

**Old Testament Survey**  
**Lesson 27 – Daniel**  
**Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School**  
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<b>Judah</b>	<b>Prophet</b>	<b>Israel</b>
	<b>627-561 Jeremiah</b> ca. 609 Habakkuk	
609	Jehoahaz	
609-598	Jehoiakim	
605	Exile: Stage #1 Daniel and a few taken captive to Babylon <b>605-536 Daniel</b>	
598-597	Jehoiachin	
597	Exile: Stage #2 10,000 Jews taken captive to Babylon	
597-586	Zedekiah	
	<b>593-570 Ezekiel</b>	
586	Judah Falls to Babylon (Exile: Stage #3 Destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem)	
539	Babylon falls to the Medo-Persians (Daniel 5)	
538	Return: Stage #1 50,000 Jews return under Zerubbabel & Joshua ca. 520 Zechariah 520-518 Haggai	
516	Completion of 2nd Temple	
458	Return: Stage #2 2,000 Jews return under Ezra to restore worship	
445	Return: Stage #3 Nehemiah returns to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem 433-424 Malachi	

**Introduction**

Studying the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel in sequence is especially interesting. While Jeremiah was preaching and prophesying in Jerusalem, Ezekiel was engaging in the same ministry among the Jews in exile in Babylonia. At this same time, Daniel was prophesying and serving in the royal court of their enemy, Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. It is the prophet Daniel that has most influenced the minds of Jews, both in captivity and free by giving substance to their vision of a Messianic Kingdom. The earlier prophets spoke of the relationship of the Jews to the nations surrounding them with an occasional mention of a future kingdom, but Daniel would teach them how the promised kingdom would fit in the scheme of great nations to come. There were to be four powerful monarchs and then one final kingdom. This was and is the great hope for the religious Jew: a Messiah, a Kingdom, and a Throne.

The title of the book of Daniel comes from the man who speaks throughout. Woven throughout the book are accounts of the Daniel's life, his rise into power, and his service to three kings. The remaining Scripture is a recounting of many direct revelations given by the Lord to Daniel, through visions and dreams.

In the Hebrew Bible, Daniel is in the third section which follows the Law, and the Prophets, and is called the Writings. It is placed there because Daniel is never directly referred to by the Hebrew word translated prophet. He is, instead identified by the title translated "seer," or "wise man." Jesus, however, called him, "*Daniel, the prophet*" in Matthew 24:15. An unusual feature in Daniel is the fact that its central-portion, 2:4 through 7:28, is written in Aramaic. Actually there are very short portions of Aramaic in Ezra and Jeremiah as well. Aramaic was the language of trade or business, in that entire part of the world, in that era. This has been confirmed by a large amount of archaeological evidence found in recent years.

**Introducing the Prophet**

One of the best known of all Bible characters is Daniel. There was a time when virtually everyone in the western world, saint and sinner alike, knew the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den. That has certainly changed, but our society still uses idioms derived from Daniel's book like "the handwriting on the wall". It is helpful that we know more about him than any other prophet. The account of the courage, conviction, and commitment to the Lord of he and his three friends is a valuable and practical lesson for us all.

“Daniel” means “God is my Judge.” So how did God judge him? God called him a “*man of high esteem*” (10:11) Men highly esteemed he and his friends, also, describing them as, “*youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding, and discerning knowledge, and who had the ability for serving the kings court. . .*” Ezekiel ranked him together with Noah and Job (Ezek 14:14) and talked of him as a man of righteousness and character.

As was the policy of Babylon, his name was changed to one attached to their gods, when he entered the royal court. He was called Belteshazzar, which means “a prince favored by Bel.” He was unique, in that he was God's prophet to the Gentile, as well as the Jewish world. His ministry lasted from 605 to 536 BC. He lived, and served his Lord through the entire seventy years of the Babylonian Captivity. Daniel spent the majority of his life as a statesman, in the court of pagan kings, even though he never failed to serve the true God. He was taken captive in 605 BC, when Nebuchadnezzar lay siege to Jerusalem and carried off the cream of the young noble families in order to solidify his plans of future conquest.

There are many books written about the authorship of the book of Daniel. As usual, the first problem is the accuracy of the predictions which drive non-believers to try to “late date” them. Here are just three of the newest findings, which verify the accuracy and timing of the Book of Daniel:

1. In the first verses of the first chapter it says that Nebuchadnezzar took vessels from the temple at Jerusalem and brought them into the temple treasury of his god. For years critics insisted that no ruler ever did such a thing. Not long ago a group of archaeologists entered a room in Babylon and found inscriptions proving that very act was a peculiar habit of that very king. He always put his choice treasures before his gods.
2. Also in the first chapter of Daniel there is a reference to a man named Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs, who was in charge of the young captives from Babylon. Critics insisted he was a fictional character made up by the scribe who wrote the book many years later. Within the last 25 years, the name Ashpenaz was found on several monuments in ancient Babylon. Those monuments, which are now in the Berlin Museum, say, “Ashpenaz, master of the eunuchs in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.”
3. In chapter five, the story is told of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, who was slain during a drunken feast when Persia invaded and conquered them. Secular history books said the king of Babylon at that time was not Belshazzar, but Nabonidus. Sir Henry Rawlinson discovered an inscription on a cylinder found in the Euphrates river. There were two kings in Babylon, during this time, Nabonidus, the father, who ruled from a fort in a nearby city, and his son, Belshazzar, who sat on the regents throne in the city. This also explains Daniel 5:29, which says, “*Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.*” There were already two co-rulers in place.

There are also several strong evidences that Daniel, himself wrote the book:

1. Several verses indicate it (8:15, 27; 9:2; 10:2,7;12:4,5).
2. It is written in autobiographical, first person from 7:2 on.
3. He was a famous historic figure of his time known by Ezekiel.
4. There is no record in any Jewish literature to indicate that they disclaim his authorship or the historicity of his dating.
5. Jesus attributed these prophecies to him in Matthew 24:15.

Since he was probably around fifteen years old when he was captured, in 605 BC, and he served Cyrus until 536 BC, he lived at least 85 years. We have no verifiable record of his death, but tradition has him buried at Shushan, at a very old age, probably over ninety.

## Introducing the Times

Because of the events we will discover in chapter 2, Daniel was given a place of prominence in the government of Nebuchadnezzar. He fell from favor when the king died, but was grudgingly recalled to interpret the writing on Belshazzar's wall at the very end of his reign. He was made one of three presidents under the Medo-Persian, King Darius, and lived until the third year of the rule of King Cyrus.

There is one phrase, having to do with the times that is prominent in the book – *"The times of the Gentiles."* "The times of the Gentiles" defines the periods of history when the Gentiles (non-Jews) would dominate world history. Jesus used that term, with that definition, in His discussion of the end times as well (i.e. Luke 21:24). "The times of the Gentiles" began with the Babylonian Captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, and will end with the return of the Christ (Messiah) in glory. This is the period of history, with its Gentile dominance, that God revealed to Daniel, long before most of it happened. God explained, through Daniel, that during this period the Gentiles would rule over the earth, especially over the Jews and the land of Palestine. This period would last from the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, through when the last Caesar reigns, in the revived Roman Empire, and up to the personal, visible, bodily return of the Lord Jesus to the earth. Another way to define this time period is to see it as the present interruption in God's direct dealing with the Jews. The time of the setting-aside of His chosen nation, until they see the Son of God sitting on, *"the Throne of David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever."* (Luke 1:32, 33)

## Introducing the People

The audience is basically the same as Ezekiel's, with the addition of the gentiles, or pagans, who had captured the land and the people. Daniel dates his various prophecies and writings, which helps us to tie them to the kings of Babylon or Persia under which he served.

## Introducing the Lessons

There are two major thrusts in the book of Daniel, both of which are given to encourage the exiled Jews by revealing the Lord's long range plan for them:

**First, God is a sovereign God.** God has control over all of the affairs, of all of the rulers, of all of the nations of the world. And God is planning to replace the power structure of man with a final kingdom and the True King. God no more suffered a defeat in Jerusalem in 586 BC, than He did on the cross at Jerusalem in 33 AD. He will punish and purify His nation by setting them aside for a long time, but He will keep His word. He will fulfill His covenant. He will provide the Messiah for the Throne of David.

**Second, God is a supernatural God.** God sometimes uses miracles to get man's attention. When He created the world; through His patriarchs and Moses; through His prophets Elijah and Elisha; during the life of Daniel; through His apostles; and He will again in the time of Revelation. When God chooses to reach down into the natural world, by His supernatural power, He make waves.

## Importance of the Book

How important is the book of Daniel? Sir Isaac Newton said, *"to reject Daniel is to reject the Christian religion."* Why would he be so concerned? To reject these prophecies leaves us without an official, prophetic word about "things to come." This affects us in three ways:

1. Israel was set aside nationally and without Daniel we would not know how God is going to work out His continuous plan to resume His covenant relationship with the chosen Hebrew people.
2. Jesus refers to Daniel in his prophetic "Olivet Discourse," and that message can only be properly understood with the book of Daniel as a frame of reference.
3. The book of the Revelation, the only prophetic book in the New Testament, would be less clear without the prophecies in Daniel and the two should always be studied together.

Through Daniel's visions the Lord makes it clear that human empires rise and fall, but He ultimately will shatter the Gentile hold in the world, and establish His kingdom on earth.

## Outline

There are primarily two ways to outline Daniel. The first looks to chapters 1-6 as historical narration related to Daniel and chapters 7-12 as prophetic revelation. The second way looks to chapter 1 as an historical introduction, chapters 2-7 as prophetic revelation related to the Gentiles (written in Aramaic), and chapters 8-12 as prophetic revelation related to the Jews (written in Hebrew).

### **I. Daniel and His Three Friends (Chapter 1)**

Daniel takes his place as one of those select few in Scripture who are spoken of in only positive terms.

<sup>12</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, <sup>13</sup>"Son of man, if a country sins against Me by committing unfaithfulness, and I stretch out My hand against it, destroy its supply of bread, send famine against it and cut off from it both man and beast, <sup>14</sup>even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves," declares the Lord GOD. <sup>19</sup>"Or if I should send a plague against that country and pour out My wrath in blood on it to cut off man and beast from it, <sup>20</sup>even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness." Ezek 14: 12-14; 19-20

He was righteous, obedient, loyal, courageous, and wise. With the possible exception of Moses and Solomon, he may have been the most learned man in the OT, and was certainly well-trained for his important role in world history and the unfolding of God's plan for Israel.

The book of Daniel begins with a blunt account of the first siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC. Here in v2 we see that God is sovereign. It was "the Lord" who gave Jehoiakim into Nebuchadnezzar's hand. It was not Nebuchadnezzar's strength. Nebuchadnezzar did not capture the city, but was able to steal some articles of worship from the temple and capture some of Israel's finest young men including, "*some of the royal family and of the nobles.*" (v3). The first three chapters introduce us to four of those noble young men and we see three specific aspects of their character: their walk with their God; their witness before their captors; and their worship of the one and only true Lord.

Following the Babylonian plan, Nebuchadnezzar ordered his chief court official, Ashpenaz, to pick the cream of the captives and bring them into the royal palace for training and indoctrination.

<sup>4</sup>youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. <sup>5</sup>The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service. Dan 1:4-5

Put yourself in the place of Daniel and his friends. You are about 15 years old. You are captured by your feared and cruel enemy, but find yourself in the position of a prince.

**Test one:** One of the perks of their new position is food from the king's own chef, the very best in Babylonian cuisine. What's the problem? The Babylonian food was not kosher. Much of the diet was made up of "unclean" animals, mostly pork, the meat was rare and bloody, some food was mixed with dairy products, and much of the wine and meat had been offered to the king's favorite idols.

For Daniel this choice was no choice so, "... *Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank...*" (v8). Daniel was an uncompromising young man of courage. What happened next is an example of creative problem solving and the art of negotiation. God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of Ashpenaz to allow he and his three friends to eat only vegetables and water for a ten-day trial period. At the end, the four of them looked healthiest of all the young men, and so were allowed to keep their own kosher diet.

## II. Prophetic Revelation of the Gentiles (Chapters 2-7)

### A. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (2)

Fitting in to the court of the king is one thing. Being put on the hot seat is another. How will Daniel and his friends stand up to a supernatural challenge?

**Test two:** Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. He had had dreams before, but this one was especially troubling to him and he could not sleep. He called for his "wise men", the magicians, conjurers, the sorcerers, and the really sharp Chaldeans to help him understand the dream. The king had always wondered if these guys were for real, so this time he not only asked them to interpret the dream, he asked them to tell him what the dream was. The pay was good, "Tell me and I make you rich", however, there was a down side, "Fail and you die." They were understandably upset. This was without precedent, it was not fair, this time they could not cheat. So, the king decreed they all be executed. When Daniel heard what was going on, he went to his friends and they prayed to the Lord for wisdom to know and interpret the king's dream. God was gracious and revealed the dream and its meaning, and here is where the test came in.

Daniel saved the "wise men" and told the king, "*As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers magicians, nor diviners are able to declare it to the king. However, there is a God in heaven ...*" (v27-28).

Nebuchadnezzar's dream is about a multi-metallic image representing the nations during the "times of the Gentiles". The image has a head of gold, arms of silver, sides of brass, and legs of iron and feet of iron and clay.

Element	Nation
Head of Gold	Babylon
Arms of Silver	Medo-Persia
Sides of Brass	Greece
Legs of Iron	Rome
Feet of Iron and Clay	Revived Roman Empire
Rock of Stone	Christ the Messiah setting up His Millennial Kingdom

### B. Obedience in Worship (3)

The third test was faced by Daniel's three friends since Daniel, seems, to have been away on royal business. We know, however from later events, that He would have stood with his friends.

**Test three:** Studying Scripture or secular history, it is obvious that Nebuchadnezzar had an ego problem. He had a gold image made, 90 feet high by 9 feet wide, perhaps of one of his god's or, as traditional teaching has it, himself. He ordered all his cabinet to come to an official dedication ceremony. When the musical fanfare was played, all those present were to bow to the image. As usual, the punishment of disobedience was severe.

The dilemma is obvious. Do the three Jews bow in body, but not in heart, and therefore obey the king? Or do they, "*worship the one true God and Him only,*" as their belief demanded. They not only did not bow, they told the king why, and affirmed the Lord's power to intervene, if He desired, and their willingness to die for Him if He did not.

<sup>15</sup>"Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, very well But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?" <sup>16</sup>Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. <sup>17</sup>"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. <sup>18</sup>"But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." Dan 3:15-18

They were cast into the fiery furnace, but God delivered them.

<sup>28</sup>Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God. <sup>29</sup>"Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way." Dan 3:28-29

#### C. Nebuchadnezzar's Pride (4)

Chapter 4 begins and ends with a testimony from an unlikely source. Nebuchadnezzar, influenced by Daniel, his three friends and their God, says, "*It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for me.*" (v2) It sounds like he's become a believer, even a follower. How do we know he's still a pagan? He has another dream and calls for the usual suspects, the "wise men" and, as usual, they cannot interpret it. Then, according to verse 8 he said, "*... Daniel came before me, whose name is Beltashazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and I related my dream to him, ...*"

In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a large fruit tree with beautiful leaves and animals lounging in its shade and birds living in its branches. An angelic being commanded that the tree be cut down and the stump be bound with iron and bronze. He then related that the stump represented a man who would become insane and live outdoors, like an animal, for seven periods of time (perhaps seven years). Daniel informed Nebuchadnezzar that the tree represented the king himself, who though powerful and providing protection and a home for many, would be brought low. Once sufficiently humbled he would be restored to the throne. One year later the dream came true and Nebuchadnezzar began to act like an animal, his hair and nails grew grotesquely long and he actually ate grass. When God restored his sanity, Nebuchadnezzar praised God publicly and warned his people about the dangers of pride. Verse 37 gives testimony to the fact that he had a true conversion to worshipping the "*King of Heaven.*"

<sup>37</sup>"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride." Dan 4:37

#### D. Belshazzar's Feast (5)

In 539 BC, twenty years after Nebuchadnezzar's death, King Belshazzar was ruling Babylon in the absence of his father, Nabonidus who had retired to Arabia. "*Belshazzar, the king, held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. When Belshazzar tasted the wine (got drunk), he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which*

*Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, ... " (v1-2) As if that wasn't bad enough, as they drank from the temple implements, they, "praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone." (v4)*

Babylon	Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 BC)	Daniel taken captive ~15 years old
	Evil-merodach (562-560 BC)	
	Neriglissar (560-556 BC)	
	Labashi-Marduk (556 BC)	
	Nabonidus (556-539 BC)	
	Belshazzar (553-539 BC)	
Medo-Persia	Darius, the Mede (539-525 BC)	"Handwriting on the wall" ~81 years old

While the people partied, the disembodied fingers of a man's hand appeared and began to write a message on the wall of the palace. The king was terrified and sent for his "wise men" to read the message and, even though he offered to make the reader third ruler in the kingdom, no one could read the mystery message. The queen, perhaps the queen mother, entered and reminded Belshazzar of the old prophet who could read dreams and visions. Daniel was called and declined the king's gifts, but he reminded him of what had happened to his grandfather because of his pride. He applied that object lesson to the arrogant king who would dare defame the Lord by using the temple vessels.

Finally he read the message, *"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."* and then interpreted it. Belshazzar's days were numbered and his reign was ending, he has been weighed on God's balance of justice and found lacking, and his mighty kingdom would be divided between the Medes and the Persians. Actually, as Daniel was delivering this prophesy of doom, the enemy armies were entering the city through the diverted Euphrates River which was the city's main water supply, and were taking the city with virtually no resistance. (v30-31)

#### **E. Daniel and the Lion's Den (6)**

Daniel continued to prosper under the new Medo-Persian rule. Darius, the Mede, chose to make him one of three administrators over the 120 districts of the provinces he ruled. In fact, it was his success that caused jealousy among the other leaders. Knowing that Daniel was loyal to the king and to his own God, they plotted to have him executed for treason by making him disobey an official edict of the king. Appealing to Darius' pride, and knowing well the "law of the Medes and Persians," they convinced him to issue a decree ordering all his subjects to worship him, and him only, for one month or be fed to the lions.

<sup>10</sup>Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously. Dan 6:10

Darius, who obviously admired and respected Daniel, tried all day to think of a way to bail him out. However, the other leaders waved the law in front of his face and he gave the order to cast Daniel into the lions' den. He was not a happy king. *"Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and sleep fled from him."* (v18) When he returned to the den in the morning he cried out to Daniel, *"... has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?"* And, of course, He had shut the lions' mouths, and Daniel was safe. Darius had him lifted out of the lions' den and his accusers and their families were thrown in and they were destroyed. The end of the chapter reminds us of chapter 4, when King Nebuchadnezzar praised God, as Darius made a decree praising Daniel's God as the sovereign Lord of the universe, and demanding that all in his kingdom fear and tremble before Him.

<sup>26</sup>"I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel;

For He is the living God and enduring forever,  
And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed,  
And His dominion will be forever.

<sup>27</sup>"He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders  
In heaven and on earth,

Who has also delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." Dan 6:26-27

### III. Daniel's Prophecies Concerning Israel (Chapters 7-12)

Up to this point the book of Daniel deals with the life and work of Daniel. With the exception of the giant image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the prophecies that he presented were tied to the rulers then alive and came to pass in a relatively short time. Now we move into a section devoted primarily to future prophecies which were given to Daniel in a series of visions.

#### A. Visions (7-9)

Daniel received three visions which are central to understanding God's prophetic plan for the world from his time on, both for the Gentile nations, and for the Nation of Israel as well. **In the seventh chapter** Daniel traces the course of four great world empires: Babylon; Medo- Persia; Greece; and Rome climaxing with the second coming of Jesus, the Christ, and the inauguration of the kingdom of God on earth (The fifth and final kingdom). **In the eighth chapter** Daniel concerns himself with the empires of Persia and Greece as they relate to Israel. Under Persia the Israelites went back to rebuild their land, city, and temple. Under Greece, especially under Antiochus Epiphanes, the city and temple were again desolated. **In the ninth chapter** Daniel presents the history of Israel from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah to the coming of the Messiah to the earth to reign.

The visions are not simple to understand, but fortunately there is an interpretation with each which does give some direction.

#### 1. Four Beasts (7)

This vision occurred in Belshazzar's first year of co-reign, which puts it at about 553 BC, prior to the fall of Jerusalem described in chapter 5. (Parallel of Nebuchadnezzar's vision in chapter 2) Four great beasts come up out of the sea, each representing rulers of a great world empire:

*"The first was like a lion and had wings like an eagle."* (v4) These symbols of strength and speed were both used in reference to **Babylonia** (Jer 4:7 and 13).

*"...a second one, resembling a bear."* (v5) The bear was used as a symbol for the **Medo-Persian Empire** because of its strength and fierceness in battle (Isa 113:17-18). It is possible that their three beaten enemies, Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt are the ribs.

*"...another one, like a leopard..."* (v6) This lightning fast creature with wings is clearly the **Greek Empire** under Alexander the Great, who invented the lightning military strategy called "blitzkrieg." After his death, the empire had four heads: Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Macedonia, each ruled by one of his generals.

*"...a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong..."* (v7-8) This beast is beyond human description. It devoured, it crushed, it trampled, it is the **Roman Empire**. The ten horns are, as explained in verse 24, the final form of that empire, a confederation of ten nations which will arise together in a **re-constituted Roman Empire**. And then a new ruler arrives to tear his way into the scene, this is the Antichrist (v24-27).



This vision ends with the judgment of those nations by the "Ancient of Days." God, the Judge and the Messiah, "One like a Son of Man," comes to wage war with the little horn and *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever."* (Rev 11:15) HALLELUJAH! All this scenario is presented in detail in the Book of the Revelation from chapter 4 on, but especially in chapters 12 through 22.

## 2. Two Beasts (8)

This vision also came during the reign of Belshazzar. Daniel saw a ram with two horns of unequal length, the longer growing after the shorter. The ram charged to the west, north, and south conquering all that were in its way. A goat with one long horn came from the west, shattered the ram's two horns, and trampled the ram into the ground. None could then stand up to the goat, but at the height of its power its horn was broken and replaced by four small horns.

Just to make it more complicated, another horn grew from one of the four and it became increasingly powerful, extending its power to the south and east. It challenged the hosts of heaven, oppressed God's people, and disrupted the sacrifices in the Lord's temple. This time we have the angel Gabriel to come to our rescue. He revealed the meaning to Daniel, and to us:

The vision is of the time of the end (v17). The two-horned ram was the Medo-Persian Empire, and the goat, the Greek Empire. The four small horns were the four divisions of Greece after Alexander's death. The little horn (not the same as in 7:8) refers to Antiochus Epiphanes who came to power in Syria from 175-164 BC, persecuted the Jews, blasphemed God, and plundered the Temple in Jerusalem, desecrating it by offering pig's flesh on the altar. Daniel was so disturbed by watching the persecution of his people he, *"... was exhausted and sick for days."* (v27) Antiochus is also a type of Antichrist in the Tribulation period.

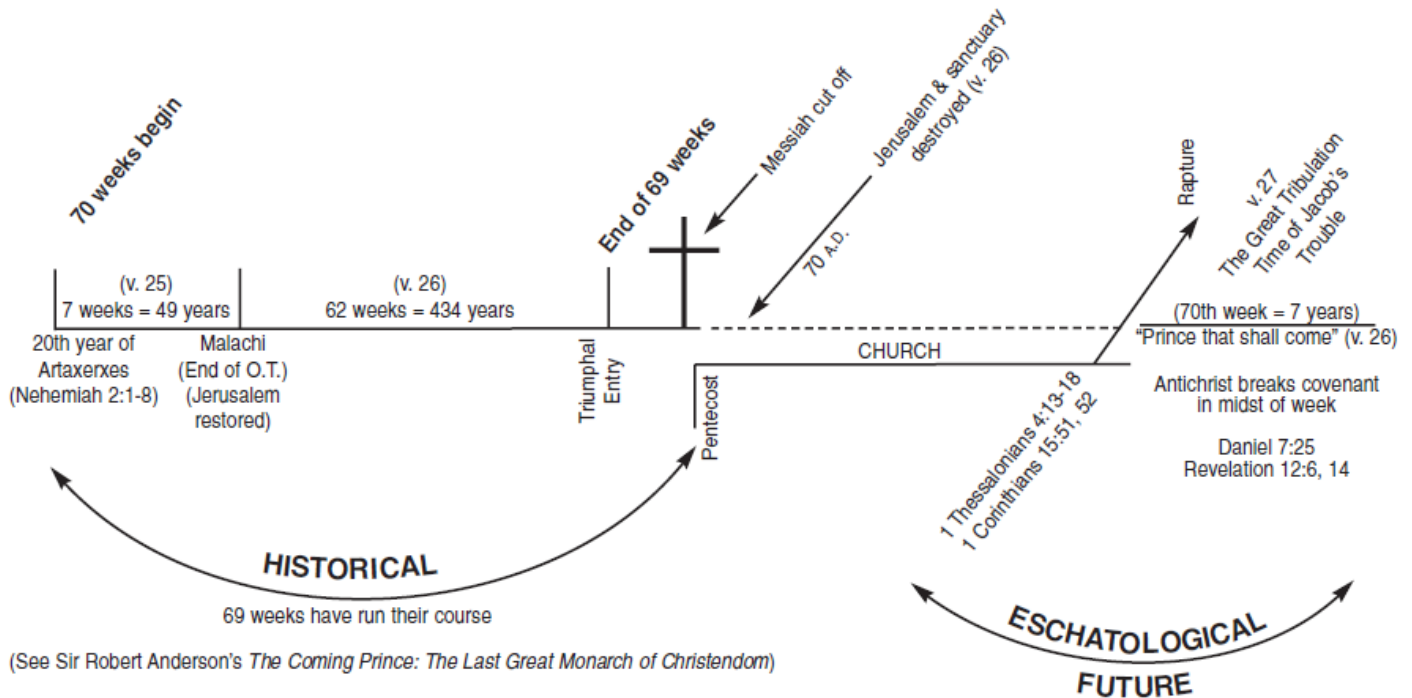
## 3. Seven years/Seven "weeks" (9)

In 538 BC, immediately after the Persian conquest of Babylon, Daniel prayed to the Lord on behalf of the exiles Israel. *"Daniel observed in the books the number of years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah (25:11-12) the prophet for the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years."* (v2) Since the prophecy began in 605 BC, there were only three years left until the return would begin. Daniel believed in the literal fulfillment of that prophecy. Time in the word moved Daniel to prayer. He prayed humbly with fasting, sackcloth and ashes, to his faithful and merciful God. It was a remarkable prayer of confession associating himself with the sins of his people 32 times. This is especially meaningful since he had little of his own sin to confess. He acknowledged that they deserved the judgment they received and asked for the Lord's forgiveness, mercy, and the restoration of His people to the land.

While he prayed, Gabriel appeared to him and gave him an answer, "seventy sevens" were decreed for the people and Jerusalem, after which time atonement would be made for their sins (v24). These are weeks of years, as opposed to weeks of days as in 10:2 and 3, and measures the span of time from the Persian decree to rebuild Jerusalem up to the founding of the Messiah's kingdom (v25).

**This chapter is a fulcrum for understanding prophecy.** Verse 24 is a summary of the entire prophecy. Verse 25 then gives details about the first 69 weeks. Verse 26 pictures the gap--the time we are in now, the temporarily putting aside of Jewish history. Finally, the last verse (27) gives us a glimpse of the 70th week.

First seven weeks (49 years) is from 445 BC (the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the wall) to 396 BC (ending the building and prophetic ministry of Malachi); the next 69 weeks (483 years) is until Messiah the Prince (Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem); and the last week (7 years) – Pictures the Tribulation period beginning with the signing of a peace treaty with the Antichrist.



From J. Vernon McGee's Daniel Notes and Outline

## B. Visitors (10-12)

Charles Ryrie calls these last three chapters, "Daniel's Prophetic Panorama." They include a vision of an angel just come from a fierce battle, a vision of two antichrists, one in type and one in truth, and a vision of Michael, the Jews own guardian angel, who has the last word.

### 1. Angels, Part I (10)

In 536 BC, Daniel received his final vision. He had in a vision a message from Jerusalem that broke his heart. The small remnant of Jews who had returned were not getting the job done. It had been two years and they had only started the temple foundation. Also, renegade Jews and other peoples were giving them a hard time (Ezra 4). To top it off, a royal edict was sent out to stop construction all together and some of the people were slipping back into idolatry. "Daniel had been mourning for three entire weeks." (v2). He was crying out to the Lord for help. He went down to the Tigris River and he saw a shining angelic being who awed him, and he fell on his face in a deep sleep. This is how he received the vision. The angel related to Daniel how, even though God had heard Daniel's prayer and dispatched the angel, that he had tried to come to him immediately, but had been detained by the "prince of the kingdom of Persia," apparently an evil angel who was involved in the affairs of that nation.

After a three-week struggle, Michael intervened ("your prince" in v21 indicates Michael is the guardian angel of Judah), allowing the angel to proceed. Interestingly, the angel will return to resume his warfare (v20), but first he reveals the future to Daniel. The angel tells Daniel what is "inscribed in the writing of truth". God has decreed all things that will come to pass.

## 2. Antichrists (11)

This chapter outlined Palestinian history from Daniel's time through the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Verse 2 refers to the four Persian rulers who would succeed Cyrus: Cambyses (530-522 B. C.), Pseudo-Smerdis (522), Darius I (522-486), and Xerxes, Esther's husband (486-465). It alludes to Xerxes' failed campaign against Greece.

Verses 3-4 then refer to Alexander the Great (336-323) and the divisions of his kingdom. Verses 5-20 outline the relationship between the Seleucids, "the king of the North" who ruled Syria, and the Ptolemies, the king of the South, who ruled Egypt during the period 321-175 BC. Verses 21-35 focus on the career of Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164), mentioning his Egyptian campaigns and persecution of the Jews. Verses 32-35 anticipate the Maccabean revolt against him.

Most scholars consider him a type of the Antichrist. The details of verses 36-45 do not correspond to his career and so a switch is made from the perspective of the type of Antichrist to a portrayal of the Antichrist himself, whose hostility has been foreshadowed in the career of Antiochus Epiphanes.

## 3. Angels, Part II (12)

The last section of chapter 11 (v36-45) anticipates a time of tribulation which Jesus described in Matthew 24:21 as, "*a time such has never occurred,*" in which Michael, Israel's guardian angel, intervenes (12:1-4). Verse 2 prophecies the resurrection of the righteous at the second coming and the resurrection of the damned at the Great White Throne judgment at the end of the Millennium. Verse 3 indicates that, during this Great Tribulation, some will see through the Antichrist's deception and will lead others to the truth.

In Daniel's final vision the angel instructed him to seal up the revelation until the end of times. Daniel then saw two other angels; one asked how long it would be before the revelation would be revealed, the other answered "*... a time, times, and a half a time; ...*" (v7), referring to the three and a half years, or the last half of the Great Tribulation.

The book ends with direction and promises to Daniel:

- Go your way to the end
- You will enter into rest
- You will... rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age

But as for you, go your own way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age. Dan 12:13

## Homework

- Read the books of Hosea, Joel, and Amos