

Christ in Prophecy

Pre-Trib 23: “Daniel 1: Validity of the Book”

© 2013 Lamb & Lion Ministries. All Rights Reserved.

For a video of this show, please visit <http://www.lamblion.com>.

Opening

Dr. Reagan: No book of the Bible has been attacked more viciously than the book of Daniel. Liberal critics hate the book with a passion because it contains precise prophecies, many of which have already been fulfilled in history. They argue therefore, that it must have been written long after the time of Daniel. What about it? Is the book a valid one that should be included in the Bible? Stay tuned for the opinions of 16 Bible prophecy experts.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. This week we are going to launch a series of programs that I hope will be fascinating and encouraging to you. You see folks I recently had the opportunity to interview a forum of 16 Bible prophecy experts regarding seven questions relating to the book of Daniel and over the next few weeks we will be sharing their answers to those questions with you.

The first question I asked concerns the integrity of the book and I worded the question as follows: “The book of Daniel has been attacked by liberal critics more than any other book in the Bible. They hate it because it contains such precise prophecies, many of which have already been fulfilled in history. They argue that it was written by someone other than Daniel about the time of Jesus. And they argue that all the prophecies related to the inter-testamental period were written after the fact. How do you respond to these attacks?”

Well folks, here are the responses of our forum members:

Part 2

AI Gist: Well I would say first of all Brother Dave that there have always been critics of God’s Word, people have never, many people have never accepted the fact that we have a miracle working God. And prophecy in itself is a miracle and they just cannot accept that. But besides that there are plenty of other support for the authority and validity of the book of Daniel, both from the secular world and from other prophets in the Bible. Josephus tells us about the time that Alexander the Great approached Jerusalem with his army and he was met by the High Priest who revealed to Alexander what the prophet Daniel had prophesized about him. And it so impressed him that he spared the city he didn’t actually try to destroy Jerusalem. And so this reference if that took place as Josephus said would have been around 300 BC much, much earlier than what the critics’ say that Daniel had to have been written. I think that probably for me you know the most definitive authority is our Lord Jesus. And He’s the one that said in His

Olivet Discourse, “When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet,” and He goes on to tell you know when this happens you should run for the hills. But he makes reference to his understanding and recognition of Daniel. And for me that just really settles it all right there.

Andy Woods: Well I would ask them to examine why they hate it first of all. I think the reason they hate it is because if the book was written in the 6th century and it is predicting things that happen in the 2nd Century then you’ve got an omniscient God that’s behind it who can see the end from the beginning, and that’s unacceptable to the liberal mind so they have to generate some kind of philosophy so they end up dragging it into the 2nd century and making it a history lesson. Another thing that comes to mind is what did Jesus say about it? You know those bumper stickers, what would Jesus do? What did Jesus say about the book of Daniel? And Jesus in Matthew 24:15 quoted Daniel 9:27 and He says, “The prophet Daniel says.” So the liberal mindset is someone other than Daniel wrote it, well that really doesn’t comport well with what Jesus said. And I think I’d rather agree with Jesus than the liberals at the end of the day myself, so, those would be my two basic answers to that.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum: Well to start I would a premise that either God does not exist, and if He does exist He doesn’t provide really true prophecies. So throw out those detailed prophecies that Daniel provides especially those in chapter 11. They have to give another accounting for it and so they have to give a late date for Daniel. That won’t solve all the problems because the Septuagint has the book of Daniel in, it which puts Daniel no later than 250 BC. And so a lot of the events like the Maccabean prophecies were not fulfilled until about a century after that. So we still have a problem no matter what. If you believe God that can do predictive prophecies there is no problem. But those prophecies they have to find another way to explain it, sets the basis they don’t have archaeological reasons for a late date of Daniel. It is just a presupposition God does not give those kind of detailed prophecies.

August Rosado: Well Dave, these critics hate the book of Daniel. You know Daniel was so accurate and precise on his prophecies that they say, “Well Daniel could not have written the book of Daniel someone after the fact wrote it, or someone after the event of the inter-testamental period wrote of the so called 400 years of silence.” Daniel wrote those prophecies in the 6th Century BC. Many of those prophecies were fulfilled in the 4th or 3rd century BC and there are other prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled in the future. Now we hear all the time, “Oh, Daniel didn’t write the book of Daniel.” But somebody in the New Testament confirms the authorship of the book of Daniel, clearly that is Jesus Christ. He says in Matthew 24:15, “When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place whosoever readeth let him understand.” Jesus is talking about that future desecration when the Antichrist goes into that third rebuilt Jewish temple and desecrates it. Jesus said Daniel wrote the book. To deny that Daniel wrote the book of Daniel is to deny the very words of Jesus Christ and we don’t want to do that.

Brian Thomas: You are definitely right in that the critics, the liberals, the atheists, agnostics they love to discredit the book of Daniel. And the reason they do so is because Daniel wrote with such accuracy and precision concerning prophecy. He wrote prophecies from the time of his day all the way to the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Now there are those that say Daniel actually wrote prophecy with more accuracy than historians have written history. And I certainly agree with that as well. So what the critics do is they will say, “Well it was written around the time of maybe 100 years before Jesus Christ.” Well they do that because they try to place it

after the time of Antiochus Epiphanies. Daniel wrote about prophecies concerning Antiochus Epiphanies with great accuracy and precision and that is of course shows a divine inspiration of our God. The critics though will say, "That that's not possible." But you can easily dismiss the critics because for example if we look at the Septuagint that is the translation of what we call the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek it was written, the translation was done around 280 BC long before the time of Antiochus Epiphanies. Then if we look at Alexander the Great he actually spared the city of Jerusalem from destruction because of the fact that the High Priest was able to show that Daniel prophesized of his empire. And then if we look lastly at our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Himself in Matthew 24:15 He referred to the abomination that causes desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet and therefore our Lord validated the book of Daniel Himself.

Daymond Duck: Well I would remind those critics of several things, first I would remind them that Jesus quoted from the book of Daniel. And I think that is very important, He called Daniel a prophet. And as far as I'm concerned that settles the issue for me. But second I would remind those critics of the Dead Sea Scrolls; scholars say that the Dead Sea Scrolls were hidden at least 200 years before the time of Jesus. If the Dead Sea Scrolls were hidden at least 200 years before the time of Jesus then the book of Daniel had to been written at least 200 years before the time of Jesus because a complete copy of the book of Daniel was found with the Dead Sea Scrolls. And the fact that the book of Daniel uses words and is written in a style that went out of use hundreds of years before the time of Jesus indicates that the book was written hundreds of years before the time of Jesus. And I think the last thing that I would remind those critics is that Daniel not only prophesized things that would happen before and during the inter-testamental period. He also prophesized things that would happen after the inter-testamental period. He prophesized that Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed, that the Roman Empire would break up. That the Roman Empire would come back into being. That Jerusalem and the Temple would be rebuilt. If Daniel could accurately prophesize things that would happen after the time of Jesus and the inter-testamental period he could also accurately prophesize things that would happen before the time of Jesus and the inter-testamental period. So I would say that those critics are wrong, the book of Daniel was written several hundred years before the time of Jesus.

Don Perkins: Well what I would say to the critics is that many of these guys they don't want to give God any credit that He can speak the future in advance. And Daniel is a perfect example of what God said he would do. God said that He's a God that He would speak the end at the beginning. And Daniel's prophecy is proof text to that. Now one of the problems I have with the critics is that if they don't believe what Daniel prophesized that have already come to pass, then they don't believe in the later part of the prophecies as well. Daniel was truly a man of God, his prophecies were truly of the Lord, and history bares it out. We can trust his prophecies. And I normally let them know well if you don't believe in the first part of Daniel's prophecies coming to pass, then you have no confidence in the later part, and I do.

Don McGee: Actually the accusations that the liberal critics present regarding Daniel are without any foundation, whether you are looking at from the internal or the external perspective, the evidence. I think more important than the accusations against Daniel, are the reasons for their accusations. And I think they could be classified basically into two areas. If they accept Daniel as an early date and that the prophecies that Daniel recorded were fulfilled literally then they have to admit that God is a miraculous God; that there is such a thing as miracles. If they admit that then they have to admit that these prophecies that Daniel wrote about regarding the

end times must also be fulfilled literally. Secondly one of the reasons they do not accept it as written as an early date is that it lifts up the Jews, the nation of Israel. Daniel is very specific, very clear, that the nation of Israel the Jewish people will play a very, very important role in end time prophecy and the history of humanity. And anti-Semitism just absolutely forbids the liberal critic from accepting that. Anti-Semitism is such a strong part of that kind of theology that Daniel no matter how clear it is, is totally rejected many times simply on the basis of anti-Semitism.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: You are watching Christ in Prophecy and a series of interviews with 16 Bible prophecy experts who are commenting on the integrity of the book of Daniel.

Ed Hindson: I think the very basic problem is that the critics for the most part (1) do not believe in predictive prophecy of any kind. So the fact that Daniel made any future prophecies is a problem for them right from the beginning. A priori, in advance you can't do that, I mean if you can predict the future this would be the Word of God and it can't be that. So if I'm determined that it has to be a humanistic book produced by a human being then I have to look for a humanistic explanation of how that book came to be.

So they reject the idea that he knew about the four empires that would succeed one another in advance even though the Roman Empire did not even exist at that time. And even a critic would have to admit if you push the date of Daniel back to the 2nd Century BC Rome still wasn't ruling the world at that point so they say, "Well he made a lucky guess." Or "People have read that into it after the fact." In reality God uses Daniel to help us understand what was going to happen in the future.

And the prophecies deal especially with the Jewish people, he keeps saying in the book, "your people," the Jews, "your Holy city," Jerusalem. These four empires that he predicts would succeed one another from Babylon to Persia to Greece to Rome all dealt with the Jewish people. The Babylonians destroyed the first Temple. The Persians allowed the Jews to rebuild the second Temple. The Greeks desecrated the second Temple and the Romans destroyed the second Temple. All of that is part of the total picture of that prophecy. When Daniel then goes on to predict what would happen in what we would call the inter-testamental period then the flag goes up again and they say, "Oh, he couldn't have known all of that in advance why it would take divine inspiration to understand that." So the first challenge is if you don't believe God can predict the future in advance then you are going to have to try to explain this away somehow.

Secondly they look at a few challenges in the text and say, "Well what about the Persian words that appear in the text?" Well Daniel tells you himself he is living in the Persian period after the fall of Babylon. The Persian words were all administrative titles that were used of administrators in the Persian Empire in part of the story that deals with the Persian aspect of the empire. The Babylonian part is clearly Babylonian and the three Greek words are instruments in Nebuchadnezzar's band that he has imported from Europe, his latest alternative rock band from Europe that is going to play at the dedication of his statue. The hermeunology used in the book clearly indicates a 6th Century author, not a 2nd Century author. The Aramaic of Daniel 2-7 is royal Aramaic it is 6th Century Aramaic it's not 2nd Century Aramaic, and the critics know that.

Gary Fisher: Well my first answer to that is Josephus Flavius he was the court historian for three successive Emperors in the Roman Empire. He records that Alexander the Great when he annexed Jerusalem received a copy of the book of Daniel and that was in 332 BC. So we have that record to know that the book of Daniel was at least recorded by 332 BC. So that is a pretty convincing argument. Second of all the Septuagint which was 300 to 200 BC included the book of Daniel so we have those two witnesses that are very strong.

Michael Norten: Jesus didn't have any problem with Daniel when he quoted him in Matthew 24. So I think that the biggest problem they have is Daniel 11 is so explicit in their prophecies they just can't stand prophecy being so accurate. So I think that is the big problem for them.

Nathan Jones: Well the critics are liberal theologians. They take the fact that Daniel was written during the exile 6th Century BC and they bring it all the way up to about 100 years before Christ and they do it because they hate Bible prophecy. They hate the fact that Daniel was so perfectly, precise about the history between especially the Seleucid's, and the Ptolemy's and the wars between them over 200 years. So they hate Bible prophecy so they have to do two things, they have to scuttle the date and they also have to scuttle the authorship.

And particularly with the authorship they have about four particular arguments that they make against Daniel being the author, for one they say that the Book of Daniel is filled with historical errors; like for instance Belshazzar being listed as the son of Nebuchadnezzar. But that is easy to explain because son was a common title in the lineage of the king, so it just meant that he was a descendent of Nebuchadnezzar. They said Daniel 12:1 speaks of his death, so how could Daniel write about his own death? It reads, "And Daniel remained there until the 1st year of King Cyrus." Well he remained there, it doesn't mean he died. So again that is kind of a useless argument.

They say the unity of the book of Daniel disproves that he was the author, chapter 1-6 is historic in Daniel's life, and 7-12 is prophetic visions. But who says that Daniel sat down in one time and wrote the whole thing in one shot, I mean he had a whole lifetime to write this over. And we come in and out of things that happen in our lives but it still has unity of theme.

Another is languages chapter 1 and the beginning of 2 and 8-12 were written in Hebrew and the rest the middle chapters are written in Aramaic. Well that's easy to explain because the ones that are written in Hebrew are for the Jews. The ones that are written in Aramaic are for the Gentiles, so that explains it too.

And I think Jesus, Jesus is the one who said in Matthew 24:15 it reads, "So when you see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation spoken of through the prophet Daniel, let the reader understand." Spoken of by the prophet Daniel, Jesus confirmed the authorship. So we know that Daniel was written by Daniel.

Randall Price: But the real problem is for external evidence for Daniel is that they want to date Daniel in the 2nd Century BC because it has prophecies that are so accurate, and so clear concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanies and the Maccabees and so they say there is no way this could be known except through what they call post eventu prophecy, that's after the fact prophecy, so someone must have lived at that period to be writing in an apocalyptic genre in the pseudonym of someone else a famous person like Daniel and then putting this as past history and in sense it is future history.

Problem is the Dead Sea Scrolls, found the Dead Sea Scrolls the oldest copies of the Bible that we have among them we now know the 11 fragments of the book of Daniel, that is 11 different copies of Daniel. And these are all reliably dated to at least the late 2nd Century or the early 1st Century BC. And the problem is they are already copies of copies, they are not fresh off the press, these are ones that have been in circulation. They are obviously recognized as canonical, that is they are part of what is considered sacred Scripture. So they come from the same time period, they allege this pseudo Daniel wrote. Well there's a couple of problems; it takes a long time for any type of writing to be considered and adopted as relevant literature, much less sacred Scripture there is authority invested in it. And then if you don't know who the author is, even more time. But that's not the case, this is a book that is already considered sacred Scripture at the very time they say Daniel, the Daniel they have in the 2nd Century BC would have written it, so it is impossible. And it pushes the date of Daniel back further and anytime you push it back before the 2nd Century BC you already have to deal with the fact that you've got predictive prophecy. So your case is won, their case is lost because the only reason they argue this way is because they are anti-supernatural so they don't want to see there is a God who can tell the future.

Tim LaHaye: There's an old hackneyed idea from the liberal era when they were trying to destroy Daniel, but that is included in the Septuagint so they won't admit that it is at least 600 years or 500 years before Christ. But the Septuagint came out in 275 BC so that's in print and it had to have been in print before that because you know as well as I do that it took probably a 100 years for it to circulate out. And so it is at least 350 years so what's the different? 500 years or 350 it is a supernatural act of God. And I think the Dead Sea Scrolls kind of erased that when they discovered some of the writings of the prophets and realized that our Bible is the most authenticated book in the history of the world.

Tom McCall: The one that they mostly deal with is the idea that Daniel could not have written about the events of the 300's and the 200's and the 100's BC writing in 500 and so forth. And he describes in considerable detail such events as Alexander the Great depicted as the ram with one horn and that one horn being broken off and four horns taking its place, what a fantastic picture of what actually happened at the time of Alexander the Great. In 300's BC he couldn't have known that they say. The description of the war between the Israeli's and Antiochus Epiphanies around 175 BC and Antiochus Epiphanies desecration of the Temple and the Maccabean War is described in considerable detail in Daniel. So the critics have decided, well it had to have been written after 175 BC, why? Because his prophecies are too accurate, and his history is too accurate for somebody to have written it back in the 500 BCs. So since they do not believe in predictive prophecy it cannot have been written in 500 BC. They rake him over the coals. But however we believe that God does know the end from the beginning. He does give predictive prophecy and He gives predictive details.

Gary Frazier: Well first of all let me just say that we always have those "liberal" theologians who are constantly attacking the accuracy and the authority of the Word of God. I frankly personally don't spend much time with these people because I've found through the years that no matter how we reason with them you're simply not going to change their mind. They basically do not believe in the inerrancy, in the authority of the Word of God. And so you can talk to these supposed educated, articulate, well informed individuals but they already have their mind made up because they've bought into these various forms of German Rationalism, forms of Higher

Criticism and so forth and they try to take the Bible as though it is just simply a standard text. It's not. It is God breathed.

And more importantly the Jewish people accepted the book of Daniel as being written by the prophet Daniel. Jesus Himself in Matthew 24 referred to the book of Daniel when he said, "When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet." So if you take that perspective then you have to understand that book had to either been written in the very short span of the life and ministry of Jesus, or Jesus got it wrong. And I'm not buying that. So I don't waste a lot of my time. You know God's called me to preach the book, not necessarily defend it.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: As we bring this program to a close I would like to say a hearty, "Amen!" to the arguments that our forum members have presented in behalf of the integrity of the book of Daniel. The historical evidence proves that the book existed long before the events it prophesied, and in my opinion the most important argument in defense of Daniel is the fact that Jesus Himself endorsed the book when He quoted it in his Olivet Discourse. Folks, if it was good enough for Jesus, then it is certainly good enough for me.

Next week, the Lord willing, we are going to continue with our interviews of the 16 Bible prophecy experts that constitute our forum on Daniel. We will take a look at one of Daniel's most famous prophecies called "The Prophecy of the 70 Weeks of Years."

Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program