leupold says that there are three aspects of Daniel’s heathen environment about which he had to make moral decisions as to his relationship with Jehovah: (1) the acquisition of human wisdom, (2) wearing a heathen name, (3) eating heathen food sacrificed to idols.

(1) In studying their sciences, he could not be compelled against his conscience to believe those elements of heathen wisdom that were false. Moses and Joseph were exposed to the same things and their faith was not destroyed. Of Moses it is said he was “taught in all wisdom of the Egyptians” (Acts 7:22). This is the same problem that we face in our secular education system. Evolution, humanism, relativism and the like do not have to destroy our faith. Learning these things and knowing their arguments and then showing their fallacies is a good way to teach the truth.

(2) His heathen name honoring a false god, he simply had to endure. It had no relationship to God any more than children today, whose parents saddle them with heathen names either deliberately or unconsciously.

(3) The matter of eating from the king’s table was a more serious matter. Most of the

food served would have been sacrificed to idols. This would have compromised principles of God's law (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:22ff). Also, there would have been food items served which were not compliant with the dietary laws of Israel. It was at this point Daniel and his friends drew the line.

Notice the manner of Daniel to make his request of the prince of the eunuchs; he "requested," suggesting courtesy, amiable demeanor. He displayed no haughtiness, rudeness or radical fanatic behavior. This was not a time for Daniel to "throw his weight around" and show them they couldn't push a prince's son around. This was a time for bold humility. Daniel was not a coward who would do nothing. But he was not reckless either.

Daniel was willing to be put to the test. Will our religion hold up?

### **Daniel's Request and Its Approval (9-10)**

*<sup>9</sup>Now God made Daniel to find kindness and compassion in the sight of the prince of the eunuchs.*

We should not interpret this verse as God miraculously intervening on behalf of these Hebrews. Daniel's calm, kind, demeanor paid off. The chief eunuch saw that there was a principle behind the request, and he showed mercy on these young men. God through His providence was watching over His future servant.

*<sup>10</sup>And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your food and your drink: for why he should see your faces worse looking than the youths that are of your own age? so would ye endanger my head with the king.*

This request has put great stress on the prince of the eunuchs. Had Daniel not acted in a kind and gracious manner, things could have turned out much differently. The chief eunuch was a loyal and trusted servant, but this meant nothing to an absolute monarch who held the power of life and death over his subjects.

In these verses you find two people afraid—one afraid of displeasing his lord, the other afraid of displeasing his God. Whom would we fear the most? There is much fear and trembling on the part of Ashpenaz. He knows his life would be on the line if he did not carry out the king's orders. Daniel has pushed him far enough, but Daniel isn't through, and makes request of another of his subordinates.

### **Daniel's Diet Put to the Test (11-13)**

*<sup>11</sup>Then said Daniel to the steward whom the prince of the eunuchs had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: <sup>12</sup>Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. <sup>13</sup>Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the youths that eat of the king's dainties; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.*

Daniel now appeals to one of the stewards to put them to the test: Prove us for ten days; give us vegetables to eat, and water to drink—then compare us to the other youths. If we fail the test, do with us what you will. This is a simple, reasonable request and relatively safe.

In the King James Version, the steward is called *Melzar*. The word is a title or position rather than a name (Stephen Powell, *Daniel*, Southwest Lectures, 63).

Butler suggests there were two lines of reasoning in Daniel's proposal; (1) His faith that God would provide, and (2) his common sense that the rich food from the king's table would not be good for them (35). It is reasonable to think that his home training and the food laws of the

Jews would lead him to these conclusions.

Did he have a special revelation from God (Young, 46) to know that they would look better than the others? There is not enough evidence to know this with certainty.

### **The Test Results (14-16)**

*<sup>14</sup>So he hearkened unto them in this matter and proved them ten days. <sup>15</sup>And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer, and they were fatter in flesh, than all the youths that did eat of the king's dainties. <sup>16</sup>So the steward took away their dainties, and the wine that they should drink, and gave them pulse.*

**Leupold** says “It may seem that a disproportionate amount of emphasis is being given to a secondary matter. But the meticulous care exercised by these young men in doing the will of their God is perhaps the strongest indication that could be found of their complete allegiance to their God. Their determination shows how clearly, they were getting their bearings in the matter of making an adjustment in reference to daily contact with heathen life. The issues involved were not trifles. In this matter they had to take a stand.” To which we might add: There is no information in the Bible that is unimportant—it is there for our learning and to give evidence for our faith!

### **Faith's Reward (17-21)**

*<sup>17</sup>Now as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. <sup>18</sup>And at the end of the days which the king had appointed for bringing them in, the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>19</sup>And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore, stood they before the king. <sup>20</sup>And in every matter of wisdom and understanding, concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his realm. <sup>21</sup>And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.*

Daniel and his friends were rewarded by Jehovah for their faith under trial in that He “gave them greater knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom:” and Daniel had an extra portion of God’s blessing in that he had “understanding in visions and dreams.” This would soon prove to be to his salvation as well as that of many others. We can only conclude that these were supernatural gifts.

It did not take Nebuchadnezzar long to find out who really was wise and capable of overseeing the affairs of the kingdom. Soon Daniel and the other three youths were displaying more wisdom, skill, and perception for their duties than the other captives trained for the task, and above that, more than the older wise men of Babylon who had been born and raised there!

*“Among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah...”*

Note the parallels in the lives of Daniel and Joseph:

Both were captives in a foreign land.

Both rose to high rank in the government of a heathen nation.

Both possessed extraordinary power from God.

Both confounded those who pretended superior knowledge.

Both saved their people from great peril.

Both kept their people from being absorbed by heathen customs and ways.

Both found favor from heathen kings.

Both are among the few men of which only good is spoken.

The angel Gabriel spoke of Daniel as “a man greatly beloved” (9:23). He was outstanding intellectually, in personal virtue, and boundless faith. Daniel has few equals in the history of the human race.

## Questions Chapter One

1. Who were the first three kings of Israel while they were united?
2. Who was the first king of Judah?
3. Who was the first king of Israel after the division in the kingdom?
4. How many tribes formed the Northern Kingdom?
5. Why did the nation split?
6. What was the approximate date of the division?
7. What was the religious and moral character of the kings of the Southern Kingdom?
8. What was the religious and moral character of the kings of the Northern Kingdom?
9. Who were some of the good kings in the South?
10. Who were some of the prophets that preached in the Northern Kingdom?
11. What country took the Northern Kingdom into captivity?                      What was the date?
12. What became of the Northern tribes?
13. When did the Southern Kingdom go into captivity?                      What country carried them away?  
How long were they in captivity?                      What prophet told the number of years of captivity?
14. When did Daniel go into captivity?
15. What prophets were Daniel's contemporaries?  
                    What happened to them?
16. Who was the last good king of the Southern Kingdom?
17. Who was the last king?                      What happened to him?
18. Who prophesied that some of Judah's sons would become eunuchs in the land of Babylon?
19. What king was on the throne of Judah when Babylon came the first time?
20. Who was the Babylonian king?
21. Who were the four Hebrew children named as captives of Babylon? Give their Hebrew names and then their Babylonian names.
22. Give two reasons the Hebrews did not eat and drink from the king's table
23. What purpose would the training these young men received provide for the king of Babylon?
- 24.. How did God reward the Hebrew children for their faithfulness?
25. In Daniel chapter one in the KJV there are twelve proper names used; list them.

# **DANIEL CHAPTER TWO**

## **THE DREAM OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR**

### **Daniel Two Outlined**

- I. The Dream of Nebuchadnezzar (1-13)**
- II. Daniel Seeks Appointment With the King (14-16)**
- III. The Secret Revealed to Daniel (17-24)**
- IV. Daniel Tells Nebuchadnezzar that God Has Made the Thing Known to Him (25-30).**
- V. The Dream Retold (31-35)**
  - 1. The Great Image**
    - Head of Gold
    - Breast and Arms of Silver
    - Belly and Thighs of Brass
    - Legs of Iron, Feet Part of Iron, Part of Clay
  - 2. The Stone That Broke the Image and Itself Became a Great Mountain**
- VI. The Interpretation of the Dream (36-45)**
  - 1. The Image Represents Four World Kingdoms**
    - Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon the Head of Gold
    - The Second Kingdom, Inferior to Babylon
    - The Third which would bear rule over all the earth
    - The Fourth exceedingly strong, but weak at its base
  - 2. The Stone Cut Out of the Mountain Without Hands**
    - It is the Kingdom of God
    - Established in the days of the fourth kingdom
    - Broke in pieces and consumed the four kingdoms
    - It is an Eternal Kingdom which will never be destroyed
- VII. Nebuchadnezzar Praises Daniel and His God; Promotes Daniel and Friends (46-49)**

## Chapter Two

“There is a limit to what human wisdom can know. In this chapter the plan of the ages is revealed by God’s prophet. God makes a revelation known to the Gentiles concerning the future. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream represented four powerful world kingdoms and covered history from Babylon to Rome. During this period the Jews would be subject to kings of other nations. The Jewish remnant would return from Captivity but would no longer have their own earthly king, as had been the case prior to exile. A 600-year period of Gentile dominion is revealed through the prophet Daniel” (Larry Mathis, Unpublished Manuscript).

### The Dream of Nebuchadnezzar (1-13)

The second year of Nebuchadnezzar would be 603 B.C.; he became sole ruler upon the death of his father Nabopolassar. “According to Babylonian reckoning, the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar would be the third year of Daniel’s training. The first year of reign for a Babylonian emperor was called The Year of Accession; his first year of reign would really be his second year; and his second year would really be his third year on the throne” (Butler, 57).

It is amazing that God would inspire a dream to a heathen king to reveal what amounts to the succession of events that bring about His plan to bring into the world the kingdom of the Messiah! One would think that such a great prophecy containing such details of His future kingdom would be first made known through a great prophet—Isaiah or Jeremiah, or one of the known, established prophets. Yet, very early in his reign, God caused this dream to come to this heathen king; then have it interpreted by a mere boy who was not even considered to be a prophet at this time! In fact, he was just a boy still in school, training to be a servant to this king! One would not expect this at all! Surely “The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Corinthians 1:25).

The dreams God sent were troubling to the king, and he was not able to sleep. The magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans were called forth to tell him about these dreams. These included all the scholars and advisers who were supposed to be able to help in such situations; the “Chaldeans” are the most important group in this assembly. The term “Chaldean” is used in two different ways (1) It may be used *ethnically* to describe the people of the nation of Babylon (e.g., Habakkuk 1:6) or (2) as “Chaldean” is used here in its *technical* sense and describes a class of elite wise men and advisors who were men of great learning and who could trace their ancestry back to families of the original conquerors of Babylon. They were the “masters” of all the advisors who exerted the strongest influence over the political and religious affairs of the country. (See Butler, *Special Study on Babylonian Priesthood*, 52-55).

### Request of Advisers Turned Down; Death is Threatened (4-9)

*Then spoke the Chaldeans to the king in the Syrian language, O king, live forever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation. <sup>5</sup>The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, the thing is gone from me: if ye make not known unto me the dream and the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. <sup>6</sup>But if ye show the dream and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and*

*great honor: therefore, show me the dream and the interpretation thereof.*

His counselors spoke to him in the Syrian (a form of Aramaic) language, the language of Babylon. Up to this point the Book of Daniel had been written in Hebrew. From chapter 2:4 through chapter 7, the book is written in Aramaic. The Jews returned to their homeland speaking this language learned in Captivity. Why it was necessary for Daniel to mention this change of language at this point in the narrative is not known with certainty, Henry Halley gives this observation on this Aramaic portion of Daniel:

The language of the book is Aramaic, or Chaldee from 2:4 to 7:28 which was the commercial and diplomatic language of the time. The rest is in Hebrew. This is what might be expected in a book written for Jews living among Babylonians, containing copies of official Babylonian documents in their original Babylonian language (*Bible Handbook*, 342; see also the *Critical Introduction* at the beginning of the commentary, 11-12).

Nebuchadnezzar was expecting the impossible of his advisers. He wanted them to tell him the dream and then to tell him what it meant! If they could, they would be greatly honored and rewarded. If not, there was but one law for them: they would be killed. This was their only fate if they could not come up with the information the king demanded.

He accuses them of just trying to buy time until they could concoct a story to tell him. Nebuchadnezzar became angry because he realized that they had been lying to him all along about their ability to interpret dreams. The wise men were hoping for a favorable change in the situation to save them from death.

### **The King's Decree, All Advisers to be Slain (10-13)**

*<sup>10</sup>The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, there is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter, forasmuch as no king, lord, or ruler, hath asked such a thing of any magician, or enchanter, or Chaldean. <sup>11</sup>And it is a rare thing that the king requires, and there is no other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. <sup>12</sup>For this cause the king was angry and furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. <sup>13</sup>So the decree went forth, and the wise men were to be slain; and they sought Daniel and his companions to be slain.*

They knew that there was no king, lord, or ruler; no magician, enchanter, or Chaldean, no person on earth, who could do what the king wanted done. "Only the gods," some supernatural power could do this.

So, in his fury the death sentence was passed on all the king's wise men and advisers in the realm of Babylon—Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah included.

### **Daniel Seeks an Appointment with the King (14-16)**

*<sup>14</sup>Then Daniel returned answer with counsel and prudence to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, who was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon; <sup>15</sup>he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, wherefore is the decree so urgent from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. <sup>16</sup>And Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would appoint him a time, and he would show the king the interpretation.*

A period of time was necessarily involved for the message of death to reach Daniel and others who were not initially summoned to interpret the king's dream. When Daniel heard, he



asked why it was so urgent to carry this out immediately. When he understood what had happened because of the failure of the other counselors and advisers, Daniel, with great protocol and prudence, asked that he be given some time to have a personal appointment with Nebuchadnezzar, saying that he would be able to give the interpretation. In light of the Book of Esther and her going to see the king unbidden, one may assume that this too was a matter in which Daniel would have to exercise great care or he would lose his life on the spot.

It may be asked as to why Daniel and his friends were so late in getting the word about the king's dream. Paul Cantrell observes, "Maybe, the younger recruits were not consulted because of the kind of thing the king desired. They were mere youth—not seasoned men of learning and experience" (*A Study of the Book of Daniel*, 18).

### **The Secret Revealed To Daniel (17-24)**

#### **Daniel enlists the help of his friends in prayer to God for deliverance from the king.**

*<sup>17</sup>Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: <sup>18</sup>that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his companions should nor perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.*

*<sup>19</sup>Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a vision of the night.*

Daniel's faith, and that of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah's in God is quite apparent. This life-threatening situation is certainly one worth praying about! And the prayer is not selfishly spoken just for themselves, in verse 24 their prayers are offered on behalf of the wise men of Babylon.

But there was also the matter of the dream. Daniel was confident that God would make it known. It would seem at this point that Daniel realizes that God has a purpose for him being in this foreign country, in this very position, at this very time to serve his people and to serve God and carry out His will (see 1:17). And God gave the revelation of the dream to him.

#### **Daniel's prayer of thanksgiving.**

*Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. <sup>20</sup>Daniel answered and said, blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his. <sup>21</sup>And he changes the times and the seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding; <sup>22</sup>he reveals the deep and secret things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. <sup>23</sup>I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast now made known unto me what we desired of thee; for thou hast made known unto us the king's matter. <sup>24</sup>Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and said thus unto him: Destroy not the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.*

This paragraph gives us the key to Daniel's success in the court of Babylon. His faith and hope in God are unwavering. This is the key to Daniel's entire career and the reason that God was able to use him—he availed himself to God. James, the Lord's brother, said "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). What about the efforts of these four righteous men?!

In Daniel's prayer, one line of his prayer records, "...*He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.*" This is not talking about physical darkness but rather the darkness of human ignorance. God knows what man is not able to know because the darkness sin has cast

upon his mind and heart. Since God knows what is in darkness, man is not able to hide anything from Him (Hebrews 4:13).

“The response of these four men to the crisis that confronted them clearly demonstrates that, from a spiritual standpoint, they had not been adversely affected by their three years of training in the court of Babylon. In our own day, a major cause of apostasy in Christian schools is the subtle but intense pressure of non-Christian perspectives upon young instructors in their prolonged studies in graduate schools” (Whitcomb, 42-43)

“*Destroy not the wise men of Babylon.*” Stay the execution! Daniel went to Arioch again to request an audience with the king. The first order of business was to stop the pending execution. Men were being rounded up; their lives were about to be taken. It would take some time to get the “wheels in motion” to stop the king’s order to slay the wise men.

### **Making the Dream Known to Nebuchadnezzar (25-30)**

<sup>25</sup>*Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the children of the captivity of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.* <sup>26</sup>*The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?* <sup>27</sup>*Daniel answered before the king, and said, the secret which the king has demanded can neither wise men, enchanters, magicians, nor soothsayers, show unto the king;* <sup>28</sup>*but there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and he hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these:* <sup>29</sup>*as for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter; and he that reveals secrets hath made known to thee what shall come to pass.* <sup>30</sup>*But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but to the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that thou mayest know the thoughts of thy heart.*

Notice that Arioch takes credit for finding the “*man of the children of the captivity of Judah.*” But he had not found Daniel—it was Daniel who, when he found out the reason for the death sentence of himself and the other wise men of the land, had taken the initiative to do something to stop the commanded execution. “Arioch was currying favor with his lord for something of which he was but an incidental part” (McClish, 77)

Daniel’s answer to the king’s question gets right to the point. Men cannot give the answers you seek, but God can! The gods of men cannot give the answers, but “There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets...” He alone knows it since Nebuchadnezzar forgot it, and God is the one that revealed it!

This “*God of heaven...hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall come to pass in the latter days.*” It seems that Nebuchadnezzar was pondering the future (29) and God revealed to him the answer! But the king was troubled by the dream and did not understand it and it left his mind. But he wanted to know what it all meant.

Like Joseph before him (Genesis 41:16), Daniel did not take credit for the interpretation. The humble heart of Daniel always shines through. The purpose of the dream for Nebuchadnezzar was to prepare him for further lessons to be learned as Daniel and his friends

reveal more and more about the God of heaven—His power, majesty, and sovereign rule of the earth.

### **Daniel Retells the Dream (31-35)**

<sup>31</sup>*Thou, O king, saw and behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible.* <sup>32</sup>*As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass,* <sup>33</sup>*its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay.* <sup>34</sup>*You saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces.* <sup>35</sup>*Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

Look at the total confidence of Daniel as he tells what the king had dreamed. (When we are telling what God has revealed, whether miraculous, as Daniel, or the written word given by inspired men, we can have all the calmness and confidence that God can supply!). He was telling what all the magicians, sorcerers, diviners, wise men, counselors, advisers and Chaldeans could not tell! He was calmly telling what they wished to fabricate but could not! Imagine the frustration and desperation of their paltry efforts! Think of the utter look of amazement on the face of the great king as this youth does what no other person on earth could do! One can almost hear him saying, “That’s it!” “That’s it!”

The image is that of a man—great, mighty, shining bright, terrible. No doubt fear was struck in the heart of Nebuchadnezzar; it is little wonder that this dream troubled him so. It is described as metallic, consisting of a head of gold, chest of silver, belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron and feet of iron and clay mixed. The dream depicts a stone cut out of a mountain without hands striking the image on its feet, breaking it to pieces. So complete was its destruction that it was like chaff on the threshing-floor in the summer which the wind blew away, to be seen no more. But the stone itself became a great mountain that filled the whole earth.

### **The Interpretation of the Dream (36-45)**

*This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.* Notice, “we” will tell the interpretation... “We” is probably Daniel’s friends who also prayed to God to learn the dream and interpretation (v 18). The secret, however, was revealed only to Daniel. Hailey points out that “when Daniel gave thanks to God for the revelation to Him, it was for what ‘we desired of thee; for you has made known unto us the king’s matter’” (*Commentary on Daniel*, 47).

<sup>37</sup>*Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory;* <sup>38</sup>*and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: thou art the head of gold.*

It was through the Providence of God that Nebuchadnezzar had come to this lofty station in life (Jeremiah 27:5-7). All these appellations are by God’s doing and not by the king’s own power and might. We are not left to wonder about the beginning point for the interpretation of the dream. **Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold**; he is the first of the kings and kingdoms that

God is going to cause to rise and fall to bring about His own kingdom. As the head of gold, he was the greatest king in importance and from which the other kingdoms of the world originated (Genesis 10:10; 11:1-9). Thus, in that respect Babylon deserved the preeminence.

*<sup>39</sup>And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.*

The second kingdom represented in the great image is “another kingdom inferior” to Babylon. These kingdoms are the Medo-Persians and the Macedonian kingdom led by Alexander the Great. They will be discussed at length in later chapters of Daniel. Their inferiority is represented by the lesser valued metals in the image.

*<sup>40</sup>And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things; and as iron that crushes all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. <sup>41</sup>And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawt the iron mixed with miry clay. <sup>42</sup>And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. <sup>43</sup>And whereas thou sawt the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron doth not mingle with clay.*

The Fourth Kingdom is the kingdom of the Caesars, the Roman Empire, and receives the greatest description. It was as strong as iron, breaking and crushing all who would oppose her in her conquests. Her weakness is also described: feet of iron mingled with clay. These two ingredients do not cling together and are not of equal strength. Thus, Rome was always stamping out wars and fighting amongst the people she conquered. Great efforts were made via arranged marriages with kings and queens of conquered lands, accepting gods of other lands equal in value with the gods of Rome, and emperor worship to cause the various human elements of her society to cleave together. But these efforts would not succeed and eventually the Empire was weakened which brought about her demise.

*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: nor shall the sovereignty be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

“In the days of these kings...” Which kings? They were the Roman kings who were alive when Jesus the Messiah came in his first advent to set up his kingdom, the church (Luke 3:1-2; Matthew 16:18-19). Jesus gave Peter the “keys of the kingdom.” Did he use them or not? Yes, he did, when he opened the doors of the church to Jew (Acts 2:47) and Gentile (Acts 10). How foolish it is to by-pass all the Scriptures that teach the establishment of the kingdom and wait for a rebirth of that ancient Roman kingdom, the rebuilding of the temple, etcetera, in the 21st century when all of this has already taken place in the 1st century when Jesus came the first time!

It is that kingdom which John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles, and the Seventy preached as being “at hand.” (Matthew 3:1-2; Mark 1:14-15; Matthew 10; Luke 10). This makes a total of eighty-four preachers declaring the kingdom to be at hand. “Any view that denies this is incorrect” (Jim McGuiggan, *Daniel*, 49).

It is that kingdom which Jesus said would be established in the lifetime of some of those to whom he spoke while he walked on this earth (Mark 9:1). The apostles were to wait in Jerusalem for power from on high (Luke 24:49). They were to receive power from the Holy

Spirit (Acts 1:6-8). The kingdom came when the power came (Acts 2:1-21).

The church\kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 30 (Acts 2:1-47). John was in it (Revelation 1:9), as were Peter (1 Peter 2:9-10) and Paul (Colossians 1:13-14); the saved are in it (Revelation 1:5,6). It is what the preachers and evangelists of the 1<sup>st</sup> century preached as being present and active (Acts 17:7; 28:23, 30-31; Hebrews 12:28). Men then, and now, may enter the kingdom by the new birth (John 3:3-5).

“Its sovereignty, the supremacy of the authority and rule of its king and citizens, would be permanent. It would never be left to another people or kingdom as happened to the world-empires of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream” (Hailey, p50). On Pentecost Peter described Jesus as “Lord and Christ,” raised from the dead to sit on the throne (Acts 2:30), and is, as Peter taught by inspiration, “*seated on the right hand of God*” (Acts 2:34-36) and ruling over His kingdom (Hebrew 1:8).

The kingdom to be established would “*break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.*” This it did and still is actively doing as the gospel is preached and men and women come out of those worldly kingdoms and establish their citizenship in the kingdom of Christ.

### **The Stone Cut Out of the Mountain Without Hands**

*Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure (2:44-45).*

Notice that the “*stone smote the image on its feet*” (34). This helps us to identify which kingdom was meant when God’s kingdom would be established. That it is “*a stone cut out of a mountain without hands....and became a great mountain*” indicates the source of this 5<sup>th</sup> kingdom as being from God and that it would grow from a small beginning to a place where it would “*fill the whole earth.*”

Critics say this never happened. Coffman, however, points out that “all the world powers of this vision have long since disappeared from the earth; and nothing whatever is known of any of them except what men have written about them in the libraries of the world; but the kingdom of God is still flourishing” (*Commentary on Daniel*, 42). It is because of Christ and His kingdom that the Bible is the number one best seller year after year and translated into nearly every known language of man. Even the calendar is dated by His birth into the world. Missionaries have taken the gospel into every country, tribe and people on the whole earth. It has literally filled the earth! (Isa 11:9).

This is the kingdom of Isaiah’s prophecy (2:2-3) “*And it shall come to pass that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord...*” This is the stone that became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (Dan 2:35). Christ is the stone which the builders rejected and was at the same time the head of the corner (Isa 28:16; Acts 4:11). Christ is the One who is “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense” (1 Peter 2:7-8; Eph 2:20). It is the kingdom of Christ that broke in pieces these four kingdoms of the world, never to rise again, and it is this kingdom over which he rules and reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim 6:15).

It is this kingdom over which he reigns (Dan 7:13-14; Acts 1:9-11; 2: 29-36) and which he will deliver to the Father when he comes the second time (1 Cor 15:24-28). Any view of

Daniel chapter two that relegates the establishment of the kingdom of God to a time other than the first century is a false view based on a faulty interpretation of the Scriptures and is to be rejected.

God's kingdom is a "*kingdom that will never be destroyed nor left to others.*" Thus, it is an eternal kingdom. Jesus said "The gates of hell" would not keep it from being established. Satan, through the Jews and Romans, killed Jesus (Gen 3:15), but Jesus triumphed over death, hell, and the grave to build his church. HE DID NOT FAIL! (See Isaiah 66:7-9). Paul wrote "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb 12:28).

Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome have come and gone but the kingdom of heaven remains. Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus the Great, Alexander the Great, the Caesars, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, Mao Tze Tung; all of them and their kingdoms and empires are gone! Each of these great kings and warlords had to turn his kingdom over to another. Only Christ and His kingdom remain. Since it is an *eternal* kingdom, it cannot be a millennial kingdom for the millennium is only 1,000 years in literal interpretation.

Wendell Winkler sums up the Messianic Kingdom described by Daniel as:

1. Divine in Origin – "Shall the God of Heaven Set Up"
2. First Century in Establishment – "In the Days of These Kings"
3. Universal in Scope – "Consume All These Nations"
4. Monarchical in Government – "Set Up a Kingdom"
5. Indestructible in Nature – "Which Shall Never Be Destroyed...Shall Stand Forever" (*Spiritual Sword*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 45-48).

It is amazing that God would reveal these things concerning the Eternal Kingdom to a heathen king. It shows the importance God placed on Daniel in the palace of this great king. This is also evidence of the testimony that God truly works in the kingdoms of men. For no man could conjure this up (as the wise men of Babylon tried to do). It is a remarkable display of the providence of God in working out His plan through a heathen king.

These are things "that shall come to pass hereafter;" at some future point in time. "*The dream is certain,*" i.e., this dream of the great image was not some fuzzy, nebulous, thing that had no bearing or meaning and would soon be forgotten. The future events foreshadowed by this great prophecy would come to pass just as the dream revealed they would.

"*The interpretation is sure.*" What Daniel said about the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah in the days of the Roman kings was sure, positive to happen just as the prophet said it would. The Premillennial scheme makes the dream uncertain, and the interpretation very unclear. There is no surety in this interpretation at all!

### **"What About the Toes of the Image?"**

Premillennialists insist that the toes of the image represent a ten-nation confederacy which will constitute a revival of ancient Rome. Foy Wallace, Jr.'s discussion of the toes totally annihilates the premillennial contention: "But it is argued that the image of Nebuchadnezzar had ten toes, which represented the ten kingdoms, in addition to the four kingdoms of the image proper. The four kingdoms part of the prophecy was fulfilled, and the body of the image was destroyed—but the toes survived the destruction, still exist, to revive in the future! Some toes they are! The body of the image was only about 600 years long, but the toes according to that picture are already 2,000 years longer than the body. Magic toes! The toes of that fellow could

be coiled around his body ten times and could still scratch the back of its neck with its toenails! And these toes lived two thousand years detached from the body! Such an argument is obviously a forced explanation to escape completely the New Testament fulfillment of Daniel's kingdom prophecy. The text says the image was "crushed"—not all but its toes. If a man is pronounced dead, it would not mean all but his toes! The fact that Daniel himself made no such application of 'the toes', is proof that the toes were not distinguished from the image. On the contrary, he said the image was smitten on its feet, the last of the four kingdoms in its weakness, and crushed. The simple truth, therefore, is that Daniel saw only four world kingdoms, and since the kingdom of God should be set up 'in the days of these kings' it follows that the kingdom had to come while the Caesars were ruling, and before the Roman Empire ceased" (*God's Prophetic Word*, 170).

Paul Cantrell sums up the purpose of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (1) to make known to the king what shall be heard after, (2) To show that kingdoms come and go, but God's kingdom remains (3) **Note:** That man would never again rule the whole world! He hasn't yet!

### **Nebuchadnezzar Praises Daniel and His God; Promotes Daniel and Friends (46-49)**

*Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou hast been able to reveal this secret. Then the king made Daniel great, and gave him many great gifts, and made him to rule over the whole province of Babylon, and to be chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon. And Daniel requested of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel was in the gate of the king.*

King Nebuchadnezzar is overwhelmed by the ability of Daniel to tell the dream, which his soothsayers and advisors had not been able to do, but also to give the interpretation in which he is so prominently positioned. Recognizing the greatness of Daniel, he falls upon his face and offers worship to him. Hailey comments on Daniel's receiving worship with this observation: "Daniel's accepting the worship and sacrifices offered him need not cause one to criticize him as having violated his religious training by accepting or receiving the obeisance as unto himself. For he had twice denied any honor as belonging to him; it all belonged to the God who revealed the dream and its interpretation (28, 30)." It also may be added, on this point, that persons many times will do what one doesn't want done, even when they have been told several times before not to do it. Besides, the king's worship of Daniel was honoring the God of Daniel. He acknowledges Daniel's God as a "revealer of secrets" and as "the God of gods," seeing Him as the chiefest of gods, superior to them, but not as the One and only God of heaven.

With the honor bestowed on Daniel came promotions and blessings. The king (1) made Daniel great, (2) gave him many great gifts which are not described, (3) made him to rule over the whole province of Babylon (Daniel is now about 20 years old!), (4) and to be chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon. Both of these last promotions would have caused envy and jealousy on the part of those who found themselves serving under Daniel. He was a young man, a foreigner, one who did not worship or recognize their gods, and, besides these things, he is a "newcomer" to the courts of Babylon.

Daniel took this opportunity to look out for his friends and to put in a good word for them. His honor and promotion were shared by his three trusted, reliable friends, as they too

were promoted and thus placed in positions of greatness and honor. “But Daniel was in the gate of the king.” He was the king’s right-hand man, his most trusted and loyal servant. Through all this Daniel remained humble and did not let these honors and blessings lift him with pride. What a great testimony to Daniel’s upbringing and faith in God. As a result, God’s providence was with him.



## Questions Chapter Two

### True or False

- \_\_\_ 1. Nebuchadnezzar told his wise men the dream he had, but they could not tell him the meaning.
- \_\_\_ 2. Nebuchadnezzar promised to the one who could tell the dream and its meaning his daughter's hand in marriage.
- \_\_\_ 3. Arioch was the captain of the king's guard.
- \_\_\_ 4. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, all prayed that God would reveal the dream to Daniel.
- \_\_\_ 5. Daniel said the gods had revealed this dream and its meaning to him.
- \_\_\_ 6. The head of the image was gold and represented the kingdom Nebuchadnezzar had conquered just before he came to the throne.
- \_\_\_ 7. The breast and arms of the image were of silver which represented the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians.
- \_\_\_ 8. The thighs were of steel, representing the Grecian empire.
- \_\_\_ 9. The feet were of iron and clay mixed together, representing the Roman empire.
- \_\_\_ 10. God would set up his kingdom in the days of the kings of Rome.

### Associate the Following

- |                               |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Jehoiakim                  | ___ King of Babylon               |
| 2. Belteshazzar               | ___ Kingdom of Greece             |
| 3. Cyrus                      | ___ Kingdom of Babylon            |
| 4. Abednego                   | ___ Kingdom of Medes and Persians |
| 5. Ashpenaz                   | ___ Part of Territory of Babylon  |
| 6. Nebuchadnezzar             | ___ Kingdom of Rome               |
| 7. Mishael                    | ___ Kingdom of Heaven             |
| 8. Chaldeans                  | ___ Arioch                        |
| 9. Hannaniah                  | ___ Daniel                        |
| 10. Euphrates                 | ___ People of Babylon             |
| 11. Shinar                    | ___ King of Judah                 |
| 12. Jerusalem                 | ___ Chief of the Eunuchs          |
| 13. Head of Gold              | ___ Meshach                       |
| 14. Chest of Silver           | ___ Shadrach                      |
| 15. Belly and Thighs of Brass | ___ Capitol of Judah              |

16. Legs, Feet of Iron and Clay Mixed

\_\_\_\_ River in Babylon

17. Stone Cut Out of Mountain Without Hands

\_\_\_\_ Azariah

18. Captain of the king's guards

\_\_\_\_ King of Persia

# **DANIEL CHAPTER THREE**

**Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego**

## **Chapter Three Outlined**

**I. Nebuchadnezzar's Image of Gold (1)**

**II. All In Realm Commanded to Worship (2-7)**

**III. Disobedience of Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego (8-12)**

**IV. Faith Under Fire (13-18)**

**V. Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego Cast Into a Fiery Furnace (19-23)**

**VI. The Fourth Man In the Furnace (24-27)**

**VII. Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego's Faith Rewarded (28-30)**

## Chapter Three

This interesting note from Charles Boufflower's *In And Around the Book of Daniel* helps us in the historical background for this chapter. "587 B.C. January. Siege of Jerusalem begins; 2 Kings 25:1. Ezekiel's second mention of Daniel; chap. xxvii, 3. In this year, according to the *LXX* and the *Peshitto*, (Syriac Version of the O.T., ebd) the golden image of Daniel iii. was set up (xviii, Tables)."

### Nebuchadnezzar's Image of Gold (1)

*Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.*

Nebuchadnezzar had a golden image measuring 90' x 9', built on Plain of Dura, 10 miles SE of Babylon. The image probably was to represent himself, reflecting his ego, or an image of one of the Babylonian gods, since it was to be worshiped, or both. The dimensions suggest that it was a large statue placed on a very high pedestal. Critics complain that the statue could not have been real because the measurements are out of proportion, too high and too narrow. "But the Colossus of Rhodes (300 BC) was 105 feet high, and Nebuchadnezzar's engineers were noted for their great skill in building towers and walls" (Whitcomb, 55). Was the image of solid gold, or a cheaper metal overlaid with gold (the ark of covenant was made of wood and overlaid with gold, (Exodus 30:1-2)? A great deal of gold was used in Babylon hence, it is referred to as "the city of gold" (Isaiah 14:4; Jeremiah 51:7).

### All Commanded to Worship (2-6)

<sup>2</sup>*Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.*

<sup>3</sup>*Then the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. <sup>4</sup>Then the herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup>that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up; <sup>6</sup>and whoso falls not down and worships shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

All peoples, nations, languages were commanded to worship the great image. All the notables in the kingdom were invited to the dedication ceremonies. No mention is made of Daniel since he is the governor over the whole province of Babylon and was not a satrap, deputy, judge, treasurer, counselor, or sheriff, or ruler of a single province as were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (2:49). Perhaps he was away on business for the king at another palace (cf. 8:1-2). There is also the possibility that Nebuchadnezzar is protecting Daniel because of his ability to interpret dreams truly. Nebuchadnezzar was still a ruthless monarch as seen by the announcement he sent out which said at the sound of the instruments of music, all were to fall down and worship under penalty of death.

The image may have had different purposes: (1) To unify all the differing nationalities into one religion. (2) Psychologically - the image was a test of loyalty to the king of Babylon, an ego trip for Nebuchadnezzar. He was not the first, nor the last, to try to deify himself.

Whitcomb describes the instruments thus:

- cornet, horn—a trumpet, usually made of animal horn
- flute—to whistle, to hiss
- harp, lyre—possibly played with a plectrum (a small piece of wood or metal for plucking stringed instruments)
- sackbut, trigon—probably a small triangular harp
- psaltery, bagpipe, dulcimer—another type of stringed instrument

### **The Command to Worship (7)**

The command to be obeyed pertained to all the subjects of the realm (7). In faithful obedience to the king the throngs bowed down to worship the image. “You do as everyone else – when they bow, you bow.” So, they all bowed—that is, everyone except Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; they remained standing.

### **The Disobedience of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (8-15)**

When the Chaldeans saw what happened, they immediately reported it to the king. “*Certain Jews*,”—one can almost hear the contempt in their voices, “*whom thou hast appointed*.” It’s as if Nebuchadnezzar had made a bad choice in the appointment of these men. “These Jews, these foreigners, they have not regarded thee” (12). The way to give regard (honor, reverence, respect) was to do as told; “*Bow down!*” Do obeisance to the golden image, the idol.

The result was exactly as they planned, Nebuchadnezzar went into a rage. . . Note the double emphasis: “rage and fury.” Isn’t it strange how just a little goodness can be such a thorn in the side of evil? Just three who did not bow out of the thousands who did bow down, were able to upset the greatest king on the earth. But Nebuchadnezzar, perhaps out of his care for how they had proved themselves in chapter two, or for his care of Daniel, gave them another chance. But they still would not bow down.

Since the events of chapters one and two Nebuchadnezzar had been their friend and benefactor. They could have said, “We have a good thing going here, let’s not mess it up.” They could have concluded it would be unwise to throw away their chances of advancement. They could have decided it would be useless to resist. “We are just little fish in a big pond; we don’t and won’t make any difference.” They could have said, “Let’s not mix politics with religion. We can’t fight city hall.” With this kind of reasoning, John the Baptist wouldn’t have lost his head. First century saints could have avoided the lions and beasts and flames in the arena in Rome. These young men could have said, “Everyone else is bowing down, we will be too conspicuous.” But they, each one, demonstrated his faith in God and stood firm.

### **Faith Under Fire (16-18)**

For raw courage in the face of the most dreadful danger, history has nothing that surpasses this defiant reply. In effect, they said, ‘Yes, our God is able to deliver us, but even if he does not deliver us, we will not disobey our God; we will not serve your gods nor worship your golden image.’ They do not need to make a lengthy oral defense, since their minds are made up, and their resolve is firm. It has been said that “True religion is the determined purpose to do

right, and not to do wrong, whatever may be the consequences in either case” (Coffman, 54).

Their response, however, should not be interpreted as insolence or disrespect for the king, but of determination, based on a firm belief of their faith. They were putting their total trust in God.

Why did they not bow down? “O king we are not careful to answer thee in this matter” (16). We don’t have to debate the issue or study this out. We are ready to answer now. We will not bow down. Why not? These young men had been brought up on the Ten Commandments:

First - *“Thou shalt have no other gods before me”*

Second - *“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God”* (Ex 20:3-5)

Idolatry has always been a curse to mankind—ancient and modern. From literal images made of wood, stone, precious metals, to money, entertainment, entertainers, sports, houses, jobs, families, friends, money, etc., (Col 3:5; 1 Tim 6:10). These young men would not be conquered by the world—they were the conquerors. Note their attitude—no complaining, no verbal abuse of the king, no display of hatred, no groveling and whining, no fuming, ranting, and raging. As someone has said, “They spoke as if they had just arisen from prayer.”

“The first prayer I want my son to learn to say for me is not ‘God keep daddy safe’ but ‘God make daddy brave, and if he has hard things to do, make him strong to do them.’ Life and death don’t matter, my son, right and wrong do. Daddy dead is daddy still, but daddy dishonored before God is something awful, too bad for words.” (Sent by Englishman to his son during WWI, W. A. Criswell)

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego knew that life and death don’t matter, but right and wrong do.

### **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego Cast into Fiery Furnace (19-23)**

Why were these three young men in the fiery furnace? How did they get into this predicament? Did they set out to be heroes? No, this would have been furthest from their minds. Were they oblivious to the danger they faced? Did they have no fear? No, they feared someone else more (Matt 10:28). Did they have some special communication from God assuring them that they would be delivered? No, there is no hint of it in the text.

Their faith is seen in their answer to Nebuchadnezzar. They had no hesitation; they didn’t have to ponder and study the matter. “We have no need to be careful (worried, concerned) in our answer” (16). They had faith in the power of God to save, “Our God is able to deliver us” (17). Their faith in eternity is seen; “but if he does not deliver us, we will not serve nor worship the golden image” (18).

Religion, to be worthwhile, must have a price to pay, a commitment, a sacrifice. We may lose friends, family, and possessions. Joe Miller, an Amish man was converted to Christ, was disinherited, and the family had a “funeral” for him and buried an empty casket. Tom Fullen, cut off by his family, died while still a young man in his forties. His father came to his funeral but had not seen or talked to him since he had obeyed the gospel twenty years before; had never met his two grandchildren.

One may lose family and friends, opportunities for advancement, work, joy and pleasures, or social life. But Christ demands commitment (Matt 16:24-25).

If God delivers us, we will trust him; if He doesn't deliver us, we will still trust Him. They made no conditions; their faith didn't depend on their deliverance. Theirs was no "foxhole" promise. They would trust God and believe in God if He delivered them; they would trust God and believe in God if He did not deliver them. This is when faith and trust are put to the test, when we don't know whether God is going to intervene or not.

What does one do when God does not intervene? We have taught, and rightly so, that God is all good; everything He does is for man's betterment; that He is always with us, hears our prayers, sees our tears. But what about the times when it seems that God doesn't seem to be there, when he does not hear, He does not seem to care? There are failures in life, sickness, heartache, hunger, futility and defeat, and there is death. We cry to God to help us, to intervene on our behalf; but if He does not, what then? We have heard people say "We have prayed and prayed about this or that situation, and God has not answered our prayers. If God is like that, we won't serve Him."

Some for whom God did not intervene: Job; Jesus, His only begotten Son (John 3:16); John the Baptizer; the apostle James (Acts 12); Stephen (Acts 7; 2 Corinthians 4:8-10); Paul (2 Corinthians 11:23-30). God did not intervene for these, but they remained faithful. Why? Belief in God goes beyond this present world. These men would not bow down, even though they might have burned to a crisp, but their faith did not waver. They believed in life after death, in heaven; this is why they were so brave. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it dies it brings forth much fruit" (John 12:24); they could see the invisible (2 Corinthians 4:16-18); they realized the just live by faith (Hebrews 10:35-39); "that they might obtain a better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35). "*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*" (1 Corinthians 15:19). Belief in heaven and life after death strengthens us in the face of life's tragedies (John 14:1-3).

H.C. Leupold says, "The quiet, modest, yet withal very positive attitude of faith that these three men display, is one of the noblest examples in the Scriptures of faith fully resigned to the will of God. These men ask for no miracle; they expect none. Theirs' the faith that says: 'though he slay me, yet will I trust Him' (Job 13:15)."

To make sure they would give no more problems by further physical defiance and resistance, Nebuchadnezzar commanded that some of his strongest men be the ones to take them and throw them into the fiery furnace.

From the description of their clothing, the three Hebrew youths were clothed in their best garments for the splendid occasion that had brought them to that place. "Hosen" refers to their leg wear and footwear.

Their death was a direct result of the hot temper and uncontrolled anger of their king. Hailey points out that in Babylon many brick-kilns or smelting furnaces were used during that period. Earlier in Bible history (Genesis 11:3), we find them burning bricks for the tower of Babel (63). Being cast down into the furnace, the expectation was that they would meet death instantly.

#### **The Fourth Man in the Furnace (24-27)**

Who was this fourth person? There are two possibilities: (1) Nebuchadnezzar said, "I see

four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, they are not hurt; and the fourth is like the Son of God (KJV). We don't know how he would have been able to know this! (2) The ASV reads "I see four men loose...the fourth is like unto a son of the gods." Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar thought it was the son of one of the Babylonian gods. How he would have known, we do not know. Could it have actually been a god? No! We know that is not true because heathen gods are a figment of man's imagination (1 Corinthians 8:4). The appearance of this fourth man in the furnace was so striking to the king that he concluded it had to be a deity. And he was correct!

Who was it really, actually? This writer believes it was the Son of God. But this is a conclusion based on the sum of Bible truth and not from the guesswork of a startled heathen king. In response to a statement by Barnes, 'It is clear that no such conception [Son of God, ebd] entered into the mind of the king of Babylon,' Coffman states, "It is admitted that Nebuchadnezzar probably did not know the full meaning of the words he used there; but so, what? Caiaphas did not know the meaning of his prophecy of the death of Christ (John 11:59); but God put true words into the mouth of that unbeliever, just like he did here in the case of Nebuchadnezzar" (58).

What was the purpose of this appearance of the Son of God in the furnace? (1) To verify the faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the God of heaven. (2) To serve notice to Nebuchadnezzar that he was not as mighty as he thought. Jehovah God is the sovereign of the Universe and is God Almighty. Nebuchadnezzar was yet to learn this lesson, (see ch 4). (3) To provide faith and assurance to men and women there on the Plain of Dura. (4) To provide faith and assurance to men and women in ages to come. Think of the generations following – Judas the Maccabean encouraged his sons in their revolt against Antiochus by referring them to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Here we are 2600 years later being encouraged by them.

"When one accepts the fact that 'God created the heavens and the earth, and all things therein,' all miracles within the scope of that reality are believable. If one rejects that premise of God the Creator, then God becomes the proposition for debate, not the miracle" (Hailey, 65).

Think of the impression made on the other witnesses—Babylonians, Jews, people from many nations. Would they wonder and think more highly of the religion and God of the Hebrews? Some would. On the other hand, many would think it was a trick, or simply push aside belief. But these named officials who witnessed up close, with a perfect view of the scene, could testify to the fact that: the fire left no mark on their bodies, the hair of their heads were not singed, their clothes suffered no change, and no smell of fire had been left upon them.



### Questions Chapter Three

1. What probably "inspired" Nebuchadnezzar to build the golden image?
2. How tall was the image?
3. What sound signaled the command for all to bow before the image?
4. What punishment was to befall those who did not bow to the image?
5. What provoked the Chaldeans to "squeal" on Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego?
6. What is meant by the phrase "seven times hotter"?
7. Who did Nebuchadnezzar say God had sent to save the three Hebrews?

### True and False

- \_\_\_ 1. Daniel was the fourth person in the fiery furnace.
- \_\_\_ 2. All people, nations, and languages were to worship the image.
- \_\_\_ 3. Shadrach is the Hebrew name for Hananiah.
- \_\_\_ 4. Daniel's Hebrew name was Belteshazzar.
- \_\_\_ 5. The image was made of silver overlaid with gold.
- \_\_\_ 6. The three Hebrews were given a second chance to bow down and worship.
- \_\_\_ 7. Any who failed to bow to the image were to have their houses made a dung heap.
- \_\_\_ 8. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were fully clothed when thrown into the furnace.
- \_\_\_ 9. The three Hebrews displayed no real convictions about God in this chapter.
- \_\_\_ 10. King Nebuchadnezzar decreed that no people, nation, or language should speak anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

# **DANIEL CHAPTER FOUR**

## **A BEAST'S HEART**

### **Daniel Four Outlined**

#### **Introduction:**

**Nebuchadnezzar's Edict Concerning the God of Heaven (1-3)**

**I. Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream: A Great Tree and A Man with a Beast's Heart (4-18)**

**II. The Dream Interpreted by Daniel (19-27)**

**III. Nebuchadnezzar's Probation Ended: The Dream Fulfilled (28-33)**

**IV. The Restoration of Nebuchadnezzar to His Throne (34-37)**

## Chapter Four

### **Introduction: Nebuchadnezzar's Edict Concerning the God of Heaven (1-3)**

Daniel four is a royal edict issued by Nebuchadnezzar through Daniel the prophet. It is an edict describing how Nebuchadnezzar came to believe in and acknowledge the God of Israel, the "Most High God" of all the earth and heaven. He extolls and eulogizes the Most High God for the signs, wonders, and supernatural acts of God shown toward him, designed to produce faith (cf., Isaiah 7:12-14; John 20:30,31). The critics try to make a case for this terminology used by Nebuchadnezzar as "too biblical," that a pagan king would not use phraseology like this and is thus "historically absurd." However, keep in mind that Daniel has now been having direct influence on the king for going on forty years; he has served in "the gate of the king" since the interpretation of the king's dream in chapter two. The events concerning Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, though by this time long since in the past, would have only solidified Daniel's position as well as theirs. This episode in the life of Nebuchadnezzar takes place in the later part of his reign; he reigned 43 years, beginning about the time Daniel was taken into captivity; thus, for Nebuchadnezzar to use "Biblical language" is not unusual or unexpected. Butler points out that it may be that Nebuchadnezzar had Daniel's help in writing this decree (145).

The king acknowledged that the kingdom of God was "everlasting" and his dominion was from "generation to generation." As Nebuchadnezzar grew older and knew his time was running out; his reign as king of all the earth would soon end, and his experience described in this chapter would cause him to realize that the Most High God of Heaven was the only one whose dominion and reign could be on-going and pass from generation to generation.

He then describes an unusual experience sent upon him by God as a judgement for his pride.

### **Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream – A Great Tree and A Man with A Beast's Heart (4-18)**

All rulers, whether emperors, kings, or governors, are placed upon thrones by the sovereign decision of the Almighty. He is the King of the nations. He determines the destiny of men and nations. These governmental officials are "minsters of God...they are ministers of God's service, attending continually" upon the affairs of government (Rom 13:1-6) (Hailey, 77).

### **The Dream Interpreted by Daniel (19-27)**

R.K. Harrison in his book, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, calls it a rare form of monomania, a condition of mental imbalance in which the sufferer is deranged in one significant area only. The particular variety of monomania described is known as *boanthropy*..., in which Nebuchadnezzar imagined himself to be a cow or a bull and acted accordingly..." (1115).

At this juncture Daniel attempts to get this great monarch to believe what he has been told and repent. "*Break off thy sins by righteousness and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.*" "Here Daniel's personal and tender regard for Nebuchadnezzar bleeds through" (Turner).

Also, one can see the boldness manifested by Daniel that he would not have been able to show on previous audiences with the king. However, there is no response from the king, and it would seem that Nebuchadnezzar was cool to any advice from his friend. The care for the poor is always presented in the Scriptures as an obligation to those who are in a position of power and

wealth. Hailey rightly points out that this shows that the king was guilty of unjust treatment and negligence of his subjects. The change in the king's demeanor to the poor would have *lengthened his time of peace and tranquility* before the events of the dream came upon him.

### **Nebuchadnezzar's Probation is Ended: The Dream is Fulfilled (28-33)**

See him—the wealth and treasure from the Nile to the Persian Gulf are his! Glory is his—he is the builder of perhaps the most magnificent city of the ancient world containing one of the seven wonders of the ancient world—the extravagant Hanging Gardens built for a bride who longed for the mountains of her home. People are his—Egyptians, Syrians, Assyrians, Elamites, Persians, Medes, Jews, Armenians, Moabites, Edomites, Philistines; people from nations conquered by his armies, etc. Hear him as he speaks. “Is this not great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling place, by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?” (See Luke 12:13-21). Every syllable drip with boasting, and arrogant pride.

One minute his mind is clear, his eyes steady; the next minute he has the countenance and doleful look of a domesticated beast. He who has conquered the world is now living as less than a man. The king who sat at a sumptuous table tasting the dainties of the earth, now eats grass as an ox. The well-dressed, refined monarch would, over the period of seven times set for him, become disheveled, wild looking; his hair would grow long like eagle feathers and his nails long and curled like bird claws. He who had been “the hammer of the earth” is himself “cut asunder and broken” (Jer. 50:23).

Though the mills of God grind slowly  
Yet they grind exceeding small;  
Though with patience He stands waiting,  
With exactness he grinds all.

### **The Restoration of Nebuchadnezzar to His Throne (34-37)**

*"At the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven..."* (34). *"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord that made the heaven and the earth..."* (Psalm 121). The Prodigal son...came to himself and returned to the father. The Gadarene demoniac...sat clothed, in his right mind, looking at Jesus.

Nebuchadnezzar had turned, he had changed, he had repented. Even the worst of men can change: The Ninevites, Saul of Tarsus, Jeffrey Dahmer; There is none so vile, that if they believe and repent, cannot be saved (2 Peter 3:9).

All these things had come upon Nebuchadnezzar *"to the intent that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom men and giveth it to whomsoever he will..."* (17, 25-26).

The king's reason returned to him, and his thoughts were about God. All men, when they are thinking correctly, will think about God. When converted, Nebuchadnezzar praised and extolled the God of heaven. All men should have this attitude. The demoniac healed by Jesus was told to "go and tell what great things God hath done for thee." The God of heaven condescended to reach out to this heathen monarch. The great God of heaven condescended in love to us (John 3:16).

Was king Nebuchadnezzar truly converted? It is difficult to say. Some commentators are firmly convinced that he was, others are not. Edward Young offers these considerations for his

conversion:

(1) There is discernable progress in his knowledge of God. Cf. 2:47 with 3:28 and finally with 4:34,35.

(2) The king acknowledges the utter sovereignty of God with respect to his own experience (4:37b).

(3) The king utters true statements concerning the omnipotence of the true God (4:34,35).

(4) The king would worship this God, whom he identifies as King of heaven (4:37a).

These reasons lead me to believe that, although the faith of Nebuchadnezzar may indeed have been weak and his knowledge meager, yet his faith was saving faith, and his knowledge true (*Commentary*, 114).

Homer Hailey says, "We must measure him as a pagan, and not by the divine standard of Moses' law or that of Christ, for he lived under neither." And while Hailey expresses great admiration for king Nebuchadnezzar, he stops short of saying he will be eternally saved.

Rex Turner, Sr. is very positive in his conclusion of Nebuchadnezzar's salvation. He makes a good case for the conversion of Nebuchadnezzar by giving evidence that when his son, Amel-Marduk (Evil-merodach, KJV), "lifted up the head" (restored him to his position in life) of the Judean king, Jehoiachin, releasing him from prison after thirty-seven years and had him sit and eat at his own table in the palace (2 Kings 25:27-30; Jer. 52:31-34), this was a positive indication to that effect. Brother Turner believes this was done due to the instructions from his father and to the guiding hand of Daniel (90-93). "Except for the fact of Nebuchadnezzar's true conversion to a faith in the one God, and one God only, how may one account for the action of Evil-merodach in lifting up the head of Jehoiachin?" "Yes, Nebuchadnezzar's conversion was genuine" (93).

Additionally, one must admit, that surely, king Nebuchadnezzar's statement of belief is more detailed than that of the king and citizens of Nineveh (Jonah 3:5-10), whom Jesus affirmed as saved in Matthew 12:41. There is no evidence that Nebuchadnezzar became a proselyte to Judaism but was a saved Gentile.

## Questions Chapter Four

1. Who is the main speaker in chapter 4?
2. Describe the state of mind of Nebuchadnezzar in the opening verses of chapter 4.
3. Tell the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.
4. What is represented by the main object of the dream?
5. Give the interpretation of the dream.
6. The vision changed image from what to what?
7. How many periods of time are to pass over the king?
8. Whom did Nebuchadnezzar say he saw descend from heaven?
9. How much time elapsed from the time of the dream til it came to pass? What was he doing when his insanity came upon him?
10. What did Daniel try to persuade the king do?
11. What lesson was Nebuchadnezzar to learn from this experience?
12. What term is used to describe the illness that came upon Nebuchadnezzar?
13. Describe Nebuchadnezzar's appearance after this illness befell him?
14. When Nebuchadnezzar recovered from his illness what did he do? Contrast this to his attitude in previous chapters. Do you think Nebuchadnezzar became a believer in only one God, the God of Heaven? Was he converted?

# **DANIEL CHAPTER FIVE**

## **BELSHAZZAR, THE PROFLIGATE KING**

### **Chapter Five Outlined**

#### **Introduction**

1. Lineage of Babylonian Kings
2. Was Belshazzar King?

#### **I. Belshazzar the Profligate King (1-4)**

#### **II. The Handwriting on the Wall (5-9)**

#### **III. Daniel Summoned Before the King (10-16)**

#### **IV. Daniel Boldly Rebukes the King (17-24)**

#### **V. Interpretation of the Handwriting on the Wall (25-28)**

#### **IV. Daniel Made Third Ruler of Babylon (29)**

#### **V. Darius the Mede Rules Babylon (30)**

## Chapter Five

### The Lineage of Babylonian Kings

The Babylonian Empire lasted from about 612 B.C. (fall of Nineveh) to 538 B.C. when Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians. **Nabo-polassar** was the conqueror of the Assyrians and father of **Nebuchadnezzar** who reigned approximately 43 years as king of Babylon (604-561). He was a strong, powerful leader—deservedly called the "head of gold." After his death, Babylon went into a rapid decline due to rivalry, lust for power, greed, and vice.

He was succeeded by his son **Evil-Merodach** who reigned about three years and was assassinated by his brother-in-law, **Nerglissar**, who reigned four years and was also assassinated. Nerglissar's son, **Loborosoarchod**, reigned nine months and was assassinated. The conspirators made **Nabonidus**, a former Babylonian priest, the king. He held the empire together for another 16 to 17 years before the Medes and Persians conquered them.

### Was Belshazzar King?

Daniel five tells of the end of the Babylonian empire and records that Belshazzar was the last king. Bible critics could not identify Belshazzar, and they discredited the book of Daniel as not authentic. Archeologists, excavating the ruins of Babylon from 1853-1911, found an inscription by Nabonidus in which he named Belshazzar as his firstborn son (Young, 694). This of course validates this chapter of Daniel. Nabonidus was probably married to Nebuchadnezzar's daughter, making Belshazzar Nebuchadnezzar's grandson (see notes below). Though Daniel refers to Belshazzar as Nebuchadnezzar's "son," we must remember that it was a common practice to refer to any male offspring as "son." Hezekiah is called the "son of David" even though they were separated by many generations. Also, Jesus is "the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt 1:1). Robert Dick Wilson, shows that among the Arabs and Babylonians the word "son" had no less than twelve separate uses, including "grandson" and "adopted son"; and the word for "father" has seven separate and distinct uses (*Studies in the Book of Daniel*, 117-118). Also, note the prophecy of Jeremiah: *"And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field also have I given him to serve him. And all the nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the time of his own land come: and then many nations and great kings shall make him their bondman" (27:6-7)*. Literally, this would be fulfilled in Nebuchadnezzar, his son Evil-Merodach, and his grandson Belshazzar, all direct blood relatives, whereas the other kings were conspirators and usurpers (Turner, . Note the emphasis by the queen mother in 5:11.

According to the Babylonian chronicles, Nabonidus was away from Babylon much of the time (wars, archaeology, building the temples of neighboring gods, or grave robbing as some believe) and had appointed his son Belshazzar as co-regent. Belshazzar served as co-regent with his father for 14 years (556-538 B.C.). Belshazzar promised to make anyone who could interpret the handwriting on the wall "third ruler in the kingdom" (5:7). "Third," would be after Nabonidus and Belshazzar.

Butler, (*Commentary on Daniel*, 188-190), reminds us that the book of Daniel is not meant to be an official document of the Neo-Babylonian empire. It was written for the Jews, the people of God who had to deal with the man who ruled in Babylon. This man was Belshazzar, not Nabonidus. The man whose royal word could affect the Jews was Belshazzar. Very



properly, therefore, he is called “king” and “king of Babylon.” Finally, Daniel, the inspired writer and an eyewitness, refers to Belshazzar as "king" four times (5:1, 30; 7:1; 8:1). These comments should suffice for any person of reasonable mind!

<sup>2</sup>*Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, might drink therefrom.* <sup>3</sup>*Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, drank from them.* <sup>4</sup>*They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.*

### **Belshazzar, the Profligate King (2-4)**

Belshazzar was not satisfied with drunkenness. He called for the silver and gold vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem when it was destroyed by his grandfather many decades prior to this feast. The vessels of the temple were sanctified, set apart, for God's service. In desecrating the vessels, he was at the same time desecrating, defiling and defaming the God of the Universe whom they represented.

A “profligate” is one "Abandoned to vice; dissolute. Extremely wasteful; recklessly extravagant" (*Webster*). This definition identifies Belshazzar to a "T". He was a drunken playboy king. The writer of Proverbs says, "*It is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted*" (31:4-5).

The pains and problems that accompany the drinking of alcoholic beverages are many.

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; They that go to seek out mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, When it goes down smoothly: At the last it bites like a serpent, And stinges like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange things, and thy heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, Or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not hurt; They have beaten me, and I felt it not: When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." (Prov 23:29-35) Truly, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever errs thereby is not wise" (Prov 20:1).

Alcohol is a great destructive force in our society. Beer, wine, and hard liquors are being consumed more and more. Young people, especially, do not realize the over-powering effect of beverage alcohol. Getting drunk is common. Most young people drink to get drunk. Drunk is drunk, whether from beer, whiskey, champagne, wine coolers, or some other booze. Alcohol destroys one's judgment, robs him of clear thinking and mobility. Statistics show that a death takes place every ten minutes on our highways due to alcohol and an injury every eighteen seconds. It is the number-one contributor to the breakup of marriages. Years ago (1950's), Judge Tatum of Nashville, conducted a survey of men sent to jail and prison. They were asked what the greatest contributor to their crime and incarceration was drinking alcoholic beverages. Drugs

would be ranked along with this over the last 60 years.

### **The Handwriting on the Wall (5-9)**

*<sup>5</sup>In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. <sup>6</sup>Then the king's countenance was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him; and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. <sup>7</sup>The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. <sup>8</sup>Then came in all the king's wise men; but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation. <sup>9</sup>Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were perplexed.*

In the midst of the feast, the same hour the vessels of the temple were desecrated, came a handwriting on the wall. The king saw it! He turned white with fear, his knees knocked together; he was terrified! Just a moment before, his voice was filled with bravado "Bring the golden and silver vessels!" Just a moment before, his face was flushed with wine. "They drank wine and praised the gods of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone." Now he is pale and trembling in fear.

"In the night as they reveled  
In a lordly palace hall,  
They were filled with consternation  
At the hand upon the wall."

### **Daniel Summoned Before the King (10-16)**

*<sup>10</sup>Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: the queen spoke and said, O king, live forever; let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed.*

Evidently the commotion in the banquet hall is such that the queen mother comes to see what the trouble is. Or perhaps some servants have told her of the problem, for she immediately comes to provide information to solve the dilemma.

But critics ask, who is this queen mother? Some have thought that she was Nabonidus' mother. But Charles Boutflower (*In and About Daniel*, 117) says this could not be true. "She was not the mother of Nabonidus. That lady, as we learn from the Annalistic Tablet, died in the camp at Sippara in the ninth year of Nabonidus. But since she appears in Daniel 5, in the character of queen-mother, and speaks with remarkable dignity and self-possession, it is reasonable to suppose that she was the widow of Nebuchadnezzar, whom Nabonidus had married, and who, now that her husband was a prisoner in the hands of the enemy, had assumed the post of queen-mother."

However, if Boutflower is correct, Belshazzar would not be in the bloodline of

Nebuchadnezzar at all, and this would not be in harmony with Jeremiah 27:6-7 (see notes after verse 1). Another thought is that she was a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar who married Nabonidus and bore Belshazzar, their son, and thus, he is a grandson of the king Nebuchadnezzar and reigned as co-regent with his father Nabonidus. To give some proof of this viewpoint, Whitcomb records "...and in March the mother of Belshazzar (Nitocris, wife of Nabonidus and daughter of Nebuchadnezzar) died in Babylon and was publicly mourned for five days" (*Darius the Mede*, 71; see Raymond Philip Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*).

*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, were found in him; and the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made him master of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; <sup>12</sup>forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of dark sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.*

The queen mother remembered Daniel, and realizing the wise men could do no good, she told Belshazzar to send for him. Where was he; why was he not there at the first call to the magicians and astrologers, etc.? The fact that she has to recommend Daniel to him, and describe his excellence in advising and helping his father (grandfather, Neb.) suggests that Daniel has been pushed into the background (providentially for his own protection), perhaps since the death of Nebuchadnezzar, and during the time of great turmoil in Babylon as his son, Evil-Merodach, was assassinated after three years and the attempts at usurping the throne by others until Nabonidus solidified the kingdom and settled the political situation. By her description, she was very familiar with the work Daniel had done, and his skills far overshadowed that of the various other advisors of the king; so much so, that he was appointed 'master' of them. That she must tell Belshazzar these things would infer that the king did not know Daniel, which would give further evidence that Daniel was inactive in the palace since the death of Nebuchadnezzar (561 BC). This time of being out of touch with the throne of Babylon would have been about 23 years. Thus, Belshazzar would not have known Daniel.

*<sup>13</sup>Then was Daniel brought in before the king. The king spoke and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, who art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Judah? <sup>14</sup>I have heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in thee. <sup>15</sup>And now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof; but they could not show the interpretation of the thing. <sup>16</sup>But I have heard of thee, that thou canst give interpretations, and dissolve doubts; now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.*

Daniel is summoned before the king. Leupold says that there is no interrogative in the king's opening statement, and it may be that he is saying 'So you are that Daniel,' The one t he had been hearing about (from his mother, ebd). Perhaps Belshazzar had even seen Daniel around the palace, but because he was 'just and old man,' had never given him any consideration—he

was just another fixture. Or it could be that Belshazzar, in his profligate and prodigal life, had no interest in any advice he could give.

### **Daniel Boldly Rebukes the King (17-24)**

*<sup>17</sup>Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.*

Some of the commentators think Daniel to be rude in his reply to Belshazzar and say this is an historical blunder since no one would be so bold to refuse the king. But consider: Daniel knows what is going to take place that very night; he has nothing to fear from Belshazzar. Rather than being insolent he is merely stating that he will give the interpretation without reward. Baldwin observes, “Daniel begins by dissociating himself from any thought of reward. This was in line with prophetic consciousness that the needed word of wisdom came from the Lord, and that it could not be bought at any price (Numbers 22:18; Micah 3:5)” (122).

*O thou king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father the kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty: <sup>19</sup>and because of the greatness that he gave him, all the peoples, 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 raised up, and whom he would he put down.*

Belshazzar had mentioned ‘the king, my father’ (v 13). Daniel proceeds to tell him if it were not for ‘the Most High God,’ Nebuchadnezzar would have had no ‘kingdom, greatness, glory, and majesty,’ and it was because he had gotten high-minded, exercising complete and unrestrained power that the Most High God had humbled him... ‘whom he would he slew, whom he would he kept alive.’

*<sup>20</sup>But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: <sup>21</sup>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; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; until he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and that he sets up over it whomsoever he will.*

Nebuchadnezzar had to learn the lesson ‘that the Most High rules in the kingdoms of men.’ This lesson he had learned by process of deep humiliation when he was driven from the sons of men (from mankind) and made to eat grass with the beasts of the field (chapter 4).

*<sup>22</sup>And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thy heart, though thou knewest all this, <sup>23</sup>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 from 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. <sup>24</sup>Then was the part of the hand sent from before him, and this writing was inscribed.*

Daniel reminds the king that he is proud and arrogant in spite of the fact that he full-well

knew the things that had happened to *his father*. His irreverent and blasphemous conduct would not go unpunished. Could it be that Belshazzar was showing his contempt for the God that had humbled his mighty predecessor by drinking wine specifically from the vessels of the temple of the Jews and giving praise to the gods of silver and gold, brass, iron, wood, and stone?

### **Interpretation of the Handwriting on the Wall (25-28)**

<sup>25</sup>*And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.* <sup>26</sup>*This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom and brought it to an end;* <sup>27</sup>*TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.* <sup>28</sup>*PERES; thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.*

Daniel interpreted the writing: Mene means “numbered, to count;” that it is repeated is probably for emphasis. In addition, *mene* carries with it the idea “to fix the limit of.” The time of the Chaldean Kingdom of Babylon literally is “caused to be completed.” God has fixed the days of your kingdom, and they are ended.

Tekel means “weighed.” This refers to the king—it is Belshazzar who is weighed and come up short—he has failed the test.

Upharsin means “to divide, rend, tear.” The letter *u* is the conjunction “and in the Semitic languages. Pharsin is the plural form of *peres*, and there may be in the word an allusion to the word *paras*, which means “*Persian*” (Butler). The interpretation is that the kingdom of Babylon is numbered, the time is fixed; as one would say, “Your days are numbered.” Belshazzar, their last king, is weighed in the balances and found wanting. The kingdom is to be rent and given over to the Medes and Persians. “The brevity of the message plus the terseness of the interpretation at the same time have a note of unquestioned authority” (Leupold).

### **Daniel Made Third Ruler of Babylon (29)**

<sup>29</sup>*Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with purple, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.*

There is no reaction recorded as to what the king thought. Belshazzar kept his word, and Daniel was promoted to third ruler in the kingdom of Babylon.

Daniel had refused the offer of wealth and promotion when first offered to show that the giving of the interpretation of the handwriting did not depend on whether he was rewarded or not. Since it is now clear that he has no mercenary motives, there is no reason the gifts should at this time be refused.

**But note the implication!** Since Belshazzar was killed that very night, and Nabonidus was out of the country and deposed as king, Daniel was actually the ruler of Babylon when Darius came! Who would have thought, 70 years ago, that a captured youth in slave status would someday be ruler of Babylon, even for a day; that he as God’s servant would be the one to turn over the kingdom to the conquerors, the Medes and Persians! And all this is revealed in a prophecy so long ago! (Ch 2).

### **Darius the Mede Rules Babylon (30)**

<sup>30</sup>*In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean King was slain.*

Belshazzar was slain that night. How did he die? We don't know except to say it was by the hand of another. Jeremiah 50-51 tells of Babylon's end: God had laid a "snare," and they would be caught in it (50:24), the trap laid for them had to do with their water defenses (51:36), "the reeds would be burned with fire" (51:32), and it would come at a time when they would be feasting and drunken (51:39). Ancient historians (Herodotus, Xenophon, Berossus, the Nabonidus Chronicle, the Cyrus Cylinder) are virtually unanimous in recording that the Medes and Persians collaborated to defeat the Babylonians who had come out of the city to meet the army led by Cyrus and were defeated. They retreated into the city, believing themselves secure behind the impregnable walls. Cyrus, at some point, diverted the water from one of the canals of the Euphrates allowing his troops to enter under the walls of the city, and it fell while its citizens were in engaged in a great festival (See Butler, 202-204).

<sup>31</sup>*And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.*

The following is from John C. Whitcomb's book, *Darius the Mede*, as quoted from Paul Butler's *Commentary on Daniel*:

"Who is 'Darius the Mede?' Whitcomb...contends that mistakes were made in translation of the Nabonidus Chronicle when two different names in this Chronicle were both translated Gobryas. One name (on line 15) was Ugbaru, the governor of Gutium, who entered Babylon with the army of Cyrus and conquered the city. On lines 19-20 of the same Chronicle is the name Gubaru, who appointed satraps. In line 22 Ugbaru is said to have died. It is Mr. Whitcomb's suggestion that Ugbaru was indeed Gobryas who conquered the city in the name of Cyrus, but it was Gubaru who had been appointed governor of Babylon and beyond the River, and who is one and the same person as Daniel's Darius of 5:31. Gubaru (Darius) was governor of Babylon and the River beyond on the very day that Cyrus first set foot in the conquered city, which was October 29 (seventeen days after its conquest by Ugbaru or Gobryas), and he continued in that position throughout the reign of Cyrus and through more than half the subsequent reign of Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. The great prominence given to Darius the Mede (Gubaru) in the book of Daniel is more readily explained if we assume his identification with a person by the name of Gubaru, whose reign extended not only over a period of three weeks (the time within which Ugbaru was dead after capturing Babylon), or even a year, but of fourteen years (539-525 B.C.)!

Whitcomb concludes "that there is one person in history, and the only one, who fits all the Biblical data concerning Darius the Mede. He is never mentioned by the Greek historians, but appears in various sixth century B.C. cuneiform texts under the name of Gubaru" (205)

## **Lessons**

- A. Man is weighed in the scales of Divine justice.
  - 1. God's word on one side – man on the other.
  - 2. Man rises quickly – he has no weight, no substance. He is found wanting.
  - 3. Man has no redeeming virtues, no righteousness, no goodness of his own. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10-18, 23).

- B. Depending on the wrong things will bring us up short of God's grace and word.
1. Those depending on human goodness—found wanting!
  2. Those depending on immoral, wicked living—found wanting!
  3. Those depending on human wisdom and ingenuity—found wanting!
  4. Those depending on human goodness and sincerity—found wanting!
  5. Those depending on another's faith—found wanting!
  6. Those depending on the doctrines of men—found wanting!
  7. Those depending on the religions of men—found wanting!
  8. Those depending on Christ and the gospel—shall be saved!
- C. Without God's grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, we could never find favor on the scales of Divine Justice.
1. But thanks be to God "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us!" (Romans 5:8).
  2. "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19).
  3. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15).
- D. More "Weighed and Found Wanting"
1. God has weighed the matter of **how many churches**. God speaks in the singular, man in the plural. The World Encyclopedia of Religion lists 20,780 worldwide!
  2. God has weighed the matter of **adding and subtracting from His word**. See Deuteronomy 4:32; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18-19).
  3. God has weighed the matter of **worship** (John 4:23-24; Matthew 15:9).
  4. God has weighed the matter of **marriage, divorce, and remarriage** (Matthew 5:32; 19:9).
  5. God has weighed the matter of **salvation** (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Matthew 10:32-33; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16).

## Questions Chapter Five

1. Identify Belshazzar. Explain why he is called “king” of Babylon when history says it was Nabonidus who was king at that time.
2. What prophet wrote of their fall and of the feasting and drunkenness at the time of Babylon’s end?
3. Explain the place of the queen in relationship to Belshazzar and Daniel.
4. What were the words that were written in the plaster on the palace wall? Give the interpretation.
5. Where did the golden vessels come from that the revelers used in their feast? Why should they have not been used in this way?
6. Why did Belshazzar not know Daniel?
7. By what strategy did the Medes and Persians conquer Babylon?



# **DANIEL CHAPTER SIX**

## **Daniel in the Lion's Den**

### **Chapter Six Outlined**

#### **Introduction (1-3)**

1. The Organization of the Medo-Persian Empire
2. Daniel's Position in the Presidency

#### **I. Conspiracy Against Daniel (4-9)**

1. Seeking to Find Fault with Daniel
2. Attack on Daniel Through His Devotion to God
3. An Interdict Drawn Up and Signed by King Darius

#### **II. Daniel's Prayer Life (10-15)**

1. No Change in Daniel's Prayer Program
2. Daniel Charged with Violating the Law
3. The Unchangeable Law of the Medes and Persians Enacted

#### **III. Daniel Cast Into the Lion's Den (16-18)**

1. Darius' Confidence in the God of Daniel
2. Darius Spends the Night Fasting and Sleepless

#### **IV. Daniel's Deliverance (19-23)**

1. God's Care of Daniel in the Lion's Den
2. The Gladness of the King

#### **V. The Evil End of Daniel's Enemies (24)**

#### **VI. Darius' New Decree Extolling the God of Heaven (25-28)**

1. The King's Gracious Praise of God
2. Daniel's Extended Service

## Chapter Six

### Introduction (5:30-6:3)

Daniel has now lived through the Babylonian era. Seventy years have passed since Daniel and others were taken captive. Babylon, the head of gold, is now history. The era of the Medes and Persians, the chest and arms of silver, has now begun. It would last from 539 BC to 333 BC. Daniel, who was but a youth when taken captive, is now approaching 90 years of age. Though a change has been made in the government, Daniel is still held in high esteem by the Medes and Persians.

*It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps, who should be throughout the whole kingdom.*

*Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* says “The *satrap* is from a Hebrew and Greek word translated ‘viceroy, lieutenant, prince:’ prob. derived from a Pers. word meaning ‘protector of the realm’” (286). The extent of a satrap’s authority and power seems not to have been definite but varied with the location and disposition of the one doing the appointing.

*<sup>2</sup>and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one; that these satraps might give account unto them, and that the king should have no damage.*

Over the satraps was appointed three presidents, Daniel being one of them. These men were to see that the satraps gave account, that there be no mismanagement financially, politically, or any other way, but to make sure of their loyalty and service to the king. The kingdom (perhaps at this time would have included only those lands of Babylon proper, not including conquered lands and territories) was divided into 120 provinces. Three presidents, each caring for 40 provinces, were under the king. Daniel was one of these presidents.

*<sup>3</sup>Then this Daniel was distinguished above the presidents and the satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.*

Daniel was so well favored by Darius that he was of a mind to put him in charge of all 120 provinces, second only to himself. Apparently, the king was able to see very quickly the “excellent spirit” that is, the fine attitude and disposition of Daniel of loyalty, true leadership, sincerity, dependability, and integrity. It was not a spirit acquired simply by his Babylonian education nor by his long service to heathen kings of Babylon, but by his loyal service and subjection to God.

### The Conspiracy Against Daniel (4-9)

*Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find occasion against Daniel as touching the kingdom; but they could find no occasion nor fault, forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.*

This action by the king provoked great jealousy of Daniel on the part of the other two presidents and the satraps. They tried to search out some way they might find fault with Daniel and entrap him in some activity whereby they could accuse him of misusing his office.

<sup>5</sup>*Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.*

They hurriedly conceived a plan to get rid of Daniel. Since they could not accuse him of mishandling his governmental affairs, they concluded that the only way they could get anything on Daniel would be through his religion and his relationship with his God. One's religious faith can make one vulnerable to the criticism and treachery of the world.

<sup>6</sup>*Then these presidents and satraps assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live forever.*

The two presidents and the satraps of the city of Babylon and local surrounding territory came en masse before the king to "overwhelm" him with the consensus of opinion to get this interdict enacted. The presence of so many of his appointed leaders acting in concert would perhaps sway the king to do their will. We can imagine their excited talk and feigned enthusiasm as they presented their case for 'a new law' that must be enacted 'right away.'

<sup>7</sup>*All the presidents of the kingdom, the deputies and the satraps, the counsellors and the governors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a strong interdict, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.*

They began by saying it is the will of all your governmental servants and advisors (these were either a part of the conspiracy against Daniel, too, or they have been unknowingly added to their scheme) that this law be enacted—"we have consulted together." Their new law, which they describe as a "strong interdict," is that no one shall have the right to petition or pray to any god or man for thirty days, except for you, O king. "*Except for you, O king*" is the "hook" of flattery that convinces the king that, 'yes, this is a good law, one that we need.' Thus, good king Darius has unwittingly been made a part of their scheme to get rid of Daniel. This is made sure of by the inclusion of a penalty of death in a den of lions to those who would dare to violate the law of the Medes and Persians "which alters not" (see also, Esther 1:19; 8:8). "The laws remained unchangeable and irrevocable, because the king was regarded and honored as the incarnation of deity, who is unerring and cannot change" (Keil, 210).

<sup>8</sup>*Now, O king, establish the interdict, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which alters not.* <sup>9</sup>*Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the interdict.*

Once the decree was signed, and since the law of the Medes and Persians could not be altered, Daniel is faced with a very serious problem. Daniel could have thought several things: (1) These men have concocted a plan to take my life. I will fight fire with fire. I'll go to the king and uncover their murderous plot and put my accusers on the spot. (2) He could have reasoned, "the law is to last only 30 days, I just won't pray for a month." (3) He could have thought, "My life is worth more to my people than my death, I need to stay alive for the sake of my

countrymen." (4) He could have said, "One way is as good as another, I'll pray to God, but I'll close my window so no one can see. Or, I can go to the cellar and pray; they won't see me down there."

### **The Prayer Life of Daniel (10-15)**

*<sup>10</sup>And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem) and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.*

Daniel could have stayed out of sight until the storm blew over, but that would have gone against his life-long habits and principles. Whether they noticed or not, whether they approved or disapproved, Daniel would do as he had done before (10). It would have been the same if Darius had said, "Whoever shall not pray to any god or man for 30 days, I'll abdicate and make him king. Daniel still would not have compromised—not for wealth or for threat of his life. Like Nehemiah, when Sanballat and Tobiah tried to intimidate him and make him afraid, he said "Should such a man as I flee? (Neh. 6:11). Daniel was like that—absolutely fearless and absolutely not going to be turned aside from his commitment to God. "When he knew the writing was signed, he went to his house and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." He was signing his own death warrant! He might as well have jumped into the den of lions at that moment! Where did he find strength and courage? His refuge was in prayer. Daniel's outward life before the Babylonians and Medes and Persians was beautiful and noble because his inward life was wholly devout and pure.

Daniel prayed three times a day... (See Psalm 55:17). Coffman gives the hours of prayer as the time of the morning burnt offering, the ninth hour (3 PM), and sunset (102). A man is what his habits (customs) are (cf. Jesus Luke 4:16). The world may mock and scoff and call one who is habitual in his worship a radical, or a legalist, and truly, this is all some are. But there are also many who are devout and true followers of the Lord whose habits and lives are to be emulated (1 Corinthians 11:1).

His window was opened in his chambers toward Jerusalem. One could have imagined the longing of Daniel, now an old man, to see the beloved city of God as he prayed, looking to the west. The Talmud instructed the Jews in foreign lands to pray toward Jerusalem and that persons in Jerusalem should pray towards the temple (Dummelow, 537). How badly we need men today who will pray for the New Temple, the New Jerusalem, the church of the living God.

Note: (1) Daniel had a place of prayer—it was in an open window. (2) Daniel not only had a place to pray; he had a time to pray—three times a day. (3) Daniel had a posture in prayer—on his knees in submission, humility, and surrender.

*<sup>11</sup>Then these men assembled together and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.*

Daniel's enemies could count on Daniel! They found him doing exactly what they thought he would be doing—praying—openly, unabashedly, faithfully practicing his religion without regard to human regulation or intervention. They had caught Daniel in the act! He

couldn't deny it (and wouldn't if he could)! But "they overlooked the **will of God**, which is a universal characteristic of all wicked men" (Coffman, 100).

*<sup>12</sup>Then they came near, and spoke before the king concerning the king's interdict: Hast thou not signed an interdict, that every man that shall make petition unto any god or man within thirty days, save unto thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which alters not.*

These conspirators against Daniel wasted no time in getting word back to the king about Daniel's flagrant violation of their royal law. Upon asking the question and receiving the king's answer, the trap was sprung. The king couldn't extricate himself from the dilemma he helped make by falling for their flattery, and Daniel couldn't extricate himself from the dilemma his faith had gotten him into.

*<sup>13</sup>Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, who is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regards not thee, O king, nor the interdict that thou hast signed, but makes his petition three times a day.*

"That Daniel...of the captivity of Judah." One can almost see the sneer, hear the contempt in their voices. He is not one of the presidents, not one of the king's faithful, loyal advisers; he is a law breaker! One deserving of death!

*<sup>14</sup>Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to rescue him. <sup>15</sup>Then these men assembled together unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians, that no interdict nor statute which the king establishes may be changed.*

Though the king now realizes the treachery of these men in his government, he must honor the law that he had signed. All day long he looked for some loophole, some solution to keep Daniel alive. This delay in carrying out the penalty of the interdict caused the foul perpetrators to come again to the king to remind him of the law of the Medes and the Persians that cannot be changed. The day before the King had reached the giddiest heights of ambition—a god, no one can pray to anyone but me! Now he realizes he had been duped and deceived. His courtiers have made a fool of him. They have made him look ridiculous. He found himself in this predicament, not because of any failure on the part of Daniel, but by his own pride and hastiness in signing the decree and the treachery of his presidents.

King Darius was herewith learning just how great, worthy, and deserving he really was in the eyes of the two presidents and the close adherents. Their "royal statute" for thirty days to "honor" Darius was a farce. Darius learned the hard way! The true character of king Darius was reflected by the fact that "he set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him" (Turner, 201-202).

One needs to be careful as to the promises he makes and the documents he signs. Parents who sign a paper saying they will raise their children in a certain faith are not obligated to do what they may find out later to be against God's will for their lives and their children. Some make promises to parents who are on their deathbeds regarding the parent's religion and will not leave it even when they find out it is error. There is an over-riding Scripture that takes precedence over these kinds of promises: "*We ought to obey God rather than men*" (Acts 5:29).

### **Daniel Cast into the Lions' Den (16-18)**

*<sup>16</sup>Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.*

One can almost hear the emotion in the voice of the king as he spoke to his friend Daniel. “Both the faith of Daniel and the faith of Darius in Daniel’s faith were being tested” (Hailey, 117).

*<sup>17</sup>And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. <sup>18</sup>Then the king went to his palace and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep fled from him.*

By putting the official seal on the entrance to the lions’ den, Daniel was left to his fate. Neither the king nor anyone else could rescue Daniel without it being known.

“Any man, trapped and frustrated by his own words and deeds, is to be pitied; and Darius spent an agonizing night, no doubt realizing just what a fool his unscrupulous lords had made of him. On the other hand, they must have enjoyed a banquet of feasting and rejoicing. However, there was to be a sequel to this event which none of them could have foreseen” (Coffman, 104).

Daniel probably spent a more peaceful, restful night in the lions’ den than did king Darius in his own bedroom! “*I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me*” (Psalm 3:5). “*For he giveth to his beloved sleep*” (Psalm 127:2).

### **Daniel’s Deliverance (19-23)**

*Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste unto the den of lions. 20 And when he came near unto the den to Daniel, he cried with a lamentable voice; the king spoke and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou serve continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? 21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. 22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also, before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. 23 Then was the king exceeding glad, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So, Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God.*

*...who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions...* (Heb 11:33)

The king’s continued concern for the welfare of Daniel is wonderfully refreshing. He did not automatically give up on Daniel and concede his death. He was fearful, but anxious enough to hurriedly go see about him “*very early in the morning.*” His belief in Daniel’s God is rewarded! It was not the lack of hunger on the part of the lions, but the intervention of an angel

of God that spared Daniel's life. There is much that we do not know about the ministration of angels (Heb 1:14), but Daniel did not have any doubt as to who had come to his rescue (cp. Peter, Acts 12:5-10).

The statement "*Innocence was found in me, and also before thee,*" is not a claim of sinlessness, but simply a statement to show that the charges of these evil men against him were false.

### **The Evil End of Daniel's Enemies (24)**

*<sup>24</sup>And the king commanded, and they brought those men that had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and broke all their bones in pieces, before they came to the bottom of the den.*

Critics have tried to say that all 120 satraps and their families and the 2 presidents and their families were all thrown into the den of lions, this in an effort to make the account of Daniel's ordeal ridiculous, and thus, spurious. But Keil points out, "Those critics who thus spoke have themselves fabricated the idea of throwing 122 men with their wives and children in the lion's den...this they have done, trying to make the account absurd: but the text states no number of the condemned" (216). As has been stated, only those in the close proximity to the city who would have instigated the conspiracy against Daniel are those who would have been punished.

### **Darius' New Decree Extolling the God of Heaven (25-27)**

*<sup>25</sup>Then king Darius wrote unto all the peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied unto you. <sup>26</sup>I make a decree, that in all the dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed; and his dominion shall be even unto the end. <sup>27</sup>He delivers and rescues, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.*

Hailey points out that this decree probably extends only to the limited region ruled over by Darius the Mede. Leupold says the words translated, "people...that dwell in all the earth," could "just as correctly be translated by the words 'that dwell in all the land'" (273)

*<sup>28</sup>So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.*

Daniel lived long enough into the reign of Cyrus the Persian that he would have witnessed with longing heart the long procession of his brethren as they made their way back to Judea from the land of their captivity. "One wonders, did Daniel point out to Cyrus Isaiah's prophecy which said he would be raised to power and allow them to return? (Isa 44:28-45:7). At any rate, both Darius and Cyrus recognized the worth of this faithful servant of God to the welfare of their kingdom and retained his services" (Hailey, 122).

Allowing that Daniel was about 17 years old when taken into captivity to Babylon, he would have been about 87 years old when Cyrus took control of Babylon (October 29, 539 B.C.). Cyrus lived nine years after he conquered Babylon and was slain in battle in 530 B.C.

## Questions Chapter Six

1. Who was Darius the Mede?
2. What is a satrap? How many provinces made up the Persian Empire?
3. What fault did Daniel's enemies at first try to find in Daniel?
4. Explain the rigidity of the law of the Medes and Persians as it played out in the life of Daniel.
5. Explain Daniel's prayer life.
6. Did the king realize the edict was aimed specifically at Daniel? How did the king react when he found that Daniel was in violation of the new law?
7. What was the king's state of mind when Daniel was put into the lion's den?
8. What was the fate of Daniel's accusers?



# **DANIEL CHAPTER SEVEN**

## **THE VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS**

### **Chapter Seven Outlined**

#### **Introduction: First Year of Belshazzar (1-2)**

#### **I. Vision of the Four Beasts (3-8)**

A Lion with Eagle's Wings  
A Bear Raised Up on One Side, with Three Ribs in Its Mouth  
A Leopard with Four Wings and Four Heads  
A Diverse Beast—Strong, Great Iron Teeth, Ten Horns  
A Little Horn from Among the Ten

#### **II. The Ancient of Days (9-10a)**

The Judgment of the Fourth Beast (10b-12)  
The Coronation of the Messiah (13-14)

#### **IV. Interpretation of the Four Beasts (15-18)**

#### **V. Daniel Asks Specific Information Concerning the Fourth Beast (19-27)**

#### **VI. Daniel Disturbed By These Things (28)**

## Chapter Seven

### Introduction (1-2)

As per Good's (172) division of chapter seven, we have:

1. Four Beasts from the Sea (2-8) – On Earth
2. Judgment of the Four Beasts 9- 12) – In the Spiritual Realm
3. Coronation of the Son of Man (13-14) – In the Spiritual Realm
4. Angelic Interpretation of Scenes 1 and 2 (15-27)  
(Beloved of God, A Study of the Book of Daniel)

<sup>1</sup>*In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matters. <sup>2</sup>Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven broke forth upon the great sea.*

The "first year of Belshazzar" is about 552 B.C. Archaeological findings have proved conclusively that Belshazzar was co-regent with his father, Nabonidus, for about 12-14 years. Daniel would be 70 to 75 years old (see notes 5:1). God is shaping history to accomplish His divine, foreordained plan (Eph 3:8ff).

"Daniel had (saw, Aramaic) a dream and visions...he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matter." This is the first record of dreams experienced by Daniel. To this point the dreams have been those of Nebuchadnezzar that Daniel interpreted by the power of God. Now they are being revealed directly to Daniel by the Most High God. We have moved from the Historical section of Daniel to the Apocalyptic section. "If we can't tell the difference between history and apocalypse, we're in real trouble. There is no one, not anyone, who interprets all scripture literally. And its sheer nonsense to say that figurative language renders the meaning of a passage open to every conceivable interpretation. This isn't so. If that were the case, then God wouldn't use ANY figurative speech at all!" (Jim McGuiggan, *Daniel*, 107).

The Four Winds represent the power of God stirring up the nations of the Gentiles (sea). At various times in history God has stirred the hearts of rulers and nations to do his will (Isaiah 10:5-16; 29:6; 45:1-7; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4, etc. "As the wind is invisible but it clearly affects things, so it is of God who is invisible but affects things in the universe" (ibid).

God does not overrule the will of men and force them to think what they do not want to think. But by his providence, God uses men to bring about his will (book of Esther, life of Joseph, history of Israel, etc.).

The Great Sea refers to the Mediterranean, which was symbolic of the Gentile powers hostile to God and his people (see Isaiah 8:7ff; Jeremiah 46:7-9; 47:2; Isaiah 17:12-13ff; and Revelation 17:1-15). The four beasts arising out of the sea represent the unsettled, agitated state of the Gentile world, i.e., the rising and falling of nations as they war among themselves.

### The Vision of the Four Beasts (3-8)

<sup>3</sup>*And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. <sup>4</sup>The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man; and a man's heart was given to it.*

This first prophecy given directly to Daniel “took the form of a visual presentation, a kind of divine motion picture” (Good, 172). God has given a preview of these ‘beasts’ that would maul, rend, and tear Israel and Judah to an earlier prophet (Hosea 13:7-8).

### **First...A Lion...Eagle’s Wings**

The lion and eagle are both symbols of Babylon (Jeremiah 49:19; 50:17,44; 48:40; 49:22; Ezekiel 17:3,12). The lion is strong, fierce, majestic in his power, The eagle’s wings represent speed, describing the rapidity of the Babylonian conquest of the old Assyrian Empire. In that they were plucked, is symbolized in the events of the life of Nebuchadnezzar as recorded in Daniel 4 when his pride and lust for conquest and his proud nature were taken from him until he learned that “*God rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whosoever He will.*” The plucking of the wings may refer to the death of its first king, or perhaps, to the demise of the kingdom that began with the death of Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>5</sup>*And, behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear; and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.*

### **Second...a Bear with Three Ribs in Its Mouth**

The second beast represents the Medo-Persian Empire. The bear is slower and more ponderous than a lion but is just as dangerous. Ancient historians (Herodotus, Xenophon, Diodorus, Arrian, etc.) mention the enormous size of the armies of Persia as being from 300,000 to 2,500,000 men, consisting of foot-soldiers, horsemen and chariots. Pusey gives an example, “Darius’ army which he marched through the desolate regions of Scythia, was counted at 700,000, exclusive of his fleet of 600 ships, which would add a naval force of 120,000 men. Xerxes’ expedition against Greece (Dan 11:2) resembled more the emigration of vast hordes, than an army; they were calculated at above two million and a half fighting men....Even its last warlike king (Darius Codomannus) brought an army of 500,000, or 600,000 to the battle of Issus; and two years after its defeat, he gathered 1,000,000 in splendid array, to cover the plain of Gaugamela, a multitudinous host from all the nations yet left under his sway, to be mostly but the spectators of his disgrace” (Pusey123-124). The second beast was heavy, slow and ponderous to the end.

*The bear being raised up on one side* indicated the dominance of one part over the other. The Persians, under the leadership of her first king, Cyrus the Great, proved to be greater power than the Medes, and in time the kingdom was simply known in history as the Persian Empire. The ribs in its mouth probably represented nations it had conquered. Many historians believe these three nations were Egypt, Lydia and Babylon in particular.

*Rise and devour...*Persia’s empire lasted about 200 years (539-333 B.C.); she devoured many nations but could never “swallow” Greece!

Pusey concludes that every characteristic of the second beast; “its heavy fierceness and destructiveness; the prominence of the one side over the other; the three ribs, which can receive no explanation as to any other empire” (Pusey, 125).

<sup>6</sup>*After this I beheld, and, lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon its back four wings of a bird; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.*

### **Third A Leopard...Four Wings...Four Heads**

Alexander the Great and the Grecian empire are symbolized by the Leopard. Due to the several Persian attempts to conquer Greece, there was great animosity between the two nations. The leopard is a swift, agile, powerful animal, appropriate to symbolize Alexander the Great and his swift armies. In a little more than ten years the successor of Philip of Macedon, Alexander, had conquered from Greece to Egypt, to what is now Afghanistan, to the Himalayas and the Indus River bordering India. The four wings of the leopard are symbolic of the great rapidity of his conquest. Compare that Babylon had just two wings. "Dominion was given to it..." indicates that Alexander was a man of destiny, singled out by divine providence to have world dominion in his hands. The four heads represent a four-way division which took place in the Greek empire following Alexander's death. It was divided among his four generals since he did not have any older sons as heirs. He did have a son by Roxana, but she and the boy were both murdered by Cassander.

The four heads were:

- **Cassander**, who governed Macedonia,
- **Lysimachus**, who governed Thrace,
- **Ptolomy**, who governed Egypt,
- **Seleucus**, who governed Syria.
- 

More will be said of this third beast, the Grecian Empire, in chapters 8 and 11.

*<sup>7</sup>After this I saw in the night-visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. <sup>8</sup>I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.*

### **Fourth...Terrible and Powerful, Exceedingly Strong, A Diverse Beast**

This last beast is not named since no beast in all of nature sufficiently fierce and terrible is able to symbolize this empire. Using its great iron teeth, it broke things into pieces. What it didn't devour, it stamped with its feet, grinding it into dust.

Though not identified by name, history proves this fourth kingdom to be the Roman Empire. Rome was singularly voracious, cruel and destructive--even vindictive as a world power. She was not concerned about raising the conquered nations to any high level of development. Her designs were only exploitation and imperialism.

The ten horns here represent the first 10 rulers of the Roman kingdom which carry us through to the end of the Jewish period of Bible history (see chart, 91).

Concerning the "little horn," Leupold suggests: "If one replaces three, it becomes comparatively quite a bit larger than any one of the others. Yet the little one does not grow as strong as the whole empire, the ten" (299). Daniel notes that the little horn has the eyes of a man and speaks great things.

**The Little Horn That Wore Out the Saints  
Twelve Recognized Emperors**

<b>Augustus (Octavian – 30 BC-14 AD)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Tiberias (14 - 37 AD)</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Caligula (37- 41 AD)</b>	3
<b>Claudius (41-54 AD)</b>	4
<b>Nero (54-68 AD)</b>	5
<b>(Galba, Otho, Vitellius)</b> “three plucked up by the roots” <b>Galba</b> (June, 68-Jan, 69) <b>Otho</b> (Jan 15-April 15, 69) <b>Vitellius</b> (April 15-Dec 22 69), have been In one year these three ruled and were successively slain or committed suicide to keep from being assassinated (Butler, 260).	6
	7
	8
<b>Vespasian (Flavian Dynasty – 69-79 AD)</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Titus (79-81 AD)</b>	10
<b>Domitian (81-96 AD) The “little horn”</b>	11

**The Ancient of Days (9-14)**

*<sup>9</sup>I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. <sup>10</sup>A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him:*

Thrones were placed (ASV footnote, *cast down*). Edward Young believes them to be the thrones of angels that serve God in judgment (cf. Psalms 89:8; Isaiah 6:2; Revelation 1:4; 4:4; 8:2; Matthew 13:36-50). However, Jesus said of the apostles “...in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt 19:28). Jesus sat on his throne when he ascended. The coronation scene follows in the next several verses.

This designation of Jehovah is found in no other book of the Bible. That He is described as “Ancient of Days” is suggestive of One with great age, wisdom, dignity, honor and eternity. It suggests “One who has lived ever since anyone can remember, and longer than anyone can

remember...the Eternal One who knows the deeds and acts of men and thus is well qualified to judge. This designation suggests wisdom, honor and reverence (Butler, 263). See Psalm 90:2; 93:2; 102:24, 27; and Job 36:26 for further passages denoting the eternity of God. This eternal recognition could also be given to the Son as well for He is described as “Everlasting Father” (Isaiah 9:6), and as the Ruler whose “goings forth are from old, from everlasting” [ancient of days, ASV footnote]; (Micah 5:2). But here in Daniel the designation “Ancient of Days” refers strictly to the Father.

Daniel is privileged to see a visible representation of God similar to that of Isaiah in chapter 6 of his book, and what Ezekiel saw in chapter 1 and what John saw in Revelation 1, 4 and 5.

The throne of God—this throne, and He who sat upon it, particularly commands the attention of Daniel. Its *fiery streams* emphasize His splendor, majesty, power, glory, and judgment. The *wheels* suggest the mobility of God's throne, His omnipresent nature. His throne is not bound to any one place, but He rules universally (cf. Ezekiel 1).

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him, representing the truth and justness of His judgments that were rendered on the “little horn” and the “beast.” See parallels in Revelation 20. Thousands of thousands—are the myriad upon myriad of heavenly beings who minister to him; angelic beings, cherubim, seraphim, the four living creatures, the twenty-four elders—all the host of heaven (cf. Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1; Revelation 4, 5).

### **Judgment of the Beast(s)**

*The judgment was set, and the books were opened (see Rev 20:11ff). <sup>11</sup>I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire. <sup>12</sup>And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.*

The Roman empire, the fourth beast, is clearly the chief object of God's judgment and is judged first. It is designated for destruction for its obstinacy against God. “The Aramaic original, correctly rendered, says, the body was given “to the burning of fire.” This form of the statement does not point so much to annihilation as to perpetual punishment, especially since other Scripture passages indicate with ample fulness the eternal character of the sufferings of the damned” (Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* 306).

The other beasts are judged, stripped of their authority, but are allowed to continue for a short time. They lived on in Rome. Rome was the embodiment of all the other three combined. Keep in mind that the full force of the object of judgment is to come on the fourth beast, who is singled out and utterly destroyed. Whereas, the first three beasts are judged, their kingdoms dissipate by being absorbed by another kingdom following, but Rome was destroyed, being torn and rent asunder and given over to barbaric hoards, not another world kingdom. The beast of Revelation 13 is described as a combination of a leopard, bear, and lion.

The Kingdoms of earth pass away one by one,  
But the kingdom of heaven remains  
(*Church Gospel Songs and Hymns*, H.R. Trickett, 455)

### **The Coronation of the Messiah**

<sup>13</sup>*I saw in the night-visions, and behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. <sup>14</sup>And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

"*One like unto the Son of man...*" Jesus is referred to as "the Son of man" 85 times in 81 verses in the New Testament. This name carries with it the idea of Divinity, while at the same time showing an identity with humanity.

Homer Hailey (*The Messiah of Prophecy to the Messiah on the Throne*, 197) observes: "The expression, 'Like unto a son of man,' emphasized the fact that though He appeared in the likeness of a man, He was not a man. He was the glorified Son of God. The victorious man who in His resurrected state, though recognizable as the man Jesus, could appear and disappear before the eyes of His beholders."

He is pictured coming "with the clouds, **to** the Ancient of days..." **to receive his kingdom.** He is not described as **leaving** or **coming from** the Ancient of days to the earth to receive his kingdom. This breaks the premillennial idea of the establishment of an earthly kingdom when Christ comes a second time all to pieces!

"*There was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom*" – *Dominion* means power, authority, the right to rule. Even the Messiah is subject to the Father, His is a *given* authority (Matthew 28:18; John 3:35; 1 Corinthians 15:27). Jesus prayed in John 17:4-5, just before His death, "*I have glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*" The *glory* is that which is appropriate to one at the head of such an empire. The *kingdom* is that to which all the prophets pointed (Isaiah 9:6-7; Psalm 2; Ezekiel 37:24-28) and which was established on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection (Acts 2).

"*All the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him...*" His is a universal kingdom embracing all nations (Isaiah 2:2-3).

"*His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*" It is a perpetual kingdom... His rule will not be surrendered by death or conquest to any other. The other kingdoms represented by the four beasts would have an end, but this is permanent, on-going and eternal. His kingdom will not suffer from discord, nor will He fear usurpers; there is no internal or external power that can invade or overthrow it (Daniel 2:44-45; Matthew 16:18-19; Hebrews 12:28; Luke 1:33; Revelation 11:15).

## **The Fulfillment of This Coronation Prophecy**

It is nothing short of amazing that very few commentators say anything about the fulfillment of this prophecy. Even the ancient Jewish rabbi's taught that this was pertaining to the Messiah. As the Jewish teachers missed the fulfillment in the New Testament, evidently so have many denominational expositors and commentators.

**When did Christ go to the Ancient of Days?** Let the Scriptures speak:

*“So, then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God” (Mark 16:19).*

*“And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven” (Luke 24:50-51).*

*“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:9-11).*

*“Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; (2 Sam 7:12-17; Psalm 132:11) he foreseeing this spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet (Psalm 110:1). Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified” (Acts 2:29-36).*

When Jesus was resurrected “he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). Jesus then ascended to the Ancient of Days and there was given Him dominion, glory, and a kingdom. He came TO the Ancient of Days, whereas the Premillennialists have him coming FROM the Ancient of Days TO THE EARTH to receive His kingdom.

Jesus told a parable about His return to the Father to receive the kingdom. He said, “A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return” (Luke 19:11-27). Christ is the nobleman; He ascended to heaven after His resurrection, to the Ancient of days; to receive a kingdom, but his people said, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us’; and then to return (His second coming and judgment of His servants).

When one considers the *Prophecy* (Daniel 7:13-14), The *Ascension Passages* (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11), the *Preaching on Pentecost* (Acts 2:29-36), and the *Parable* (Luke 19:11-27), there can be no doubt as to the time of the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy of the Coronation of Christ! (7:13-14; see **Special Study the Coronation of Christ**).

The kingdom of God was established when Jesus came the first time – in the days of His flesh He preached the good news of the kingdom (Mark 1:14-15), told men they must be born again to see it (John 3:3-5), that some would be alive when it came (Mark 9:1), that it would come with the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8), then was crucified according to



the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23), was buried and resurrected as prophesied (Psalms 22, Isaiah 53). Jehovah was not taken by surprise nor caught off guard! The rejection of Jesus and the Cross was the way of salvation for all men of all nations through his blood.

Jesus is NOW reigning at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:3, 8; 8:1, etc.). When He comes the second time (Hebrews 9:28) it will be to deliver the kingdom back to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:22-28; Ephesians 5:25-27). Premillennialism is dead wrong!

There will never be another world empire like the four described in the visions of Daniel 2 and 7. The "stone cut out of the mountain without hands" saw to that! The kingdom of Christ is the one and only universal kingdom to exist on earth until the end of time. It is a spiritual kingdom. God never intended that it be a political, physical, earthly kingdom as per the premillennial agenda. See my "*Studies in Premillennialism*", The Kingdom (Class notes).

### **Various Interpretation of The Four Beasts (15-18)**

<sup>15</sup>As for me, Daniel, my spirit was grieved in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. <sup>16</sup>I came near unto one of them that stood by and asked him the truth concerning all this. So, he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. <sup>17</sup>These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth. <sup>18</sup>But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever.

Daniel's spirit was greatly disturbed by the visions of these beasts and desired to know the truth about these things. One that stood by told him the interpretation: The four beasts represent four kings that shall come out of the earth. But the saints shall receive and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever.

There are many widely varying interpretations on the vision of the four beasts in Daniel Seven.

First, **Liberal Critics** see the four beasts as Babylon, Media, Persia and Greece. They do this because of their bias against the ability of Daniel, through inspiration, to predict with such accuracy events so far into the future. They hold that the writer of Daniel was a person who lived during the time of the Maccabees (circa 165-140 BC) and was writing about past events and not predicting the future, thus eliminating Rome as the fourth beast. In the Liberal view, Antiochus Epiphanes is the "little horn" of chapter 7. However, in Daniel eight the second and third beasts are specifically named as **Media and Persia** (20) and **Greece** (21). Antiochus was a Greek, not a Roman, and was a terror to the Jews 100 years before the Romans came on the Palestinian scene. The understanding of the four heads of the leopard and the he-goat with the great horn broken and four horns coming up in its stead comport with the historical evidence. The Liberals are prejudiced against Daniel and dishonest in their handling of the Scriptures. "In short, The Roman Empire would necessarily be eliminated from the book of Daniel" (Rex Turner, *Daniel A Prophet of God*, 132). This view is unhistorical and totally in error.

Second, **Premillennialists** see the beasts as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome but do not see the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands!" According to their theory, the kingdom of Christ was not set up because he was rejected by the Jews; thus, the prophecy of Daniel is a failure and ends up being postponed for at least 2,000 years! But, in order for them to have the kingdom of Christ on the earth, they must restore the sacrifices and trappings of the law of Moses, the earthly kingdom of David, another temple to be built in Jerusalem, and the

Romans again ruling the Mediterranean and Israel! The first century, the Romans, Judaism all over again! Unbelievable! Fantastic! Absurd! Incredible!

Third, **The Roman Catholic church and the papacy** is the view held by many. The focus of the O.T. prophets was to announce the advent of Christ and to convince the world that he was the Messiah. There may be a reference to the papacy in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, but Roman Catholicism was a later development, not coming about until the 6th century AD; too late for the events described in Daniel's prophecy.

### **Daniel Asks Specific Information Concerning the Fourth Beast (19-27)**

*<sup>19</sup>Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; <sup>20</sup>and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows. <sup>21</sup>I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; <sup>22</sup>until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.*

Daniel is particularly concerned with the fourth beast and inquires specifically about it. His curiosity is without doubt a mixture of fascination and fear as he describes again the terrible fierceness of this beast adding that it had nails of brass. He asks especially about *the horn that rose up and before whom three of the kings fell...that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and whose look was more stout* (ASV; *greater* NKJ) than the others, and who made war against the saints and prevailed against them.

Before any answer could be given by the angel, Daniel saw the ancient of days give judgment on the beast and the saints of the Most High possessed the kingdom.

*<sup>23</sup>Thus he said, the fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. <sup>24</sup>And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. <sup>25</sup>And he shall speak words against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. <sup>26</sup>But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. <sup>27</sup>And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

The explanation of the angel is that the fourth beast is a fourth kingdom, but different from the others. It shall devour "the whole earth." While this could mean all the lands conquered by the Romans it certainly does not mean the entire globe, which would be the impression that some commentators (Premillennial) would have us believe. The term "earth" would better be understood as "land," i.e., the land of Palestine, the land of the Jews, the land of God's people, the *holy land* (Zech. 2:9, 12), since this is the area that is of concern to Daniel, and this is the land where the activities described herein take place.

From this fourth beast 10 kings shall arise, and another (11<sup>th</sup> king), shall arise; he shall be different from the others. He shall subdue three kings and speak pompous words against God; and shall persecute the saints. He intends to change times and law and the saints shall be given into his hands for a time, times and a half time (a short period of time, (23-25).

**Vespasian** (9<sup>th</sup> Caesar) was called back to Rome from the Jewish wars to solidify the government and was made emperor in the process. He is the one who *subdued the three barracks rulers*. Vespasian was generally a benevolent ruler and not hostile to the Jews (69-79 AD).

**Titus** his eldest son, put down the Jewish rebellion and became Caesar number 10 after the death of his father (79-81 AD).

**Domitian**, a second son of Vespasian became king when Titus died after a short reign, he is the eleventh Caesar who is described in verses 23-25. It must be admitted that he was not the persecutor like Nero that some make him out to be. He personally did not “wear out the saints” as did Nero and as described by the vision in Daniel.

It was not his personal persecution of the saints, but his political policies that led to the governmental persecution of the early church. History bears out that “the most crucial time for the infant church (especially in Asia Minor where the church was greatest numerically and influentially) was during the reign of Domitian (81-96 A.D.). The Book of Revelation shows that persecution was already upon the church of Christ, (1) “the time is at hand,” relief from persecution was near, (2) the kingdom of God would prevail against the efforts of the “beast” (Rev 13) and (3) “the Lamb who is a Lion” would show in victory who is “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords” (Rev 19:16).

#### **Addenda on the Jewish Rebellion (68-70 AD).**

After his father Vespasian left the field to take his place as Caesar of the Roman Empire, Titus, as the commander of the Roman armies, led the siege against Jerusalem and the Jews, destroying the temple and the Holy City. Rex Turner quotes from Josephus:

Some of these were indeed, fighting men...but the greater part of them were poor people, who were deterred from deserting, by the concern they were under for their own relations:...so they were first whipped, and then tormented with all sorts of tortures before they died, and were then crucified before the wall of the city...So the soldiers, out of the wrath and hatred they bore the Jews, nailed those they caught...to the crosses, by way of jest; when their multitude was so great, that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies...So Titus commanded that the hands of many of those that were caught should be cut off...(Turner, 133).

Josephus, the Jewish historian records that the Roman army crucified so many Jews that they ran out of wood to make the crosses; that over 1,100,000 men, women, and children died in the siege from starvation, pestilence and disease, by the sword, and in Eusebius’

words, "...by countless other forms of death," and 97,000 were taken as slaves to Rome and paraded through the streets as trophies of the victorious Roman army.

The "wearing out of the saints" (Jews, God's people from Daniel's perspective in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) was to have lasted "until a time, times, and a half time" were accomplished. How long is this? Time =1, times (pl) = 2, a half time = 1/2; thus 3½. But is it 3½ days, weeks, months, years, centuries? If we are correct in interpreting this "wearing out of the saints" as primarily Jews of Jerusalem and Judea, this took place in the destruction of Jerusalem which began in Galilee at the beginning of A.D. 67 and continued until September 5, A.D. 70 then we have the three and one half, years predicted in Daniel. The time, times, and ½ time are the 3 ½ years that Jerusalem was under siege by the Roman Legions as prophesied by the Lord in Matthew 24 as well as the prophesies of Daniel 7 and 9 and John, Revelation 13.

But the "saints" would also "receive" the kingdom. These are the Israel of the New Covenant, "the true Israel of God" (Gal 5:16); these are the righteous who fled from Jerusalem as per the Lord's instructions when they saw "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24:15), and the city surrounded by the Roman legions (Luke 21:20-22). They were to flee to the mountains. Historians tell us that the saints fled to the region east of the Jordan in the region of Pella (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 1, 402). The kingdom of the little horn would be anti-God vocally, physically, and legally--speaking against God, seeking to change times and laws. Subsequent Roman emperors launched vicious persecutions against the kingdom of Christ seeking to destroy them totally.

However, "*the judgment is set;*" i.e., God had already decided the fate of the fourth beast. His dominion would be taken away, consumed, destroyed to the end. Thus, the fourth beast, Rome, that dominated the world with great ferocity from 63 B.C. to A.D. 476, came to an ignominious end, when it came under attack by Attila the Hun and the Germanic tribes, never to rise again. When the kingdom of God was established on the 1<sup>st</sup> Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the Roman Empire was doomed, and when Jerusalem and Judaism fell in A.D. 70, the persecution of the Jews ended, and the church went forth to conquer the world as per Daniel's prophesies.

*"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (27).*

### **Daniel Is Disturbed by These Things (28)**

*<sup>28</sup>Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance was changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.*

This vision was very upsetting to Daniel, it troubled and depressed him; but he kept the matter in his heart. The knowledge of these things awaited a later day when his writings would become known to another generation.

## Chart

### Solving the Riddle of Revelation 17:7-11 with Daniel 7:8

**“The Seven Heads are Seven Mountains...There are Seven Kings...Five are Fallen.”**

**Augustus 30 BC – A.D. 14**

**Tiberias 14 – 37 A.D.**

**Caligula 37 – 41 A.D.**

**Claudius 41 – 54 A.D.**

**Nero 54 – 68 A.D.**

**Galba** 6 mo. 68 – 69, **Otho** 3 mo. 69, **Vitellius** 1 mo. 69 A.D.  
*Plucked up by the roots (Dan 7:8).* Called “barracks emperors.”  
could not secure the empire, rooted out by Vespasian

**One Is – Vespasian 69-79 A.D.**

**“Other not yet come” – Titus, “when he comes, he must continue a short time”** Titus reigned but 2 years.

**“The Beast that was, and is not, and is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition” – Domitian 81-96 A.D.** Domitian is the eleventh emperor of Rome and is regarded most like Nero – persecutor, cruel, aloof, humorless, with an insatiable desire for wealth. He was the first Caesar to make it a law forcing others to worship him as a god (Rev 13:3, 12, 14).

## Questions Daniel Chapter Seven

MATCHING Place the number of the terms on the right by the beast it describes.

\_\_\_\_\_ First Beast

\_\_\_\_\_ Second Beast

\_\_\_\_\_ Third Beast

\_\_\_\_\_ Fourth Beast

1. Like a bear
2. Eagle's wings
3. Dreadful and terrible
4. Three ribs in its mouth
5. Like a leopard
6. Like a lion
7. Diverse
8. Iron teeth
9. Man's heart given to it
10. Four heads
11. Four wings of a fowl
12. Head of gold
13. Ten horns
14. Wings were plucked
15. A little horn
16. Told to arise, and devour much flesh
17. Made to stand on its feet like a man
18. Feet of iron and clay mixed
19. Dominion was given to it
20. It raised up itself on one side

## RESEARCH

1. Describe the first beast. What nation does it represent?
2. Describe the second beast. What nation does it represent?
3. Describe the third beast. What nation does it represent?
4. Describe the fourth beast. What nation does it represent?
5. Describe the Ancient of days. Who is the Ancient of days?
6. Who is the one like the Son of man, who came to the Ancient of days with the clouds of heaven?

7. What was given to the one like the Son of man?
8. Who explained the meaning of this vision to Daniel?
9. With whom did the fourth beast make war?
10. What do the ten horns and the horn that came up later represent?
11. What was Daniel's reaction to this vision and its meaning?

# **DANIEL CHAPTER EIGHT**

## **VISION OF THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT**

### **Chapter Eight Outlined**

#### **Introduction**

Vision at the Palace in Shushan (1-2)

#### **I. Vision of the Ram with Two Horns (1-4)**

#### **II. Vision of the He Goat (5-8)**

The Great Horn

Four Notable Horns

#### **III. The Little Horn (9-14)**

The Blasphemous Activity of the Little Horn

#### **IV. Interpretation of the Vision Concerning the Little Horn (15-26)**

#### **V. Daniel's Reaction to These Scenes (27)**



## Chapter Eight

### Introductory Matters

At the end of the seventh chapter the Book of Daniel switches back to the Hebrew language. Why this was done is not clear. Chapters 1:1-2:4 are written in Hebrew. Chapters 2:5-7:28 are in Aramaic. Aramaic seems to have been a “commercial” language that was a mixture of several Semitic languages (Hebrew, Chaldee, Akkadian, etc.). The Babylonians had their own language, but perhaps by this time there had developed a “common” language of commerce and trade as with the Classical and koine Greek of the first century. In 701 when Assyria was at the gates of Jerusalem (Isa 36:11ff; 2 Kings 18:26ff), the leadership of Jerusalem begged Rabshakeh to speak to them in Aramaic instead of Hebrew so that the people would not be able to understand the threats and diatribes of the Assyrians. We would conclude that few Jews of that time understood Aramaic, but now, in Daniel’s time at the close of the Babylonian Empire, it is a common language in the middle east.

Daniel eight focuses on the second and third kingdoms seen in chapters two and seven, these being the Medo-Persian and Grecian Kingdoms, giving us more detail and incite than the previous chapters.

Chapter eight describes the defeat of the Medo-Persian Empire by the Grecian armies of Alexander the Great, the subsequent break-up of the Greek kingdom and the oppression of Israel by Antiochus IV, Epiphanes, described as “the little horn.”

Note that the vision takes place in the third year of Belshazzar. Keep in mind that the book of Daniel is organized by subject matter and not chronologically. If it had been put together chronologically it would have been chapters 4, 7, 8, 5, 6, and 9. Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 43 years (606-561) and was succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach who reigned 2 years and was responsible for releasing King Jehoiachin of Judah out of prison as prophesied by Jeremiah.

*“And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon in the first year of his reign lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison, And spoke kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon, And changed his prison garments: and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life. And for his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life (Jer 52:31-34; 2 Kgs 25:27-30).*

Nerglissar (559-556), mentioned in Jer. 39:3, assassinated Evil-Merodach, usurping the throne for four years; then he too, was assassinated by conspirators. He was succeeded by his son Labash-Marduk (556) who reigned nine months and he was assassinated. Nabonidus was made king by the conspirators; a former priest, he had married Nicotris, the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar (See chapter 5). Nabonidus was more interested in restoration work on the temple of the moon god Sin, located in Tema (western Arabian Peninsula) than ruling the great city of Babylon. Thus, his son Belshazzar became co-regent king in his father’s absence serving in that capacity for as much as 15 years of Nabonidus’ 17 years on the throne. (R. P. Dougherty 134).

### **The Vision at the Palace in Shushan (1-2)**

The year is 551 B.C., the King Nabonidus is off in Arabia, and Belshazzar, his worthless son is on the throne of Babylon. Within twelve years (539) Cyrus, king of Persia with the aid of the Medians would conquer Babylon (Whitcomb, 107). Susa (Shushan, ASV), 350 miles east of Babylon, was the capital of the old country of Elam and is located in what is today southwestern Iran (a basalt stele containing the Code of Hammurabi was found here). Susa had been destroyed by the Assyrians in 645 B.C. and would be rebuilt by Darius I, Hystaspes (522-486 B.C.). Why is this pointed out? Is there some significance to this information? Yes, this information has a bearing because this vision has to do with events connected with the second kingdom, Medo-Persia, and Shushan (Susa) would be its capital. In Shushan is where the events of the book of Esther would take place (483-473 B.C) and the early service of Nehemiah as cupbearer to king Artaxerxes I in the year 446/45 B.C. (see Nehemiah 1:1; Esther 1:2, 5; 2:3, 5).

Why was Daniel here? Was he here only in a vision as Ezekiel (8:1-3; 40:1-5)? Was he here because he was physically, miraculously transported to this location? Either of these is a possibility. I offer the following as a consideration: keep in mind that Daniel had been trained to “*stand before the king*,” and had faithfully and loyally served Nebuchadnezzar. The next three kings, Evil-Merodach, Nerglissar and Labash-Marduk were all assassinated. How did Daniel escape the same fate; he who was so loyal to Nebuchadnezzar and who gives no mention of these assassinated kings in his book? Nabonidus is now king and Belshazzar his co-regent; but Belshazzar did not seem to know Daniel. However, the queen mother knew him and remembered him (5:10-16). Thus, he is either in Shushan on official business; or perhaps has been sent away from the city of Babylon before this turmoil during the transition of kings and has been gone for some time and almost forgotten. But, nonetheless, by God’s grace and providence, he is at this place and at this time given a vision by Jehovah, the God of the Jews, of events that will begin to transpire in just a few short years.

### **Vision of the Ram (3-4)**

While standing by the River Ulai, Daniel saw a ram with two horns; both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, the higher coming up last. Keil points out that rather than a definite article before *ram*, it is rather a *numeral*; it is *one ram*, with *two horns* (Daniel, 290). The ram represents Persia. The horns, one higher than the other, represent the alliance of Medes and Persians which formed the nation, with the Persians under Cyrus the Great becoming the dominant people. The angel Gabriel interprets the ram as representing “the kings of Media and Persia” (v20). This gives strong confirmation of the identity of the silver kingdom in chapter two and the bear in chapter seven as the dual monarchy of Medo-Persia. The ram pushed westward toward Babylonia, Syria and Lydia in Asia Minor and later into Greece: northward—Armenia and Scythia; and southward—Egypt. Nations were powerless against his might and he “magnified himself;” i.e., acted in a despotic, tyrannical manner.

### **Vision of the He-Goat (5-8)**

While Daniel was contemplating the import of the vision of the ram, he sees another animal, a male goat coming from the west over the face of the whole earth; and his feet didn’t touch the ground. That this he-goat is “from the west” gives us a clue—this is the Grecian Kingdom, and Gabriel again confirms this truth (21).

Daniel's description of Greece as a "he-goat" reflects the legendary origins of the Greek people. "The goat had been a symbol of the Greeks for 200 years before Daniel's time. It is said that a man named Caranus, when looking for a good place to make home, was advised by an oracle to follow the goats. Shortly, he encountered a heard of goats running from a storm and followed them, where they stopped, he made his home and called it *Aegea*, "the goat's town" from *aigos*, Greek for goat. He called his people the *Aegadae*, "the goat's people." A son born posthumously to Alexander by his Bactrian wife, Roxana, was named *Alexander Aegus*, "Alexander the goat." In fact, the sea between Asia Minor and Greece is today called the Aegean Sea, "the goat's sea." For about 270 years of the period between the Testament, Greek kings of Syria and Egypt ruled the Jews, and the Greek language was spoken on the streets of Jerusalem. It was this wonderfully exact language which became the vehicle for God's revelation of His will in the New Testament" (J. Edward Nowlin, *The Silent 400 Years 3-4*).

### **The Great Horn**

*"And the goat had a notable horn between its eyes."* This conspicuous horn represents the first and most noted king of the Greeks, Alexander the Great. He is noted in history for his military prowess and daring. He is one of the greatest conquerors of all time. Edward Young, quoting from 1 Maccabees 1:3, says of Alexander "He went through to the ends of the earth and took spoils of a multitude of nations; and the earth was quiet before him." (*The Prophecy of Daniel*, 168). "The face of the whole earth" gives us an indication of the extensive, far-reaching conquests of the Greek Kingdom. This is a good place to show that words must be interpreted in their context. "*The whole earth*" does not mean lands over the entire globe. The extent of Alexander's conquests reached from Egypt to the Indus River. So "the face to the whole earth" contextually must be understood to mean only the world that he knew. The rapidity and swiftness of the conquests is seen in the phrase "*his feet not touching the ground.*" In ten years, Alexander had conquered the world and at age 33 he died lamenting (according to legend) "he had no more worlds to conquer."

*"And he came to the ram that had the two horns, which I saw standing before the river, and ran upon him in the fury of his power."* (6)

The ram, representing the Medo-Persian Kingdom would be the first obstacle in Alexander's path, and he came against him with all the fury of his power. Ancient history records the great hatred of the Greeks for the Persians. For three centuries the Persians had mounted military campaigns against the Greek city states in an effort to conquer them. When the Greeks retaliated it was in *fury*.

*"And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and broke his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand."* (7)

“*Choler*” (KJV) means anger, wrath. This is an indicator of the hatred that had been welling up in the hearts of the Greek people against the kings of Persia for nearly three centuries. The Persian Kingdom was powerless to stop this onslaught by Greece. He broke the two horns, symbols of the combined power of Media and Persia, totally defeating them. The victory was thorough and complete as “none could deliver the ram out of his hand.”

*“Therefore, the he-goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.” (8)*

*“The he-goat magnified himself exceedingly.”* In a little more than ten years (334-323 B.C.) Alexander had conquered the world of his time, from Greece to India, Egypt, Palestine and Syria, the realm of the Scythians and modern Afghanistan to the Indus River. With 40,000 men he swept into Asia Minor and gained his first victory at the Granicus River near the Hellespont. He then dealt the Persians a crushing defeat at the Battle of Issus in northern Syria. Sweeping on down the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, he conquered the island fortress of Tyre after a seven-month siege. In 332 he conquered Egypt without a battle. In fact, the Egyptians were so relieved to be out from under the oppressive rule of the Persians that they welcomed Alexander (Rollin, *Ancient History*, Vol 1, 554-555). From Egypt he went up to Mesopotamia where he met Darius III in a final battle at Gaugamela, (331 B.C.). He pushed his armies into Sogdiana and Bactria down through modern day Afghanistan, thence to India where he won his last great battle, overcoming the war elephants of King Porus (323 B.C.). He had carved out an empire of 1.5 million square miles.

*“When he was strong, the great horn was broken.”* Alexander had taken his army across the Indus River into the Punjab region of India. His army rebelled at the thought of more battles and conquests and desired to go home. He reluctantly granted their desire and turned back toward Europe. Thus, at the height of his power while on his way home after crossing the border of India, he took ill and died at the age of 33 in 323 B.C. There are rumors that he was poisoned, but there is no positive proof of this. It is concluded by most historians that his health broke after a great bout of drinking, during which he took a fever, and after several days in which he gradually grew weaker and weaker, he died. Alexander died without an heir. He had married a Bactrian princess named Roxana. She and her son by Alexander, then twelve years old, were both killed at the instigation of one of his leading generals, Cassander, to prevent a foreigner from taking the throne of Greece. More likely he did not want to share the power and throne that he had taken. A quote from *Greece and Rome*, National Geographic Society, (1968) page 246 summarized Alexander’s last days:

His mind full of new projects, Alexander built a fleet to explore the coasts of Arabia and Africa. He sailed up the Tigris to Opis, the ancient Assyrian city where Cyrus the Persian had defeated the Babylonians in 539....Alexander entered Babylon for the last time in the spring of 323. Worn out by wounds, hardship and over drinking, he fell ill of a fever. Soon he could neither move nor speak. He was propped up and each officer and soldier filed past. He acknowledged each man with his eyes or a slight movement of his head. Within two days Alexander died. He was not yet thirty-three years old.

### **The Four Notable Horns**

*“There came up four notable horns toward the four winds of heaven.”* Upon the death of Alexander, a power struggle arose among his generals that lasted several years. Antigonus, who commanded the Asian (Syrian) army, seemed to have the upper hand but was killed in 301. Alexander’s kingdom then was divided into four parts:

- Cassander took Macedonia
- Lysimachus took Greece and Bithynia in Asia Minor
- Seleucus I Nicator took Syria and Old Babylon
- Ptolomy I Sotor took Egypt

*“The four winds of heaven”* symbolically and literally tell us that the once mighty empire of Alexander is now forever scattered and divided to the four winds.

### **The Little Horn (9-14)**

After the death of Alexander, Palestine was under the rule of the Ptolemaic kings who were generally benevolent toward the Jews. But Palestine and Egypt were coveted by the Seleucid kings of the Greek empire. Thus, after about 100 years under the mostly peaceful rule of the Ptolemies, warfare and political intrigue developed between the Greek kings of Syria and the Greek kings of Egypt; this is brought out in great detail in chapter 11.

### **The Blasphemous Activity of the Little Horn**

From one of the four horns came “a little horn...” The particular horn is that of the Seleucid kings who controlled the Syria/Palestinian portion of the Alexandrian Kingdom from which the “little horn” came. Note carefully that the little horn of chapter 8 and the little horn of chapter 7 are kings from two different kingdoms and two different eras of time. The little horn of chapter 7 is from the fourth kingdom, i.e., Roman kings of the first century A.D. The little horn of chapter 8 is from the third kingdom, a Grecian king of the second century B.C. Many Premillennial interpreters try to blend these two into one and rename him the Antichrist who they say is yet to come. This is done also by the liberal modernist scholars who take the position that Daniel’s prophecies did not extend any further than the Grecian period.

This Grecian king described as “the little horn” would grow to great power (Young, 170), casting his ambitious eyes south (Egypt, Daniel 11:5; 1 Maccabees 1:16), east (Armenia and Elymais, 1 Maccabees 3:31, 37; 6:1-4), and “the glorious land” (Canaan,). The pleasant land (KJV) or glorious land (ASV) is the land of the Jews, the promised land (Genesis 12:1-3), “the land that God had searched out for them flowing with milk and honey, that was the glory of all lands” (Ezekiel 20:6; see Jeremiah 3:19; Daniel 11:16, 41).

*“And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground and stamped upon them.” (10)*

The host of heaven does not refer to angels and other heavenly personages nor to literal stars of the sky since men do not have this kind of power or ability, but rather to the people of God and the priestly host who served God on the earth. The children of Israel are referred to as

God's hosts in Exodus 7:4 and 12:41. Thus, to fight against God's people is to fight against God Himself. An attack on the hosts of God on earth is an attack on heaven.

That this is true is seen when one looks at verse 11, "*Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.*" This evil king removed the *prince of the host*, the high priest, thus stopping his ministrations of daily sacrifices and desecrating the temple making it unfit for use. The sanctuary was "cast down" but this does not mean that the temple was razed. It was robbed and looted of its treasure, defiled and desecrated, but not destroyed. See 1 Maccabees 1:44-47.

Bible commentators are generally agreed that this little horn of the Seleucid kings is the infamous Antiochus IV, Epiphanes, whom Josephus describes in his *Book of Antiquities*, X:11:7:

"And there would arise from their number a certain king who would make war on the Jewish nation and their laws, deprive them of the form of government based on these laws, spoil the temple and prevent the sacrifices from being offered for three years. And these misfortunes our nation did in fact come to experience under Antiochus Epiphanes, just as Daniel many years before saw and wrote that they would happen."

Verse 12 goes on to say that many of the people of Israel and the priestly worship were lost due to transgression. The result being that truth itself was cast to the ground.

The question is asked as to how long this troublesome period is to last? "*How long shall be the vision concerning the continual burnt-offering, and the transgression that makes desolate, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?*" The answer is given as "*2,300 evenings and mornings, then shall the temple be cleansed.*" The wording of the sentence seems to indicate a period of about 6.38 years—which is the span of time which elapsed from the time Antiochus deposed the legitimate high priest, Onias, until the temple was finally cleansed. This period of time is approximately 171 B.C. to 165 B.C. the period of Antiochus' abominations (see Young, 175).

### **The Interpretation of the Vision Concerning the Little Horn 15-26**

While most of the interpretation of the vision has already been developed, there are some particulars that must be noted.

The angel who interprets is identified as Gabriel. This is the first time an angel is identified by name in the Bible. The only other angel identified by name is Michael who is also discussed in this book.

Daniel was afraid that these terrible things were to come in his lifetime but is assured that it belongs "to the time of the end." This period of time is described as "the latter time of the indignation; for it belongs to the appointed time of the end." Notice carefully that this "appointed time of the end" is also the same time of "indignation" brought on by the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. The time of the end is not the end of time! It is the time of the end of the reign of terror by Antiochus.

The ram with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia. When we have a Divine interpretation there is no room for speculation! This is the first specific statement identifying by name the second and third kingdoms. But it is very important to the proper interpretation of the book of Daniel and to subsequent Bible history that we know without a

shadow of doubt which are the kingdoms represented in the visions of chapters 2, 7, and 8. The second kingdom of chapter two is the second kingdom of chapters seven and eight and in both chapters, they are the Medes and Persians—one kingdom. Thus, the Liberal interpretation of the vision in Daniel 2 making the kingdom of Media and the kingdom of Persia separate segments of the great image is false from the very outset.

The rough he-goat is the king of Greece. Again, we must point out that this is the Divine interpretation; Greece is the third kingdom, not the fourth, Alexander is the first king, the great horn. Thus, the corresponding vision in chapter 2 means that the third kingdom is the Grecian kingdom. The four kings coming from it are Greek kings “*from out of the nation.*”

It is in the latter part of the Grecian kingdom that “the king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up”—**Antiochus Epiphanes**. Leupold interprets these words as “bold faced” and “skilled in double dealing” (366). There is no more dangerous politician than one who is cunning, crafty, and cruel, who is also bold, arrogant, and a master of intrigue. He is further described as becoming very powerful, but not by his own power. Since he is sly and crafty and very bold, we surmise that he came to his power by trickery, guile and subterfuge, and not by his own achievement. His cunning political skills allow him to “overthrow and kill and destroy on an unusual scale. He will be one of those monsters that wade through history in a welter of blood” (Leupold, 367).

“Another matter that shall cause men to wonder at his career will be the fact that, no matter what he undertakes, whether it is great or small, for the time at least ‘he shall have success in his undertakings,’ Hebrew: ‘he shall cause to prosper, and he shall do.’” (Leupold).

The angel told Daniel that Antiochus would stand up against the “prince of princes,” setting himself in opposition to God Himself, but he would be broken “without hand,” meaning that his death would not come by the hand of man. After suffering several reverses in battle against both Jews and Persians, Antiochus died of grief and insanity. (Montgomery, 44). How totally futile are the attempts of men to fight against God!

The vision is true, these things will surely come to pass (see 2:47). He is told to “Shut up the vision....” for it is to be fulfilled at a future time, some 400 years after the time of this prophecy (171-163 B.C.). Clarence Larkin in his book *Dispensational Truth* says on one of his charts (71), that he believes that the vision shut up is an entirely different prophecy that tells of things that will happen at the end of time. But it is clear in the book of Daniel that the vision “shut up” is the vision that has just been given to Daniel and is not a different prophecy that we know nothing about!

Please note that Daniel said he “fainted and was sick certain days” from worry over the import of this prophecy on his people. The vision left the old prophet exhausted and worn out. It was several days before Daniel was able to be about the king’s business. If Daniel was written “after the fact” as history, why would he feign sickness and grief at something already past? Daniel’s condition makes sense only if it is something he saw that had not yet taken place.

### **A Brief Look at Antiochus IV, Epiphanes, The Little Horn of Daniel Eight**

Antiochus means “withstander, or one who withstands,” Epiphanes means “illustrious, or

enlightened one.” The Jews nicknamed him “Epimanes” which means “madman;” he is described as the “vile person” of 11:22. He was the fourth of the Seleucid kings to call himself Antiochus and reigned from 175-163 B.C. Antiochus was born in Athens, but as a boy lived in Rome for twelve years as a hostage. He took upon himself to use the title “Epiphanes” or more fully, “Theos Epiphanes,” i.e., “Enlightened God” for he looked upon himself as an incarnated manifestation of Olympian Zeus.

Antiochus IV is known as one of the cruelest tyrants of all time; he used methods that stirred up opposition, particularly among the Jews, e.g., declaring his own divinity. Antiochus had to pay heavy tribute to the Emperor of Rome. In order to raise the money, he sold the office of High Priest to the highest bidder, to a man who ignored Jewish laws and who built a gymnasium in Jerusalem where naked athletes met for Greek sporting events. He prohibited Jewish worship in Jerusalem and introduced the worship of Zeus. He slaughtered thousands of Jews (it is said he massacred over 100,000 men, women and children of the Jews). Josephus says that he killed circumcised babies and hung them around their mother’s necks. In his attempt totally to Hellenize the Jews, he had a sow sacrificed on the altar of the Temple, desecrating it. In addition, he erected an image of Jupiter in the Holy Place of the Temple. This, likely, is what Jesus had in mind when he said, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the Holy Place...” (Matthew 24:15; see Dan 11:31, and comments on page 231). The evil orders of Antiochus forbade circumcision and destroyed all the Old Testament books that could be found. Antiochus confiscated the property of Jerusalem’s citizens and ransacked the temple of its treasures to fill his own coffers. The persecutions of Antiochus threatened the very existence of God’s people. These outrages brought on the Maccabean war in which the Syrian armies were repeatedly defeated by Judas Maccabeus and his brothers.

Rex Turner lists 13 things from Josephus that took place in Jerusalem during the time of Antiochus’ control.

1. Antiochus obtained possession of the city of Jerusalem through those of his own party.
2. He vandalized the temple and left it bare.
3. He forbade the Jews to offer daily sacrifices.
4. He burnt down the finest buildings.
5. He built a citadel in the lower part of the city, where in the wicked part of the Jews dwelt.
6. He built an idol upon God’s altar.
7. He slew swine and offered them upon the altar.
8. He compelled the Jews to forsake the Jewish order of worship.
9. He compelled the Jews to raise idol altars in every city and village and to offer swine on them every day.
10. He forbade the Jews from circumcising their sons.
11. He caused to be whipped with rods and torn to pieces those who did not adhere to his instructions.
12. He caused to be strangled those women and their sons whom they circumcised, hanging their sons about their necks.
13. He destroyed all the sacred books of the law as they were found (165-166).



### Christ Versus Alexander

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three,  
One lived and died for self; one died for you and me.  
The Greek died on a throne; the Jew died on a cross,  
One's life a triumph seemed, the other but a loss.  
One led vast armies forth; the other walked alone,  
One shed a whole world's blood; the other gave His own.  
One won the world in life and lost it all in death,  
The other lost His life to win the whole world's faith.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three.  
One died in Babylon; and one on Calvary.  
One gained all for self; and one Himself He gave,  
One conquered every tongue, the other every grave.  
The one made himself God; other made Himself less,  
The one lived but to blast; the other but to bless.  
When died the Greek, forever fell his throne of swords,  
But Jesus died to live forever Lord of Lords.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three, the Greek made  
all men slaves, the Jew made all men free.  
One built a throne on blood, the other built on love,  
The one was born of earth, to lose all earth and heaven,  
The other gave up all, that all to Him be given.  
The Greek forever died; the Jew forever lives.  
He loses all who gets and wins all things who gives.

— Charles Ross Weede

## Questions From Daniel Chapter Eight

1. Daniel's vision in chapter eight appeared during the reign of what king?
2. Where was Daniel at in this vision?
3. What was the first beast Daniel saw in this vision?
4. What was the second beast Daniel saw in this vision?
5. How many horns came from the notable horn of this second beast?
6. How long would the sanctuary and the host be trodden under foot?
7. Who made the meaning of this vision known to Daniel?
8. What nation did the first beast represent?
9. What nation did the second beast represent?
10. What did the great horn on the second beast represent?
11. Who was the little horn?
12. Describe what kind of man this king of fierce countenance would be.
13. What was Daniel's response to this vision?

### True and False

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Daniel had this vision in the second year of king Nebuchadnezzar.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The first beast Daniel saw in this vision had two horns that were different in size.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The second beast came from the east, and did not touch the ground.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. From the one great horn of the second beast, came four other horns.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Michael was the one who revealed the meaning of this vision to Daniel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. When the one began to explain this vision to Daniel, Daniel was in a deep sleep, with his face toward the ground.

\_\_\_\_\_7. The fierce king would even stand up against the King of Kings.

\_\_\_\_\_8. The fierce king would be broken without hands.

# DANIEL CHAPTER NINE

## Daniel Nine Outlined

### Introduction:

**Daniel Reading the Books (1-2)**

**Intercessory Prayer (3-19)**

1. Confession of Sin and Guilt 4-10
2. God's Punishment Because of Sin and Guilt 11-14
3. Daniel's Importunity 15-19

**Angelic Answer (20-23)**

### DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS (24-27)

**I. Literal or Figurative**

**II. Interpretations Based on Presuppositions**

1. The Higher Critical Approach
2. The Premillennial View
3. The Max King, A.D. 70 Theory

**III. Design of the Prophecy**

**IV. Things are Determined—Two Subjects Discussed**

1. The Jewish Nation, Jerusalem and the Temple
2. The Work of the Messiah

**V. The Going Forth of the Commandment**

1. The Decree of Cyrus, 536 B.C.
2. The Decree of Artaxerxes, 457 B.C.
3. The Decree of Artaxerxes, 444 B.C.

**VI. Six Things to Be Accomplished by the Messiah At His First Advent**

1. Finish Transgression
2. Make an End of Sins
3. Make Reconciliation for Iniquity
4. Bring in Everlasting Righteousness
5. Seal Up Vision and Prophecy
6. Anoint the Most Holy

## Chapter Nine

### Introduction (1-2)

As Daniel 9 opens we are once again in the reign of Darius the Mede to whom Daniel had turned over the city of Babylon (5:31) and who had reluctantly cast Daniel into the den of lions (ch 6). If the episode in the lions' den has already taken place, then the events of this chapter are taking place in Darius' first official year, the spring of 538 B.C. to the spring of 537 B.C. Darius is a subordinate king to Cyrus of Persia for he "was *made king* (emp. mine ebd) over the realm of the Chaldeans." It should be noted, too, **this Darius is the same as Gubaru who is of the Nabonidus Chronicle**. See Whitcomb's *Commentary on Daniel*, 79-80.

*Daniel understood by the reading of the books...* To what books (scrolls) he had access we don't know. It is probable that Daniel is familiar with Isaiah's prophecy of Cyrus (44:28-45:13); that it would be Cyrus who would give order to allow the Jews to return to Judea. But it is certain that of one of the books was Jeremiah the prophet! He understood by reading from Jeremiah that "*the number of years had been accomplished.... for the desolations of Jerusalem, even seventy years.*"

*Therefore thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith Jehovah, and I will send unto Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the lamp. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jeremiah 25:8-11).*

*After seventy years are accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place... (29:10)*

The desolations began when Nebuchadnezzar first came to Jerusalem in 606 (when Daniel was taken captive). The time has almost come for the release from captivity. Two or three years are yet remaining on the full seventy-year period. Anticipation and expectation would be running high. But Daniel begins now to make preparation for their delivery. When permission came from Cyrus, about 50,000 Jews would go home under the leadership of Zerubbabel (Ezra 1-2). The desolations that came on Jerusalem and Judah were because of the sins in which they rebelled against God and worshiped and served idols.

*Moreover, all the chiefs of the priests, and the people, trespassed very greatly after all the abominations of the nations; and they polluted the house of Jehovah which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And Jehovah, the God of their fathers, sent*

*to them by his messengers, rising up early and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and scoffed at his prophets, until the wrath of Jehovah arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore, he brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or virgin, old man or hoary headed: he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of Jehovah, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfil the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths: for as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years (2 Chronicles 36:17-21).*

### **Daniel's Intercessory Prayer**

#### **Daniel 9:3-19**

*<sup>3</sup>And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. <sup>4</sup>And I prayed unto Jehovah my God, and made confession, and said, Oh, Lord, the great and dreadful God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments*

**Daniel begins his prayer by setting his face toward the Lord God.** This is an indication of the earnestness and dedication, and soul-searching Daniel is doing as he goes before God in prayer. So intense is Daniel in his prayer and supplication that it is accompanied by fasting and sackcloth. These acts show the great and overwhelming grief of heart and soul Daniel feels in his prayer which is a confession of sins for himself and his people. "All these were outward signs of internal humiliation and penitence" (Stuart, in Young's, 184). "And so it was with sackcloth and ashes that Daniel besought the Lord to fulfil what he had promised, not that Daniel lacked faith concerning the future, but rather he would avoid the danger that a feeling of security might produce carelessness, and carelessness produce an offense to God" (Jerome, 91).

Keil points out that the prayer is divided into two parts, with verses 4-14 containing a confession of sin and guilt, and verses 15-19 have a supplication for mercy and the restoration of the holy city and its sanctuary (328).

Daniel begins by speaking, "Oh, Lord the great and dreadful God," reminding us of the terrible hurt and ruin God can bring upon sinful men and nations. But He is also the same God who keeps his covenant and provides loving kindness to those who love him and keep his commandments. The "goodness and severity" of God is consistently displayed throughout the pages of the Holy Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. It is a great shallowness of study and research that would make God out to be a vengeful ogre or a softhearted old man who will not discipline his children. Either position is patently false. "I Jehovah, change not" (Malachi 3:6).

He is consistent, too, in the demands on those who love him and serve him. Loving kindness is the reward of those who love and obey him (Matt 7:21-23; John 14:15; Heb 5:9).

In a statement that Keil describes as “an exhaustive expression of a consciousness of sin and guilt,” (330; see Psalm 106:6) Daniel describes the downward spiral of Israel and Judah into the depths of sin:

We have sinned!

We have dealt perversely!

We have done wickedly!

We have rebelled!

We have even turned aside from thy precepts and ordinances!

We have not listened to thy servants the prophets that spoke in thy name!

In admitting that they had turned aside from God’s precepts and laws, and had not listened to the prophets, they admit to rebellion and willful disobedience. Edward Young correctly points out that “Daniel, who had lived most of his life in Babylon and was now an old man, by using the pronoun *we*, identified himself with his people. This is the more remarkable, when we consider how pure was his character.”

Their consciousness of sin is described as “*confusion of face*;” they are ashamed and embarrassed, for God is completely justified in his anger against the people of Jerusalem, Judah, and all Israel. His “*curse has been poured out upon us*.” John used similar language in describing the bowls of wrath poured out on the wicked (Rev 16:1-4). What they were now enduring, they deserved and had been warned before by Moses that it would happen this way if they departed from obeying God (Lev 26:14-45; Deut. 28, 29, 30). But he cries out for the Lord’s pity and mercy, “for under the whole heaven hath not been done as has been done upon Jerusalem” (12). After 32 months of siege by Babylon in which the citizens of Jerusalem had been reduced to starvation, cannibalism, and total destruction those remaining went into Captivity for 70 years. The Book of Lamentations tells much of the horror experienced by Jerusalem.

In verse 16 Daniel, for the first time, makes a request of God. Daniel (1) confesses his sin and that of the people, (2) he gives praise to God for the mighty deliverance in time past with a mighty hand from Egypt, and (3) he makes request that God’s wrath be turned aside from Jerusalem, lest they become a reproach among their neighbors about them. This sets for a good formula for us—Confession, Praise, then Request.

The fervor and zeal of Daniel is seen as his prayer surges heavenward (16-19).

“Verses 17, 18, 19, are emphatic repetitions of Daniel’s concern that only the glory of God be upheld. Daniel is not concerned that the people be delivered in order to enjoy physical ease and comfort. Daniel is not interested that the people be delivered in order that their wounded pride avenged. His only interest is that God’s holiness and faithfulness be vindicated. After all, sinning man deserves only judgment. If he is delivered at all, it will be entirely due to the very nature of God—his mercifulness and loving kindness” “...It is not the eloquence of man’s prayers, nor the quantity of them that moves God to action; if this were so, answer would come on a basis of merit. It is the attitude” (Butler, 338).

John Whitcomb (Daniel, 126) shows his Premillennial bent when he says:

It is of great importance that we recognize what Daniel prayed for—and what he *did not* pray for. **He did *not* pray for the spiritual well-being of the church, the Body of Christ.** He did *not* pray for the prosperity of the saints of all ages. He *did* pray for ‘thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain.’ He prayed for the restoration of ‘thy desolate sanctuary’ (9:17) and for a reversal of the ‘desolations and the city which is call by thy name’ (9:18-19).

This distinction is highly important because God’s answer is just as specific as Daniel’s prayer. The answer sent by God through Gabriel centers *exclusively* on Jerusalem and Israel, and thus **bypasses the entire church age** (bold emphasis mine, ebd). The present church economy or ‘stewardship’ or ‘administration’ was totally hidden to Daniel (see Rom 16:25-26; Eph 3:2-10).

The fallacy of Whitcomb’s argument and that of other Premillennialists is that he has totally skipped over the **restoration** of the temple and the city of Jerusalem that took place under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Joshua, the high priest, Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah and applies these statements to a restoration supposedly to take place after the so-called rapture. Then, he totally ignores the fact that Daniel’s prophecy has determined that the “restored Jerusalem” (9:25) is going to be once again, the “destroyed Jerusalem!” (9:26b). The “desolations” Whitcomb “sees” are that of the so-called Premillennial “tribulation.” In addition, he completely dismisses the teaching of the N.T. telling of the establishment of the kingdom and the rule and reign of Christ (Matthew 3:1ff; 16:18-19; Acts 2:34-36; Colossians 1:13-14; Hebrews 1:8, 8:1; Revelation 1:6,9). How totally do the Premillennials have their eyes darkened by their false doctrine!

### **The Angel Gabriel Answers Daniel’s Prayer 9:20-23**

*<sup>20</sup>And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my supplication before Jehovah my God for the holy mountain of my God; <sup>21</sup>yea, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. <sup>22</sup>And he instructed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee wisdom and understanding. <sup>23</sup>At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment went forth, and I am come to tell thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore, consider the matter, and understand the vision.*

While Daniel was “speaking and praying and confessing” his sins and the sins of the people, the man Gabriel came to him. He is referred to as “the man” because of his human form, and also identifying him as the same person whom Daniel had seen in the vision in 8:15 about thirteen years earlier. In these verses we see (1) the speed by which God can answer prayer—“while I was yet speaking...,” and in fact “from the time he had begun speaking” God was sending Gabriel (2) Daniel is described as “greatly beloved,” (3) Daniel was praying around 6 pm, “at about the time of the evening oblation,” (4) Gabriel came to give Daniel wisdom and



understanding concerning the vision.

### **The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24-27**

*<sup>24</sup>Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. <sup>25</sup>Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. <sup>26</sup>And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. <sup>27</sup>And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.*

This passage has proved to be the "playground" for those whose minds are constantly milling in the prophetic realm. Charles Spurgeon expressed his frustration with the flood of books on prophetic themes by saying "...we could not in our conscience believe that a tithe of them would yield anything to the student but bewilderment... We reverence the teaching of the prophets, and the Apocalypse, but for many of the professed expounders of those inspired books we entertain another feeling" (Quoted by Wilbur Smith in *The Minister in His Study*, 114). Truly, "men through the ages have confounded and confused the religious world with their wild and fanciful speculations on prophecy; the book of Daniel in general, and chapter 9 in particular, have been a favorite source of their mischief. John Calvin said the Jews of his time "cast a mist" over this passage. (51st Annual Ohio Valley Church Lectures, *The Book of Daniel*, Charles Aebi, 58).

### **Design of the Prophecy**

- The Messiah's earthly advent and its purpose (24).
- The beginning point of the prophetic 70 weeks (25a).
- The initial phase of the prophecy - the rebuilding of Jerusalem (25b).
- The Messiah's death (26a).
- Jerusalem and the temple to be destroyed because of the Jewish rejection of the Messiah 26b).
- The Messiah's covenant replaces the former covenant (27a).
- The full end of the Jewish system (27b).

(*Christian Courier, Daniel's Seventy Weeks*, Wayne Jackson, Vol 15, Issues 5,6,7, September - November 1979)

### **Seventy "Sevens" – Literal or Figurative**

Daniel was told that a period of "SEVENTY WEEKS" have been "DECREED" upon the "JEWS" and upon their "CITY" (Jerusalem).

The Babylonian Captivity had lasted seventy years. Daniel had been praying in reference to seventy years in captivity. He is told that seven times that period (70 "weeks" or "sevens"; 70 x 7) are determined upon the Jews and Jerusalem.

## The Going Forth of the Commandment

**NOTE:** Different edicts were issued by Persian kings allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Here is where the difficulty arises—When, in what year, was the command to "go forth" (Dan 9:25), to "restore and build Jerusalem?" The following three dates are usually discussed in this regard:

1. **The decree of Cyrus, 536 B.C.**, which marks Zerubbabel's return. But if one subtracts 483 years (69 weeks which begin the Messiah's work) from 536 he ends up at 53 B.C. which does not come close to the time of the Messiah and the events that are to take place in His ministry. Philip Mauro in his book *The Seventy Weeks of Daniel* argues for Cyrus' original decree as the starting place.

2. **The decree of Artaxerxes I, 444 B.C.** is the date of Nehemiah's return. If one starts at this date and subtracts 483 years, he ends up at A.D. 39, which advances him well beyond the life and work of the Messiah.

3. **The decree of Artaxerxes I, 457 B.C.** is Ezra's return.

“Subtracting 483 years from the **starting point of 457 BC** the year AD 26 is reached. In the modern system of counting years there is no year zero. Hence the year AD 27 must be reduced by one for chronological accuracy. According to Daniel, Messiah-Prince would appear in AD 26. It is surely more than a coincidence that the baptism of Jesus occurred in AD 26. (According to Luke 3:1ff. it was the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias Caesar that John began his ministry. Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Bible Chronology*, 259-69, dates the baptism of Jesus to November, AD 26. At that time John introduced him to the nation as their Messiah, the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world.” (Smith, 386).

### “Things Are Determined”

Gabriel tells Daniel that “*things are determined*” upon the Jewish nation (9:24), and upon the city of Jerusalem (from the rebuilding of Jerusalem until the Messiah-Christ). This determination has been made by God. A further “*determination*” is made by God's Son, the Messiah, in the “*midst*” of the final week. Please note that this determination was made in the midst of the week but does not come about in the midst of the week. This is a determination of further desolation, (9:26-27), when Jerusalem sees its final desolation when it is destroyed by the Romans, A.D. 70. The determination to destroy Judaism was made in Jesus' public ministry in his teaching in Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and in the Book of Hebrews describing the Old Covenant to be done away and abolished and a New Covenant under Christ, Heb 7-10.

Daniel is told that the Jews would come out of the Babylonian Captivity, but the nation would have troublesome times and would become so apostate as to crucify the Son of God. He is told the fate of the Jewish nation—the destruction of Jerusalem (Judaism) by the Romans, A.D. 70. Daniel 9:26-27 is what Jesus referred to in Matthew 24:15.

When Daniel was told to **know and understand** this information, he was being

encouraged to have absolute confidence that both important events would transpire (Smith, 385).

### Two Subjects Being Discussed

**NOTE:** This prophecy is difficult to understand unless the student makes the proper division between the two subjects being discussed. Statements applicable to the city of Jerusalem are in proper sequence, and all statements applicable to the Messiah are in proper sequence.

Statements Pertaining to the City of Jerusalem	Statements Pertaining to the Messiah
<p><i>"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem...shall be seven weeks... the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times" (9:25).</i></p>	<p><i>"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem <b>unto the Messiah the Prince</b> shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks" (9:25).</i></p>
<p><i>"And the people of the prince that shall come <b>shall destroy the city and the sanctuary</b>; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined" (9:26).</i></p>	<p><i>"And after threescore and two weeks <b>shall Messiah be cut off</b>, but not for himself" (9:26).</i></p>
<p><i>"<b>And upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate</b>; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate." (9:27)</i></p>	<p><i>"And <b>he shall confirm the covenant</b> with many for one week: and in the midst of the week, <b>he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease</b>" (9:27).</i></p>

**NOTE:** Some of this prophecy deals with the Messiah and his work, some with Jerusalem and the temple, from the rebuilding to another desolation or destruction by the Romans in A.D. 70. Notice very carefully the time schedule (9:25) *"Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment...unto the Messiah"* = 69 "weeks" or 69 "sevens" making 483 years.

### The Seventy Weeks Subdivided

7 Weeks      7 X 7 = 49 Years....."From the going forth"  
 62 Weeks    62 X 7 = 434 Years..... The "silent years" between the testaments and brings us to the time of the ministry of the Messiah.  
 1 Week      1 X 7 = 7 Years.....This one week is further divided in half 3½ and 3½.

70 Weeks                      or                      490 Years

Seeing that this is divided into particular “time slots” we must come to appreciate the uniqueness of this amazing prophecy. A “time” prophecy is very exacting and demands that it be fulfilled in the time span that God has allotted. It cannot fall short or go beyond the time frame in which God has placed it. This places a great burden on all Bible students to “*rightly divide the word of truth*” (2 Tim 2:15), especially those of a Premillennial persuasion. They want the last half of the week of this prophecy to expand 2,000 years from the 1st century fulfillment to the 21st century! Coming to a correct understanding of this great prophecy also demands that one be as careful as possible as to which date is accepted for the beginning of the interpreting of the prophecy.

*From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah* was to be a total of 69 weeks or 483 years. When this time was fulfilled, those who knew this prophecy, were expecting the appearance of the Messiah. For example, Simeon, “*who waited for the Consolation of Israel,*” (Luke 2:25-35) and Anna who served in the temple “*spoke of Him to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem*” (Luke 2:36-38), and the disciples of John the Baptist in John 1:41 and 1:49 had a messianic expectation. When John came baptizing, “*the people were in EXPECTATION* (my emphasis, ebd), *and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he was the Christ or not*” (Luke 3:15). John plainly told them he was not the Christ—he was but the forerunner. He had appeared to Israel at the right time! Thus Jesus, in evident reference to the time prophecy of Daniel, said: “*The TIME* (my emphasis, ebd) *is fulfilled, and the kingdom of heaven is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel*” (Mark 1:15).

### **Six Things Pertain to the Time of the First Advent of the Messiah and to the Establishment of His Kingdom**

When Jesus came the first time, His purpose was to deal with the problem of sin (Matthew 1:21; 20:28; 26:28; Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Peter 1: 18-20).

“The ultimate finality of Christ’s work in dealing with sinful humanity is underscored in Hebrews 9:26, 28. He was manifested to put away sin! In connection with this mission of the Messiah, Isaiah 53 is strikingly similar. Note Isaiah’s use of “transgression” (53:5, 8, 12), “sin” (10, 12), and “iniquity” (5, 6, 11). Now here is a vital point: Isaiah 53 is quoted frequently in the NT and applied to the first coming of Christ. Obviously, therefore, since Daniel 9:24ff is parallel in emphasis, it points to that initial coming of the Lord, and not to his second coming as alleged by Dispensationalists” (Wayne Jackson, *Christian Courier*)

*First*, the Messiah would “**finish transgression.**” The American Standard footnote and the text of the English Revised Version render this as, “finish THE transgression.” This causes us to understand that during this prophetic period of 490 years the Jewish leadership would fill up the cup of iniquity to the full, culminating in their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. “*Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers*” [iniquity, guilt, ebd] (Matthew 23:31-32). The apostle Paul said that the Thessalonians, in becoming Christians, had become partakers of the fellowship of their fellows Christians in Judea in that “*Ye also suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God and are contrary to all men: forbidding us to speak to*

*the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost”* (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16).

There is another aspect of this statement—transgression was “finished” when Jesus died and arose from the dead, triumphant over death, the grave, hades, and Satan (Revelation 1:17-18; Colossians 2:15). In the Genesis 3:15 prophecy Satan would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman—a non-fatal wound, but Christ would bruise his head—giving him a deathblow. Thus, the reign of sin and death was finished (Romans 7:24-8:2). When Jesus was dying on the cross he cried, “*It is finished!*” (John 19:30). Isaiah said of Him “*He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed*” (53:5).

*Second*, when the Messiah came, he would “**make an end of sins**” (sin offerings, **Clarke**, 602). “A way would be provided wherein sin could be forgiven” (Turner, 318). This the Messiah did with the one-time offering of himself for sin (Hebrews 10:5-18). Jesus “*put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*” (Heb 9:26). The constant need of daily sacrifice for sin ended when Jesus shed his blood and the veil of the temple was rent in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51). This does not mean that sin ceased to be man’s problem, but rather it means that on the cross, the one-time, once-for-all sacrifice for sin was made, giving all mankind the way to be rid of their sins and stand justified before God.

*Third*, Messiah Jesus would “**make reconciliation for iniquity.**” One is reconciled (‘to make friends with again’) when the atonement price has been paid (Romans 5:11). Paul said, “*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation*” (2 Cor 5:17-19). Sin was covered over with the blanket of blood shed by Jesus (Zec 13:1; Rom 5:20-21); the propitiation has been offered (Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). This image of “covering” sin “never designates anything else other than the *forgiveness of sin*, the covering of sin by the veil of mercy, so that the eye of the angry Judge cannot find it” (Hengstenberg, *Christology of the Old Testament*, 407).

*Fourth*, when the Word became flesh, he would “**bring in everlasting righteousness.**” The righteousness brought by the Messiah is eternal in duration as opposed to that of the fleeting gifts and promises of the Old Law (Galatians 2:21; 3:21; Hebrews 7:11ff). The righteousness given by the Messiah is everlasting because it comes from Him who is everlasting; He is “*the sun of righteousness with healing in His wings*” (Malachi 4:2). Thus, the gospel system initiated by Jesus Christ and the apostles would usher in eternal redemption coupled with one’s commitment to a life of submission and humility and good works.

*Fifth*, the Messiah would “**Seal Up the Vision and Prophecy.**” All Old Testament prophecies would be completed, fulfilled in Christ—including Daniel’s (Luke 24:25-27, 44). All the prophetic statements concerning Christ and his kingdom would be “stamped as true and genuine by their accomplishment.” Jesus in Luke 24:43 said, “*all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.*” Some 300 plus prophecies of the Old Testament pointing to the coming of Jesus Christ were fulfilled in his life, death, resurrection, ascension and reign as our Priest/King. Old Testament prophecy was brought to an end by the appearance of the Messiah—he fulfilled its task: it was no longer needed; therefore, it was brought to an end; “*sealed up.*” The New Testament shows that Christ is the end, the fulfillment, the anti-type, the confirmation of all prophecy (2 Corinthians 1:20; Revelation 19:11). Jesus said of the Scriptures, “*...these are they which testify of me*” (John

5:39). Jesus speaking of John, the forerunner of the Messiah said, “*All the prophets and the law prophesied until John*” (Matthew 11:13), then John presented Jesus as “*he that was to be made manifest to Israel*” (John 1:31). When Jesus prayed in John 17:4, He said, “*I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which you have given me to do.*” That included accomplishing all that the prophets said He would do.

But the Premillennialists would have us keep prophecy “open,” allowing them to run amuck with the Scriptures to the delusion and destruction of many souls. Others, like the Mormons would have us keep prophecy “open” to enable them to continue to have their so-called “Latter-Day Revelations.” Roman Catholics want prophecy kept open allowing their bishops, cardinals, and popes to rewrite their ever-changing doctrines. All denominationalists who believe in continuous revelation do not believe Jesus sealed up vision and prophecy.

*Sixth*, the Messiah, when He came in His first advent would “**Anoint the Most Holy.**” This has several possibilities and perhaps includes all of them.

1. “Because of this word’s frequent use with the consecration and appointment of kings (cf. 1 Samuel 9:6; 10:1; 15:1; 2 Samuel 2:4; 1 Kings 1:34), priests (Exodus 28:41; 40:15), and prophets (1 Kings 19:16; Isaiah 6:1), some understand Daniel 9:24 to refer to the consecration and appointment of the Messiah, “the Anointed One,” which He fills under the New Testament Economy. He is both *King* (Acts 17:7; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Revelation 1:4,5; 17:14; 19:6), *Priest* (Heb 4:14,15; 5:1ff; 6:20; 7:1ff; 8:1-4), and *Prophet* (Matthew 17:5; Acts 3:22,23; Hebrews 1:1,2; 12:25).” (Daniel Denham, *The Defender*, 29, March 1983).

Charles Boutflower makes this observation:

“The predicted anointing of a holy of holies refers not, I think, to the mystery of Christ’s holy incarnation, nor even to His baptism when He was “anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power” (Acts x.38); but rather to His royal anointing, when, after His atoning work was done, He was received up into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. It is our Savior’s coronation rather than His consecration which is here foretold. For after He had fulfilled “vision and prophecy,” this was to be the reward of, as well as the testimony to, His most holy life, “Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Ps xlv.7). It is in anticipation of this exaltation that He is called in this prophecy, “Messiah the Prince” (183-184).

2. Others believe that this phrase refers to Christ receiving the Holy Spirit at His baptism (Luke 4:18ff). His anointing by the Holy Spirit prepared him for His earthly ministry of “doing good, healing all who were oppressed of the devil” (Acts 10:38).

3. A third explanation is that it refers to the fulfillment by Christ of the figure presented in the Feast of the Atonement in the Old Testament. In that feast the blood of the sacrifice was taken by the high priest into the Most Holy Place where it was sprinkled on the mercy seat (Hebrews 9: 1-12). When Christ shed His blood, He anointed heaven itself (Hebrews 9:23-24). It is to this “anointing” occurring in Jesus’ death on the cross, to which I concur.

### **The Final One Week**

This week is isolated by divine intent and purpose--it is the culmination of all God had in mind in the Old Testament (the coming Messiah). The Messiah shall be *cut off*, a reference to

the premature and violent death, the murder of the Messiah. The *Syriac Version* of the Bible simply says, “the Messiah shall be slain.” Here we see a link with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53:8, “He was cut off out of the land of the living.”

When He is cut off, he shall **have nothing**. Jesus had nothing in that He left no posterity (but see Isaiah 53:10); was rejected by His own people and nation (John 1:11); at his trial and crucifixion his closest disciples denied him and forsook him and fled; and even forsaken by His Father (Matthew 27:46), while bearing our sins on the tree.

“*And He shall make a firm covenant with many for one week.*” If the Messiah is “cut off,” slain, why would He make a covenant with the Jews for *one week* completing the *full seventy weeks*? Wayne Jackson asks, “What is the significance of the *full seventy weeks*?” He goes on to suggest,

“Possibly the termination of that full final week extends down to the tie of the conversion of Paul, at which point the gospel accelerated predominately among the Gentiles. Paul’s conversion is generally dated 3-4 years after the death of Christ (*Zondervan’s Encyclopedia*, I. 822).

This is in harmony with the preaching of the apostles Peter, Paul and James, the Lord’s half-brother, (his book *written to Jews* as the primary readers, James 1:1). Peter said, “To you first, God having raised up His Servant Jesus sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities” (Acts 3:26). Paul, on his first mission tour in Acts 13 said to his Jewish audience in Antioch of Pisidia, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first: but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46). In like manner, James says, “Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures” (James 1:18). This is in harmony with the prescribed rule of evangelism stated in Acts 1:8, that the apostles would be witnesses of Christ first in “Jerusalem and Judea” and then “Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth” (Acts 1:8; Rom 1:16; Acts 13:46).

James Smith believes that the Messiah’s firm covenant with the Jews “would terminate with the stoning of Stephen after which the church was scattered” (Acts 8:1, 4). He further says, “In that same year (A.D. 33/34) Paul was converted to Christianity” (*What the Bible Teaches About the Promised Messiah*, 388). By the time of the Samaritans – Acts 8 (about 3 ½ years after Pentecost), this “prophetic week” was fulfilled. Thus, the new covenant was confirmed with many Jews. Paul’s conversion, the apostle to the Gentiles, was about three to four years after the death of Christ (*Zondervan’s Encyclopedia*, I, 822). (Some extend the period up to the time of Cornelius, Acts 10).

Further, in the midst of the seventieth week (after the completion of the Messiah’s earthly ministry), when Jesus was “cut off,” died on the cross, he would cause “sacrifice and oblation to cease.” The book of Hebrews shows clearly that with the death of Christ the need for sacrifices of animals and other types of offerings under the Old Covenant ceased forever (Heb 9:12; 10:9-10; Eph 2:14-16; Col 2:13-15). Christ fulfilled the first covenant to bring in the new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah (31:31-34).

“*And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary (temple, ebd); and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end shall be war; desolations are*

*determined (26b). And upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate” (27b).*

During the first 3 ½ years this last "prophetic week," the **determination** was made by Christ, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. Dan 9:26-27 with Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21). However, Jerusalem was not destroyed by the Romans until A.D. 70. NOTE: The statements about the fall of Jerusalem (9:26b and 9:27b) are **determined**, i.e., **prophesied** by Jesus in Matthew 24. He did this in the first half of the last week before he was “*cut off*.”

“It should be pointed out that the prophecy does not say that the city would be destroyed within the span of the one week. Rather, it says that within that week the destruction of the city was **determined** (my emphasis, ebd). One could hardly read verses 26 and 27 without recalling our Lord’s words: “Behold your house is left unto you desolate” (Matt 23:38). (Roy Deaver, *Premillennialism, True or False*, 109).

“Finally, we have here a very distinct indication of the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Romans. This follows upon the rejection of the Messiah by the people of his own nation and is connected with it here; not because it is to come immediately after it in time, but because it was to be a part, at least, of the punishment of those national sins which culminated in the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory.” Again, Taylor says, “The connection, says Pusey, is not of time, but of cause and effect. Some forty years were allowed in which individuals might save themselves from that untoward generation. But the doom of the whole was fixed. They had pronounced upon themselves their sentence, ‘We have no king but Caesar.’ (Both quotes are from *Daniel, the Beloved*, William Taylor, 175).

Notice the number of times in verses 26b and 27b the words *destroy*, *desolations*, and *desolate* occur. Jesus in Matthew 23:38 said in the discourse leading up to the prophecy of the Fall of Jerusalem, “*Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*”

Daniel said that “*the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...*” Some understand this prince to be Jesus, but then the people of the prince would have to be Christians. This cannot be. Rather, it is my understanding that this prince is Titus, the Roman general, and the people of the prince would then be the Roman Legions. This matches up with Daniel’s prophecy and subsequent history.

A chart following on the next page, hopefully, will simplify this intricate and detailed prophecy.





## Questions Daniel Chapter 9

1. How did Daniel know that the Jews were to be in captivity for seventy years?
2. To whom did the prophets God had sent prophesy?
3. Why were the Jews taken into captivity?
4. To what oath in the law of Moses was Daniel referring in verses 11 and 13?
5. Why was the captivity seventy years in length?
6. While Daniel was praying, who touched him? What time was it?
7. What are the possible starting dates for the beginning of the 70 Weeks?
8. What two things were going to happen to Jerusalem?
9. What six things would the Messiah accomplish when he came?
10. To whom does the term “prince” refer in v26?
11. What was to happen in the first 7 weeks?
12. What was to happen in the next 62 weeks?
13. How is the last week divided?
14. What would happen to the Messiah in the last week?
15. Was the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 to be included in the 70 weeks?

# DANIEL CHAPTER TEN

## Angelic Warfare

### Chapter 10 Outlined

#### **Introduction: The Setting of Daniel's Vision (10:1-3)**

Third Year of Cyrus, King of Persia

A Great Warfare

Daniel Mourning and Fasting 3 Weeks

#### **I. Vision of the Heavenly Being (10:4-9)**

Dated: Nisan (April) 24, 536 B.C. on the Banks of the Tigris River

Description of the Heavenly Being

#### **II. An Encounter with Angels (10:10-11:1)**

Angel of Persia Hindering Answer to Daniel's prayer

Angelic Strengthening of Daniel for Revelation of Truth About Great Warfare

Angelic Fighting Against Angels of Persia and of Greece

## Chapter Ten

### Daniel's Vision by the Tigris River 1-3

Chapters ten, eleven and twelve form a unit and are best studied as such. "A divine message is revealed to Daniel, which serves as an introduction to the revelation given in chapters 11 and 12" (Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 375). The detail and accuracy of the prophecies in these chapters are of such high degree that all one has to do is read the secular histories of this time period and add the names and places to see the events unfolding before one's eyes. It is because these prophecies are so intricately detailed and correspond to secular history so well that critics have declared them to be *history written after the fact* rather than *history prophesied by Daniel 350 years before time*; that it was written by an unknown Jew sometime at the beginning of the Maccabean period. Their bias against predictive prophecy will not allow them to concede that God *inspired* Daniel to write these things years previous to the actual events. But it bears repeating that the Septuagint Version was translated from the Hebrew to the Greek around 270 B.C. and the entire book of Daniel, as it is written, was a part of that translation, proving that it had to have been written and fully accepted as part of the Jewish canon many years previous. As far as the Old Testament canon is concerned, the last inspired writings were the prophetic book of Malachi and the historical book of Nehemiah, both dating about 425-400 B.C.

*<sup>1</sup>In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, even a great warfare: and he understood the thing and had understanding of the vision. <sup>2</sup>In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three whole weeks. <sup>3</sup>I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.*

It is the now the third year of the reign of Cyrus the Great, king of Persia. Daniel is near ninety years old, having lived through the Babylonian captivity, and the Medo-Persian Empire is in control of the fate of Daniel and the Jews in so far as human involvement is concerned. It is likely that he did not ever go back to his beloved homeland of Judah. It is the year 536, and God has another revelation for this old prophet.

The vision of long-lasting warfare was so upsetting that he mourned and fasted three whole weeks because it would affect the covenant people. That he was able to understand this vision caused him great consternation and trouble of soul.

### Vision of the Heavenly Being (4-9)

This prophecy is dated as taking place in the third year of King Cyrus, 536 B.C. in the Hebrew month of Nisan, corresponding to our month of April. By this time the first group of captives had returned to Judea under the care of Zerubbabel (Sheshbazzar, Ezra 1:8). According to Ezra, chapter 2, nearly 50,000 Jews returned at this time. Daniel and many others were not among them. Others would leave the land of their captivity under the guidance of Ezra (457 B.C.) and Nehemiah (444 B.C.). Daniel mentions his Babylonian name Belteshazzar as "a

reminder of the occasion over 70 years before when the name had been given to him by Nebuchadnezzar, and a reminder also perhaps of 1:21, where Cyrus was first mentioned; the author/editor was presenting the book as a unity” (Baldwin, 179).

The announcement of the messenger concerned a great warfare and put Daniel into a state of mourning with fasting for three whole weeks.

While Daniel was by the Hiddekel (Tigris) River a vision was seen of a man clothed in bright apparel. Some have concluded that this is a reference to the Messiah, and it may well be. R. Spacek believes it to be a vision of Christ and asks: “Is this a theophany (i.e., a visible manifestation of deity), in particular the pre-incarnate Christ? Or is it an angel sent from God?” He then quotes from the *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*:

In favor of identifying the man of verse 5 with Gabriel, the angel who later talks with Daniel is the absence of any clear categorical indication otherwise. In favor of identifying the man with the incarnate Christ are: (1) correspondence of language with Dan 7:13 (2) similarities to Ezekiel’s vision of Him (Eze. 1:26, in context); (3) similarity to John’s vision of Christ (Rev. 1:12-20); (4) His standing, later in the vision “above the waters,” set apart, where even angels dare not stand (Dan 12:6, ASV); (5) the manner in which angels appeal to Him as having superior knowledge (12:6) (*PC Study Bible*, Hochdorf, 187).

However, it is more consistent with the overall view of these three chapters to interpret this as a vision of a mighty angel who reveals these future events to Daniel.

Daniel fainted while contemplating the great warfare that would come on the Jews, but the angel revived him and encouraged him. Daniel alone saw the vision; the men traveling with Daniel, perhaps men on government business, fled in fright (see Acts 9:7).

### **An Encounter with Angels 10:10-11:1**

*And behold, a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. <sup>11</sup>And he said unto me, O Daniel, thou man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright; for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. <sup>12</sup>Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand, and to humble thyself before thy God, thy words were heard: and I am come for thy words’ sake. <sup>13</sup>But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there with the kings of Persia. <sup>14</sup>Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days: <sup>15</sup>and when he had spoken unto me according to these words, I set my face toward the ground, and was dumb. <sup>16</sup>And, behold, one in the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spoke and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by reason of the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I retain no strength. <sup>17</sup>For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither was there breath left in me.*

Daniel is reassured by the words “*thou man greatly beloved...*” (See also 9:23; 10:19).

These words are very striking because few persons are so described in Scripture. These words mean “one in whom God takes delight.”

What are we to understand of these angels and the fighting between angels of Judah against angels of Persia and Greece? Are there so-called “territorial angels, demons and spirits”? Some claim that there are angels good and bad whose work it is to rule over nations enabling or preventing them from accepting the good influences of God. Are there “guardian angels” and “guardian demons”? The answer may be seen by looking at what the Lord said to Peter. “Satan has desired to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you...” (Luke 22:31). This may be all that is being said here: Satan is sifting the people of God who remain under the influence of the Persians and Greeks, a battle is going on for their souls. When the first group of Jews returned to Judah under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua and began rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple, the enemies, in the form of the Samaritans, put a stop to the construction. It was the same kind of situation when Ezra returned, and Nehemiah. The dangers to the Jews were on earth; they were real, but they were described as battles being fought on a heavenly, angelic plane. In the Book of Revelation 12, events taking place on earth are described in a highly figurative way as a war in heaven, with Michael the Archangel, and Satan described as the great red dragon, are fighting a battle. Paul describes this battle in the book of Ephesians – “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (6:12; see 2 Corinthians 10: 3-6). Wherever there are sheep, there will be wolves that want to destroy them.

As an aged man these scenes of angelic beings in conflict have left him worn out, agitated in body and soul.

*<sup>18</sup>Then there touched me again one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me. <sup>19</sup>And he said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he spoke unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for you have strengthened me. <sup>20</sup>Then he said, do you know why I have come to you? and now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece shall come. <sup>21</sup>But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth: no one that upholds me against these, but Michael your prince.*

**“Touched By an Angel”** is a television program that has popularized the supposed activity of angels in our time. Daniel was certainly one to whom it really happened! Three times in this chapter a heavenly messenger is said to have “touched” him (10:10, 16, 18).

The children of Israel are very insignificant in number in comparison to their foes, Persia and Greece, as described in this chapter. But they are to be reassured that the hosts of heaven, with Michael the archangel leading, is on their side. The conflict and struggle of God’s people during this time will cause them great suffering. Many will doubt whether they can survive; things may get very grim, but the vision is designed to give unshakable assurance that, as desperate as things may become, God is fully in control and able to save. In the case, of Daniel, he is able to disclose the events before they happen and is showing “the end from the beginning” (Isa 46:10). The revelation of God shows Him to be in control and His knowledge is of past, present, and future.

### Questions Daniel Chapter 10

1. What was Daniel's other name?
2. How long did Daniel mourn?
3. What river was Daniel beside?
4. Describe the man Daniel saw dressed in fine linen.
5. What happened to the men who were with Daniel?
6. What happened to Daniel when he heard the one speaking to him for the first time?
7. Who had come to help the speaking to Daniel?
8. The one speaking to Daniel said he was returning to fight with whom?
9. After he had gone forth, who would come?
10. How many times does this chapter say Daniel was touched by an angel?

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## Intrigue Between the Kings of the North and South

### Daniel Eleven Outlined

#### **I. SUMMARY OF PERSIAN KINGS AND FIRST KING OF GREECE (11:2-4)**

Cyrus the Great

Four Following Him - Cambyses, Psuedo-Smerdis, Darius Hystaspes, Xerxes

Alexander the Great and the Break-Up of the Grecian Kingdom into Four

#### **II. WARS BETWEEN KINGS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH FOR DOMINION OF THE HOLY LAND (11:5-20)**

The Ptolemies in Egypt and the Seleucids in Syria

Plotting, intrigue, marriages, alliances and the effects on the Jews in Palestine

#### **III. ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES AND HIS HATRED OF THE JEWS (11:21-45)**

The Rise of Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (21-24)

The First Campaign into Egypt (25-28)

His Second Campaign into Egypt Thwarted by the Romans (29-30a)

His Wrath on the Jews; The Emergence of the Maccabees (30b-35)

The Great Arrogance of Antiochus (36-39)

A Recapitulation of Antiochus' Reign of Terror (40-45)



## Chapter Eleven

Verse one properly belongs with chapter 10 and is the result of an unfortunate chapter break. Darius' first year is also Cyrus' first year when the decree allowing Israel to return to Judea took place. "Daniel is providing us a glimpse back to a recent event in order to show the heavenly action behind it" (Baldwin).

### A Summary of Persian Kings and the First King of Greece (11:2-4)

The angelic being, or the Lord, now continues to show Daniel the truth of what is to come. Two hundred years are passed over in a verse (2) because they are not relevant to his theme to be developed in this chapter; the Greek empire, and the struggles between two branches of Alexander's kingdom. After King Cyrus (558-529), will come three kings: Cambyses (529-522), Smerdis (522-521, also known as Pseudo-Smerdis or Gaumata), and Darius Hystaspes (521-486). Following these shall be a fourth king of Persia, richer by far than any of the others who would stir up all against the Greeks. This was Xerxes (486-465, his Persian name was Khshayarsha, his Hebrew name was Ahasuerus (Ezra 4:6; Book of Esther). The Greek historian Herodotus tells us that Xerxes raised an army of 5,000,000 men (probably exaggerated) to attack Greece, but they were beaten by a much smaller Greek army at Salamis, 480 B.C.

The "mighty king" described in verses 3 and 4 was a king born in 356 B.C., Alexander the Great, king of the Grecian Empire (336-323) who overthrew the 200 years of Persian domination and conquered all the way to the Indus River in a matter of 10 years. Alexander's aim was to Hellenize the entire world, but his army, longing for family and home, rebelled and would continue no further. The great conqueror took a fever, some say brought on by unhealed wounds and drunkenness and died at the age of 33. His great empire was left to his generals and eventually divided among four of them: Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus. These last two who ruled over the Egyptian (South) and Syrian (North) segments of the Grecian kingdom play a great part in history of the Jews in the period between the testaments and are the subjects of this chapter.

### Wars Between Kings of the South and North for Dominion of the Holy Land (11:5-20)

*<sup>5</sup>And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. <sup>6</sup>And at the end of years they shall join themselves together; and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the strength of her arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm; but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in those times.*

<b>South - Ptolemy I Soter</b> (savior) (323-285)	<b>North - Seleucus I Nicator</b> (victor) (312 - 280)
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Of importance to students of the Bible are the Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynasties of the

Greek empire. The Ptolemies were a dynasty of Grecian kings which ruled in Egypt from 323 to 30 B.C., and the Seleucids were a line of Greek kings which ruled in Syria from 312 to 65 B.C. It would be helpful to the Bible student to secure a Bible with the apocryphal books in it and read especially the *Books of the Maccabees*. Though not inspired, these books give invaluable information on the history of this period. Also, the *Histories of the Jews* by Josephus will be helpful with this period between the testaments, as well as Charles Pfeiffer's book *Between the Testaments*.

<b>South - Ptolemy II Philadelphus</b> (brother-love) (285-247)	<b>North - Antiochus I Soter</b> (savior) (280-261) <b>Antiochus II Theos</b> (god) (261 - 246)
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Daniel begins his prophetic history during the reigns of Ptolemy II of Egypt (285-247) and Antiochus I of Syria (280-261) when an attempt was made by these two Greek kings to unite their two kingdoms by marriage between Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II and Antiochus II, Theos, son of Antiochus I. Antiochus Theos was already married to Laodice, whom he divorced. However, when Ptolemy II died, Antiochus Theos divorced Berenice and took Laodice back. Laodice then proceeded to poison Antiochus Theos and murder Berenice and her child (5-6).

It was in the rule of this king, Ptolemy Philadelphus, that a Greek translation called the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament Scriptures was done by 70-72 priests at Alexandria, Egypt. This was accomplished in conjunction with the high priest Eleazar in about the years 275-270 B.C.

*<sup>7</sup>But out of a shoot from her roots shall one stand up in his place, who shall come unto the army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail. <sup>8</sup>And also their gods, with their molten images, and with their goodly vessels of silver and of gold, shall he carry captive into Egypt; and he shall refrain some years from the king of the north. <sup>9</sup>And he shall come into the realm of the king of the south, but he shall return into his own land.*

<b>South - Ptolomy III Euergetes</b> (well done) (246-222) (11:7-8)	<b>North - Seleucus II Callinicus</b> (gloriously triumphant) (246-226)
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Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III, Euergetes, took revenge for his sister's death by invading Syria and gaining a great victory (7-8). His conquering the Seleucid kingdom was the apex of the Ptolemaic age.

Seleucus II, Callinicus, invaded Egypt in 242 B.C. but was not successful and returned home (9).

*<sup>10</sup>And his sons shall war, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on, and overflow, and pass through; and they shall return and war, even to his fortress. <sup>11</sup>And the king of the south shall be moved with anger, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north; and he shall set forth a great multitude, and the multitude shall be given into his hand. <sup>12</sup>And the multitude shall be lifted up, and his heart shall be exalted; and he shall*

*cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail.*

Seleucus Callinicus was succeeded by his two sons Seleucus III, Ceraunus, and Antiochus III, the Great, the latter of which mounted several unsuccessful military campaigns against Egypt and was defeated by Ptolemy IV, Philopater at Raphia in 217 B.C. (10-13).

*<sup>13</sup>And the king of the north shall return and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former; and he shall come on at the end of the times, even of years, with a great army and with much substance. <sup>14</sup>And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the children of the violent among thy people shall lift themselves up to establish the vision; but they shall fall. <sup>15</sup>So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mound, and take a well-fortified city: and the forces of the south shall not stand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to stand.*

<b>South - Ptolemy IV Philopater</b> (Lover of his father) (222-205) (11:10-12)	<b>North - Seleucus III Ceraunus</b> (226-223) <b>Antiochus III the Great</b> (222-187)
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“*His sons shall war...*” These are Seleucus III and Antiochus the Great who became king at age 18. Antiochus III invaded Palestine in 221 without success and again 219 when he took the cities of Tyre and Acre. By the spring of 217 he had conquered all of Palestine and was at the gates of Raphia, a border town of Egypt. But Ptolemy came against him with 70,000 infantry, 5,000 calvary and 73 elephants. Antiochus was soundly defeated, losing 10,000 infantry, 300 calvary, and 5 elephants dead, plus 4,000 men lost as prisoners. But Ptolemy squandered his victory by going back to a life of luxury and profligacy and died in 205. Antiochus the Great fought again against Egypt and gained a great victory at Panion (Panias) in northern Israel, at the head waters of the Jordan River (in New Testament called Caesarea Philippi). The phrase “*he shall come on at the end of the times, even of years...*” does not refer to the end of the world and the Antichrist as some claim, but simply describes the years intervening between Antiochus’ defeat by Ptolemy IV and Antiochus’ victory at Panion.

With Antiochus III victory at Panion the dominion of the Jews changed from a generally tolerant rule of the Ptolemies to the harsh and cruel rule of the Seleucids who were determined to force Hellenism on them.

Verse 14 tells of violent men among the Jews that joined the army of Antiochus when he invaded Egypt. This would not bode well with the Jews at a later time.

*16 But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him; and he shall stand in the glorious land, and in his hand shall be destruction. <sup>17</sup>And he shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and with him equitable conditions; and he shall perform them: and he shall give him the daughter of women, to corrupt her; but she shall not stand, neither be for him. <sup>18</sup>After this shall he turn his face unto the isles and shall take many: but a prince shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; yea, moreover, he shall cause his reproach to turn upon him. <sup>19</sup>Then he shall turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall and shall not be found.*

<b>South - Ptolemy V Epiphanes</b> (Illustrious) (204-181)	<b>Seleucus IV Philopater</b> (Lover of his father) (187-175)
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After some other successes Antiochus envisioned a plan to re-establish the kingdom of Alexander. He gave his daughter, Cleopatra (not the famous one), in marriage to Ptolemy V in an effort to acquire Egypt. She, however, ended up siding with her husband, spoiling her father's plans. He then turned to the isles, where he engaged and defeated the Romans. A year later the Romans defeated Antiochus. This marks the beginning of the Roman rise to power. Verse 19 prophesied that he would turn toward home after his defeat and not be found. History tells us that Antiochus and his soldiers plundered a pagan temple, and in the ensuing battle many of his army were massacred, including Antiochus.

Antiochus III was succeeded by Seleucus IV, who sent Heliodorus, his chief minister, an exacter, a tax collector, to "impose taxes on the glorious kingdom", where upon he took possession of the treasury of the Temple in Jerusalem (2 Maccabees 3:7-40)). Heliodorus, perhaps with visions of grandeur for himself, murdered Seleucus by poison and attempted to usurp the kingdom but was not able to do so because of the interference from the brother of Seleucus, Antiochus IV, Epiphanes.

No other details are given to this verse of the twelve-year reign of this rather ineffectual king except that he did not die in battle or in a mob action as had his father, Antiochus. Yet Seleucus IV met an untimely end through poison administered by Heliodorus (Hochdorf, 211, Gleason Archer, 134).

#### **Antiochus IV, Epiphanes and His Persecutions of the Jews (11:21-45)**

<b>South - Ptolemy VI Philometor</b> (Lover of his mother) (181-145)	<b>Antiochus IV Epiphanes</b> (Illustrious) (175-164)
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It becomes immediately apparent as we read through the chapter that an inordinate amount of space is used to discuss Antiochus IV. This is only right, for he is the one who caused so much trouble for God's people in this period between the testaments. Antiochus IV, Epiphanes was "the younger son of Antiochus the Great. He was a hostage at Rome, from whence he escaped. He was brother and successor of Seleucus, and a usurper, for he supplanted his nephew Demetrius, the son of Seleucus and lawful heir to the throne" (Wordsworth, as quoted in *Biblical Encyclopedia and Museum*, Vol 9-10, p.66, by James Comper Gray). The reason for his being a hostage in Rome was that his father, Antiochus the Great, suffered defeat in war with Rome. Taking his son as a hostage would ensure his loyalty to Rome and prevent further rebellion. His twelve years as a hostage taught him to respect the new power which was to conquer the world.

Antiochus IV, ruled Syria from 175-164 B.C. He called himself Epiphanes, which means,

“enlightened or illustrious.” The Jews, however, called him Epimanes, the “madman.” He is introduced in Daniel 11:21 as a “*vile person*” (KJV), “*contemptible*” (ASV). With him came a major shift from a strict following of the Law of Moses to the implementing and adoption by many Jews of the Greek culture; this to the dismay of the pious ones. “*The prince of the covenant*” is Onias, the high priest, a good man and strict orthodox Jew who was deposed and later murdered and his brother Jason, a pro-Hellenist, was made high priest instead. From this time forward the office of high priest was given to the highest bidder, even men from tribes other than Levi. A gymnasium was built in Jerusalem where Jewish youth exercised and played games in the nude.

Several incursions of the Egyptian lands of the Ptolemies were made by Antiochus. The first was a successful engagement where he won the battle of Pelusium, capturing Ptolemy VI (171 BC). Another success came in 170. But upon his next venture into Egypt, he was met by the Romans. This is described in verse 30:

**The line in the sand.** Antiochus went to Egypt a third time, bent on the full conquering of Egypt. “The Romans, however, interfered as “*ships of Kittim*,” i.e., Romans from Cyprus came against him. Their legate Q. Popilius Laenas met Antiochus four miles from Alexandria and demanded the recall of his forces. When Antiochus said that he would take time to consider, the Roman legate drew a circle around him in the sand with his staff and insisted on his replying before he should leave the spot. Antiochus then yielded and withdrew 168 B.C.” (J. R. Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 543). After this, he returned in great fury to Palestine where he took out his frustration on the hapless Jews. In his march back through Palestine, he detached from his army 22,000 men under the command of Apolonius and sent them to Jerusalem to destroy it. Following is a list of some of the crimes perpetrated against God’s people, as given in Josephus: *Antiquities* Book 12, Chapter 5, Section 4. Pretending peace, he got possession of the opponents of the high priest, Menelaus. In a Sabbath attack, when he knew the Jews would not defend themselves, he slew large numbers; he plundered the temple and left it bare; he forbade the Jews to offer daily sacrifices; he pillaged the whole city; the city walls were destroyed; more than 10,000 men, women, and children were taken captive; the finest buildings were burned; an idol was built upon the altar of God where a sow was sacrificed; he forced the Jews to cease and forsake the worship of God; he required temples and idol altars to be raised in every city and to worship by offering swine upon them every day. He prohibited the Jews from circumcising their sons, and he caused to be strangled the sons who were circumcised, and their mothers as well. The books of the law were confiscated and torn to pieces and burned. Anyone found with the book of the covenant in his possession was condemned to death. The temple was further desecrated by identifying the God of Israel with Jupiter and ordered a bearded image of the pagan deity, perhaps the likeness of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, set upon the temple altar. This was what Jesus called, “*the abomination that makes desolate*,” referring in the first century to these abominable acts being duplicated by the Romans in A. D. 70 (Daniel 11:31; Matthew 24:15).

Though the **Maccabees** play a great role in the history between the Testaments, from Daniel’s far away perspective they are mentioned but briefly in 11:32-35. The ASV says in verses 32 and 33 “*But the people that know their God shall be strong and do exploits. And they that are wise among the people shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days.*” These were thrust into the role of heroes when certain officers of Antiochus came to the small village of Modin, just west of Jerusalem, enforcing an

edict for all Jews to sacrifice to the gods. Mattathias, the priest, was called upon to sacrifice to the gods to set an example for others to follow. He refused, but a fearful Jew came forward to do the sacrifice. Mattathias struck the apostate dead. He and his five sons and the villagers put the soldiers of Antiochus to flight and the ensuing war would result in nearly 100 years of Jewish independence.

*<sup>36</sup>And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods; and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done.*

*<sup>37</sup>Neither shall he regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. <sup>38</sup>But in his place shall he honor the god of fortresses; and a god whom his father's knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. <sup>39</sup>And he shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god: whosoever acknowledges him he will increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many and shall divide the land for a price.*

“*And the king shall do according to his will.*” Many commentators speculate about this king, wanting to make these verses apply to (1) the Antichrist, (2) Constantine the Great, (3) the Roman empire, (4) the Antichrist of Dispensational Premillennialism, (5) the pope of Rome, etc.

But why would not this “willful king” still be Antiochus IV? Everything about this section is fitting of his hateful character and ruthless methods. Charles Pfeiffer (*Between the Testaments*, 79) reminds us that “Epiphanes” means “enlightened one,” or “illustrious one,” and says this was almost a title of deity. Isn’t this what is described in verse 36 “...he exalted himself, and magnified himself above every god?” To try to fit some other person in a far distant time into this text does violence to the Scriptures.

Men become obsessed with many things—gold, money, jewels, woman, power, etc., but Antiochus’ passion was the god of war (36-39). Through the valiant efforts of the Maccabees, the Jews were able to throw off the shackles of persecution and idolatrous influence. The desecrated temple was cleansed, and a new altar of sacrifice was built. The Feast of Lights (Hanukkah) was instituted at that time and has been observed annually since that date. When Jesus attended this feast, it was called the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22).

This period, described in verses 40-45, seems to be a general summarization of the whole period of history involving Antiochus Epiphanes and his wars against Egypt, as well as his hateful dealing with the people of Judah.

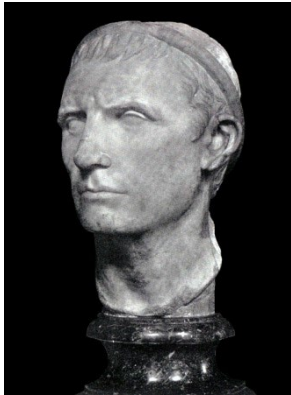
“There are no historical records of a fourth Syrian campaign with details to fit this context. This, however, does not necessarily mean such a campaign did not actually take place. The careful Bible-believer has learned that the silence of history does not necessarily prove biblical prophecy contradictory. The silence of history only proves the silence of history!” (Butler 438). Butler goes on to say, “This is, (general summary of Antiochus Epiphanes, ebd) in our opinion, preferable to “the Antichrist Theory” which is unsound contextually and historically.”

Hearing of revolt in the eastern and northern parts of his kingdom, Antiochus left part of his army fighting against the Maccabean uprising and gave Lysias, his general, the charge to wipe out the Jews. But at Emmaus, Judas Maccabaeus inflicted so great a defeat upon them that they fled from the field of battle back to Syria. Judas regained possession of the entire country

and on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Chislev (December) entered the Temple and removed all the signs of paganism which had been installed there. The altar dedicated to Jupiter was taken down, and a new altar was erected. The statue of Zeus-Antiochus was ground to dust. Beginning with the 25<sup>th</sup> of Chislev, they observed an eight-day Feast of Dedication, known as Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights. In this manner, they celebrated the end of the period during which the temple was desecrated.

Meanwhile, Antiochus retired to Babylon, and moved from there to Tabae in Persia, where he became mad “from superstition, terror and remorse” (*McClintock and Strong*, Vol 1, 272), and died in 164 B.C. “*He came to his end, and there was no one to help him*” (Dan 11:45)

This inspired account of history covers only until the death of Antiochus and the rise of the Maccabees that subsequently gained for Judah a period of Independence. Listed on the next page are the kings of the north and south after Antiochus IV, until the conquering of the land of the Jews by Pompey and the beginning of the fourth kingdom.



#### **Antiochus Epiphanes, IV**

- **Greek Syrian King** (175-163 B.C.) Son of Antiochus the Great, usurper, vile, contemptible person. Took the title ‘Epiphanies’ *enlightened one*, Jews called him ‘Epimanes’ *madman*.
- **Warred against Ptolomies**, made three incursions into Egypt. “Line in the Sand”
- **Forced Greek Culture on Jews**. Persecuted those who would not comply. Deposed the “prince of the Covenant” (High Priest), banned sacrifices. Entered Holy Place, set up idol and offered a sow on the Altar. “Abomination of Desolation” 11:31; Matt 24:15.
- **Maccabean Rebellion** (11:32-35).
- **Temple Cleansed, New Altar Built**
- **It comes down to basically three choices:**

**1. The emergence of the Romans in Judea** (a trend among some, but not sustained by context. [1] The context shows it to be a continuation of the affairs of the “kings of the north” and “kings of the south,” the Seleucids and Ptolomies (36, 40). To shift to a discussion of the Romans is abrupt and unwarranted. [2] Rome can hardly be called a king of the “north” when it is 1434 land miles and 1246 nautical miles to the west! “North” and “south” in context still pertains to Syria and Egypt. [3] Ch 12:11-12 are rendered meaningless if Rome is now in the picture (explained later).

**2. The Anti-Christ of Premillennialism** – John indicates that there was no particular individual called THE Antichrist; he writes of “many” antichrists. The antichrists of 1, 2 John were Gnostics developing in the late 1st – 4<sup>th</sup> centuries that denied that Deity came in the flesh (1 Jn 2:18; 4:3; 2 Jn 7). Premillennialists do not believe THE antichrist has come yet; 2,500 years have gone by since Daniel wrote these things! Of what good is it to the Jews who experienced those “troublesome times” to be told of someone that has not come even yet!? This makes it past history not a prophecy (or a failed prophecy)!

**3. It is a Summary of Antiochus IV reign.**

**Many read ch 12 and want to project it far into the future, even to the end of time.**

- “At that time *Michael* shall stand up...” Contextually connected to the whole vision which began in chapter 10.
- A “resurrection” – not the end of time, but like Ezekiel 37
- The wise shall shine...like stars forever and ever. Knowledge shall be increased as the things written in Daniel’s book are unfolded.
- Shut up the word, seal the book...*until the time of the end. What End?*

*Not end of time, Not the Second Coming of Christ*, but end of the troubles brought on the Jews by Antiochus IV.

*Shut up the book. Why?* Because its contents apply nearly 400 years in future. 10:1 says “the appointed time is long...”

- **Verses 5-12**, contextually, tie the whole chapter to the Great Warfare and the troublesome times of Antiochus Epiphanes begun in chapter 10. Remember, chapters 10, 11, and 12 are a UNIT!
- Two angels, one on each side of the river, are asked, “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” “Time, times and ½ time” until the end of the “breaking in pieces the



power of the holy people,” i.e., three and a half years until the evil dominion of Antiochus would be broken.

During this trying time many would be purified; others would do wickedly. They would not understand the import of these things (the wicked never do), but the wise will understand that their security was by trusting in God and being loyal to Him.

Daniel is told, “Go your way for the words are closed up and sealed **till the time of the end** – the end of the shattering of God’s people. NOT THE END OF TIME!

Those who want to apply ch 11:40 – ch 12 to the Roman Empire make vs 11 and 12 meaningless. What is the point of the reference to the daily sacrifice if chapter 12 is talking about the destruction of the temple by the Romans in AD 70?

**These verses have meaning only if the temple worship is to continue.**

- All sacrifices were invalid after the Cross.
- The temple in the time of Antiochus was desecrated and cleansed. Worship was restored.
- The temple in the time of the Romans was destroyed never to be rebuilt!
- Temple worship in ch 12 continued; it did not and could not after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Daniel is told, “Go your way” that he would rest (in death) but would “arise to his inheritance at the end of the days.” A reference to the final resurrection when time is no more.

**A List of the Kings of the “North” and Kings of the “South” After Antiochus, IV**

<p><b>South - Ptolemy VIII (Euergetes II),</b> (170-145-116)</p> <p><b>Ptolemy VII (Philopater Neos)</b> (145) made king in 145, but <b>Euergetes II</b> took over and ruled to 116.</p> <p><b>Ptolemy IX, (Soter II)</b> reigned in Egypt (116-108) his brother <b>Ptolemy X (Alexander I)</b> ruled from Cyprus. From 108-89 the situation was reversed with Alexander in Egypt and Soter in Cyprus. Then Soter returned to Egypt to rule (88-80).</p> <p><b>Ptolomy XI (Alexander II)</b> ruled 20 days (80)</p> <p><b>Ptolomy XII (Philopater Philadelphius Neos Dionysus)</b> (80-51) called “Auletes” flute-player.</p> <p><b>Ptolomy XIII (Philopater)</b> (51-47) married his sister CLEOPATRA VII, age 17. In this time Egyptian history coalesces with Rome. Ptolemy XIII was killed in war with Julius Caesar.</p> <p><b>Ptolemy XIV (Philopater)</b> (47-44) Died as a result of Cleopatra’s contriving.</p> <p><b>Ptolemy XV (Philopater Philometor Caesar)</b> (44-30) Son of Cleopatra, she claimed by Julius Caesar, called “little Caesar.” Cleopatra died in 30 (suicide), little Caesar was murdered. Egypt was made a Roman Province by Octavian</p>	<p><b>North - Demetrius I, (Soter)</b> (164-162)</p> <p><b>Alexander Balas</b> (162- 150)</p> <p><b>Demetrius II, Nicator</b> (1<sup>st</sup> reign 150-146)</p> <p><b>Antiochus VI, Theos Tryphon</b> (146-137)</p> <p><b>Antiochus VII, Sidetes</b> (137)</p> <p><b>Demetrius II, Nicator</b> (2<sup>nd</sup> reign 137-128)</p> <p><b>Alexander Zebina</b> (128-125)</p> <p><b>Seleucus V</b> (125)</p> <p><b>Antiochus VIII Grypus</b> (125-113)</p> <p><b>Antiochus IX Cyzenicus</b> (113)</p> <p><b>Seleucus VI</b> (113-95)</p> <p><b>Antiochus X Eusebes Philippus</b> (95-83)</p> <p><b>Tigranes</b> (83)</p> <p><b>Demetrius III Eucuerus</b> (83)</p> <p><b>Antiochus XI Epiphanes</b> (83)</p> <p><b>Antiochus XII Dionysus</b> (83-69)</p> <p><b>Antiochus Asiaticus</b> (69-67)</p> <p> </p> <p>This list of kings is from <i>Thirteen Lessons on New Testament Backgrounds</i> by Wilbur Fields, College Press (1977).</p>
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### Questions Daniel Chapter Eleven

1. Which king in Persia would be far richer than the others?  
Who would he stand up against?
2. Who was the mighty king who would stand up and do according to his will?
3. Where is the glorious land?
4. How did the king mentioned in verse 21, come to the throne?
5. In verse 27, when the kings would sit down at the same table, which one would lie?
6. What are the ships of Kittim mentioned in verse 30?
7. What countries would escape being overthrown by this wicked king?
8. What country would not escape being overthrown by this wicked king?
9. What was to happen to this terrible king of the north?

# **DANIEL CHAPTER TWELVE**

## **Daniel Twelve Outlined**

**Conclusion: Triumph and the End of Trouble brought on by the Wicked Reign of Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (12:1-13)**

**I. The End of Trouble and the Triumph of the Saints (12:1-4)**

**II. The Cleansing of the Sanctuary (12:5-13)**

Daniel's Desire to Know How These Things Would Turn Out (8)

The Book and Prophecy of Daniel Sealed (9)

The Time from the Cessation of the Burnt Offering Until the Cleansing of the Temple (11-12)

Daniel Reassured and Comforted (13)

## Chapter Twelve

### Triumph of the Righteous and the End of Trouble (12:1-13)

Many who read chapter twelve want to project it far into the future, even to the end of time. I do not believe this to be the case, but rather chapter 12 is a continuation of the affairs connected to the end of the evil times of Antiochus IV, Epiphanes and the rise of the Maccabees.

In the first verse it is Michael, *the same Michael of chapter ten*, who was to fight for the people of God and to defend their cause against the Persians and Greeks (see 10:12ff). Notice: (1) “*at that time*,” is referring to the time of Antiochus’ death, and the beginning of the Maccabean wars, (2) Michael shall “*stand up*” and lend support to the Jews, (3) it would be a “*time of trouble*” such as they had never seen before, and (4) “*at that time*,” *the same time that Michael comes to their aid*, they would be delivered, “*every one that shall be found written in the book*,” those who were the faithful remnant who survived this great time of trouble brought on by Antiochus and the wars that followed.

Verses two and three describe a resurrection scene, not of the end of time, but a figurative resurrection, one like that described in Ezekiel 37:11-14. In Ezekiel the *dry bones* coming to life again is figurative of the Jews’ restoration to their homeland following the Babylonian Captivity. Here in Daniel some are described as continuing faithful to God and others would succumb to the evil ways brought on by the Hellenizing Greeks and Jews. The faithful would be “wise” and restore many to righteousness and receive great eternal reward. Those Jews who were given to the Hellenizing culture did not join in with the Maccabees and some even fought against them. These would suffer “*shame and everlasting contempt*.”

Within the purview of verses two and three is the final resurrection and judgment that is yet to come. All resurrections in the Old Testament and New Testaments point to the future and final resurrection of the dead at the second coming of Christ (John 5:28-29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). The angelic revelation of the resurrection of the dead to those coming out of unprecedented persecution was a breath of hope to a downtrodden, despairing people. The “wise” among the remnant would “shine” having faith and hope renewed. Through their example and “evangelizing” many of their fellow Jews would be turned to “righteousness.”

Daniel is told to “*shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end*,” the time of the completion and fulfillment of its prophecies, not the end of time, in any literal sense. The reason being, that the fulfillment of these prophecies was far into the future—nearly four hundred years beyond Daniel’s time! “*The great warfare*” (ASV 10:1) and things described in detail in chapter 11, though causing Daniel great sorrow and discomfort, would not touch him or the people of God for several generations because “*the time appointed was long*” (KJV 10:1), a future time, a time beyond which Daniel should have no concern nor worry. Though the words “*time of the end*” are used, they have nothing whatsoever to do with the second coming of Christ and the literal and ultimate end of the world.

In verses 5-13 Daniel notes “*there stood another two (men, angels), one on one side of the river, the other on the far side of the river*.” Surely the context of these chapters demands that the river is the Tigris, *the same river as in chapter ten*. The two heavenly beings conversed, and the question was asked, “*How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?*” The emphasis should

be on “*these wonders*.” The wonders described beginning in chapter 10 continue through chapter 11, and are now in the process of conclusion. How long? “*Time, times, and a half time*” until the end of the “*breaking in pieces the power of the holy people*”; that is, until the harsh and brutal treatment and evil dominion of Antiochus IV and subsequent Greco-Syrian kings would be broken.

Daniel wants to know further, “*what shall be the issue of these things?*” What is to be the final outcome, the conclusion of these difficulties for the people of God? But Daniel is told to “*go his way,*” don’t be concerned about these matters, “*for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end.*” Verse 10 coincides with what is said in verse 3; many would purify themselves by trusting in God, others would do wickedly and have no understanding of the spiritual warfare taking place around them, but the wise would know and understand. This verse is saying basically the same thing as Revelation 22:11: “*He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*” These men, the wicked, Daniel is speaking of, are past repentance, they have sided with the devil and are going to stay with him! On the other hand, the wise will purify themselves and be refined as they are tried by the fires of warfare in the Maccabean rebellion that sweeps down upon them.

A side note for your consideration: Daniel was told to “*shut up the words and seal*” his book, for the time belonged to matters that would take place nearly 400 years in the future. John was told “*Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*” Surely it must be concluded that the things to which the Book of Revelation pertain were matters then upon the people of God of the New Testament era and not to the Continuous History Approach that would be many years in the future—i.e., the rise of Catholicism, the rise of Mohammedanism, the Crusades, the Reformation, the French Revolution, the American Civil War, World Wars, etc. Nor does the Book of Revelation refer to things, persons, places and events as per the Dispensational Premillennial theories that are proposed even yet in the future, according to their scheme.

Further evidence that chapter 12 is a continuation of the description of the Antiochus Epiphanes and Maccabean era, is the statement concerning the taking away of the continual burnt offering and the abomination that makes desolate. These things would end at the same time the “*breaking in pieces the power of the holy people*” should be finished. The “*time, times, and ½ time*” are the same as the “*1,290 days.*” “Epiphanes’ decree to abolish the burnt offerings was issued on what would be, by our calendar, May 25, 168 B.C. The burnt offerings were resumed on what would be, by our calendar, December 25, 165 B.C., after the Maccabees had recaptured Jerusalem and had cleansed the temple of its abominations. That was 1290 days, a little over 3 ½ years” (John A. Copeland, *A Study of Daniel*, 64). This is the period of time that the sanctuary was desecrated, and the burnt offering was stopped.

“In chapter 8:13-14, the length of the desolations was given as 2300 days; that period covers the entire time of Epiphanes’ oppression of the Jews, from the time the legitimate high priest was deposed until the temple worship was restored. The period of 1290 days covers the time during which the temple worship was abolished. The significance of the 1335 days, which would be 45 days beyond the cleansing of the temple is not clear. It may refer to the completion of the protective wall which the Jews built around the temple to prevent further attempts to defile it” (*ibid.* 65). Others believe the 45 extra days signify the time of Antiochus, the madman’s death, which came in the month Shebat ending the Jews calamity (*Biblical Encyclopedia and*

*Museum*, Vol. 10, 74).

Daniel is given reassurance and told not to worry, in that his reward for his faithful service is certain, “*for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days,*” that is, in the final judgment over which Jesus the Messiah will preside, the Judgment of the Just (12:13).

## **Addenda to Chapter 12**

Those who want to apply this section (11:36 through chapter 12) to the Roman Empire make verses 11 and 12, meaningless. They have no explanation for the 1290 days or the 1335 days. What is the point of the reference to the daily sacrifice if chapter 12 is talking about the Romans destroying the temple? These verses have meaning only if the temple worship would continue. All animal sacrifice and other offerings became invalid after the cross, and when the temple was destroyed, sacrifices could not continue after A.D. 70. The temple in the time of Antiochus was desecrated and able to be cleansed, whereas the temple in the time of the Romans was destroyed never to be rebuilt. Temple worship in the time of Daniel and Antiochus would continue; it did not and could not continue after the death of Christ and the fall of Jerusalem (Eph. 2:15).

This author believes the last verses of chapter eleven and all of chapter 12 is a continuation of the events connected to the end of the evil times of Antiochus IV, and the rise of the Maccabees. From the very beginning of chapter eleven, the Bible text has emphasized *the kings of the south versus the kings of the north*. Verse 40 speaks in this same manner: *The king of the south* (the Ptolemies of Egypt) *shall attack him* (Antiochus IV), *and the king of the north shall come against him* (the Egyptian king).

There are two reasons for rejecting the view of the Roman ending to 11:36-45. (1) It demands a major change in the context, and (2), verses 11 and 12 of chapter 12 are robbed of any real meaning. I find no warrant for changing the context to make it the Roman Empire. The Romans were never referred to as any part of the Greek Seleucid kingdom. One must change the entire context of Daniel eleven to get the Romans into this chapter. Rome can hardly be called a *king of the north*, when in reality it is 1434 land miles and 1246 nautical miles to the west (Google).

### Questions Daniel Chapter 12

1. When the time of trouble would come, who would be delivered?
2. What was Daniel told to do with the things he had seen and heard?
3. What was the question asked to the one who was upon the waters?
4. What was the answer given by the one upon the waters?
5. How long was it to be from the time the daily sacrifice was taken away until the abomination that makes desolate be set up?
6. “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the \_\_\_\_\_.”

### Chapter Identification

In what chapter of the book of Daniel do these things appear. These are taken from chapters 10, 11, and 12. Some may have more than one answer.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. _____ Darius, the Mede                 | 9. _____ Egypt                         |
| 2. _____ Belteshazzar                     | 10. _____ Mourning three full weeks    |
| 3. _____ Hiddekel                         | 11. _____ King’s daughter of the south |
| 4. _____ Michael                          | 12. _____ 1335 days                    |
| 5. _____ 1290 days                        | 13. _____ He shall come to an end      |
| 6. _____ King of the north                | 14. _____ Prince of Persia             |
| 7. _____ Ships of Chittim                 | 15. _____ The sanctuary                |
| 8. _____ One upon the waters of the river |  |



## Special Study #1

### Daniel and the Critics

#### Introduction:

- A. In the 6th century BC, Daniel was in the **lion's den**. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century AD Daniel is in the **critic's den**!
- B. **The Book of Daniel one of most criticized** in all the Bible by liberal theologians.
  - 1. The reason is plain. It is clearly an effort to destroy the supernatural, miraculous and prophetic in the Bible.
  - 2. The ultimate aim of the modernistic higher critics is to make the Bible simply a human book.
  - 3. Daniel, they claim, is vulnerable to critical attack because it is filled with supernatural events, miracles, and prophecies.
  - 4. Thus, if any attack can be launched against the Old Testament Scriptures, they must start with Daniel.

#### I. PROPHECY IN THE BIBLE

- A. **Prophecy is everywhere in and throughout the Bible.**
  - 1. Prophecy is not incidental; it is central.
  - 2. From Genesis to Revelation, prophecy is a vital facet of Scripture.
- B. **Prophecy is unique to the Bible.**
  - 1. No other religions are based on prophecy.
  - 2. When human authors attempt to foretell the future, their errors, mistakes, guesses and non-fulfillments discredit them. (Nostradamus, Jean Dixon, Charles "Taze" Russell, Hal Lindsey, modern day astrologers, psychics, etc.)
  - 3. **Only the Bible contains prophecy. Only God knows the future.** "Remember the former things of old: for I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa 46:9-10).
- C. **The authority, authenticity, and trustworthiness of the Bible is based on prophecy.**
  - 1. Jesus said, "And now I have told you before it comes to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe" (John 14:29).
  - 2. Fulfillment of prophecy verifies the truthfulness of the prophet (Deut 18:19-22; Jer 28:10-17).
- D. **Prophecy is history written in advance.** Only God possesses such foreknowledge. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar "the great God hath made know unto the king what shall come to pass hereafter" (Dan 2:45).
- E. **Prophecy is twofold.**
  - 1. It is **exhortative**. The prophets were the preachers of the OT (Joel 2:13; Micah 6:8; Mal 3:8).
  - 2. It is **predictive**, unveiling the future and what shall come to pass. Daniel told the king, "The dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan 2:45).
  - 3. The preaching of the prophets was not from their own minds; they were guided by the Holy Spirit. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of

God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet 1:21).

F. The predictive element in the book of Daniel is especially strong, this is the reason for the attack by liberal scholars.

## II. THE ATTACK AGAINST THE SUPERNATURAL

A. How can an attack be made on fulfilled prophecy?!

1. Here the prediction is made--There it is fulfilled in history!
2. How does the critic deny this?

B. **Examples of Modernist's attempts to discredit miracles.**

1. **Crossing of the Red Sea.** Critics say it should be called the "reed" sea, swampy. Pharaoh's army drowned in mud?!
2. **Fire from heaven destroyed Nadab and Abihu.** They say it was just a chance bolt of lightning and not God's punishment. The primitive Hebrews just interpreted it that way.
3. **The Resurrection of Christ.** The disciples were just hallucinating. They wanted Him to raise so much that they actually believed he did.
4. **The appearance of Christ to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus.** Saul was simply blinded by a flash of lightning from an electrical storm common to the area.

C. **Attempts to discredit prophecy.**

1. **The book of Deuteronomy not written by Moses** but by an unknown Jew during the time of king Josiah and conveniently found in the temple.
2. **Isaiah could not have prophesied so accurately concerning Cyrus the Persian king** who allowed the Jews to return to their homeland after the Babylonian Captivity, so there must have been two or three or perhaps several men who wrote under the name "Isaiah" at a later time than the original Isaiah.
3. **Daniel could not have written with such accuracy concerning the events taking place in the period between the testaments;** therefore, they say it was written not 500 years before Christ, but in 165 BC by an unknown writer calling himself "Daniel."
4. **Citizens of Nineveh did not repent as the book of Jonah says.** But Jesus says they did! (Matt 12:41-42).

## III. WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED?

A. **Jesus called Daniel a "prophet" (Matt 24:15).**

1. He didn't say "Daniel the forger" or "Daniel the deceiver," but "Daniel the prophet."
2. If the visions and prophecies of Daniel were written 400 years after the fact, then they are **past history and not prophetic** in any sense, and Daniel is no prophet, and Jesus is mistaken or a deceiver. The integrity of the Son of God depends on the truthfulness of such statements.

B. **Ezekiel mentions Daniel three times** (14:14, 20; 28:3) and holds him up to his fellow countrymen in Captivity as being a model of faith and virtue. If there was no Daniel during the time of Ezekiel, then neither of these were true prophets.

C. The spotless character of **Daniel is endorsed by the writer of the book of Hebrews.**

Daniel is characterized as a true hero of faith (Heb 11:33).

D. **Daniel is an indispensable introduction to the NT.**

1. It tells of the establishment of the kingdom of Christ in the days of the Roman kings

(Dan 2, Luke 2:1-2, 3:1-2).

2. The Ascension of Jesus and the beginning of his Reign as King of kings is predicted by Daniel (7:14).

3. The casting off of the Jews after their rejection of Jesus is foretold (Dan 9:24-27).

**E. To destroy prophecy is to destroy the Bible.**

1. Christianity is a revealed religion. Job says that man, by searching, cannot find God (11:7). If we are to find God, it will be because he has revealed himself to us.

2. If the critics are true in their attempts to discredit Daniel: (1) Jesus is mistaken and not the Son of God, (2) Ezekiel can be eliminated from the OT, (3) Hebrews can be eliminated from the NT, (4) the kingdom did not come, and Christianity is a farce. In fact, the whole Bible must be rejected because its credibility is destroyed.

**Conclusion:**

A. **We would do well to be concerned when liberal theologians attack the word of God.** You can believe that no matter how wild and fanciful their criticism there will be some that will follow them.

B. As with Paul and others of the NT, **we must be set for the defense of the faith (Phil 1:17, Jude 3).**

C. **If the prophecies are not true, then Christianity that is founded on prophecy is not true.** To destroy the prophets is to destroy Christ and the Bible.

D. Daniel escaped unharmed from the lion's den. Whether he escapes from the critics' den depends upon whom we will believe—Daniel and the prophets or the critics.

## Special Study #2

### THE INFLUENCE OF DANIEL ON THE GENERAL WELFARE OF THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON

Since Daniel was taken in the first wave of captives and had found favor with Nebuchadnezzar due to his interpretation of the dream (Dan 2), he was in a position to make their conditions as a conquered people more bearable. Remember, he was in captivity twenty years before Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed (606-586 B.C.). As a result, their conditions proved to be much better than they could have been.

- (1) They were still able to have access to their elders, prophets and priests (Jer. 29:1).
- (2) It was during this forced separation from their homeland that synagogue worship was begun, thus keeping up the faith and teaching it to the young ones.
- (3) They would still have had access to the Holy Scriptures (Dan 9:2).
- (4) The captives enjoyed freedom in their living conditions. Jeremiah advised them to build houses, plant gardens, give their daughters in marriage, etc. (Jer. 29:5). Ezekiel had his own house where elders came to visit him (Ezek. 8:1).
- (5) They had correspondence privileges with friends and relatives back in Judah (Jer. 29:25ff).
- (6) Since many of the captives settled on the river Chebar (Ezek. 1:1, 3; 3:15, 23), and near Tel-abib, a city on a canal, they probably had good fertile land for agriculture.
- (7) Archeologists have found tablets dating from the fifth century which show that the Jews had business opportunities also.

These kinds of advantages would hardly have come to them had it not been for the providence of God watching over them, and someone in high places with good influence on the king. Daniel was that person. He was God's chosen person in the very place God needed him. He was a man of faith and fortitude, integrity and intelligence, wisdom, courage, hope for the future, and love for his people.

Without doubt, Daniel had much to do with effecting the return of the captives to Judah. He was still living at the time of their return (536 B.C.), as seen from the transition from the rule of the Babylonians to the Medes and Persians (Dan 6:2-3; 9:1-2) and from the statement in chapter 10:1 which says that he lived into the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia. Daniel was reading from the prophet Jeremiah (9:2) and realized that the seventy years of captivity were finished. Did he have the boldness to approach the king on behalf of his people with this information? Everything about Daniel in his book suggests that this is true.

Having said all that, we must not presume that their situation was one of luxury, freedom and ease. They were dislocated captives, away from all that was familiar – their land, their Temple and its worship, their priests and teachers of the law, their beloved Jerusalem. Without doubt, for a good while they would have been grieving, in shock and disoriented. Read the 137<sup>th</sup> Psalm. They would have been awed at the vastness of the flat deserts and open spaces of Mesopotamia as compared to the coast lands, foothills and mountains of Judea. Babylon was at the height of its power, and Nebuchadnezzar was busily engaged in the enlargement and development of the palaces and buildings of Babylon. The magnificence and spaciousness of the city of Babylon with its temples and idols would have been awe-inspiring and overwhelming. No doubt the

poorer class of people was in a more servile position and would have been laborers in Nebuchadnezzar's many construction projects, including one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. These proud Judeans would be bewildered by their sudden humiliation and angered by the obvious pleasure some of their traditional enemies manifested at their downfall (e.g., the Edomites). They believed that God would never forsake His people, the holy land and its sacred institutions. It was the task of Ezekiel who went into captivity in the second wave (597 B.C.) to remind them of why they were captives and to convince the Jews that they would be in Babylon for the entire period prophesied by Jeremiah, the full 70 years (25:11,12; 29:10), and to encourage them to "settle in" for the long duration. The spiritual, emotional and psychological trauma of the Jews is reflected in Psalm 137. Under these circumstances, those with a flimsy, superficial faith would be bitter and resentful towards God. But others who were faithful and who would compose the "remnant" would see the error of their ways and be contrite of heart and very penitent (as manifested in the prayers of Daniel 9 and Nehemiah 1).

Without the help of Ezekiel among the people and of Daniel in the courts of the king of Babylon, the fate of the citizens of Judea would have been much more desperate.

### Special Study #3

## A CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF DANIEL CHAPTER TWO IS CRITICAL TO PROPER BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

The second chapter of Daniel is a pivotal chapter of the Bible. Notice how Daniel 2, Isaiah 2, Psalm 2, and Joel 2 converge in Acts 2, making it, in the words of the title of a book by James D. Bales, “The Hub of the Bible.” (See the book by the same name).

This chapter is critical to the understanding of the book of Daniel. The book in scope covers the history of God’s people from Babylon to Rome, and the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, a period of some 670 years. Chapter two is expanded further in chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 as it covers prophetically in great detail the histories of the second, third and fourth kingdoms. What is recorded here in the “history” section (1-6) of the book is further elucidated in the “prophetic” section (7-12), showing the one-person authorship and unity of Daniel.

Daniel two is critical to the understanding of the entire scheme of redemption as God unfolds it from Genesis to Revelation. It is no wonder that so many men and women, supposedly students of the Bible and Christianity, are wandering about, hopelessly lost in a quagmire of prophetic delusion. While boasting great knowledge of the subject, they have missed the entire scope of the chapter, the book of Daniel, the New Testament—the entire scheme of redemption! They have fouled up the entire Bible teaching of the Messiah and His Kingdom and thus his promised salvation! This includes those of a liberal persuasion who fail to rightly divide the prophecy in chapter 2, and subsequently those of the following chapters. And it includes, especially, those of a Premillennial persuasion who have devised an entirely different Messiah, Kingdom, and plan of salvation that was not and is not in the mind of God, but wholly from their own misguided and deluded minds. Because of these warped and twisted views of Scripture, millions of souls will be lost for eternity. To miss the point of Daniel two is to miss it all!

Daniel two is critical to correct Bible understanding because it points out that God has not forgotten his people and the covenant he made with Abraham, David, and other faithful souls of the Old Testament (Genesis 12:1-3; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Ps. 89:3-4, 19-37, 38-52). The Messianic Kingdom seen in the second chapter of Daniel is the pledge and promise of God to Israel that He has not forgotten! Though they are in captivity in a foreign land, there are better days ahead; the people of Judea will return, and the faithful remnant mentioned by such prophets as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Zechariah and Malachi will pave the way for the Messiah who is to come.

There is great significance to the fact of the contributions made by the four world kingdoms seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream in Daniel two. Each kingdom making up the great image contributed to the spread of the New Kingdom to be established by Jesus the Messiah.

**Babylon** – The great contribution of this world kingdom was the **synagogue**. Because the Jews were separated from their homeland and temple during their Seventy Years Captivity, the synagogue worship came about. The apostle Paul and others used the synagogues as stepping-stones for evangelism. They were to go “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”

(Acts 3:26; 14:46; Romans 1:16; 2:9-10). How better to do this than by going to the place where Jews were being instructed in the law of God, the synagogue? The church of the New Testament was patterned in part after the worship of the synagogue. It was the place of reading of the scriptures and religious instruction (see Luke 4:15ff), prayer and singing (without the accompaniment of musical instruments).

**Medo-Persia** – Their chief contribution of this world kingdom for the promotion of God’s cause was its commitment to **the principle of law and order**. “The law of the Medes and Persians alters not” (Dan 6:8). This principle helped to fix in the minds of men the value of an unchanging system of law and justice that treated every man the same. In addition, the Persians had a very efficient and orderly **postal system**. In fact, the “Postal Creed” is from the ancient Greek historian Herodotus’ statement, “These neither snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness of night prevent from accomplishing each one his appointed task, with the very utmost speed” (Herodotus, *Histories*, 531).

**Greece** – The significant contribution of the third world kingdom was **the Greek language**. Alexander the Great was the Apostle of Hellenism. It was his aim to infuse the culture and language of Greece in all the peoples he conquered. By the time of Christ, the Greek language was almost universal. The New Testament was written in Greek.

**Rome** – Their great contribution to the spread of Christianity was their **road system**. This provided freedom of travel and communication all over the Mediterranean world. How wise God was to select Paul to be the great apostle to the Gentiles with his Roman citizenship! Another contribution of the Romans to “the fullness of time” was the “**Pax Romana**,” **Roman peace**. Because of their military superiority and ability to move their armies swiftly throughout the Empire over their roads, Rome could quickly stamp out any uprising or threat from conquered nations.

## Special Study #4

### FOUR VIEWS OF DANIEL TWO

#### I. The Liberal View. The Image Represents the Kingdoms of Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece

A. Support for this view hangs on the understanding of Dan 5:28, 30-31; that the kingdom of the Medes is an independent kingdom, thus the second kingdom, with the Persian and Greek kingdoms following.

B. This is the view associated with the old Liberal school of thought. This allows them to hold to the dating of the book in the time of Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (169-164 B.C.). This interpretation confines the book of Daniel to a period of three to five years! It concerns itself with the rise and fall of Antiochus IV Epiphanes—the same period detailed in the books of 1 and 2 Maccabees. This view must be rejected on the following grounds:

1. It rejects the inspiration of Scriptures, saying that the Book of Daniel is not predictive prophecy – written before the fact, but rather history – written after the fact.
2. It does not deal fairly with textual interpretation. That the Medes and Persians constitute one kingdom is seen from 6:8, 12, 15.
3. It does not take into account the book of Acts and the establishment of the kingdom. The Kingdom of God was established in the days of the Roman kingdom, not the Greek kingdom, at the time of the Maccabees.
4. This Liberal view with its late date denying the supernatural does not solve all their problems, for Jesus quoted Daniel (Matthew 24:15) and applied it to the future (A.D. 70). Thus, even with their late dating, they have to admit to predictive prophecy.

#### II. The Divided Greek Kingdoms Theory. The Image Represents the Kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece as Under Alexander the Great, and Greece as Divided Among His Generals.

A. This was the view of some commentators in the 19th century. It has the same weaknesses as the Liberal view.

1. Daniel gives no indication whatsoever that the Greek kingdom is to be viewed as two independent kingdoms, one under Alexander and another under his four generals.
2. From 7:6 and 8:5-8; 21-23, Daniel sees both phases of the Greek kingdoms as one kingdom. *The leopard in 7:6 is one animal with four heads. In chapter 8 the he-goat is one animal with 4 horns.* Thus, they are simply describing one kingdom with different phases or extensions of their character.
3. This view has no merit in view of the developments leading to the rise of the Romans prior to the time of Christ and developments of the New Testament.

#### III. The Premillennial View. The Image Represents the Kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

A. While they have the right kingdoms, they divide Rome into (1) ancient historical Rome of the first century and (2) a revived Roman empire of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

1. Premillennialism is based on a *literal* interpretation of the Bible. Since in this view many of the O.T. prophecies have not been literally fulfilled, it must be future.



2. They identify the ten toes of the image in chapter 2 with the ten horns of the beast in chapter 7.
  - a. They associate the toes and horns with the European Common Market as being 10 kingdoms of the modern restored Roman Empire.
  - b. However, the nations of the Common Market are not (1) kingdoms [also the horns of the beast are not kingdoms, but “kings”], and (2) there is no Roman kingdom (political or economic) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; in fact, Italy has little or no influence on world affairs, (3) if the “toes” of the beast are still around in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the “toes” are three times as long as the original image! Daniel’s prophecy was given about 600 years before Christ, but the Premillennialists now have it older than 26 centuries and not finished yet! Who can believe it!?
3. Jesus came “preaching the gospel (good news) of the kingdom and saying, the time is fulfilled, Repent ye and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14-15) in the first century.
4. The Premillennialists say, “the time is fulfilled in the twenty-first century.” Whom shall we believe!?

#### **IV. Scriptural View. The Image Represents the Kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome**

##### **A The First Kingdom Babylonian Kingdom (610-539 B.C.).**

1. “Thou O King art the head of gold” It is fitting that Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon should be the head of gold, for it was known as “the city of gold” (Isaiah 14:4), since gold was used profusely to decorate and embellish the temples and buildings of Babylon.
2. Also, the concept of world empire originated with the Babylonians. “The policies which were formulated in Babylon continued to control succeeding empires even as the head controls the body” (James Smith, *The Major Prophets*, 540).

##### **B. “Another kingdom inferior to thee” (silver) - Medes and Persians (539-333 B.C.).**

1. The two arms fittingly represent the two nations that composed the second empire, the Medes and the Persians.
2. The Medo-Persian coalition was inferior to the Babylonian Empire in several ways:
  - a. Wealth - See previous comments on Babylon as the “city of gold.”
  - b. Military strength - If Nebuchadnezzar had been king instead of the drunkard Belshazzar when the Medes and Persians came, things might have been quite different.
  - c. City - This was the showpiece of the world, especially with the Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
2. “The silver here may be intended to portray the more commercial spirit of this empire” (ibid).

##### **C. “Third kingdom of brass” - Grecian Kingdom (333-67 B.C.).**

1. Again the symbolism is appropriate since bronze (brass) was the primary metal in instruments of war in this age. Alexander’s army was noted for its military prowess.
2. Second, what began as a unit (the abdomen) divided itself into two separate parts which were never reunited. This may point to Syria and Egypt, the two great Hellenistic kingdoms which grew out of the empire of Alexander (ibid).

##### **D. “Fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron...mixed with miry clay” - Roman Kingdom (67 B.C. - A.D. 476).**

1. The fourth kingdom represents the Roman Empire which, with its iron strength, crushed and broke “all these in pieces;” but also the miry clay which showed its weakness.

2. Each kingdom embodied the elements of the previous kingdom. When Rome crushed the Hellenistic kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, it in effect crushed all the previous kingdoms (ibid).

E. *“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed...the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands.”*

## Special Study #5

### THE CORONATION OF CHRIST AS KING Acts 2:29-36

#### Introduction:

- A. The Coronation of Christ as King is vigorously taught in the Old and New Testaments.
- B. But it is just as vigorously denied by many religious people.
  - 1. This has come about because of the preconceived ideas foisted on good by those of a Premillennial persuasion.
  - 2. Those who espouse this doctrine insist that truly Jesus came to establish His kingdom, but the unbelieving Jews crucified Him; thus He was not able to bring in the kingdom and substituted the church instead.
- C. There are many things wrong with this doctrine, the most obvious of which are these:
  - 1. This makes unbelieving men more powerful than the God of heaven.
  - 2. It denies the fact that Jesus was prophesied to be crucified (Rev 13:8; Isa 53; Ps. 22; Jn 12:27).
  - 3. It flies in the face of Jesus' teaching that the gates of hell would not prevail against His church/kingdom (Matt 16:18-19). This means Satan won!
  - 4. If God's plan of redemption prepared from the foundation of the world could be thwarted by the conniving of men in the first century, what would keep the same thing from happening when Jesus comes to set up the kingdom again?
- D. It is my firm conviction that this is a damnable heresy, and souls are at stake. There are five lines of thought that I would like to present on the Coronation of Christ as King from the: Psalms, Prophets, Parables, Passages on the Ascension, and the Pentecost Pronouncement.

#### I. PSALMS

##### A. 24:7-10

*"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah."*

##### B. 89:3-4, 30-37

*"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah."*

*"If his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah."*

##### C. Summary

- 1. God's covenant with David and his seed would be to the SPIRITUAL SEED OF

DAVID, THE MESSIAH (Matt 1:1; Luke 1:32-33; Romans 1:3). The fleshly seed ceased sitting on the throne with Coniah (Jeremiah 22:30).

2. Therefore, these Psalms are not speaking of David, nor to this fleshly seed, but of his spiritual seed Jesus the Christ.

## II. PROPHETS

### A. 2 Samuel 7:12-16

*“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.”*

### B. Isaiah 9:6-7

*“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”*

### C. Zechariah 6:12-13

*“And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”*

### D. Daniel 7: 13-14

*“And I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed” (NKJV)*

1. The Son of Man would go TO the Ancient of Days
2. He would be GIVEN dominion, glory, and a KINGDOM
3. All peoples, nations and languages would serve Him
4. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away. His KINGDOM is that which shall not be destroyed.

## III. PARABLE

### A. Luke 19:11-27 (Summarized).

*“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we will not have*

*this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading... But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."*

**B. Interpretation** - Jesus told a parable about His going to the Father to receive the kingdom.

1. **A certain nobleman** – Christ is the nobleman. He was born to be King (Luke 1:32; Matt 1:1; 2:2).
2. **Went to a distant country** – The distant, far country is heaven where He went when he ascended (Luke 24:26; cf. Mark 10:37 with Matt 20:21).
3. **To receive a kingdom for himself** – He ascended to heaven after His resurrection; to the Ancient of days (His Father); to receive a kingdom – the kingdom to be received was the church (Dan 7:13-14; Matt 16:18-19).
4. **And return** – His return is the Second Coming (Acts 1:8-11).
5. **But his citizens hated him and said, 'We will not have this man to reign over us'** – Jesus was rejected by His own people (Isa 53; John 1:11; 19:15; Matt 16:21-23)
6. **When He returned** – He called them into account. This represents the Judgment of the Jewish nation and foreshadows the judgment of the world (Matt 21:41; 22:7; Acts 17:31; Rom 14:12; 2 Cor 5:10-11).
7. **The Judgment is of the Just and the Wicked** – The Just are rewarded. The Wicked are those who hated Him, described as His enemies. They are to be slain before His eyes (2 Thessalonians 2:7-9).

**C. This parable shows** (1) That Christ's kingdom was NOT established during His earthly reign. (2) That it was NOT a kingdom on earth established after His return.

#### **IV. PASSAGES ON THE ASCENSION**

**A. When did Christ go to the Ancient of Days?** Let the Scriptures speak:

1. *"So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God"* (Mark 16:19).
2. *"And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven"* (Luke 24:50-51).
3. *"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven"* (Acts 1:9-11).

**B. Summary**

#### **V. PREACHING ON PENTECOST**

*A. "Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his*

*throne; (2 Sam 7:12-17; Ps 132:11, ebd) he foreseeing this spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet (Psalm 110: 1). Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified" (Acts 2:29-36 NKJV).*

**Conclusion:**

A. When Jesus was resurrected, *"he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God"* (Acts 1:3). After this Jesus ascended TO THE ANCIENT OF DAYS and there was given Him DOMINION, GLORY, AND A KINGDOM...He came TO the Ancient of Days, in the HEAVENS. The Premillennialists have him coming FROM the Ancient of Days to the EARTH to receive His kingdom.

B. When one considers THE PSALMS, THE PROPHECIES, THE PARABLE, THE ASCENSION PASSAGES, and the PREACHING ON PENTECOST he can have no doubt as to the time of the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy of the Coronation of Christ! (7:13-14).

C. The kingdom of God was established when Jesus came the first time--in the days of His flesh He preached the good news of the kingdom (Mark 1:14-15), told men they must be born again to see it (John 3:3-5), and was crucified according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23). Jehovah was not taken by surprise nor caught off guard; Jesus died, was buried and resurrected according to the scriptures (Psalms 22, Isaiah 53; 1 Cor 15:1-4). Jesus is NOW reigning at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:3, 8; 8:1; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; etc).

D. When He comes the second time (Hebrews 9:28), it will be to deliver the kingdom back to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:22-28; Ephesians 5:25-27). Premillennialism is absolutely wrong!

E. There will never be another world empire like the four described in the visions of Daniel 2 and 7. The *"stone cut out of the mountain without hands"* saw to that! The kingdom of Christ is the only universal kingdom to exist on earth until the end of time. It is a spiritual kingdom. God never intended that it be a political, physical, earthly kingdom as per the premillennial agenda.

F. When the disciples of John the Baptist asked Jesus if He was really the Messiah, Jesus told them to check the evidence. The same is true regarding the kingdom. The evidence demands that we accept the Kingdom God has given and not be guilty of looking for another that the Bible knows nothing about.

## Special Study #6

### Developments from the Scattering of the Ten Northern Tribes (721 BC) and the Fall of Jerusalem (586 BC) to the Opening of the New Testament Preparatory to “The Fulness of Time” Galatians 4:4

#### Nations

**Babylonia** — First world kingdom in Daniel’s vision, Nebuchadnezzar took Jews into Captivity for Seventy Years (606 - 536 BC)

**Medo-Persia** — Allowed the Jews to return to homeland under Cyrus the Great (536 - 333 BC)

**Greece** — Under Alexander’s influence changed the complexion of Judaism (333 - 67 BC)

**Rome** — World kingdom in power when Kingdom of God established (67 BC - AD 476)

#### Contributions

**Babylon** — The **Synagogue** developed in captivity to keep their worship alive. **Idolatry** abandoned by the Jews forever.

**Medo-Persia** — **Law and Order, Postal System.** Herodotus, when he gives the ‘Postal Creed’ is describing the Persian postal system—“These neither snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness of night prevent from accomplishing each one his appointed task, with the very utmost speed” (Herodotus, *Histories*, 531).

**Greece** — **Universal Language.** N.T. written in koine (common) Greek language. O.T. translated from Hebrew to Greek.

**Rome** — **Universal Peace (Pax Roma)**, forced, but it allowed the spread of the gospel.

**Roman Roads** built for quick dispersal of Roman Legions to trouble spots in the Empire also allowed quick travel of evangelist of the gospel.

#### “S” Words

**Scattering** — Dispersal of the Jews among the nations (1 Pet 1:1; James 1:1; cf. Acts 2:5-11).

**Samaritans** — Mixed race consisting of parts of 10 Northern Tribes and Gentiles

**Synagogue** — Local place of worship after destruction of temple

**Septuagint** — Translation of Hebrew Scriptures into Greek (280 BC)

**Sanhedrin** — Supreme court of the Jews, first mentioned specifically about 200 BC, flourished under Ptolemies, had great power in time of Christ.

**Sects** — Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, Zealots, (Assassins *Sicarii*, Acts 21:38 ASV), Essenes, Zadokites

#### Greek Philosophies

**Epicureans** — Greek sect derived from Epicurus (342-271 BC), taught followers to search for happiness through pleasure, not absolute truth (1 Cor 15:32); experiential, not reason (Acts 17:18).

**Stoics** — Derived their name from the *stoa* (porch) where Zeno taught (357 - 263 BC). Severe and lofty Pantheists who reflected indifference in all circumstances (Acts 17:18). They were fatalists—what will be, will be.

#### Greek Thinkers

**Socrates** — Taught people to think for **themselves**.

**Plato** — Taught people to think **beyond selves**, on spiritual level. He reasoned that man had an inner being, a soul, sent from “the world soul” (place of souls). While very primitive in

concept, it did get men and women conscious of such an idea, preparing them for full Bible revelation on the matter.

**Aristotle** — Taught people **how** to think, **logically**. His rules of logic are still observed.

## Writings

**Close of Old Testament Canon** (cir 400 BC)

**Translation of the Septuagint (LXX)** (cir 250 BC)

**Dead Sea Scrolls** — Found AD 1947-48 in caves at Qumran by shepherd boy. “Every book of the Old Testament is found either in manuscript, quotation, or allusion in the Qumran literature” (Charles Pfeifer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 112).

**Apocrypha** (*apokruphos*), — Generally produced from 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, not part of OT canon, but some included in Catholic Bible. Contains wide variety of historical, geographical, moral, and chronological errors. However, the Books of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Maccabees contain much reliable information of the period.

**Pseudepigrapha** (false writings) — A vast number of false and spurious writings, never seriously considered as canonical; represent the religious lore during the intertestamental period.

**Midrash** — Doctrinal and homiletical expositions of OT brought together 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to AD 300.

**Talmud** (instruction) — Oral traditions which became written circa 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to 5<sup>th</sup> century AD consisting of two main divisions the *Mishnah* (repetition, teaching) and the *Gemara* (complete, accomplish, learn); “The tradition of the elders” (Mark 7:3).

## Personalities

**Four of Worlds Greatest Kings** — Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus the Great, Darius, Alexander the Great

**Antiochus IV, Epiphanes** — Wreaked havoc on Jews which provoked the Maccabean uprising giving the Jews independence from Greece until the coming of the Romans 67 B.C.

**Herod the Great** — Idumean king of Judea at time Jesus was born. Killed babies of Bethlehem.

**Roman Caesars - Augustus Caesar**, was the emperor when Christ was born; reigned BC 23 - AD 14. “The days of these kings” (Dan 2:44; Luke 2:1). Tiberias was Caesar when Jesus began his ministry (Luke 3:1ff)

**Maccabees** - Rebelled against Antiochus IV gained independence for Jews (165-63 BC), Feast of Dedication, [*Hanukkah*, Lights] (John 10:22).

## Negatives

Greek Culture turned many of the Jews away from God. The coming of the gymnasium drove a wedge between the youths and their parents and away from adherence to the law of Moses. The priesthood had become a position to be bought and sold.

**Greek philosophy** had failed to give an adequate answer to life’s questions and problems. **Idolatry** was the great curse of the Gentile world. The Gentiles had steeped themselves in the vilest of sins and crimes against God and humanity (Rom 1).

**The Jews** were equally corrupt and more to be condemned for they had the advantage of the oracles of God and were God’s chosen people (Rom 2-3). Truly Judaism was a “dry ground” (Isa 53:2) with little understanding of God’s Kingdom or the Messiah.



**Conclusion:**

A great many nations, kings, people, events, institutions, positives and negatives went into the “fulness of time.” God’s plan of redemption through the ages had been revealed little by little—“precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little there a little” (Isa 28:10) over a course of about 4,000 years through patriarchs, prophets, priests, judges, kings, scribes, and wise men. Both directly and providentially God had used men and nations to bring about His Divine will. He caused nations and men to rise and fall and to do his bidding—the Hebrews, Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, etc.—Joseph, David, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander. All of these persons, places, things, and events combined to bring the world to the right time for the coming of the Messiah and their need for a Savior.

When Jesus came, the world had been prepared for his coming. Positively, God had revealed His coming. The faithful remnant of the Old Testament looked for His coming. Anna and Simeon of the New Testament, along with many others were looking and longing for His coming. Negatively, the “exceeding sinfulness of sin” (Romans 7:13) had shown the world the need for a Savior. No wise man or philosopher, Jew or Gentile, had the answer to sin and the problems it caused in the lives of men and women. The wisdom of the philosophers, which in many ways prepared men for the gospel and the salvation it would bring, was inadequate to deal with the problems of the soul (Isaiah 55:8-11: Jeremiah 10:23). The time was right for a Savior!

The world was prepared by God for the fulness of time and those who were knowledgeable of God’s will were ready and waiting for Him. “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Galatians 4:4).

## Special Study #7

### Dates Important to the Study of the Book of Daniel

(all dates B.C.)

721 – Fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel to the Assyrians

612 – Fall of Nineveh, ending the dominance of Assyria and the rise of Babylon

606 – Battle of Carchemish, Babylon defeated Egypt, which is no longer a major power; Daniel and friends taken captive to Babylon; Nebuchadnezzar succeeds his father, Nabopolassar, as king of Babylon

597 – Jerusalem rebels, Nebuchadnezzar returns, takes King Jehoiachin into exile, along with 10,000 leading citizens; Ezekiel, the prophet, was among the captives. Jehoiachin surrendered the city March 16, 597 B.C. (James Smith, *The Books of History*, p 646).

586 – Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem in January, 587; a breach was made in the wall August 15, 586 after a siege of 18 months. Zedekiah, the king, was taken captive to Babylon where he died.

539 – Fall of Babylon; Medo-Persian Empire under kings Darius the Mede (Dan 5:31) and Cyrus the Great.

536 – Cyrus the Great allows the Jews to return to their homeland, ending the 70 years Captivity.

Ezra 1-2 records that nearly 50,000 of the Captivity returned

520 – In the second year of King Darius I, Haggai and Zechariah are called upon to stir up the people to complete the rebuilding of the Temple.

516 – The rebuilt Temple of Zerubbabel is complete (70 years after being destroyed).

486 - 465 – Xerxes (Ahasuerus) King of Persia and Queen Esther

457 – Ezra returns to Jerusalem

444 – Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem with permission to rebuild the walls which were still broken down, later becomes governor.

420 - 400 – Close of O.T. canon, Persians are still the world power

413 - Reference to Joiada, son of Eliashib the high priest, and son-in-law to Sanballat...last datable reference in the O. T. (Nehemiah 13:28).

334 – Alexander succeeds his father to the throne of Greece and defeats the Persians in battle, goes on to conquer as far as the Indus River. Upon his death in 323, the kingdom is divided among his four generals. Bible history is concerned with the Ptolomies in Egypt and the Seleucids in Syria.

301 - The fortunes of the Jews pass into the hands of the Ptolomies of Egypt, generally a peaceful period.

250 - About this time 70 Alexandrian (Egypt) Jews complete the translation of the Old Testament Hebrew Canon into Greek – the new common language of peoples in the Middle East and around the Mediterranean.

198 - Antiochus the Great conquers Palestine; the Jews come under the control of the Syrian Greeks.

175 - Antiochus IV comes to the Seleucid throne, instigates a reign of terror on the Jews, desecrates the Temple (167).

164 - Rebellion of the Maccabees against Antiochus, leads to Jewish independence. A priest, Mattathias Maccabees, refuses to sacrifice to idols; sons Judas, Jonathan and Simon are leaders.

67 - Romans under Pompey conquer Palestine, beginning the Roman dominion of Judea. Antipater, an Idumean, is appointed king over Judea.

37 - Herod the Great, son of Antipater, embellishes and builds on to the Temple, a very cruel and brutal man.

**4 B.C. - Jesus, the Christ, is Born in Bethlehem of Judea**

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