

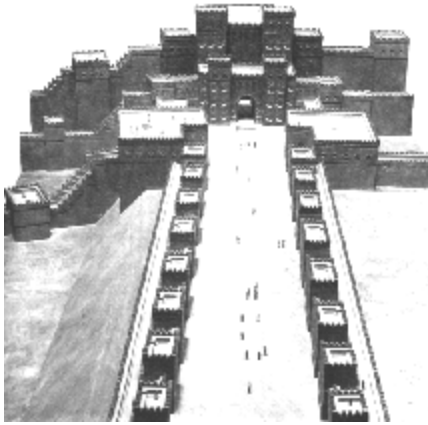
Study Notes for the Book of Daniel

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INTRODUCTION

A. The Historical Setting for the Book

The entire Book of Daniel is set in the Jewish *diaspora* and “the times of the Gentiles.” Daniel was taken into captivity in 605 B. C. as part of Nebuchadnezzar’s first deportation. Daniel assumed “the times of the Gentiles” had begun (cf. chap. 2, Nebuchadnezzar himself was the “head of gold” that began the statue of Gentile kingdoms); and he did not record any information about the final days of Judah (he recorded nothing about Judah’s destruction in 586 B. C.)



Processional Way into Babylon

1. The Person of Daniel

A young Hebrew boy (probably in his teens initially) who lives during the 7th and 6th centuries BC.

2. Nebuchadnezzar's Invasion (605 BC)

Following a major battle between the Egyptians and the Babylonians, Judah is invaded by the Babylonian army. A number of young Jews (particularly among the aristocracy) are taken captive and deported to Babylon.

3. Life in Babylon

Daniel is given an important position in the Babylonian courts, especially when he correctly interprets a dream of the king. During the time he grows up in Babylon, the Jewish Temple back in Jerusalem is destroyed in 586 BC. Daniel lives to see the Babylonian Empire overthrown by the Persian forces in 539 BC.

4. Dreams and Visions

Daniel is enabled to see the future, especially the rise and fall of Gentile kingdoms; and eventually Messiah's kingdom which will replace them.

B. Daniel's Name Dan = *to judge* El = *God* Meaning: "God is my judge"

Significance: He is put to the test several times, but the righteous judge of Heaven intercedes and delivers him.

C. The Languages of the Book of Daniel

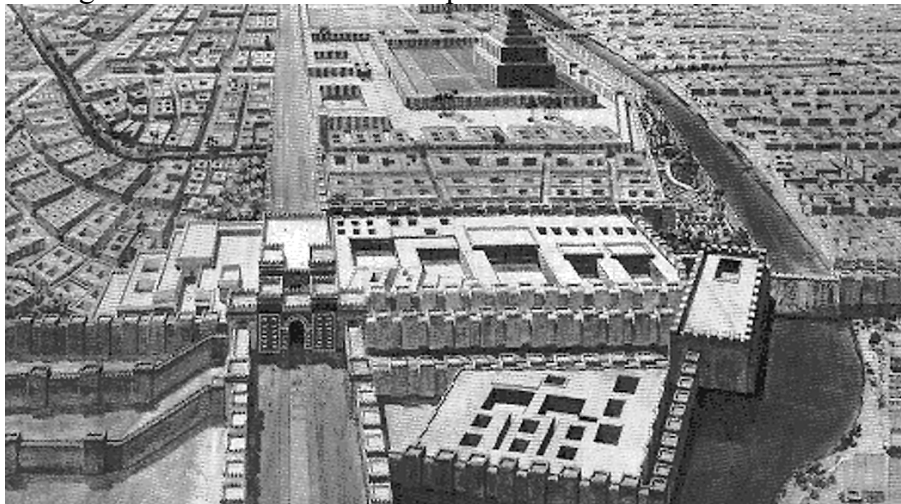
1. Hebrew (1:1–2:4a; 8:1–12:13)
2. Aramaic (2:4b–7:28)

Explanation:

Daniel's native language in Judah was Hebrew, whereas the language of Babylon was Imperial Aramaic (the *lingua franca* of the day). In the parts of the book that focus on the Gentile nations and their future, the material is in Aramaic. When the focus is on God's covenant people of Israel and their future, Hebrew is used.

D. Author

The name "Daniel" (*dānīyē'l*) means "God is (my) Judge." Daniel was deported to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C. It is possible that Daniel was a member of Judah's royal family (1:3; cf. Isa. 39:6-7). Daniel's ministry was that of a statesman in Babylon. Thus his book is listed in the Hebrew Bible among the "Writings" rather than with the "Prophets."



Artist's drawing of Babylon showing the Ishtar Gate and Southern Palace with the ziggurat, Etemenanki, in the distance.

E. Date

If Daniel is assumed to be the author, the date of writing can be determined through the use of internal chronological markers. Daniel was taken to Babylon in

605 B.C. (1:1), and his rise to prominence came in 603 B.C. (2:1). The latest dated prophecy was “in the third year of Cyrus” (10:1) which was 536 B.C. Thus Daniel’s ministry spanned a period of approximately 69 years (605–536 B.C.).

Many have objected to such an early date for the composition of Daniel. Several reasons are given for a later date.

- A. Daniel was placed among the *Kethubim* (“Writings”) instead of among the prophets.
- B. Several apparent historical inaccuracies are recorded which seem to indicate that the writer was unfamiliar with the historical situation (and thus must have composed the book sometime after the time period in question).
- C. The Book uses several Greek loan words which point to a composition after 330 B.C. when the Greek language spread throughout the Middle East.
- D. The book records the rise of the Greek empire which took place about 330 B.C.

Each of these problems has been answered by conservative scholars. Daniel was placed among the *Kethubim* because of his office as a statesman rather than a prophet. The “historical inaccuracies” have been refuted by the finds of archaeology. The coregency of Belshazzar with Nabonidus actually supports an early date for Daniel. The record of Belshazzar’s coregency was lost by the time of Herodotus (ca. 450 B.C.) and was not rediscovered until recently. Thus Daniel must have been composed before 450 B.C. while the records were still available. The presence of Greek and Persian loan words can be explained by the function of the words present. The words in Daniel were describing musical instruments (cf. 3:5), and it is well known that musical instruments crossed national boundaries. There are also records that indicate that Greeks were sold into slavery in Babylon and Persia as early as 700 B.C.

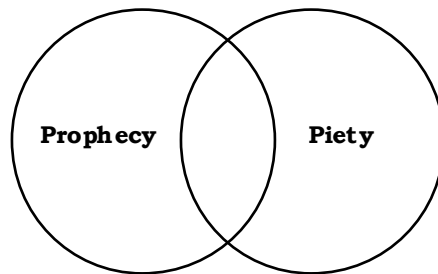


Relief from Old Babylonian period showing a man playing a harp

Finally, the argument from historical situations is based on the assumption that predictive prophecy is not possible. If one allows God to foretell the rise of Persia, Greece, and Rome, then there is no problem with Daniel predicting these nations even though he lived during the kingdom of Babylon.

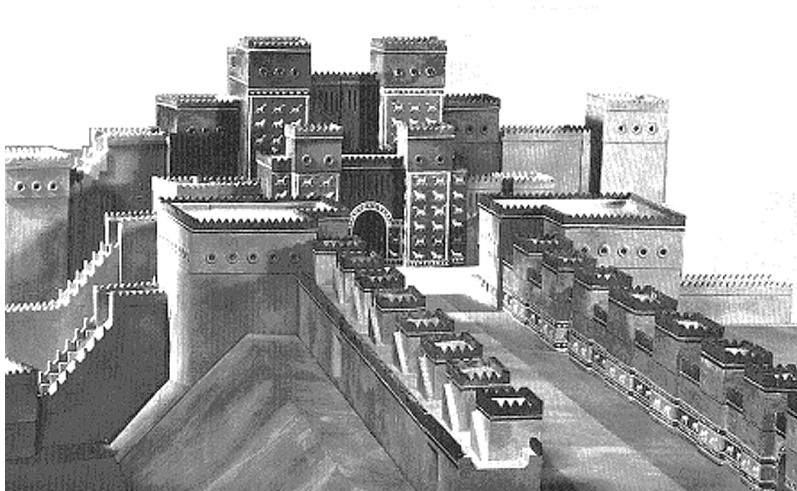
F. Purpose

Daniel's purpose in writing blended the themes of prophecy and piety. He wrote first to show God's *future* program for Israel (in light of her fall) during and after "the times of the Gentiles." Second, he wrote to show what the believer's *present* response should be during "the times of the Gentiles" as he or she awaits the coming kingdom of God.



The Book of Daniel certainly has several purposes, but the primary purposes must be seen in light of Judah's deportation to Babylon and the theological questions that this raises in light of her calling to be God's "holy nation" (Ex 19:5-6) and a blessing to all the nations of the earth (Gen 12:1-3).

- A. Even though Israel was created to be the focal point of God's redemptive program, Gentile kingdoms will dominate over Israel for most of history ("the times of the Gentiles" - Lk 21:24), but only until the time when God is ready to establish His kingdom under Messiah.
- B. God will fulfill His plans with Israel in the latter days, when the Messiah defeats the Antichrist and establishes His kingdom. [Believing OT saints will eventually be resurrected to join in the kingdom].
- C. Daniel's personal dedication to God provides an example of how to live in a godless society.



Artist's drawing of the Ishtar Gate at the northern entrance to Babylon

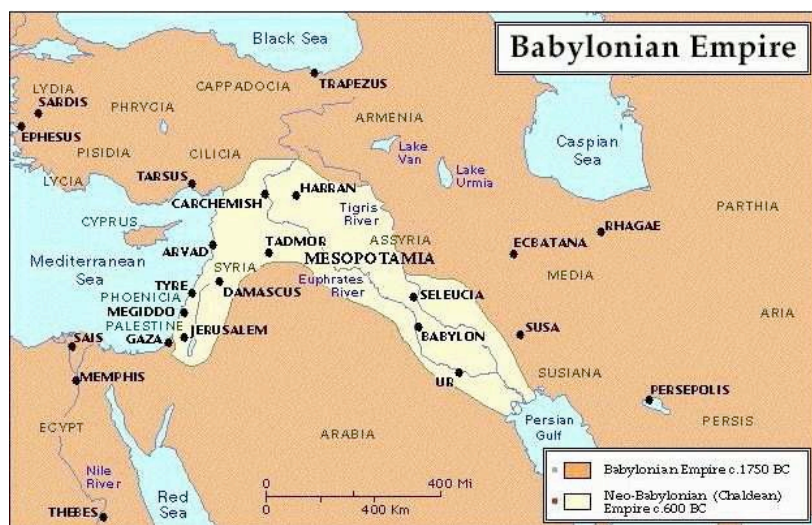
THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF THE EXILE

- A. Israel's Calling as God's Special Nation (Ex 19:5-6)**
 Israel's role: to be a mediator between God and the other nations of the world, so that people of all nations could have the truth of the Creator God and come under His blessing.

- B. The Covenant Agreement**
 - 1. Faithfulness to the covenant stipulations would result in blessing, but disobedience would result in curses (Deut 28–30; note esp. 28:1-2, 15).
 - 2. Continued disobedience would result in exile from the land of promise (Deut 28:36-37, 41; 29:22-28).

- C. The Discipline of Exile**
 - 1. The northern kingdom of Israel: by the Assyrians (722 BC)
 - 2. The southern kingdom of Judah: by the Babylonians (605-586 BC)

- D. Why is the judgment so harsh?**
 Israel was chosen to be a light to the nations to lead them out of darkness and idolatry, but they had perverted their responsibility.



OUTLINE

I. DANIEL 1 – CAPTIVES IN BABYLON

A. Captivity of the Young Men (1:1-2). 605 B.C.

Da 1:1-2 1 *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came and laid siege to Jerusalem.* 2 *The Lord handed over to him Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and some of the vessels of the temple of God, which he carried off to the land of Shinar, and placed in the temple treasury of his god.*

1. **1:1, Judean system of dating** means the ascension year not counted. This would be in the year 605 BC, just after Nebuchadnezzar's defeat of the Egyptian army at the battle of Carchemish (present day lower Turkey). The pursuit of the Egyptians brought the Babylonians to Jerusalem. This occasion would mark the first of three deportations of Jews to Babylon.
2. **1:2, The Sacking of Jerusalem's Temple** - note: Shinar (so NASB) was the ancient name of Babylon.
 - a. "and he brought them . . . to the house of his god." Principal deities of Babylonian Religion
 - 1) **Marduk**—the national God of Babylon, Marduk was depicted as a hybrid dragon creature which ornamented the walls of ancient Babylon.
 - 2) **Nabû**. (Hebrew = Nebo) Regarded as the son of Marduk. According to D. J. Wiseman, the name Nebuchadnezzar means "May Nebo protect my offspring."



- 3) **Ishtar.** An important female deity of fertility. She is often represented riding on her sacred beast, the lion.



- 4). **The Temple of Marduk**
 a) The Temple of Marduk (named Esagila) stood prominently in the middle of the city of Babylon.
 b) Nebuchadnezzar, as king, was regarded as the head of the cult of Marduk.

3. Theological Significance

- a. **Nebuchadnezzar's Perspective:** A sign of triumph for "his gods," Marduk and Nabû. By placing the vessels from Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem in Esagila, he is giving the credit to these pagan deities. For a moment, it seems that the unbelieving world has the victory and the true God is robbed of His glory!
- b. **God's Perspective:** Notice the text: "*the LORD gave Jehoiakim . . . into his hand*" cf. 2 Chronicles 36:14-17. God will also deal with Marduk (Bel) and Nabû (Nebo). cf. Isa 46:1-2.

Reflection:

Think about the long dusty march that Daniel made from Jerusalem to Babylon, and the feeling of defeat and discouragement that his Jewish friends must have felt, especially as they entered Babylon and saw the vessels of Yahweh's Temple being placed in Marduk's temple. Some Babylonians may have been hurling insults like "Foolish Jews! You should have known that Yahweh could not help you. You should have called out to Marduk!"

Application:

There are times when as God's people, we may be tempted to think that our God has been defeated. When we get our focus on the Scriptures, however, we are reminded that our God is in perfect control and will ultimately triumph. In the meantime, He will work every situation for the furtherance of His glory. Remember, we may have setbacks, but we are not defeated!

B. Selection of the Young Men (1:3-7) Nebuchadnezzar's attempt to reprogram Daniel and his friends (1:3-7)

Da 1:3-7 3 *The king told Ashpenaz, his chief chamberlain, to bring in some of the Israelites of royal blood and of the nobility, 4 young men without any defect, handsome, intelligent and wise, quick to learn, and prudent in judgment, such as could take their place in the king's palace; they were to be taught the language and literature of the Chaldeans; 5 after three years' training they were to enter the king's service. The king allotted them a daily portion of food and wine from the royal table. 6 Among these were men of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. 7 The chief chamberlain changed their names: Daniel to Belteshazzar, Hananiah to Shadrach, Mishael to Meshach, and Azariah to Abednego.*

1. Young men without physical defect, handsome.
2. Showing aptitude in every kind of learning.
3. Well-informed, quick to understand, qualified to serve. They were to learn the language and literature of the Babylonians: Math, astronomy, history, science, magical arts.

Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel* (Tyndale OT Commentaries, 80) says, “The writer of Daniel implies no objection to the study of a polytheistic literature in which magic, sorcery, charms and astrology played a prominent part, though these had long been banned in Israel (Dt. 18:10-12; cf. I Sa. 28:3ff.). These young men from Jerusalem's court needed to be secure in their knowledge of Yahweh to be able to study this literature objectively without allowing it to undermine their faith.”

4. Subject to “elitism” — only royalty and nobles allowed (v. 3)
5. Humanistic environment — human viewpoint of “best” (v. 4)
6. Lifestyle where godly values are ignored
 - a. OT Food laws: Lev. 11 and Deut. 14:3-21 – prohibits unclean foods
 - b. Exodus 34:15 – Jews were forbidden to eat foods that had been sacrificed or offered to pagan deities or idols.

Foods offered to deities in Babylon:

“The image was fed, in a ceremonial fashion accompanied by music, from offerings and the produce of the temple land and flocks. When the god was 'eating', he was, at least in later times, hidden from human view, even the priests, by linen curtains surrounding the image and his table. . . . When the god had 'eaten', the dishes from his meal were sent to the king for consumption. What was not destined for the table of the main deity, his consort, his children or the servant gods was distributed among the temple administrators and craftsmen. The quantities of food involved could be enormous.” (Joan Oates, *Babylon*, rev. ed., 175).

7. A new identity, v. 7

Their original Hebrew names (1:6)

Daniel (*dānīyē'l*) - “God is my Judge”
 Hananiah (*h^ananyāh*) - “Yahweh is gracious”
 Mishaël (*mīshā'ēl*) - “Who is what God is”
 Azariah (‘*azaryāh*) - “Yahweh has helped”

Their new Babylonian names (1:7)

Belteshazzar (*bēlet-šar-ušur*) - “Lady protect the king”
 Shadrach (*šādurāku*) - “I am very fearful (of God)”
 Meshach (*mēšāku*) - “I am of little account”
 Abed-nego (*abed-Nebō*) - “Servant of [the god] Nebo”

NOTE: These translations are based on Yamauchi’s name identifications (*Bib Sac*, January–March 1980, 4).

Application

Just as Nebuchadnezzar sought to pressure these young men to compromise their faith and seek humanistic goals, so we too are lured to the world's standards. Compare Rom 12:1-2! We are called to be different from the world, because we now belong to Jesus Christ (cf. the high priestly prayer of Jesus [Jn 17:6-10, 14-17]).

C. The Steadfastness of the Young Men (1:8-16). THE FIRST DEMONSTRATION OF FAITH

Da 1:8-16 *8 But Daniel was resolved not to defile himself with the king's food or wine; so he begged the chief chamberlain to spare him this defilement. 9 Though God had given Daniel the favor and sympathy of the chief chamberlain, 10 he nevertheless said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king; it is he who allotted your food and drink. If he sees that you look wretched by comparison with the other young men of your age, you will endanger my life with the king." 11 Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief chamberlain had put in charge of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah, 12 "Please test your servants for ten days. Give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then see how we look in comparison with the other young men who eat from the royal table, and treat your servants according to what you see." 14 He acceded to this request, and tested them for ten days; 15 after ten days they looked healthier and better fed than any of the young men who ate from the royal table. 16 So the steward continued to take away the food and wine they were to receive, and gave them vegetables.*

1. Nebuchadnezzar’s food was offered to idols.
2. Ceremonially unclean animals were eaten.
3. Wine was offered that had been offered to idols.
4. The issue: They did not want to defile themselves.

Feinberg states, “If we are to gain the most from the study of this book, we must bear in mind that the visions and truths in this book were revealed to a spiritually minded man who was separated from the sin and degradation of his day.” Charles Feinberg, *Daniel*, 21.

5. Daniel as a Model. One of the rewarding things about the Bible is that it not only teaches us what is right and wrong, but it lets us see this fleshed out in the lives of men and women who are faithful . . . who have convictions and live by them. Here are two things to remember:
 - a. Daniel and his friends were probably only teenagers.

- b. They were probably separated from their parents.
- 6. Notice the approach they took for a solution: They did not run away & flee Babylon. They looked carefully to see where they had to obey God and drew their battle lines carefully.
- 7. Note the balance between conviction and action!

Principle:

There is a time when we need to do as Martin Luther ("Here I stand, I can do no other"), but often we need to trust God to use His established authorities. Conviction does not excuse us from acting with sensitivity, tact, and respect. Although Daniel had made up his mind, he went about it in a courteous way.

D. Superiority of the Young Men (1:17-21). THE OUTCOME OF THE THREE YEAR TRAINING PROGRAM. Issue: Not diet by courage of conviction.

Da 1:17-21 *17 To these four young men God gave knowledge and proficiency in all literature and science, and to Daniel the understanding of all visions and dreams. 18 At the end of the time the king had specified for their preparation, the chief chamberlain brought them before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 When the king had spoken with all of them, none was found equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; and so they entered the king's service. 20 In any question of wisdom or prudence which the king put to them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his kingdom. 21 Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.*

1. The Reward of Obedience (v. 17)

- a. 1 Sam. 2:30 "those who honor Me I will honor"
- b. God did not free them to return to Jerusalem, but to use them where they were.

2. The Process

- a. Inner conviction
- b. Wise approach
- c. Divine assistance
- d. Unique distinctions

Baldwin (p. 84) writes, "As representatives of the only God they needed to prove in Babylon's highly competitive setting that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. High intelligence and hard work alone did not account for their success, but their wisdom was God's gift."

3. The Issue of the Occult (v. 20)

- a. **magicians** - "The term for 'magicians' (v.20) is *chartummim*; a *chartom*; was probably a diviner, one who used some sort of inscribed chart or magical design (possibly imposed on a chart of the stars) in order to arrive at an answer to questions put to him." Gleason Archer, "Daniel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 7:37
- b. **conjurer/enchanter** - This term is derived from the Akkadian word *asipu* meaning "incantation priest." Louis F. Hartman, *The Book of Daniel*, The Anchor Bible, 131.

Principles/Applications:

God has revealed many things which we would not have been able to know otherwise. But we are to gain this through His Word, not by channeling, magic, etc. There is a great deal of the supernatural that must be left alone (Deut 29:29). All that we need to know is in His Word.

4. Daniel's Period of Service, v. 21

This verse is not saying that his time of service did not go beyond this (cf. 10:1). The point is that Daniel not only served through the reign of Nebuchadnezzar but throughout the entire remaining time of the Babylonian empire. Daniel served in the Babylonian court for over sixty years, and lived to see the Persian king Cyrus issue the decree permitting the Jews to return (cf. Ezra 1:1-3). Daniel lived to see God's faithfulness with Israel begin to be worked out.

THE PRACTICE OF GODLINESS

"The practice of godliness is an exercise or discipline that focuses upon God. From this Godward attitude arises the character and conduct that we usually think of as godliness. So often we try to develop Christian character and conduct without taking the time to develop God-centered devotion. We try to please God without taking the time to walk with him and develop a relationship with him. This is impossible to do." Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness* (NavPress, 1983), 18.

CLOSING THOUGHT

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose!" Jim Elliot, missionary martyr for Jesus Christ

II. DANIEL 2 — NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S IMAGE—THE METALLIC MAN**Basic Divisions to the Chapter:**

- a. Dan 2:1-30 Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and the Revelation to Daniel.
- b. Dan 2:31-49 Daniel Reveals the Dream and Its Interpretation.

A. The Dream Given to Nebuchadnezzar, 2:1-16**1. The King's Dream, 2:1-3**

Da 2:1-3 *1 In the second year of his reign, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which left his spirit no rest and robbed him of his sleep. 2 So he ordered that the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans be summoned to interpret the dream for him. When they came and presented themselves to the king, 3 he said to them, "I had a dream which will allow my spirit no rest until I know what it means."*

The request by a king for an interpretation of a dream was not unusual. In fact, the interpretation of dreams had become a highly developed discipline. Dream manuals had even been composed with elaborate instructions on proper interpretations.

A. L. Oppenheim, "The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol 46, Part 3 (1956):203ff.

Baldwin writes (87), "These experts in dreams worked on the principle that dreams and their sequel followed an empirical law which, given sufficient data, could be established. The dream manuals, of which several examples have come to light, consist accordingly of historical dreams and the events that followed them, arranged systematically for easy reference. Since these books had to try to cover every possible eventuality they became inordinately long; only the expert could find his way through them, and even he had to know the dream to begin with before he could search for the nearest possible parallel. The unreasonable demands of the king and the protests of the interpreters in verses 3-11 are in keeping with his character and the known facts concerning dream books."

2. The Wise Men's Frustration, 2:4-11

Da 2:4-11 *4 The Chaldeans answered the king (Aramaic): "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream and we will give its meaning." 5 The king answered the Chaldeans, "This is what I have decided: unless you tell me the dream and its meaning, you shall be cut to pieces and your houses destroyed. 6 But if you tell me the dream and its meaning, you shall receive from me gifts and presents and great honors. Now tell me the dream and its meaning." 7 Again they answered, "Let the king tell his servants the dream and we will give its meaning." 8 But the king replied: "I know for certain that you are bargaining for time, since you know what I have decided. 9 If you do not tell me the dream, there can be but one decree for you. You have framed a false and deceitful interpretation to present me with till the crisis is past. Tell me the dream, therefore, that I may be sure that you can also give its correct interpretation." 10 The Chaldeans answered the king: "There is not a man on earth who can do what you ask, O king; never has any king, however great and mighty, asked such a thing of any magician, enchanter, or Chaldean. 11 What you demand, O king, is too difficult; there is no one who can tell it to the king except the gods who do not dwell among men."*

3. The King's Anger and Decree, 2:12-13

Da 2:12-13 *12 At this the king became violently angry and ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be put to death. 13 When the decree was issued that the wise men should be slain, Daniel and his companions were also sought out.*

4. Daniel's Request, Intercession and Prayer, 2:14-16

Da 2:14-16 *14 Then Daniel prudently took counsel with Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had set out to kill the wise men of Babylon: 15 "O officer of the king," he asked, "what is the reason for this harsh order from the king?" When Arioch told him, 16 Daniel went and asked for time from the king, that he might give him the interpretation.*

B. The Dream Revealed to Daniel, 2:17-23

1. Daniel's Prayer to God (2:17-18). Of thanksgiving.

Da 2:17-18 *17 Daniel went home and informed his companions Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 18 that they might implore the mercy of the God of heaven in regard to this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.*

2. God's Revelation of the Dream (2:19a)

Da 2:19 19 *During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision, and he blessed the God of heaven:*

3. **Daniel's Praise to God (2:19b-23)** This was not simply a dream but imagery that arose out of God's direct intervention.

Da 2:19-23 19 *During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision, and he blessed the God of heaven: 20 "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and power are his. 21 He causes the changes of the times and seasons, makes kings and unmakes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who understand. 22 He reveals deep and hidden things and knows what is in the darkness, for the light dwells with him. 23 To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, because you have given me wisdom and power. Now you have shown me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the king's dream."*

Baldwin notes, "The ability to keep calm under severe shock and pressure, to think quickly and exercise faith in a moment of crisis, these are aspects of prudence and discretion seen in Daniel here (14; cf. Phil. 4:7)." (89)

The structure of the Prayer:

- A Praise for God who possesses wisdom and power (20)
- B God's power: He controls human thrones (21a)
- B' God's wisdom: He has all understanding and reveals hidden knowledge to men (21b-22)
- A' Praise for God who dispenses His wisdom and power (23)

Archer states, "God determines when in history events are to take place and how long each process or phase in history is to endure." 7:43

C. The Dream Explained to Nebuchadnezzar, 2:24-45

1. Daniel's Presentation to the King (2:24-30)

Da 2:24-30 24 *So Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not put the wise men of Babylon to death. Bring me before the king, and I will tell him the interpretation of the dream."* Arioch quickly brought Daniel to the king and said, 25 *"I have found a man among the Judean captives who can give the interpretation to the king."* 26 *The king asked Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Can you tell me the dream that I had, and its meaning?"* 27 *In the king's presence Daniel made this reply: "The mystery about which the king has inquired, the wise men, enchanter, magicians, and astrologers could not explain to the king. 28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what is to happen in days to come; this was the dream you saw as you lay in bed. 29 To you in your bed there came thoughts about what should happen in the future, and he who reveals mysteries showed you what is to be. 30 To me also this mystery has been revealed; not that I am wiser than any other living person, but in order that its meaning may be made known to the king, that you may understand the thoughts in your own mind.*

- a. Arioch (v 25) - A glory-grabber!
- b. Daniel (v 30) - Notice the humility

- c. “He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in ‘the latter days’” (v 28) [NIV = “days to come”] The expression (**used some 14 times in the OT**) may refer to the near or remote future of the prophet. The viewpoint of the future includes a Messianic aspect, and ultimately looks to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom on earth.
- d. Daniel’s Testimony to the King (vv. 27-28). Although Daniel’s primary reason to appear before the King to explain the dream, notice that he takes advantage of the opportunity to witness to Nebuchadnezzar.

Applications:

Nebuchadnezzar was the most powerful person on earth at that time in history, and yet Daniel had the faith and courage to bring a testimony to him. Sometimes we are timid to approach an important person in our society with the truth. However, two things need to be kept in mind:

1. No matter how important they might be in our culture, they are only human and subject to God just like anyone else.
2. Their eternal destiny depends upon the decision they make about Jesus Christ. Often people overlook them, but they need the truth and gospel.

2. Daniel’s recitation of the Dream (2:31-35)

Da 2:31-35 31 “You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. 32 “The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. 34 “You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. 35 “Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

THE DREAM STATED	INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM		NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S RESPONSE
A statue of a man which a stone smashes	Gentile kingdoms	Messiah’s triumph and kingdom	Esteems Yahweh above Babylonian deities
2:31-43	2:36-43	2:44-45	2:46-49

- a. **The Statue of a Man, 2:31-35**
 - 1) “Appearance was awesome” v. 31. The Aramaic word means "fear," and the point is that the statue was frightful or terrifying (notice its large size).
 - 2) Note the decreasing value of the metals (gold to clay)

- 3) Notice the increasing hardness of the metals
- 4) The fifth and final part is unique.
 - a) Not pure metal, but a composite of metal and clay.
 - b) It shares the same metal as the fourth (iron), suggesting that there may be some connection between them.

b. The Smashing Stone that Destroys the Statue, 2:34-35

- 1) Described as “cut out without hands” – suggests a divine source of origin and power rather than human (v. 34). The STONE or ROCK is Messiah, Jesus, Ps. 118:22; Isa 8:14; 28:16; 1 Pet. 2:6-8.
- 2) Although the stone destroys the entire statue, the point of assault is at the feet (v. 34).
- 3) The metaphor of the wind carrying away the chaff speaks of a complete removal of the statue, not just dominion over the statue.
- 4) When the statue is destroyed, it is destroyed decisively and completely, not gradually (v. 35 – “crushed all at the same time.”).
- 5) The Mountain = Kingdom = the earthly kingdoms would be destroyed by God, not human hands

- 3. Daniel’s Interpretation of the Dream (2:36-45a)** Note that the “we” in v. 36 may suggest that Daniel’s companions were with him before the king. 2:47 – “Surely your God is a God of gods.” The word in the Aramaic text is plural! This may have made Daniel’s request on behalf of his friends all the more appropriate (v. 49).

Da 2:36-45 36 “This was the dream; now we will tell its interpretation before the king. 37 “You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory; 38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold. 39 “After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. 40 “Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces. 41 “In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. 42 “As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. 43 “And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery. 44 “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom

which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. 45 “Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

a. Interpretation of the statue (vv. 37-43)

- 1) The text shows they are symbolic
- 2) These kingdoms represent the Gentile powers that dominate God’s chosen people until the time that Israel is restored by the Messiah (Jesus Christ).
- 3) This period is called the “times of the Gentiles” (Lk. 21:24) where Christ pointed this out in his prophecy of Jerusalem’s destruction, vv. 20-24).
- 4) It may have been given to Nebuchadnezzar because he was the first of the many Gentile rulers who would exercise authority over Israel during the period of the Times of the Gentiles.

	Critical Scholars	Evangelicals
Head of Fine Gold	Babylon	Babylon
Breast & arms of silver	Media	Medo-Persia
Belly & thighs of bronze	Persia	Greece
Legs of iron	Greece	Rome

Note: Critical scholars interpret the fourth kingdom as Greece, because to admit that Rome is the fourth would be to concede that the Bible records true prophecy.

Fallacies of the Critical Interpretation:

- 1) Historically, there was no independent kingdom of Media which followed Babylon. Instead, Babylon was conquered by the Persian king Cyrus the Great who ruled over the joint empire of the Medes and Persians.
- 2) In Dan 5:28, the handwriting on the wall declared that Babylon would be given over to the Medes and Persians.
- 3) Dan 6:8 refers to “the law of the Medes and Persians.”
- 4) In Daniel 8, two animals are used to symbolize Gentile kingdoms, a ram with two horns and a shaggy goat. The latter is identified by the text itself as Greece (8:21), while the ram (one entity) represents Media and Persia (v 20).

Explanations:

- 1) 1st Kingdom = Babylon (vv 37-38)
“head of gold” – not only does gold reflect the “quality” of Nebuchadnezzar’s rule in comparison to the rulers which followed, but Nebuchadnezzar had a special taste for gold. In the temple to Marduk in Babylon, the inner shrine was embellished with gold. “Of this inner cell Nebuchadnezzar says that he ‘covered

its wall with sparkling gold, I caused it to shine like the sun.’ Here, according to Herodotus, was the great sitting figure of Marduk, all of gold on a golden throne, supported on a base of gold, with a golden table standing beside it. I was told by the Chaldeans that to make all this more than 22 tons of gold were used. Outside the temple is a golden altar.” Joan Oates, *Babylon*, rev. ed., 157.

- 2) 2nd Kingdom = Medo-Persia (v 39a)
 - a) 539 BC – Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon (Isa 45:1-4)
 - b) “inferior” – Not in terms of geographical extent, but in terms of absolute monarchical power. Nebuchadnezzar had unfettered power, but with Medo-Persia the king was restricted in his authority, for he could not annul a law once he had made it (cf. Dan 6:8).
- 3) 3rd Kingdom = Greece (v 39b)

Note that virtually no detail is given on the 2nd and 3rd kingdoms, although these two will be highlighted in ch. 8.
- 4) 4th Kingdom = Rome (v 40)

Iron is a fitting metaphor for Rome, as the Roman legions were noted for their ability to crush all resistance with an iron heel.

Details on the Iron/Clay Kingdom (vv 41-43)

- 1) Possibilities of Fulfillment Chronologically
 - a) This kingdom exists during the life of the Roman Empire and is merely an extension of it.
 - b) This kingdom immediately follows the Roman Empire, and thus we must look for an historical fulfillment in the past:

Western Empire – AD 476
Eastern Empire – AD 1453
 - c) This kingdom does not immediately follow the 4th kingdom of Rome, and thus an unspecified time gap must be understood between the demise of the 4th kingdom (Rome) and the “toes of the feet.”

Solution:

- a) Hints from the immediate context
 - (i) The element of iron suggests some connection to the fourth kingdom, although the mixed components of iron & clay suggest that this kingdom is distinct from the fourth kingdom of Rome.
 - (ii) This kingdom must be a confederacy of nations/kings that exist simultaneously, because they are destroyed together according to Dan 2:44.
 - (iii) These kings are destroyed by Messiah (Dan 2:44), and there will be no more Gentile kingdoms (“it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms”) when His kingdom is established.

Note: This would effectively eliminate possibilities “a” and “b” above.
- b) Hints from the broader biblical context
 - (i) This confederacy is apparently composed of ten kings

- aa) The mention of “toes” in v 42 allows for this.
 - bb) Dan 7 is a parallel vision on these kingdoms, with ten kings arising out of the fourth (7:23-24).
- (ii) The Scriptures do predict a ten-king confederacy that will rise up in the end times (Rev 17:12).
- c) Historical Evaluation

There is no satisfactory explanation historically for a ten nation confederacy either during the time of the Roman Empire or subsequent to it.
- d) Conclusions
 - (i) The iron/clay kingdom is distinct from the previous kingdoms.
 - (ii) It does not follow them in chronological succession. Apparently we must allow for a gap of time between the 4th kingdom and this one.
 - (iii) This will be a confederacy of ten kings/nations.
 - (iv) It will emerge in the end times out of the nations that composed the Roman Empire.
 - (v) It will be crushed by Jesus Christ Himself at His Second Coming, and this will be an end to Gentile powers.

Further Insights on the Final Kingdom

- a) “it will have in it the toughness of iron” (v 41)

As was the Roman Empire, this final kingdom will be established and rule by brute strength (compare v 40).
- b) Yet the kingdom is also characterized as “baked clay pottery” (v 42)

Some of the component nations will be strong (iron), while other parts are brittle (weak/easily shattered).
- c) NASB on verse 43: “they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another.” This probably looks not at intermarriage, but that the confederacy will be composed of mixed people-groups.

Suggestion:

This confederacy of kings/nations will have significant strength and rule by merciless power, but it will be a fragile union since it is composed of diverse groups of people. As we will see in chapter 7, however, this confederacy will be the springboard for the Antichrist (the world dictator of the end times), and he will see this as a perfect opportunity for his rise to power. By taking advantage of the weak nations (the brittle pottery), he will catapult himself into power by subduing some of these and gaining the authority from the others to rule (cf. Rev 17:16-17).

Interpretation of the Smiting Stone (vv 44-45)

a. Old Testament Revelation of Messiah’s Kingdom Prior to Daniel

- 1) The promise to David of a king (2 Sam 7:12-13)
- 2) David’s reflection on the Messiah as world ruler (Psalm 2)

- 3) Messiah's Kingdom of the "last days" compared to a mountain (Isa 2:1-4)
- 4) The Messiah will govern the earth with a righteous rule (Isa 9:6-7)

b. Interpretation of Dan 2:44-45

- 1) Christ is the "stone" who smites the image and brings it to an end. ["cut out of the mountain without hands" – there is no human role in this victory; it is entirely of God's doing].
- 2) The smashing of the image will be followed by the establishment of Christ's kingdom which will never be destroyed (v 44).
- 3) Recall Dan 2:35 – the stone will become a great mountain and fill the whole earth – that is, the kingdom of Jesus Christ will be worldwide (universal; cf. Ps 72:8-11).
- 4) The mountain out of which the stone (Christ) is cut probably refers to Israel (see Dan 2:45).

THEME VERSE: Dan 2:44 "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever."

Comments on the Kingdom

- 1) **Misconceptions:** Some teachers feel that the Kingdom was introduced by Christ at His 1st Coming, and that with the Church He is conquering the kingdoms of this world.

Response: The crushing of the statue was not fulfilled by Christ at His First Coming, nor is this prophecy being fulfilled in any way by the Church.

- a) Christ came in the middle of the Roman Empire, and the Roman Empire continued on past His crucifixion.
- b) You cannot say that the Church broke the power of pagan Rome either. Christianity was not the decisive factor that broke up the Roman Empire; rather it was internal decay and political conditions.
- c) Messiah's kingdom will put an end to Gentile kingdoms (Dan 2:44).
- 2) **The Kingdom of Messiah** Jesus is still future and will be inaugurated at the Second Coming.
 - a) Dan 2:44 says that it will not come until "the days of those kings," i.e., when the final ten-nation confederacy arises.
 - b) Isa 2:1-4 predicts that there will be no more warfare after Messiah's kingdom is established.
 - c) Jesus clearly predicted that the Kingdom would not come until after His return (Luke 21:25-31).
 - d) Dan 2:44-45 finds its fulfillment in Revelation 19–20 where a devastating defeat of Gentile powers is recorded.
 - (i) Rev 19:11-21 – The Second Coming of Jesus Christ when He conquers the Antichrist and the nations in confederacy with him.
 - (ii) Rev 20:1-6 – The reign of Christ on earth

Note: Some teachers try to defend the notion that the kingdom has already come by saying that the kingdom is internal & mystical. They base this on Christ's statement "For the Kingdom of God is within you" (KJV). A closer look at this passage (Luke 17:20-21), however, reveals that Christ is not saying that at all. For one, this is a poor translation, and the words are better translated "among you" or as the NASB puts it "the kingdom of God is in your midst." Secondly, Christ is not referring to the inner spiritual realm of the disciples but to Himself! He was in the midst of the nation of Israel at that time. This is obviously clear by the verses which follow in which He predicts that the time is coming when He will not be with them.

D. The Honoring of Daniel, 2:45b-49

Da 2:45-49 45 *"Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."* 46 *Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and did homage to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and fragrant incense.* 47 *The king answered Daniel and said, "Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery."* 48 *Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.* 49 *And Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel was at the king's court.*

"your God is a God of gods"—this was a humbling admission for a pagan king that served Marduk and other deities of the Babylonian pantheon, but it is still deficient. He had come to see Daniel's God as supreme, but not as the only God.

Concluding Thoughts

1. There must be a time gap between the fourth kingdom (Rome) and the ten nation confederacy depicted in 2:41-43.
 - a. Confirmation: A time gap is clearly involved in Dan 9:24-27.
 - b. What purpose does the time gap serve?
According to the New Testament (Eph 3:4), the Church was a mystery. The gap of time allows for the formation of the Church composed of Gentiles and Jews throughout the whole world - until the time that God is ready to lift Israel's hardening and bring her (as a nation) into the bond of the New Covenant.
2. How close are we to the fulfilment of Dan 2:41-45?
Observations (cf. 1 Thess 5:4):
 - a. There is a nation of Israel in the land today.
In 1948, Israel became a nation again after nearly 2000 years of being dispersed among the nations. Although we as Christians believe that they are back in the land in unbelief and still under God's discipline, the fact is that the Scriptures clearly reveal that there must be an Israel in the land prior to the start of the Tribulation. [This does not mean, however, that they have a biblical right to the land, as the regathering promises of the OT apply to a yet future generation that turns to Messiah Jesus in faith at the close of the Tribulation].

- b. There is an attempt being made today to rebuild the ancient Jewish Temple in Jerusalem today (cf. 2 Thess 2:4). Even though this Temple may be built in unbelief (and there is no reason for Christians to give approval to such a project), this is nevertheless interesting, since the Scriptures lead us to expect the rebuilding of a temple prior to Christ's return.
- c. There is a trend in the current political situation for nations to unite in a confederacy. A key example: European Union

III. DANIEL 3—THE FIERY FURNACE (Heb. 11:32-34)

God Delivers: Main Characters — Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego (Daniel is not mentioned, probably because was in higher office (2:48) he may not have been required to do this; or he was not in the Capital at this time; or maybe the astrologers knew Daniel did not bow but were afraid to accuse him.

A. Tested (3:1-7) The Image of Gold, 90' high (30 meters)

Da 3:1-7 1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, the height of which was sixty cubits and its width six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. 2 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent word to assemble the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. 3 Then the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces were assembled for the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 4 Then the herald loudly proclaimed: "To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and men of every language, 5 that at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up. 6 "But whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire." 7 Therefore at that time, when all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

The text does not tell us if the King intended this statue to serve as an idol to one of the Babylonian deities. Most commentators do not think so.² The word translated "image" in Dan 3:1 is the same word translated "statue" in Dan 2:31 (מַלְאָכָה). At the very least, the requirement to worship before the statue represented a loyalty check for the subjects of Nebuchadnezzar (which would be particularly appropriate if this were in the early part of his reign).

The faith of the Hebrew youths had been challenged earlier in chapter one. Will they compromise or obey God? Nebuchadnezzar had not forbidden them to worship other gods, even Yahweh. But in addition to their own gods, the subjects had to worship before the statue. This would not have been so objectionable to most subjects who were polytheistic anyway. To the Hebrews, their worship was restricted to Yahweh alone!

B. Accused (3:8-12) Enemies take opportunity to accuse.

Da 3:8-12 ⁸ For this reason at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges against the Jews. ⁹ They responded and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king: “O king, live forever! ¹⁰ “You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, and bagpipe and all kinds of music, is to fall down and worship the golden image. ¹¹ “But whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire. ¹² “There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, namely Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. These men, O king, have disregarded you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up.”

1. Anti-Semitism in Nebuchadnezzar's Court (3:8f)

2. The Charges against the Jews and the Motivation for the Charges (3:12)

C. Unmoved (3:13-18) Courage and Conviction.

Da 3:13-18 ¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; then these men were brought before the king. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? ¹⁵ “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?” ¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. ¹⁷ “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. ¹⁸ “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.”

D. Delivered (3:19-25) The Fourth Man Delivers Them

Da 3:19-25 ¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ He commanded certain valiant warriors who were in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast them into the furnace of blazing fire. ²¹ Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their other clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire. ²² For this reason, because the king's command was urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. ²³ But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire still tied up. ²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, “Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?” They replied to the king, “Certainly, O king.” ²⁵ He said, “Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!”

E. Promoted (3:26-30) Conviction pays off

Da 3:26-30 ²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire. ²⁷ The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the

hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them. 28 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. 29 "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." 30 Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

APPLICATIONS:

Just as Nebuchadnezzar erected a statue and demanded his subjects to worship before it, so the "beast" (the Antichrist) will do in a similar way during the Tribulation period prior to the 2nd Coming of Christ (see Rev 13:15). Like Shadrach and his friends, the believers of that time will stand true to God and refuse to participate in the worship of the image (Rev 14:9-11).

1. Who we worship is one of the fundamental questions of history. God alone is worthy of our worship, and He is very jealous of this matter (Ex 20:3-5a; 34:14). Satan's ultimate strategy is to not only turn us away from worshipping God, but to get our worship for himself (Mt 4:8-10; Rev 13:4; 14:7).
2. Is there anything in your culture or family situation where you might be compromising your worship of God? Will you pledge before God (with His help) to be true in this area of your life from now on, no matter what it will cost you?

IV. DANIEL 4 — THE TREMENDOUS TREE

God Judges

Main Characters – Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel

Year – between 586 and 567 B.C.

A. Introduction—the King's Testimony (4:1-3) Praises YHWH "Most High God."

Da 4:1-3 I Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language that live in all the earth: "May your peace abound! 2 "It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for me. 3 "How great are His signs And how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom And His dominion is from generation to generation.

In 4:3b, attention is called to God's kingdom. In Dan 2:44, the revelation was made that history would culminate in a special kingdom established by God rather than man. Now Nebuchadnezzar sees that history centers around the development of God's kingdom, not Nebuchadnezzar's.

Elaboration of the Kingdom theme in Scripture:

1. The Eternal Kingdom

God is always ruling over His creation, so in one sense we can speak of the eternal kingdom of God.

2. The Earthly Manifestation

At a given point in time, the kingdom will be manifested on earth following the return of Jesus Christ. This is when He will reign upon the earth for 1000 years, which is referred to as the Millennial Kingdom (cf. Mt 25:31-34,41).

3. The Kingdom of the New Creation

At the end of this 1000 year reign, the present earth and heavens shall be destroyed, but the kingdom shall continue on eternally in the new creation (Rev 21--22).

B. The Dream Reported (4:4-18). Contents of the Dream.

Da 4:4-18 4 *"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace. 5 "I saw a dream and it made me fearful; and these fantasies as I lay on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. 6 "So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. 7 "Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me. 8 "But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, saying, 9 'O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery baffles you, tell me the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation. 10 'Now these were the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed: I was looking, and behold, there was a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great. 11 'The tree grew large and became strong And its height reached to the sky, And it was visible to the end of the whole earth. 12 'Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, And the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches, And all living creatures fed themselves from it. 13 'I was looking in the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed, and behold, an angelic watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven. 14 'He shouted out and spoke as follows: "Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit; Let the beasts flee from under it And the birds from its branches. 15 "Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, But with a band of iron and bronze around it In the new grass of the field; And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, And let him share with the beasts in the grass of the earth. 16 "Let his mind be changed from that of a man And let a beast's mind be given to him, And let seven periods of time pass over him. 17 "This sentence is by the decree of the angelic watchers And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men." 18 'This is the dream which I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell me its interpretation, inasmuch as none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.'*

1. The Bountiful Tree (vv 10-12)

a. The metaphor of a tree as representing a kingdom is rooted in Hebrew tradition (Ezek 31:3; cf. Isa 2:12-13).

b. Christ's parable of the mustard seed (Matt 13:31-32). The point of the parable can be deduced from the intended contrast between the starting size and the final product. Messiah's kingdom, though its beginning was small and obscure, would become large and significant in due time. It began with a handful of common fishermen, but spread through all the earth to include men & women from every tribe and people and tongue.

2. The Removal of Blessing (vv 13-18)

- a. Identity of the "watcher" (v 13) *NIV* = "messenger" Note: the word "angelic" is not in the Aramaic text, but we should probably understand that an angel is in view. The word occurs only here in the Bible, but it appears later in the Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran cave 1, where it is used as a term for an angel.
 - b. *"Let his mind be changed from that of a man"* The word translated "mind" is the Aramaic word meaning "heart." Archer summarizes the meaning of the term: "the word for 'mind' is lit., 'heart,' a term that in Scripture refers to the inner self as the seat of moral reflection, choice of the will, and pattern of behavior. It includes not only the mental processes but also the feelings, affections, and emotions, along with all the motivational factors leading to decisions and responses to life situations." His heart (including his mental reasoning) was the very source of his pride, and it is there that God touches him.
 - c. Length of punishment: *"seven periods of time"* (vs 16) This is expressed in Aramaic by two words. This is probably meant to signify a period of seven years.
3. The Main Lesson (v 17b). Point: Nebuchadnezzar needs to humble himself before the One who granted him the authority to be king.

C. THE DREAM INTERPRETED (4:19-27)

Da 4:19-27 19 *"Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, 'Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.' Belteshazzar replied, 'My lord, if only the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your adversaries! 20 'The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth 21 and whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt and in whose branches the birds of the sky lodged— 22 it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth. 23 'In that the king saw an angelic watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze around it in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the beasts of the field until seven periods of time pass over him,' 24 this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: 25 that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes. 26 'And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that it is Heaven that rules. 27 'Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by doing righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.'*

1. The Interpretation of the Bountiful Tree (vv 19-22)
"reached to the sky" - pictures Nebuchadnezzar at the peak of his political power, dominating the world scene.
2. The Interpretation of the Tree Chopped Down (vv 23-26)
An appropriate punishment: he lost control of his kingdom because he lost control of himself (he became like a beast).

“This prolonged humiliation would teach him to respect God’s sovereignty over the affairs of men and to realize that he, like all earthly rulers, held authority only by permission of the Almighty in heaven above.” [Gleason Archer, “Daniel,” 63]

The “stump” – The tree is not completely removed. This is an assurance to Nebuchadnezzar that his authority will be restored once he has learned his lesson.

3. Advice for Nebuchadnezzar (v 27)

- a. God is quite willing to lift judgment in the presence of repentance (cf. Jonah 3). God is not so *puny* as to stoop to a game of “getting even”; He simply wants to foster a change of heart.
- b. In his efforts to build Babylon into the world’s premier city (a monument to himself), he no doubt had inflicted great pain and suffering on other people in the process, either through forced labor, heavy taxation, etc. Rather than abusing people to build his own monuments, God called upon him to have compassion on the needs of individuals under his authority.

There are some people who use positions of authority to serve their own interests, but a true leader is concerned for the needs and interests of those whom he/she represents.

D. THE DREAM FULFILLED (4:28-33)

Da 4:28-33 28 *“All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king. 29 “Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. 30 “The king reflected and said, ‘Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?’ 31 “While the word was in the king’s mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, 32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.’ 33 “Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws.*

The illness: zoanthropy This is a mental disorder in which a patient imagines himself to be a beast and acts like one.

E. CONCLUSION—THE KING’S TESTIMONY (4:34-37)

Da 4:34-37 34 *“But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom endures from generation to generation. 35 “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’ 36 “At that time my reason*

returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. 37 "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."

1. One of man's greatest failure is the failure to comprehend the magnitude and greatness of God (v 35). see Isaiah 40:15,17
2. "*surpassing greatness was added to me*" (v 36) This is God's abounding grace. He takes no delight in punishment, but He is incredibly enthusiastic about Bestowing grace. Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 43 years from 605-562 BC. Cf. Job 42:10ff.
3. Grasp the Full Lesson (v 37) This chapter does not simply teach that pride is wrong, but that God humbles the proud.
4. The Question of Nebuchadnezzar's "salvation"??? Scholars are divided on this issue, and although we cannot be absolutely certain, it is quite possible he came to true saving faith in the God of Heaven.

HUMILITY IS THE ONLY FORCE STRONGER THAN ARROGANCE.

V. DANIEL 5—THE FINAL FEAST

God Judges

Main Characters — Belshazzar, Daniel

Year 539 BC

A. The Feast of Belshazzar (5:1-4)

Da 5:1-4 1 Belshazzar the king held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. 2 When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. 3 Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which was in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. 4 They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

Significance of the Literary Structure

1. Since the dream of the image (ch 2) and the vision of the four beasts are parallel, one helps interpret the other.
2. The turning point in the literary structure falls between chapters four and five, suggesting that this is a significant point in the author's presentation. Chapters 4 and 5 are similar in that both deal with Babylonian kings whose pride needed to be humbled before the God of Heaven. The nature (and extent) of the humbling, however, is different. In chapters 2–4, God progressively dealt with Nebuchadnezzar, revealing more about Himself and sovereignly bringing him to a point of praise of the true God. Obviously, God could have dealt accordingly with each and every king thereafter—humbling them until at last they praised Him. By the end of chapter 4, however, the point had sufficiently been made as to who truly rules over human affairs. There is not a need to demonstrate this again (at

least in the same way), and judgment is allowed to fall upon Babylon so as to advance the revelation of the successive Gentile powers.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

There is a gap of at least 23 years between chapters 4 and 5 (probably longer), and several considerations need to be taken into account.

1. The chapters are not in chronological order (7 & 8 precede ch 5). The author seems to have been interested in completing the downward spiral of Babylon's demise before taking up other visions.
2. Historical Shift
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BC after a reign of 43 years.
 - b. Several rulers held office between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar
 - c. Belshazzar was actually a coregulator over Babylon with his father.
 - 1) Nabonidus spent ten years away from Babylon (at Teima in Arabia), during which time the daily administration was entrusted to Belshazzar.
 - 2) Nabonidus returned to Babylon sometime during the years 542-540 BC, apparently as the Persian menace intensified.
 - d. Daniel had been in Babylon for 66 years, and was probably in his eighties by this point.
3. The Challenge of Cyrus II the Great
 - a. 550 BC - Led the Persians in victory over the Medes.
 - b. During the year(s) prior to Dan 5 (539 BC) - Cyrus began his advance against Babylon.

B. The Fright of Belshazzar (vv. 5-6)

Da 5:4-6 4 They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. 5 Suddenly the fingers of a man's hand emerged and began writing opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the back of the hand that did the writing. 6 Then the king's face grew pale and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together.

Belshazzar was the second highest ruler with his father Nabonidus being the highest. So the highest position he could offer was the third highest ruler.

Note: For many years, critical scholars doubted the historicity of this chapter, since the extra-biblical literature named Nabonidus as the Babylonian ruler whom Cyrus defeated and since the name of Belshazzar did not even appear. The discovery of the Nabonidus Cylinder with its mention of Belshazzar as the son of Nabonidus verified the historical accuracy of the biblical account.

C. The Frustration of Belshazzar (vv. 7-16)

Da 5:7-16 7 The king called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, "Any man who can read this inscription and explain its interpretation to me shall be clothed with purple and have a necklace of gold around his neck, and have authority as third ruler in the kingdom." 8 Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the inscription or make known its interpretation to the king. 9 Then

King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, his face grew even paler, and his nobles were perplexed. 10 The queen entered the banquet hall because of the words of the king and his nobles; the queen spoke and said, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts alarm you or your face be pale. 11 "There is a man in your kingdom in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of your father, illumination, insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father the king, appointed him chief of the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans and diviners. 12 "This was because an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight, interpretation of dreams, explanation of enigmas and solving of difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare the interpretation." 13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Are you that Daniel who is one of the exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? 14 "Now I have heard about you that a spirit of the gods is in you, and that illumination, insight and extraordinary wisdom have been found in you. 15 "Just now the wise men and the conjurers were brought in before me that they might read this inscription and make its interpretation known to me, but they could not declare the interpretation of the message. 16 "But I personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the inscription and make its interpretation known to me, you will be clothed with purple and wear a necklace of gold around your neck, and you will have authority as the third ruler in the kingdom."

D. The Fearlessness of Daniel (vv. 17-28)

Da 5:17-28 17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, "Keep your gifts for yourself or give your rewards to someone else; however, I will read the inscription to the king and make the interpretation known to him. 18 "O king, the Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, glory and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father. 19 "Because of the grandeur which He bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations and men of every language feared and trembled before him; whomever he wished he killed and whomever he wished he spared alive; and whomever he wished he elevated and whomever he wished he humbled. 20 "But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken away from him. 21 "He was also driven away from mankind, and his heart was made like that of beasts, and his dwelling place was with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and that He sets over it whomever He wishes. 22 "Yet you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this, 23 but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and your ways, you have not glorified. 24 "Then the hand was sent from Him and this inscription was written out. 25 "Now this is the inscription that was written out: 'MENĒ, MENĒ, TEKĒL, UPHARSIN.' 26 "This is the interpretation of the message: 'MENĒ'—God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. 27 " 'TEKĒL'—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. 28 " 'PERĒS'—your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians."

The message (5:24-25)

NOTE:

(*mēnē*) "To number" (related to Hebrew word, *minah*)

(*teqēl*) "To weigh, to be found light" (related to Hebrew word, *shekel*)

(*ûparsîn*) [a combination of "and" and the word *perēs* "to divide"]

E. THE FALL OF BABYLON (vv. 29-31)

Da 5:29-31 *29 Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he now had authority as the third ruler in the kingdom. 30 That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. 31 So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.*

1. Daniel honored—probably in mockery (cf. vs 17).

2. Belshazzar's Defeat That Night (v 30)

The king thought he was so secure behind the massive walls of Babylon, but that night (Oct 12, 539 BC) a general of Cyrus named Ugbaru took the city with hardly a battle. According to the Greek historian Herodotus (1.191), the city was taken not by a bloody battle of storming the walls but by a sneak attack through the Euphrates which ran through the middle of Babylon.

Archer summarizes, “Unknown to them, Cyrus's resourceful commander, Ugbaru (referred to in the Chronicle as governor of Gutium), had diverted the waters of the Euphrates to an old channel dug by a previous ruler . . . suddenly reducing the water level below the river-gates. Before long the Persian besiegers would come wading in at night and clamber up the river-bank walls before the guards knew what was happening.”

3. Cyrus's Victory over Babylon

According to the Nabonidus Chronicle (ANET, 306), Cyrus entered Babylon several days later (Oct 29). Apparently Cyrus appointed a Mede (Gubaru?) to rule over Babylon [see Appendix H.9-12].

VI. DANIEL 6—DANIEL IN AND OUT OF THE LION'S DEN

God delivers

Main Characters—Darius, Daniel, Medes and Persians

Year, 538 BC

A. Daniel Chosen by Darius (6:1-3)

Da 6:1-3 *1 It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom, 2 and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss. 3 Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom.*

B. Daniel Framed by His Enemies (6:4-9)

Da 6:4-9 *4 Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be*

found in him. 5 Then these men said, "We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God." 6 Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: "King Darius, live forever! 7 "All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions' den. 8 "Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked." 9 Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.

1. Daniel's Reputation (v 4)

- "no negligence or corruption was to be found in him." He was not only an honest government employee, but he was very competent in his work as well. How refreshing it is to find a man in business or politics who has integrity! Cf. Eph 6:5-8. There can be a temptation when working in the midst of dishonest workers to begin operating just like them. Our focus must stay on our true master, Jesus Christ!
- "he was faithful" The world needs examples of people who are faithful! Daniel was a model of a stewardship faithfully discharged (cf. Proverbs 20:6; 1 Cor 4:2).

2. The resentment towards Daniel

- Since Daniel was a Jew, others in the administration who were race-conscious resented his elevation in government, particularly the idea that he might be the "prime minister" of sorts over all the officials (v 3). There could be a couple of reasons for this:
- For those who operated by graft and corruption, Daniel's honesty would have hampered their conduct.
- Apparently the status of the exiled Jews was still one of being an inferior race (at least resented).

3. Important Factors

- a) On Oct 29, 539 Cyrus entered Babylon It is very possible that Daniel met him at that time, and possibly even shared the prophecy of Isa 44:28--45:7 with him. Since Daniel was appointed a high official in the realm, Cyrus certainly knew of him and probably had further contact with him even after Darius the Mede was appointed to rule over Babylonia.
- b) Dan 9:1-3 - This first year of Darius was a time of intensive Bible study and prayer for Daniel. He would have realized through his study of Bible prophecy (Jer 25:11) that God was about ready to act again on Israel's behalf.
- c) Cyrus' Decree in Ezra 1:1-4 He is not only motivated to initiate the return to Judah, but he is very aware that Solomon's temple had been plundered by Nebuchadnezzar (see Ezra 1:7; 6:3-5). This decree was

made in his first year, i.e., his first regnal year (Mar-Apr 538 to Mar-Apr 537), probably after the events of Daniel 6.

d) Two crucial questions:

- i) Did Daniel, in his position of authority and influence, counsel Cyrus to make the decree permitting the return and rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem?
- ii) Was Satan attempting to eliminate Daniel before he could share prophetic details with Cyrus and influence him in the furthering of God's program with Israel?

C. Daniel Caught by His Enemies (6:10-15). Prayer to YHWH was the issue.

Da 6:10-15 10 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. 11 Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. 12 Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king's injunction, "Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions' den?" The king replied, "The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked." 13 Then they answered and spoke before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day." 14 Then, as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed and set his mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him. 15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed."

D. Daniel Cast to the Lions (6:16-18). The issue was God's integrity/power.

Da 6:16-18 16 Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you." 17 A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel. 18 Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.

E. Daniel Delivered from the Lions (6:19-24).

Da 6:19-24 19 Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den. 20 When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?" 21 Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever! 22 "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime." 23 Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. 24 The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children and their wives into the lions' den;

and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

F. Daniel's God Glorified by Darius (6:25-28).

Da 6:25-28 25 Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language who were living in all the land: "May your peace abound! 26 "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. 27 "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." 28 So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

VI. DANIEL 7—THE FOUR BEASTS, back to Belshazzar c. 553 before the events of chapter 5. Dan 7:1 is dated in the first year of Belshazzar. Implication: ch 7 precedes chapters 5 & 6. **Daniel 7 is the pivotal point of the book!**

A. The Setting (7:1)

Da 7:1 1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it.

Chap 7	Chap 8	Chap 9	Chaps 10-12
<i>1st yr of Belshazzar 553 BC</i>	<i>3rd yr of Belshazzar 550 BC</i>	<i>1st yr. of Darius 539-538 BC</i>	<i>3rd yr. of Cyrus 536-535 BC</i>

Similarities Between Dan 2 and Dan 7:

- 1) Both chapters portray a sweep of successive Gentile powers in four stages beginning with the kingdom of Babylon.
- 2) Both culminate in Gentile powers being replaced by a kingdom of God which triumphs over them.
- 3) Both chapters elaborate more on the 4th kingdom than the first three.

Different Perspective Between Dan 2 and Dan 7

"The vision of chapter 2 was seen by a pagan king and therefore portrayed history as man would view it, each empire having at least some intrinsic value. The vision of chapter 7, however, was given to a man of God, and to him God reveals the nations of history as they really are inwardly. They are portrayed as God sees them--wild, ferocious beasts, continually fighting and devouring one another." Donald K. Campbell, Daniel; God's Man in a Secular Society, 106.

2	Categories	7
Babylon Strong	Time	Babylon Declining
Heathen King	Vision	Godly Prophet
Daniel	Interpreter	Angel

**Human
Various Metals
Human Aspects
All 5 Kingdoms**

10 Toes

**Form
Distinctives
Characteristics
Interpretation**

Emphasis

**Animals
Various Animals
Animalistic
4th & 5th Kingdoms**

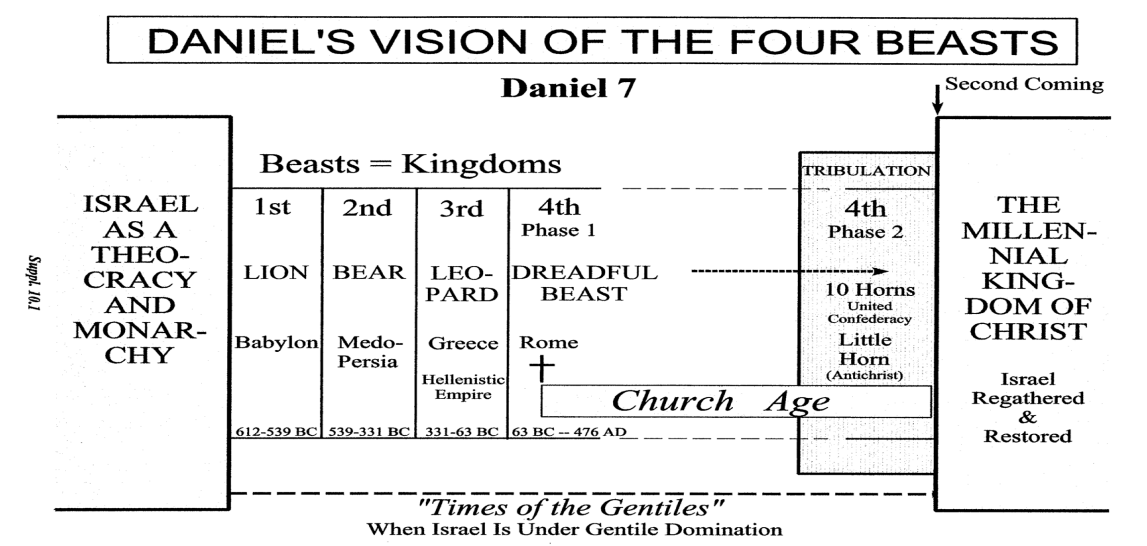
**10 kingdoms - Little
Horn**

Structure of the Chapter

VISIONS		INTERPRETATION	
The Beasts vv. 1-8	Judgment before the Ancient of Days vv. 9-14	General vv. 15-18	Specifically in Regard to the 4 th Beast vv. 19-28
7:1-14		7:15-28	

B. The Dream (7:2-14)

Da 7:2-14 2 Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. 3 "And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. 4 "The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. 5 "And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!' 6 "After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. 7 "After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. 8 "While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts. 9 "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. 10 "A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened. 11 "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. 12 "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time. 13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. 14 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.



C. The Interpretation (7:15-27)

1. Summary of the Five Kingdoms (vv. 15-18)

Da 7:15-18 15 "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. 16 "I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 17 'These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. 18 'But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'



Babylon - 1st Beast
606-539 BC

Medo-Persia, 2nd Beast
539-331 BC

Greece - 3rd Beast
331-146 BC

Rome - 4th Beast
146 BC - AD 476

Rome - Revived
Feet of Clay

2. Details of the Fourth Kingdom (7:19-25)

Da 7:19-25 19 "Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, 20 and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates. 21 "I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. 23 "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. 24 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.



4th Beast: Dreadful with Iron Teeth (vv 7-8) = Roman Empire

Note: In contrast to Greece which acquired its power rapidly under Alexander, the Roman Empire acquired dominion very gradually (from about 241 BC until the height of its power in AD 117). Alexander conquered by the rapidity of his troop movements, whereas Rome conquered by the ruthless crushing of other peoples (*"it devoured and crushed, and trampled"* - v 7).

(1) Observations

- (a) The 4th kingdom is differentiated from the previous three in that it is not likened to any specific animal but is simply described as being *"dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong."* There is no animal fierce enough to portray this kingdom.
- (b) This 4th beast/kingdom does involve stages:
 - i) Dan 7:24a - The 10 horns arise after the 4th beast
 - ii) Dan 7:24b - The *"little horn"* arises after the ten
- (c) This 4th beast/kingdom has both a near and remote fulfillment:
 - i) The *"4th beast proper"* is the Roman Empire (paralleling the 4th part of the Image in Dan 2).Note: The element of iron is common to the 4th part of the image and the 4th beast (*"large iron teeth"*).
 - ii) However, the Book of Revelation makes clear that the 10 horns

and "little horn" are yet future - reserved for the Great Tribulation (Rev 13, 17 & 19).

iii) Therefore, the 4th beast covers a vast expanse of time, but with a "time gap" involved.⁷

(d) Despite the fact that the 4th beast has the additional features of the 10 horns and the "little horn" (with a time gap involved), there is a strong connection between the historic Roman Empire and the eventual fulfillment in the "end times."

i) The text refers to this as one beast (7:3 & 7:17).

ii) Dan 7:24 specifically says "*out of this kingdom ten kings will arise.*"

(2) Focus on the "Horns"

(a) The "horn" as a symbol - The horn is symbolic of power (1 Kgs 22:11; Zech 1:18ff.), particularly that of the reigning house (Ps 132:17; Ezek 29:21). In Dan 7:24, the horns are clearly seen to represent kings.

(b) The "little horn" is a symbol of the future Antichrist who will rise up in the Great Tribulation prior to Christ's Second Coming (see next session).

SUPPLEMENT: INSIGHT ON THE ANTICHRIST FROM 2 THESS. 2:1-12

1. Context: The Christians at Thessalonica were suffering persecutions and afflictions, and some mistakenly thought they were then living in the time of the Tribulation. Paul wrote to correct this false understanding.

2. His Proof: Two key closely-related events must take place before the "Day of the Lord" (i.e., the Great Tribulation) can begin.

a. The "man of lawlessness" must be revealed (2 Thess 2:3). This is another name for the Antichrist or "little horn." The clue to what this means is found in the following verse, which suggests that the Antichrist will carry out some very defiant act in conjunction with the Temple of God. By comparing several passages (Dan 8; 12:11; Matt 24; and Rev 13), this seems to refer to what Daniel (12:11) and Jesus Christ (Matt 24:15) called the "abomination of desolation," an atrocious act whereby the Antichrist defiles the Jewish Temple.

(1) The Jewish Temple must be rebuilt before Christ returns.

(2) The Antichrist will defile the Jewish Temple about 3 1/2 years before the 2nd Coming of Christ.

(a) He will enter the Temple and proclaim himself to be God and demand worship for himself (2 Thess 2:4).

(b) His image is constructed and set up in the Temple for which people will be responsible to worship (Rev 13:14ff.).

b. The "apostasy" (*NIV* "rebellion") must come first (2 Thess 2:3). This refers to the departure or turning away from the true God of Heaven by people professing to be Christians (but who in actuality are not saved) in order to join in the worldwide worship of the Antichrist (Rev 13:8). Possibly due to persecution and financial pressure, there will be a very obvious abandonment of worship of the true God, and only those who truly belong to Jesus Christ will refuse to join in with the worship of the Antichrist.

3. Details of the Fifth Kingdom (7:26-27)

Da 7:26-27 26 *'But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.* 27 *'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest*

One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

- a. **v. 26 The old kingdom destroyed.**
- b. **v. 27 Handed over to the Saints – People of the Most High (Messiah) – They will rule. All rulers will worship and obey him. Rev. 19-22.**

4. The Effect (7:28) – Awestruck/deeply trouble/face pale/I kept to myself.

Da 7:28 28 *"At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself."*

**VIII. DANIEL 8—THE TWO BEASTS, About 551 BC, under Belshazzar, comes before Chap. 5. An awake vision, not a dream.
EAST MEETS WEST**

With Dan 8:1, the text shifts from Aramaic back to Hebrew. The focus is no longer on the dealing of God with the Gentile nations but rather the future of Israel during the "times of the Gentiles."

A. The Description of the Vision, 8:1-14

1. Introduction to the Vision (8:1-2)

Da 8:1-2 1 In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously. 2 I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal.

2. The Ram with Two Horns (8:3-4) = Medo-Persia

Da 8:3-4 3 Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last. 4 I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

The Symbolism of the Two Horns (8:3)

Both horns were "long" (i.e., powerful), but one was longer than the other and came up last. This was Persia, which although it arose later than Media, went on to become the more powerful and dominated over Media. Note: Notice the parallelism with the vision of the bear in Dan 7:5. The bear raised on one side (ch 7) and the longer horn of the ram (ch 8) both refer to Persia's domination over Media.

3. The Male Goat (8:5-8) = Greece

Da 8:5-8 5 *While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn*

between his eyes. 6 He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. 7 I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. 8 Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

1. The goat is a symbol for Greece, as explained in Dan 8:21.
2. "a conspicuous horn between his eyes" (NIV = "prominent horn") This symbol is also explained in Dan 8:21 as her "first king" and clearly refers to Alexander the Great.³
3. "coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground" (8:5)
 - a. His origin: Alexander emerged from the west and conquered virtually everything to the east (and Egypt to the south).
 - b. His speed of conquest: He moved so quickly in his conquest of Persia and Egypt that he is said to not have touched the ground. This is parallel to Dan 7:6 where Greece's speed of conquest was symbolized by a leopard with four wings. Whereas Medo-Persia took decades to establish her power through conquest, Alexander conquered the whole world in three short years:
 - (1) May 334 BC Alexander pushed into Asia Minor and defeated the Persian forces at the Granicus River.
 - (2) Oct 333 BC Alexander defeated a great Persian army of 600,000 footmen (much larger than his own) at the battle of Issus near the northeastern tip of the Mediterranean Sea.
 - (3) 332 BC Alexander invaded Egypt (the Egyptians, who hated the Persians, actually welcomed him as a deliverer).
 - (4) Oct 331 BC Alexander made a massive defeat of the Persians at Gaugamela (near Arbela) in Assyria.

4. The "Small Horn" and His Hostility Against Israel (8:9-14).

Da 8:9-14 9 Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land. 10 It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down. 11 It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down. 12 And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper. 13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?" 14 He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."

1. Comparison with the 'Little Horn' of Daniel 7 Although the English expressions "small horn" and "little horn" may sound similar, care must be taken to distinguish these two. They do not refer to the same person!
 - a. The "little horn" of Daniel 7 arises from the ten horns of the 4th beast (Roman Empire), and is interpreted as the Antichrist of the Book of Revelation.

- b. The “small horn” of Daniel 8 arises from the third kingdom of Greece and one of its four divisions: 8:8—“there came up four conspicuous horns” (i.e., the division of Alexander's empire into four smaller realms) 8:9 - "And out of one of them came forth a rather small horn"
 - c. The “little horn” of Dan 7 is followed by God's kingdom, but the "small horn" of Dan 8 is not.
 - d. The "small horn" of Dan 8 refers not to the Antichrist, but to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (a Seleucid king who reigned 175-164 BC).
- 2. “grew exceedingly great” in three directions (8:9)
 - a. “toward the south”—This refers to Egypt. For many years, there was a bitter rivalry between the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt and the Seleucid dynasty in Syria. Antiochus IV had several encounters over the Egyptians and was generally successful.
 - b. “toward the east” - Expeditions against rebellious elements in Parthia and Armenia.
 - c. "toward the Beautiful Land" - This is Palestine! The word "land" is actually not in the text. The Hebrew word is from a root meaning "beauty, honor."⁴
 - (1) Yet this is an abbreviation for "the Beautiful Land," since the longer phrase is used in Daniel 11:41, clearly with reference to Palestine.
 - (2) The same word is used in Ezek 20:6 of the "Promised Land" which "is the glory [Lit., 'beauty'] of all lands."
- 3. Tramples down “the host of heaven” (8:10) The Hebrew word "host" is used most often of angels in the service of God, and at other times of literal stars (Jer 33:22). However, the reference here is clearly to Jewish people of Israel. The trampling of the hosts refers to their persecution and affliction by the Seleucid king of Syria, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
 - a. The term "host" is also used of the people of God, who are to become as the stars in number (Gen 12:3; 15:5).
 - b. In Exodus 12:41, the term is used of the Hebrews as "'the hosts of Yahweh' . . . who went out of the land of Egypt."
 - c. This makes good sense in light of the term's use in Dan 8:13, in conjunction with the Temple ("the holy place").
 - d. In Dan 12:3, those who attain to the resurrection from Israel are compared to innumerable stars.
- 4. The Atrocious Acts of Antiochus Against the LORD (8:11-12)
 - a. The removal of "the regular sacrifice" (8:11)
 - (1) This is one word in Hebrew, meaning "continuously."
 - (2) This is a technical expression for the daily sacrifices which were offered at the Jewish Temple according to Ex 29:38-42 (cf. Num 28:3ff.). The word is from the Exodus passage in which the sacrifices were to be done "each day regularly".
 - (3) The daily sacrifice consisted of the offering of a lamb along with a grain offering and a drink offering, both in the morning and at twilight, as

a soothing aroma to the Lord. Every day of their life, the Jews were reminded that the blood of the lamb atoned for sin, which anticipated the coming of Jesus Christ whose death for sins on the cross was a "fragrant aroma" to God (Eph 5:2).

(4) During the reign of Antiochus, he actually forced the Jews to halt the offering of the daily sacrifices at the Temple.

(5) This action, however, also has an end times counterpart according to Dan 12:11.

b. "the place of His sanctuary was thrown down" (NIV "brought low") During the reign of Antiochus, he desolated the Jewish temple. Not only did he halt the regular sacrifice, but he himself entered the Holy of Holies (which only the High Priest was allowed to enter), he sacrificed swine on the altar, and he erected a statue of Zeus Olympias in the temple.

c. "it will fling truth to the ground" (8:12) Antiochus not only despised the truth of God's Word, but he literally attempted to outlaw scriptural faith and service to God on pain of death. Copies of the Torah (Bible) were burned. For a while he "performed his will and prospered," i.e., God allowed him to do what he wanted and succeed.

d. "on account of transgression" (NIV = "rebellion") The Hebrew word is a word for sin or transgression with the idea of revolting against the authority of God (but there is no clear case where the noun actually means "rebellion" as the NIV has). This may look at the abomination of the priesthood that was carried out by certain Jews. The legitimate high priest of this time was Onias III, but his Egyptian sympathies aroused the disfavor of those Jews who were pro-Seleucid. Soon a power play arose over the position of High Priest. One Jew named Menelaus arranged for the murder of Onias, and bribed Antiochus for the position of High Priest (though he had no legitimate claim to the priesthood). Funds from the temple treasury were used for paying off Antiochus.

5. The Duration of Antiochus's Atrocities (8:13-14)

a. Chronological Data

(1) Antiochus reigned as king 175-164 BC.

(2) The priesthood was corrupted about 171 BC when Onias III was murdered and an illegitimate High Priest assumed office.

(3) 15th of Chislev, 167 BC (Dec 167) - This is the time at which Antiochus defiled the Temple, halted the regular sacrifice and instituted the religious persecution.

(4) 25th of Chislev, 164 BC (Dec 164) - A successful uprising against Antiochus led to the cleansing and rededication of the Temple. Note: This occasion was commemorated thereafter as the feast of Hanukkah (which means "dedication"), also known as the Feast of Lights or Dedication (cf. Jn 10:22).

b. The Interpretation of "2300 evenings and mornings" Since the dates are very inexact for this period, it is difficult for anyone to establish terminal points for this reference, although most evangelicals agree that this is fulfilled in the time of Antiochus. The mention in Dan 8:14 of the proper restoration of the "holy place" does seem to view the formal rededication of the Temple in Dec 164 BC.

- (1) This could mean 2300 days (so Walvoord, Feinberg) So interpreted, this would amount to more than six years, and could refer to the period from 171 BC (when the High Priest was murdered) until the Rededication of the Temple.
- (2) This could mean 1150 days (so Archer, Pentecost) If the point is to record how many sacrifices were missed (two each day, one in the morning and one in the evening), then only 1150 days were involved.⁵ In this case, the period runs approximately from Antiochus's desolation of the Temple in Dec 167 until the Rededication in Dec 164.
- (3) Evaluation
- (a) Walvoord's objection (p 189) to the 1150 days based on Hebrew parallels (e.g., forty days and forty nights) does not really stand.
 - i) For his position (2300 days), we would have expected the text to say "2300 evenings and 2300 mornings," which it does not.
 - ii) The parallel does not apply here, because the point is not about "days and nights" but about daily sacrifices.
 - (b) If "2300 days" were the point, there would be no need to mention "evenings" and "mornings." This suggests that the concern is over sacrifices. This seems to be confirmed by the question itself in v 8:13 - "How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply?"
- (4) Conclusion: While either position is possible, a better case can be made for 1150 days (in which 2300 sacrifices were missed). This would probably refer to a period running from some time in 167 BC until the Temple Rededication in December 164 BC.

B. The Interpretation of the Vision (8:15-26)

Da 8:15-26 *15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man. 16 And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision." 17 So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end." 18 Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright. 19 He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end. 20 "The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia. 21 "The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. 22 "The broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power. 23 "In the latter period of their rule, When the transgressors have run their course, A king will arise, Insolent and skilled in intrigue. 24 "His power will be mighty, but not by his own power, And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree And prosper and perform his will; He will destroy mighty men and the holy people. 25 "And through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; And he will magnify himself in his heart, And he will destroy many while they are at ease. He will even oppose the Prince of princes, But he will be broken without human agency. 26 "The vision of the evenings and mornings Which has been told is true; But keep the vision secret, For it pertains to many days in the future."*

The Encounter with Gabriel (8:15-19)

1. "the vision pertains to the time of the end" (17)

2. "to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation; for it pertains to the appointed time of the end" (19)
3. These time references are perplexing. Whereas the context seems to clearly refer to the atrocities of Antiochus IV about 167 BC, the angel seems to suggest that the vision goes beyond this. The word "end" does not have to have an eschatological (end times) nuance, but it most often does.⁶
 - a. The particular phrase "time of the end" occurs three other times in Daniel (11:35,40; 12:4), all with clear reference to the period near the 2nd Coming of Christ.
 - b. Even more interesting is the phrase "the final period of the indignation" (Lit. "the latter indignation"). The word for "indignation" is used again in Dan 11:36 in a passage referring to the Antichrist of the end-time Tribulation: "he will prosper until the indignation is finished."
4. **Point:** Whereas the vision pertained to the historical Antiochus, the angel seems to be suggesting that the vision looks beyond his time to the end times when another shall rise up in a similar manner to him.

Explanation of Gabriel (8:20-27)

1. Symbols: From Medo-Persia to the Division of Alexander's Kingdom (8:20-22)
2. The King who arises out of Alexander's Kingdom (8:23-26)
 - a. Notice v 8:23 - "and in the latter period of their rule" This is referring to the previous verse which spoke of the four divisions of Alexander's empire. Since this is before "Rome," Antiochus is still in view.
 - b. Traits All of these characteristics could be true of Antiochus, but they will also be true of the Antichrist (in an even greater way).
 - (1) The "Prince of princes" refers to God who is prince over the rulers of the earth (Dan 4). Whereas Antiochus defied God and attacked His Temple and the Jewish people, the Antichrist will attack Jesus Christ personally and also the Jewish people in the Tribulation.
 - (2) "he will be broken without human agency" Antiochus did not die in battle but probably insane or from internal ailments in 164 BC. The Antichrist will not be destroyed by human agency but by the personal return of Jesus Christ (Rev 19).
3. Fulfillment of the Passage There are three basic ways in which the passage in Dan 8:9-26 can be interpreted:
 - a. The passage is directly prophetic of Antiochus IV Epiphanes of the 2nd century BC, but does not go beyond him.
 - b. The passage is prophetic, but it has double fulfillment: it is fulfilled in part with Antiochus, but more completely with the Antichrist who arises in the Tribulation period prior to the 2nd Coming of Christ.
 - c. The passage is directly prophetic of Antiochus and all the details can be fulfilled in some sense with him. However, his character and actions serve as a "type" of the Antichrist who will arise in the Tribulation (typical fulfillment). This is the preferred view.

C. The Effect of the Vision (8:27)

Da 8:27 *27 Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up again and carried on the king's business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it.*

IX. DANIEL 9—THE SEVENTY WEEKS

- (1) Dan 7 He learns that several major world empires will have domination over Israel, and that out of the last of these will come an evil ruler who will gain complete power for 3 1/2 years. But this evil ruler and his dominion will be replaced by the "Son of Man" and the Messianic kingdom.
- (2) Dan 8 This chapter focuses upon an historical figure that will arise out of the 3rd major kingdom (i.e., Greece) who will foreshadow the evil ruler revealed in the previous chapter.
- (3) Dan 9 In light of what is revealed in chapters 7 & 8, this chapter will clarify how these events will correlate with God's plan for Israel as a nation in light of the anticipation of Israel's restoration and Messiah's coming.
- (4) Although it is difficult to say which came first, Dan 6 and Dan 9 occur very close to the same time. Daniel, as a godly man well into his eighties, was a leading figure for Israel as he interceded for the nation and their restoration.

Occasion for the Chapter	Daniel's Prayer	God's Responses
9:1-2	9:3-19	9:20-27

- A. **The Occasion of the Prayer (9:1-2)** 539-38 BC. Babylon only, Darius son of Xerxes (not of Esther). According to the word of Jeremiah 25:11, and the 70 years of captivity.

Da 9:1-2 *1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— 2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*

Jeremiah 25:9-12

- (1) The fall of Babylon would basically correspond to the 70 years of Judah in exile. Thus, if Daniel had been in exile for 67 years, and the Babylonian kingdom had been brought to an end, the time of release must be near. Something was about to happen.
- (2) The explanation of 70 years
 - (a) 2 Chron 36:19-21 - The length of exile is determined on the basis of violation of the Sabbath rest of the land.
 - (b) Predicted in Leviticus 26:33-34,40-45 (esp. v 43)
 - (c) Biblical basis for the Sabbath rest of the land Lev 25:2-5. Every Sabbath year, the land was to rest, i.e., not be used for agricultural practices.
 - (d) Resulting Judgment This principle had been violated for about 490 years (approximately the length of the monarchy), and thus 70 Sabbath years had been skipped. God uses this for determining how long the exile will be (long enough for the land to be fallow and make up the 70 years).

Jeremiah 29:10-14

(1) Notice how this passage unites several themes:

- (a) 70 years of exile to Babylon (10)
- (b) A repentance and seeking of God (12-13)
- (c) Return to the land and restoration of blessing (14)

(2) Clearly unites the principles of Deut 30 to the exile in Babylon!

(3) Implication:

- (a) Daniel feels a need to prayerfully humble himself before God on behalf of his nation, which is exactly what we see him doing in Dan 9:3-19.
- (b) Although we can learn a lot about praying from Daniel's prayer in chapter 9, this is really a prayer about national repentance and restoration of Israel.

B. The Contents of the Prayer (9:3-19). Pleading regarding the exile.

1. The Basis of the Prayer, vv. 3-4

Da 9:3-4 *3 So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,*

2. Confession of sin and acknowledgement that God is right, vv. 5-14

a. There must be an agreement that we are wrong, v. 5

Da 9:5 *5 we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.*

b. Acknowledgement that God's counsel has been rejected, v. 6.

Da 9:6 *6 "Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land.*

c. Admission that we get what we deserve – that sin always has a price, vv. 7-11a

Da 9:7-11 *7 "Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You. 8 "Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9 "To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; 10 nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets. 11 "Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him.*

d. Admission that God's Word is right! He does discipline for disobedience, vv. 11b-13 (See Lev. 26; Heb. 12:7-11)

Da 9:11-13 *11 "Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. 12 "Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great*

calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. 13 "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth.

e. God is not to blame for the suffering we incur when under discipline, v. 14

Da 9:14 14 "Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.

3. Daniel's Petition, 9:15-19

Da 9:15-19 15 "And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked. 16 "O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. 17 "So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. 18 "O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. 19 "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

- The proper motivation for God to reverse the discipline is not for our comfort or our wants, but for His interests and His glory (note v 17). "For they sake, O Lord"
- Whatever God decides to do is grace, we certainly do not merit His kindness, and we always get more than we deserve (v 18).

We have no right to ask for anything, until we see that we deserve nothing!

C. The Answer to the Prayer, 9:20-27

INTRODUCTION

The first part of this chapter dealt with Daniel's prayer of repentance in response to his discovery in Jeremiah's writings that the time in exile would be seventy years. In view of his prayer, God was pleased to reveal even more to him:

1. The actual date when Messiah Jesus would come, the One whom Daniel had seen in vision in Dan 7 as the "Son of man."
2. The prediction that the Messiah would suffer violently (be "cut off") before the eventual Kingdom.
3. The "Little Horn" or Antichrist (who was revealed to Daniel in ch 7 and through type in ch 8) would enter into a unique covenant arrangement with Israel before his own judgment.

1. God's Response to Daniel through Gabriel, 9:20-23

Da 9:20-23 20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had

seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. 22 He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. 23 "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

There would be a relationship between the 70 years of exile and God's future program with the nation. Paul Feinberg describes this:
"The seventy years of captivity are the clue to a prophecy of seventy weeks. In the seventy years of captivity God put an end to idolatry, which had been a besetting sin prior to God's judgment. The new prophecy of seventy weeks foresees a time when all transgression, sin, and iniquity will be done away with in Israel." Paul D. Feinberg, "An exegetical and Theological Study of Daniel 9:24-27," in *Tradition and Testament*, 189-220.

2. The New Revelation to Daniel of the Seventy "Weeks", 9:24-27

Da 9:24-27 24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. 25 "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

a. Who? Note that the decree pertains to "your people" and "your holy city." Since Daniel is the recipient, these phrases have the Jewish people and Jerusalem in mind, not the Church. There may be implications for the Church, but the primary focus is on Israel.

b. Six Purposes of God to be Accomplished:

- 1.) "to finish the transgression" This looks at Israel's apostasy and sin against the LORD, and her wandering over the face of the earth in discipline. The restoration of Israel which Daniel sought in his prayer will ultimately be fulfilled within the "seventy week" period.
- 2.) "to make an end of sin" Christ Himself will be punished for Israel's sin, and will eventually remove sin from the nation at the 2nd Advent (Ezek 37:23; Zech 5; Rom 11:20-27).
- 3.) "to make atonement for iniquity" To atone means "to cover" with the idea of iniquity being withdrawn from God's sight and one being reinstated to His favor. The grounds for this is the crucifixion of Christ at Calvary, although the phrase finds its

fulfillment in Israel's national day of atonement at the 2nd Coming (Zech 3:8-9; 13:1).

- 4.) "to bring in everlasting righteousness" This alludes to the many Messianic passages which view righteousness as being applied to the earth at the time of the second coming of Christ (Jer 23:5-6; Isa 11:2- 5; 60:21).
- 5.) "to seal up vision and prophecy" While many OT prophecies have already found fulfillment, much of prophecy concerns Israel's ultimate restoration in Messiah's kingdom. This looks at the full realization of what God said He would do in fulfilling His covenant with Israel in the millennial kingdom.
- 6.) "to anoint the most Holy Place" The "most holy" are technical words that are always translated in the OT as the "holy of holies." This phrase anticipates the rebuilding and reinstitution of the Temple. While this may look partially at Zerubbabel's temple (516 BC), ultimately this looks to the millennial temple when Christ comes to reign (Ezek 40- 44).
- 7.) **Summary:** "The six summarize God's whole program to bring the nation Israel the blessings He promised through His covenants (Gen. 15:18-21; 2 Sam. 7:16; Jer. 31:31-34)." J. D. Pentecost, "Daniel," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, OT, 1362.

c. The Time Frame "seventy weeks" (seventy-sevens)

Introduction: Israel's time of exile under Babylon had been 70 years, but this did not satisfy God's righteous anger against His people, nor did Israel yet have a "heart" for God (Deut 5:29). More time was needed for the "Times of the Gentiles" to run its course before Israel's final restoration would be complete. This would take 70 "weeks."

- a. Meaning of the 70 "Weeks" The term "weeks" means "a unit of seven." The time reference could be days, months, or years. In this case, however, here it clearly means years. Hence, seventy periods of seven years (490 total) will be needed to accomplish God's purposes.³
- b. Defense of "Week" = 7 Years
 - (1) It is simply not possible for all these purposes of God to be fulfilled in 490 days or even 490 months. Furthermore, if "week" meant a period of 7 days, then Dan 9:27 would call for a covenant being made for 7 days (which is very doubtful).
 - (2) Daniel had been thinking in terms of years (Dan 9:1-2).
 - (3) The 70 years of captivity was a judgment for 490 years of failure to keep the sabbatical years. So, 490 years are assigned for the completion of

Israel's desolations. "The most convincing reason is that Daniel had been thinking about seventy years of captivity (Jer. 25:11; 29:10). Every year of exile represented a cycle of seven years in which the seventh year, the sabbatical year, had not been observed. Thus, the 70 years of captivity were the result of having violated seventy sabbatical years. This would have been done over a period of 490 years. Daniel now is given a prophecy of units of seven concerning 490 years (2 Chron. 36:21; cf. Lev. 26:33-35; Jer. 34:12-22)." Paul D. Feinberg, 209.

- (4) The final "week" in 9:27 most likely means seven years. The covenant is broken in the middle, and the final period of 3 1/2 parallels the 3 1/2 years of Dan 7:25 (cf. Rev 11-13).
- (5) Although not used elsewhere in the Bible for "years," the term does mean "7 years" in other Jewish literature. In the Mishnah, it clearly means "7 years":

d. The Time of Messiah's Coming (Dan. 9:25)

Da 9:25 25 "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

1. **Messiah's coming** will be after 7 weeks plus 62 weeks (69 weeks total) The calculation is based on a certain "decree", namely the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. Hence, we must determine which decree this was, and when it took place.

2. **Implication:** Why does the text divide this into two periods (7 and 62)? Why not say 69? The first period of 7 weeks (49 years) is the time needed for the complete rebuilding of Jerusalem with fortification walls, etc. Note the last sentence of the verse! Explanation: From the time of the issuing of the decree, it will take 7 weeks (49 years) until the city is properly rebuilt. Then another 62 weeks (434 years) will be needed until the Messiah comes.

3. **Three possibilities** as to the identity of this decree:

- a. **The decree of Cyrus about 538 BC** (Ezra 1:1-4; 6:3-5) [so Keil, Leupold, Young, and Baldwin]

Reasons to reject this possibility:

- (1) A close examination of these passages reveals that the decree of Cyrus concerned the Temple, not the rebuilding of the city.

(2) Within 49 years (7 'weeks' of years) of the decree, the city was to be completely restored. However, it obviously was not restored during the period 538-489 BC (see Neh 1).

(3) A total of 69 "weeks" (483 years) from 538 BC would terminate about 55-54 BC, a date shy of the Messiah's coming.

b. **The decree of Artaxerxes** to Ezra about 457 BC (Ezra 7:11-26) [so J. Barton Payne, Gleason Archer, Leon Wood, and Pusey]

Defense: Calculating on the basis of solar years, this date would put the 69th "week" at AD 26/27, which advocates of this position would equate with the commencement of Christ's public ministry. This would allow for the death of Christ in AD 30, which Archer points out is the "generally believed" date for the crucifixion.⁸

Problems with this view:

(1) There is no mention in the Ezra passage of rebuilding the city, but rather of permitting a return of the Jews and the "adorning" of the Temple.

(2) Using AD 27 as the start of Christ's public ministry (so Archer) runs into a problem when one harmonizes the chronological data of the gospels. Hoehner has demonstrated that the commencement would have to be in AD 29 based on Luke 3:1-3, the 15th year of Tiberius.⁹

c. **The Authorization of Artaxerxes** permitting Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem in 444 BC (see Neh 1-2)¹⁰ [so Walvoord, Ryrie, Hoehner, J. D. Pentecost, and D. Campbell]¹¹

Concerns:

(1) This decree is not a major one, but reaffirming an earlier existing edict.

(2) This position demands a late date for the crucifixion (AD 33).

(3) This relies for its calculations on a prophetic or 360 day year.

(4) Proponents calculate the terminus ad quem as the date of Christ's triumphal entry, although the text in Daniel says nothing about the specific time in Messiah's life.

Support:

- (1) The concern in Nehemiah was specifically over the dilapidation of the city (Neh 1).
- (2) Nehemiah's request before the King was specifically to rebuild the city (2:5), and the decree was for that purpose (2:7-8).
- (3) The Book of Nehemiah (and Ezra 4:7-23) indicate that the restoration was done in the most distressing circumstances (note Dan 9:25!).

Dating Nehemiah's Decree:

- (1) The biblical data: Neh 2:1 gives the date as the month Nisan in the 20th year of Artaxerxes. Comparing this to Neh 1:1, the author must be using the Tishri-to-Tishri system (rather than the Persian of Nisan-to-Nisan).
 - (2) Historical date: The father of Artaxerxes (i.e., Xerxes) died shortly after Dec 17, 465.¹² Hence, the accession year of Artaxerxes would be Dec 465 to Nisan, 464 BC. His first regnal year as King (according to the Persian system) would be Nisan 464 to Nisan 463 (or Tishri 464 to Tishri 463 by the Jewish system).
 - (3) Thus the decree in the 20th year would be Nisan of 444 BC according to the Tishri-to-Tishri system.¹³
4. Conclusion Regarding the Decree for the Terminus a quo The best position seems to be the authorization to Nehemiah to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and its walls, which was given by King Artaxerxes in the month Nisan of 444 BC.

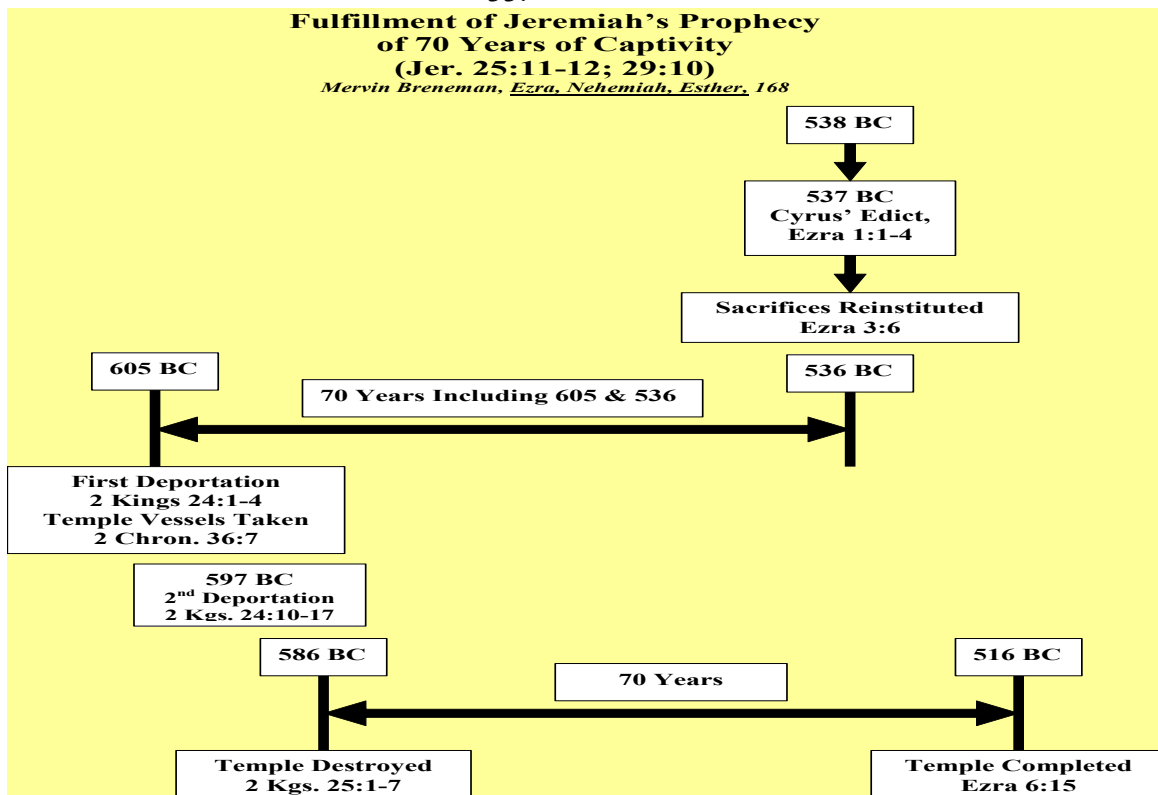
5. Dating Christ's Ministry**a. Possible Years**

- (1) The year of crucifixion must be when Passover (14th Nisan) was on a Friday (so Gospels; esp. Mt 27:62; Mk 15:42; Lk 23:54)
- 2) Solved astronomically, the 14th of Nisan fell on Friday in the years 27, 30, and 33 AD (but on other days in all other years between 26 and 34 AD).¹⁵

b. Which Year in Particular? This can be determined on the basis of Christ's cleansing of the Temple on the 1st Passover of His public ministry (Jn 2:20), in which a comment is made about 46 years of the Temple. Taking this as the Temple edifice (naov") and using the date supplied by Josephus (18/17 BC), Hoehner concludes that the 1st Passover of Christ's public ministry would be AD 29 or 30. Hence, the crucifixion would have to be in AD 33.16

c. Conclusions:

The triumphal entry of Christ was on the 10th of Nisan, March 30, AD 33 (see Exodus 12—this was the day the lamb was to be selected for Passover). Christ died a few days later on Friday, April 3, AD 33.



7 Weeks	=	49 Years
62 Weeks		434 Years
+ 1 Week		+ 7 Years
70 Weeks	52	490 Years

The Calculation of “69 weeks” until Messiah

- a. Calculate the Total Years
 - (1) Each "week" is seven years
 - (2) Messiah will come after 69 "weeks" ($7 + 62 = 69$)
 - (3) Number of years until Messiah: $69 \text{ "weeks"} \times 7 \text{ yrs/wk} = 483 \text{ years}$
- b. Calculate the Total Days
 - (1) We need to assume that the years are "prophetic years" of 360 days, not solar years of $365 \frac{1}{4}$ days
 - (2) $483 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days/yr} = 173,880 \text{ actual days}$
- c. Convert to Solar Years
 - $173,880 \text{ days} \times 1 \text{ yr}/365.242 \text{ days}$
 $= 476.068 \text{ solar years}$
 $= 476 \text{ solar years} + 25 \text{ days}$
- d. Calculate from the Date of the Decree to Nehemiah
 - (1) Decree: March 5, 444 BC¹⁹
 - (2) Add 476 years + 25 days [Note: 1 BC to AD 1 = 1 year]
 - (3) Result: March 30, AD 33

Conclusion

From the decree of Artaxerxes on Nisan 1, 444 BC, 69 "weeks" would bring us to March 30, AD 33, the very day of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

- (1) Zech 9:9 – The prediction of Israel's king coming on a donkey was fulfilled on March 30, AD 33.
- (2) Luke 19:41-44 – Israel's failure to discern the significance of this occasion. This was the time when Jesus was formally presented to the nation as her Messiah and evaluated by the Sanhedrin.

e. The Tragedy of the 69th Week, 9:26

Da 9:26 26 “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

“the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing”

- a. This refers to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ "The 'cutting off' of Messiah indicates a violent death. The Hebrew word is used of making a covenant, involving the death of a sacrificial animal (Gen 15:10,18). The word is used of the death penalty (Lev 7:20) and always of an unnatural violent death (cf. Isa 53:8)."²⁰

b. **“have nothing”** - Earlier in Daniel, the expectation had been given that the Messiah "Son of Man" would inherit the kingdom (Dan 7:14; cf. Ps 2:8) and take up His Messianic rule over the nations. In light of Israel's rejection and the crucifixion of her Messiah, the kingdom was not inaugurated at the time of His first coming

“destroy the city and the sanctuary” This looks at the tragic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70 by the Romans under Titus. Notice carefully: it is not the "Prince who is to come" that destroys Jerusalem. Rather, it is the "people of the prince who is to come." The people obviously refers to the Romans, and hence the future "prince" (the "little horn" or Antichrist) must arise out of the remnant of the Roman Empire—a fact consistent with what was taught in Dan 7:24-25.

Crucial Observation: The "prince" does not come immediately after the 69th week, and he does not come until after AD 70!

f. The Final Week: A Covenant with Israel (9:27)

Da 9:27 27 “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

1. The final week (7 years) does not follow the first 69 weeks, and we must understand some gap of time between verse 26 and verse 27.22
 - a. The goals of 9:24 were not accomplished with Christ's 1st coming.
 - b. The destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70) is after the first 69 weeks by 37-38 years, but before the 70th week.
 - c. The "abomination of desolation" (alluded to in 9:27) is regarded by Christ as a future event connected with the 2nd coming (Mt 24:15).
 - d. The text never says that the prophecy in 9:24 is for 490 consecutive years; rather they are seen in 70 units of seven years.
 - e. The details of 9:27 fit well with what we know elsewhere of the tribulation period, especially the similarity to Dan 7:24-25. [A half "week" would be equivalent to "time, times, and half a time"].
 - f. Paul, in 2 Thess 2:4, makes clear allusion to Daniel by describing the Antichrist as "the son of destruction" and associating him with a temple desecration.
2. The one making the covenant is the Antichrist
 - a. In 9:25 mention is made of "Messiah the Prince," whereas v 26 speaks of "the prince who is to come." The latter cannot be Christ, because he is connected with the people that destroyed Jerusalem (i.e., the Romans).
 - b. The near antecedent in 9:27 for "he" (i.e., the one who makes the covenant) is the prince of 9:26.23.
 - c. There is a strong Christian tradition that the 70th week is the future time of the Antichrist.

(1) Irenaeus (c. AD 120-202) not only identifies the subject as the Antichrist, but takes the last half of the week as the 3 1/2 years of his power.²⁴ He will make an "abomination of desolation" in a literal temple (fulfilling Mt 24:15 and 2 Thess 2:4).

(2) Hippolytus (d. ca. AD 236) authored the earliest extant commentary on Daniel. He indicated that this period included the 3 1/2 year reign of the future Antichrist.

3. Details of the Covenant

- a. The covenant is with "the many." This refers to Israel (notice "your people" in 9:24).
- b. Hence, the covenant is an agreement between Israel and the "prince" of 9:26 connected with the future phase of the Roman Empire, i.e., the Antichrist.
- c. The nature of the covenant is not revealed, but this may be some type of agreement guaranteeing the peaceful existence of Israel as a nation.
- d. The Antichrist seems to honor the covenant for the first half of the week (3 and 1/2 years) but then deceitfully reneges on the agreement.
- e. The remainder of the verse seems to look at violations of the temple worship during the final 3 and 1/2 years.

(1) Sacrifices are no longer allowed.

(2) The "abominations" seem to look at Dan 12:11 and Mt 24:15 with the "abomination of desolation" set up in the temple. This may be connected with the atrocities of 2 Thess 2:4 and the image of the beast in Rev 13 (in this regard, Antiochus was a prototype of the Antichrist).

4. The Outcome

This desolater will succeed momentarily, but only for the final 3 and 1/2 years of the Tribulation. Then will come his "destruction" which looks back to Dan 7:11,26—this is the work of Jesus Christ at His 2nd coming.

X. DANIEL X—DANIEL'S LAST VISION

A. The Setting of the Vision, 10:1-4. 539 or 536 B.C. Cyrus is ruler over all the Empire and Darius, 9:1

Da 10:1-4 *I In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision. 2 In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. 3 I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed. 4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris,*

1. Time setting: "third year of Cyrus" (10:1)
 - a. Date: about 536 BC (cf. 10:4)

b. Significance

- (1) 538 BC - Cyrus permitted the return of the Jews to Israel
 - (2) 537 BC - Some of the returnees had built the altar to the LORD during the 7th month, i.e., Tishri (see Ezra 3:1-2)
 - (3) 536 BC - The foundation of the Temple was laid in Jerusalem (see Ezra 3:8- 10).¹ Note: According to Ezra 4:24, the work on the Temple did not get very far. It was halted in 536 BC and was not resumed again until 520 BC.
 - (4) The year 536 was a significant time. Although Daniel was probably too old to make the return trip, many others had gone back to Judah and Jerusalem. The prayer of Daniel in ch 9 was seeing fulfillment: as the restoration work was underway at last, Daniel was no doubt concerned for the future of his people back in their homeland.
2. Daniel's Concern (vv 2-3) These verses do not tell us what his great concern was, but 10:12 provides a further clue: he was seeking "understanding." The purpose of the angel in 10:14 provides another clue ("*an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days*"). Apparently, he had been humbling himself and seeking to know more about God's plan for Israel's future. The phrase in 10:12 "*I have come in response to your words*" suggests Daniel was praying.

B. The Subject of the Vision, 10:5-6

Da 10:5-6 *5 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. 6 His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.*

C. The Sequel of the Vision, 10:7-21

1. Daniel Overcome, 10:7-9. Physical and emotional affect of prophecy.

Da 10:7-9 *7 Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves. 8 So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength. 9 But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.*

2. Daniel Strengthened and an Explanation Given by an Angel, 10:10-14.

Da 10:10-14 *10 Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. 11 He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. 12 Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your*

words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. 13 “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. 14 “Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.”

Spiritual Warfare

a. The Nature of the Warfare in Daniel 10 The battle between the angel and the “prince of Persia” was the result of the angel trying to bring a message to Daniel in response to his prayer, fasting, and humbling. The “prince of Persia” sought to prevent or delay God's angel in doing so. Michael finally arrived to help, and he fought the "prince of Persia" while the first angel completed his mission to Daniel.

b. The Nature of the Angel's Message "It was to be a revelation of the warfare (10:1) between Israel and her neighbors until Israel is given peace by the coming Prince of peace" (Pentecost, 1366).

c. Implications for Believers Today

(1) Apparently, the demonic host are organized with various levels of authority. Some of them appear to have responsibility over certain geopolitical areas to carry out Satan's schemes and thwart the work of God.

(2) Demons do have certain limited powers of obstruction and rebellion. They also have the capacity to bring about hindrances and delays to the delivery of answered prayer.

(3) Though they are powerful, God imposes limitations on their activity and assault on believers (Job 1:2; 2:6; 1 Cor 10:13).

A Word of Caution about Spiritual Warfare

Unfortunately, a misguided emphasis has come about in recent years in relation to the issue of spiritual warfare. One example of this would be the idea of providing “prayer protection” for angels in their struggles against demonic forces. There is no biblical support for this concept, it tends to elevate the power of Satan and demons too much, and it lends itself to an *overly-mystical* approach to Christianity. Caution also needs to be exercised in regard to the matter of binding “territorial spirits,” especially as a *necessary prelude* to evangelism. In this chapter Daniel never prayed against the demonic spirits. The New Testament does not instruct or provide patterns for this. Our primary responsibility is to *resist Satan*. Hence, let us not be overly preoccupied concerning what goes on at the angelic level.

3. Daniel Overcome Again, 10:15-17.

Da 10:15-17 15 *When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. 16 And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, “O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength. 17 “For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me.”*

4. Daniel Strengthened Again and an Explanation Given by an Angel, 10:18-21. Verse 21 Book of Truth – Secret book recording God’s plans and purposes for mankind and the earth, His decrees and plans are truth.

Da 10:18-21 18 Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. 19 He said, “O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!” Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, “May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.” 20 Then he said, “Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. 21 “However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince.

D. The Prophecies of the Vision, chaps. 11-12.

Theme of this chapter

To trace the rivalry between the kings of the south (Egypt) against the kings of the north (Syria) which gave rise to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who in turn foreshadows the Antichrist of the end times.

Observation: Throughout many years of conflict between these two powers, Israel is continually caught in the middle.

CHAPTER 11
VV. 2-35
BACKGROUND AND RISE OF ANTICHRIST
VV. 36-45
WARFARE OF THE ANTICHRIST

Observation: Since the initial revelation about the "little horn" (Antichrist) in Dan 7, this topic has been gathering momentum. In the latter part of ch 11 (vv 36-45), it will come into full bloom. Once again, though, Antiochus will be portrayed as the one foreshadowing him.

1. Prophecies concerning Persia, 11:1-2.

Da 11:1-2 1 “In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him. 2 “And now I will tell you the truth. Behold, three more kings are going to arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all of them; as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, he will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece.

2. Prophecies concerning Greece, 11:3-4.

Da 11:3-4 3 “And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. 4 “But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his own descendants, nor according to his authority which he wielded, for his sovereignty will be uprooted and given to others besides them.

- Most of this chapter will deal with the strife between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucid kings of Syria. Verses 2-4, however, provide an introduction to this by depicting the overthrow of the Persian Empire by Greece which in turn established these political entities.

- There were certainly more than four Persian kings prior to the Empire of Greece, but the point of verse two is simply to call attention to the 4th Persian king, Xerxes I (486-465 BC), as the one most responsible for sowing seeds of bitterness and hatred between Persia and Greece (cf. Dan 8:7).⁵
- Xerxes's assault on Greece (ca. 480 BC) led to the burning of Athens, but the outcome was disastrous for the Persians. The Persian fleet was defeated at the Battle of Salamis, and in the following year (479), the Persian army was defeated at Plataea.⁶
- Note: a time gap of approximately 150 years between v 2 and v 3.
- "A mighty king" = Alexander the Great (crushes Persia in 331 BC)

3. Prophecies concerning Egypt and Syria, 11:5-35. SEE MY HANDOUT ON THESE VERSES

a. Period #1 – vv. 5-6. 323-246 BC

Da 11:5-6 5 *"Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with one of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain will be a great dominion indeed.*
6 *"After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in those times.*

Alexander the Great (336-323)	
<i>The Ptolemies</i> Ptolemy I Soter, son of Lagi (323-282) Ptolemy II Philadelphus (282-246)* Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221) Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-203) Ptolemy V Epiphanes (203-181) Ptolemy VI Philometor (181-146)	<i>The Seleucids</i> Seleucus I Nicator (312/11-280) Antiochus I (280-261) Antiochus II (261-246) Seleucus II (246-226) Seleucus III (226-222) Antiochus III the Great (222-187) Seleucus IV (187-175) Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164)

Two kingly lines

(1) King of the North: Syria [1st king = Seleucus I Nicator]

(2) King of the South: Egypt [1st king = Ptolemy I Soter]

Note: Both men had been generals in Alexander's army
An attempt at diplomatic marriage (6)

A treaty of peace was attempted in 252 BC when the king of the south (Ptolemy II Philadelphus) gave his daughter Bernice in marriage to the king of the north (Antiochus II Theos). The attempt is a failure, and Bernice is eventually murdered.

b. Period #2–vv. 7-9. 246-240 BC

Da 11:7-9 7 *"But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against their army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and*

display great strength. 8 *“Also their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from attacking the king of the North for some years. 9 “Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land.*

Ptolemy III Euergetes (brother of murdered Bernice)

- a. Vs 7 - Sought revenge and attacked Syria, pillaging the Seleucid capital of Antioch (the Third Syrian War raged 246-241 BC).
- b. Vs 8 - Booty taken!
- c. Vs 9 - A counter-attack by Seleucus II of Syria was unsuccessful.

c. Period #3–vv. 10-19. 223-187 BC

Da 11:10-19 10 *“His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his very fortress. 11 “The king of the South will be enraged and go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the latter will raise a great multitude, but that multitude will be given into the hand of the former. 12 “When the multitude is carried away, his heart will be lifted up, and he will cause tens of thousands to fall; yet he will not prevail. 13 “For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment. 14 “Now in those times many will rise up against the king of the South; the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down. 15 “Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand their ground, not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand. 16 “But he who comes against him will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to withstand him; he will also stay for a time in the Beautiful Land, with destruction in his hand. 17 “He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand for him or be on his side. 18 “Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn. 19 “So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more.*

1. Battle of Raphia (11-12)—Egyptians defeat Antiochus (ca. 217 BC) Ptolemy IV Philopater dealt a setback to Antiochus III on the southern Palestinian border. As a result, Antiochus was compelled to cede all Phoenicia and Palestine back to Ptolemy IV.
2. Antiochus's Defeat of the Egyptians (13-16) Following the death of Ptolemy IV in 203 BC, Antiochus III saw an opportunity to strike back at Egypt. Due to his alliance with Philip V of Macedonia (and some Jewish revolutionaries), he prevails this time over Egypt.
 - a. Note v 14: *"the violent ones among your people"* - refers to pro-Seleucid Jews who joined the revolutionary cause against Egypt.
 - b. V 15 - Captures a *"well fortified city"* Following the Battle of Panium (ca. 200 BC), the Egyptians had retreated to the coastal city of Sidon. Antiochus, however, laid siege to it and the Egyptians were unable to withstand. This gave Antiochus control of all the lands (including Israel *"the Beautiful land"*) down to

Egypt. This represents the final and definite replacement of Ptolemaic rule by the Seleucids in Palestine.

3. Another Diplomatic Marriage (17) Antiochus gave his daughter Cleopatra to be the wife of Ptolemy V in 194/3 BC.⁷
4. A Dismal End to Antiochus's Reign (18-20)
 - a. Defeat by a Roman commander (18) Part of the terms of surrender involved the taking of 20 hostages to Rome, one of whom was the king's 2nd son, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
 - b. V 19 - Antiochus III and his soldiers were killed while attempting to plunder the Temple of Bel at Susa in 187 BC.

d. Period #4—v. 20

Da 11:20 20 *“Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle.*

V. 20—Antiochus’s successor (Seleucus IV) was left with a great debt to Rome. This resulted in him sending out tax collectors, one of whom (Heliodorus) plundered the Temple in Jerusalem.

e. Period #5—vv 21-35. THE REIGN OF ANTIOCHUS IV EPIPHANES

1). His Rise to Power (21-24) "a despicable person"

Da 11:21-24 21 *“In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue. 22 “The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant. 23 “After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people. 24 “In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest parts of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but only for a time.*

- a. Antiochus was not the rightful heir to the throne; rather, the son of Seleucus IV (i.e., Demetrius Soter IV) was the heir.¹
- b. Claimed divine honors for himself on coins he had minted.²
- c. Vs 24 - Uses bribery to gain power!

2) Campaign Against Egypt (25-28)

Da 11:25-28 25 *“He will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South with a large army; so the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war; but he will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him. 26 “Those who eat his choice food will destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain. 27 “As for both kings, their hearts will be intent on evil, and they will speak lies to each other at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still to come at the appointed time. 28 “Then he will return to his land with much plunder; but his heart will be set against the holy covenant, and he will take action and then return to his own land.*

- a. Historical Background: During the years 169-68 BC, Antiochus carried out his military campaigns against Egypt. The exact dates and number are uncertain, but there were two primary campaigns:
 - (1) 1st = 169 BC Result: Dealt a defeat to Egypt
 - (2) 2nd = 168 BC Result: Romans intervene; halt Antiochus
- b. V. 26 - Victory for Antiochus over Ptolemy Philometor
- c. V. 27 - Notice the treachery and dishonesty between the Egyptian and Syrian rulers!
- d. V. 28 - Antiochus's return trip to Syria His heart is "*set against the holy covenant*"! The "holy covenant" is that special relationship between Israel and her God. Antiochus despised Israel's faith.
 - (1) Puts down a small insurrection in Jerusalem
 - (2) Plunders the Jerusalem Temple

3) His Persecution of Israel (11:29-35) Occasion: Following Antiochus's second invasion of Egypt (168 BC)

• **Unsuccessful Invasion of Egypt (29-30a)**

Da 11:29-30 29 *"At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. 30 "For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.*

- a. "*ships of Kittim*" - This is a reference to Rome.³ Antiochus would have been successful again, but he was handed a letter from the Roman Senate ordering him not to fight against Egypt.
- b. "When the Syrian king hesitated, the Roman consul drew a circle around Antiochus in the sand and told him he must make a decision before stepping out of the circle."⁴

• **Persecution of the Jews (30b-35)**

Da 11:30-35 30 *"For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 "Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation. 32 "By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action. 33 "Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days. 34 "Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy. 35 "Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time.*

a. **“enraged at the holy covenant”** (30b) While Antiochus was in Egypt on his 2nd campaign, there had been a rebellion in Jerusalem. Jason, the former High Priest, was making an attempt to regain Jerusalem.

b. **Antiochus's persecution against Jerusalem** “No doubt, in light of the recent events with Egypt and Rome, Antiochus felt compelled to communicate a message that insurrection would not be tolerated. Such opposition to Hellenization and Seleucid authority could only be interpreted as sympathy for Egypt, for only from Egypt could the rebels hope to receive support for the liberation movement. Therefore, upon reaching Jerusalem, he had the walls of the city torn down, slaughtered thousands of Jews, and sold many more into slavery (II Macc. 5:11ff). In addition, he himself entered the Holy of Holies, with Menelaus as his guide.”⁵

c. The Aftermath (31)

(1) Apollonius was left behind to make sure that the "rebellious Jews" presented no danger to Antiochus's kingdom.

(2) Apollonius's stay in Jerusalem only made things worse.

(a) The pollution of the Temple by Gentiles worshipping other deities.

(b) The use of sacred prostitutes.

(3) There was a great Jewish flight out of Jerusalem and abandonment of the Temple.

(4) Antiochus now saw Judaism as detrimental to the unification of his realm.

(5) Orders were issued for a further religious persecution which occurred in December of 167 BC.⁶

(a) A special emissary was sent to Judaea to force the Jews to transgress the laws of their religion.

(b) Jewish ritual was prohibited (1 Macc 1:45-6).

(c) The sacred precincts were formally given over to the worship of Zeus Olympios (1 Macc 1:54; 2 Macc 6:2).

(d) A small pagan altar was erected on top of the altar of burnt offering (1 Macc 1:59; 4:44), an abomination to the worship of the LORD God.

(e) Copies of the Torah were burned.

- (f) Sabbath keeping and circumcision were forbidden.
- (g) Jews were forced to celebrate the king's birthday every month and to participate in the festal procession of Dionysus.
- (h) High places and altars on which swine and other animals were to be sacrificed were erected throughout Judea. [Inspectors were appointed]

d. Result: The Maccabean Revolt (32-35) "*the people who know their God will display strength and take action*" (32) The leading priest of the town of Modein (Mattathias) not only refused to worship at one of the pagan altars, but slew the officer of Antiochus carrying out the command. The sons of this priest (including Judas Maccabaeus) led the Jewish people in an uprising against Antiochus, and eventually overthrew their oppressors and rededicated the Temple in December of 164 BC

4. Prophecies Concerning the Antichrist, 11:36–45. How do we know? Because nothing in history corresponds to this. It also corresponds with Mt. 24:15; 2 Thes. 2; Rev. 13 etc.

Beginning in v 36, the text leaps ahead in time to the period when the Antichrist is going to persecute Israel.⁷ This sudden transition might appear unduly abrupt had it not been for chapters 7–8 of Daniel which depicted Antiochus as a type of the Antichrist. The first four verses of this section (11:36-39) provide us with a general description of the Antichrist, while the final six verses (11:40-45) depict his military ventures that lead up to the battle of Armageddon.

Note that the change in subject from Antiochus (vv 21-35) to the Antichrist (vv 36ff.) is very subtle, and yet a new subject is clearly in view beginning at Daniel 11:36.

Support:

- a. The primary subject in vv 36ff. is not referred to as the *King of the North* but rather as "the king". Normally in ch. 11, a qualifier such as "south" or "north" is included (exc. 2-3,27).
- b. In vv 21-35, Antiochus IV served in the role of the *King of the North*, as the other Seleucid kings before him. In

- v 40, however, the *king* is apparently in contention with both the *King of the North* and the *King of the South*.
- c. Verse 35 still anticipates the "end time", whereas verse 40 reflects that the "end time" has finally come.
 - d. Dan 12:1-4 is actually a continuation of 11:36-45 and forms one unit with it. The opening verse of ch 12 connects the two temporally with the expression "Now at that time." But the mention of the time of greatest distress in 12:1 (certainly the "Great Tribulation") and the mention of the resurrection in 12:2 certainly gives the whole unit an eschatological setting. It is certainly beyond the time of Antiochus!
 - e. Related to "d" above, there is a large "leap forward" in time between 11:35 and 11:36. However, there are other "leaps" in time throughout chapter 11 (e.g., between v 2 and v 3).
 - f. The death of the "king" recorded in Dan 11:45 takes place in Israel, but the details do not correspond to the death of Antiochus (who died in Persia).
 - g. The comment in Dan 11:36 that "he will exalt himself above every god" is not exactly true of Antiochus. Antiochus exalted Zeus on the reverse side of his coinage (cf. G. Archer, "Daniel," *EBC*, 144).

a. He will be a dictator

Da 11:36 36 *"Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done."*

b. He will exalt himself

Da 11:36 36 *"Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done."*

c. He will magnify himself above other gods

Da 11:36 36 *"Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done."*

d. He will speak against the true God

Da 11:36 36 *"Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done."*

e. He will be successful until the end of the Tribulation

Da 11:36 36 *“Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.*

f. He will be irreligious

Da 11:36 36 *“Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.*

g. He will be a military man

Da 11:37 37 *“He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself above them all.*

h. He will be energized by Satan

Da 11:38 38 *“But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor him with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures.*

i. He will honor those who honor him

Da 11:39 39 *“He will take action against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god; he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and will cause them to rule over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.*

j. He will be opposed by alliances formed against him

Da 11:40 40 *“At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through.*

k. He will enter Palestine and kill Jews, but many Arabs will escape

Da 11:41 41 *“He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.*

l. He will defeat Egypt

Da 11:42-43 42 *“Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. 43 “But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians will follow at his heels.*

**m. He will be disturbed by news from the east and north
(Antichrist is the king of the West)**

Da 11:44 44 *“But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.*

n. He will destroy many people

Da 11:44 44 *“But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.*

o. He will station his soldiers in Israel

Da 11:45 45 *"He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him."*

p. He will be destroyed

Da 11:45 45 *"He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him."*

5. Prophecies Concerning the Tribulation and the Millennium (chap. 12)

1. Chapter 12:1-4 is closely related to the previous section (11:36-45) as evidenced by the initial words in 12:1, *"Now at that time."*
2. There is a continuity to both units, namely, the activity and atrocities carried out by the Antichrist who is introduced in 11:36. However, the emphasis of the final section in chapter 11 varies slightly from the opening of chapter 12:

Chapter 11:40-45 <i>vs 40 - "And at the end time"</i> THE BROAD OUTLINE OF MILITARY CONFLICTS CONDUCTED BY THE ANTICHRIST IN THE TRIBULATION Good News: Antichrist Destroyed!	Chapter 12:1-4 <i>vs 1 - "Now at that time"</i> THE HARSH REALITY OF PERSECUTIONS TO FALL ON ISRAEL DURING THE TRIBULATION Good News: Resurrection for Faithful Jews!
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The Main Point of Chapter 12

This chapter discloses what will happen to the Jews who must endure the Tribulation under Antichrist at the "end time" and what Daniel can personally anticipate.

(1) Israel's distress, 12:1a

Da 12:1 1 *"Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued."*

a. Continuity of persecution theme in Daniel

- (1) Example of Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-nego for refusal to bow to Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold (Dan 3)
- (2) Example of Daniel for refusing to cease his prayers to the God of Heaven (Dan 6)
- (3) The "little horn" in Dan 7 (symbolic of the Antichrist) will wage war with the saints and overpower them (7:21), and "wear down the saints of the Highest One" (7:25) for 3 1/2 years.
- (4) The "small horn" in Dan 8 (symbolic of Antiochus who serves as a type of the Antichrist) removes the regular sacrifice and tramples the "host" (Israel). See Dan 8:24 - *"he*

will destroy the mighty men and the holy people."

- (5) Antiochus (the type of the Antichrist) is said in Dan 11:30 to "*become enraged at the holy covenant and take action.*"

b. Old Testament Anticipations of the Tribulation for Israel

- (1) Restoration from "distress" predicted for the "latter days" (Deut 4:25-31). Note: in light of this passage and Deut 28--30, the "distress" of the *end times* is part of God's plan of discipline for His people who are disobedient to the covenant. Because of the Abrahamic Covenant, however, God will not allow them to be exterminated, but will rescue them.
- (2) According to Jer 30:1-11, Jacob's "time of distress" (same expression as in Dan 12:1) will result in Gentile political dominion ("the times of the Gentiles") being lifted from Israel so that they can serve Messiah Jesus (note 7-9).
- (3) Two-thirds of the Jewish remnant will perish in the Tribulation, although the surviving ones will call on the Lord for salvation (Zech 13:7-9).
- (4) Jesus predicted that the Great Tribulation (the final 3 1/2 years of the 70th "week") would be initiated by the "abomination of desolation" being established in the Temple (Matt 24:15-22).

c. Conclusion

The *Great Tribulation* will be a time for the Antichrist to carry out the most horrible atrocities ever known to man. This period of persecution for 3 1/2 years will be aimed at Israel in particular, although ultimately this is a measure of discipline from God Himself. When the majority of the Jews have been killed, Israel will at last be brought to her knees before God and look to Jesus Christ in faith.

d. What precipitates the Great Tribulation?

- (1) Dan 12:1 - Michael will arise
- (2) Rev 12:7-13,17 - spiritual warfare in heaven results in the expulsion of Satan and his angels from heaven. Satan then empowers the Antichrist (*Beast* of Rev 13).

e. Two consolations for Israel: *God's R & R*

- (1) God will "rescue" His people before they are exterminated (Zech 14:2-4; cf. Rom 11:11-12; 25ff.).
- (2) God will "resurrect" the righteous to eternal life.

(2) Israel's protection by Michael, 12:1b

Da 12:1 1 *"Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued."*

(3) Israel's resurrection, 12:2; Resurrection of the dead. NOT a general resurrection – show 4 phases of the 1st resurrection.

Da 12:2 2 *"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt."*

(4) Israel's reward, 12:3

Da 12:3 3 *"Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever."*

- a. Since the previous verse focused on the Tribulation in which many of Daniel's people would be martyred, those who would not live to see the "rescue" by Messiah's return could at least have the consolation of being resurrected at a later time.
- b. Dan 12:2 only points forward to the fact of resurrection for both the righteous and the wicked, not that both occur at the same time.
- c. Commendation for Winning Souls to Christ (12:3b) *"those who lead the many to righteousness"*

The "Rapture" of the Church (1 Cor 15:50-58; 1 Thess 4:13-18)

What? Those who are part of the body of Christ will be supernaturally taken to be with the Lord. First those who have died will be resurrected and those who are living will be translated.

When? Apparently before the beginning of Daniel's 70th "week"

- a) The NT epistles promise that the "body of Christ" will be delivered from the "wrath to come" (1 Thes 1:10; 5:9). Note 1 Thes 5:2 - the context is the "day of the Lord," clearly an eschatological wrath, not simply a general wrath.

- b) The promise of Christ to the church at Philadelphia (and to others by implication) was that they would be kept from (not *through*) the "hour of testing" which was coming upon the whole world (Rev 3:10). In the context of Revelation, this has to refer to the Tribulation before Christ's return in glory.
- c) If the *rapture* occurs at the same time as the 2nd Coming, it becomes difficult to explain the need for a separation of the sheep and goats following the 2nd Coming (Matt 25:31ff.).

(5) Israel's desire for answers, 12:4

Da 12:4 4 *"But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase."*

a. The thought that "*knowledge will increase*" probably does not refer to general knowledge, which obviously increases with each new generation. The word "knowledge" is more literally "*the knowledge*", and points back to the initial part of the verse where "these words" and "the book" are mentioned. The phrase looks forward to the increase in prophetic knowledge, and the unique role that Daniel's book would play.

b. Two key factors contribute to the increase in prophetic knowledge

- (1) The completion of God's written revelation to man through the Scriptures.
- (2) An increase of interest in prophetic revelation as the "end time" approaches. There have been more books written on prophecy in the last 50 years than the preceding 200 years combined. This *prophetic interest* will certainly accelerate during the Tribulation!

b. The Tribulation and the Millennium, 12:5-13

(1) The first question and answer, 12:5-7. How long? 3 ½ years

Da 12:5-7 5 *Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on that bank of the river. 6 And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be until the end of these wonders?" 7 I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and*

half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.

a. Insight on Verse Six

The question raised in v 6 has to do with the time involved: how long? Unfortunately, the *NASB* weakens the question.

- (1) *NASB* = "How long will it be until the end of these wonders?"
- (2) The word translated "wonders" is the Hebrew word which means "things which are incredible, hard to imagine or believe." The *NIV* has rendered this better: "*these astonishing things*." They are so terrible as to be astonishing to all who hear?
- (3) In this context, this refers to the astonishing things that were announced for Israel in the future Tribulation when the Antichrist would have authority to afflict God's people.

b. The answer to the question (7)

- (1) The time: "*time, times, and half a time*" i.e., 3 1/2 years. This is the same expression as appeared in Dan 7:25, and corresponds to the half "week" in Dan 9:27 where the "prince to come" (the Antichrist) will bring "desolations."
- (2) The main point of this time period: "*shattering the power of the holy people*" (7b) This needs to be interpreted in light of Dan 12:1 where attention was called to "the sons of your people." Hence, "the holy people" is the nation of Israel, the Jews. Though the Tribulation will bring God's judgment on the whole world (even believers in Christ), it is aimed at Israel in particular.
- (3) The Bad News: Correlation with Rev 11:1-2: the nations of the world will trample underfoot Jerusalem for 3 1/2 years.
- (4) The Good News: The shattering of Daniel's people will eventually make the Jewish people willing to welcome Jesus Christ as their Messiah (see Matt 23:37-39).

(2) The second question and answer, 12:8-13; What then? Spiritual cleansing and understanding, v. 10; Thirty additional days (v. 11); Forty-five additional days, (v. 12); Daniel's death and resurrection, v. 13.

Da 12:8-13 8 *As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?"* 9 *He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.* 10 *"Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.*

11 "From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. 12 "How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days! 13 "But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age."

a. God's purging and refining of Israel will not be understood by the unbelieving among the Jews ("the wicked"), but the "completed Jews" with insight (who believe Jesus is the Messiah) will understand.

b. Further Goals Subsequent to the Tribulation (11-12)

(1) The 1290 Days

This is a period of time measured from the setting up of the "abomination of desolation" and halting of the Temple sacrifices at the middle of the final seven year period.¹ The latter half of the final "week" will be 3 1/2 years or 1260 days, at which time Christ will return in glory. So the 1290 days apparently extend 30 days beyond the 2nd Coming of Christ. Even though Christ returns at the end of 1260 days (and the atrocities of the Antichrist are terminated), the work of purging and refining the people of God is still in progress.²

(a) The anticipation for the end of the present age is explained in the "parable of the tares" (Matt 13:24-30; 36-43).

(b) Judgment upon the nations (Matt 25:31-46)

(c) Judgment upon Israel (Ezek 20:34-38)

Point: Only believers go into Messiah's kingdom!

(2) The 1335 Days

Another 45 days beyond the previous 30 will result in a very special blessing! No hint is given as to the nature of the blessing, but the extra days could be allotted for making certain necessary preparations for the millennial kingdom. They are about to become citizens of the most wonderful society governed by the most wonderful ruler in all human history!

(3) A Special Promise to Daniel (12:13)

a. The promise of being resurrected—"rise again"

b. The promise of an "*allotted portion/inheritance*" Daniel will one day be a part of the kingdom of the "Son of Man"

and will be well rewarded for a life of faithful service (cf. 2 Tim 2:12).

Suggested Books

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Davis, Dale Ralph. *The Message of Daniel*. *The Bible Speaks Today*, ed. J. A. Motyer. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013.

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Stedman, Ray C. *On the Way to the Future: Daniel's Visions and the Believer's Hope*. Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House, 2014.

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Whitcomb, John C. *Daniel*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1985.

Wood, Leon. *A Commentary on Daniel*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.