

Daniel

The Times of the Gentiles

A child's worst nightmare is the thought of being _____ and taken away from his or her family, never to see them again. For a young teenager named Daniel, this horrifying scenario came true. At about _____ years of age, he was taken captive by the _____, spent three years being indoctrinated in their teachings and customs, and was given a new _____ and a new _____, in order to try to totally _____ his Jewish heritage.

But Daniel was no ordinary young man. And in spite of being in a pagan land and being coerced to worship pagan gods, he remained _____ to his God ... and his God remained faithful to him.

The book of Daniel gives us a rare glimpse into what was happening in Babylon during Judah's 70-year _____. God chooses the young man Daniel to be His _____ to both the Gentile and Jewish peoples, and to declare God's present and future purposes for them. While the prophet Ezekiel (Daniel's contemporary) emphasized the nation's _____ restoration, Daniel concentrates on its _____ restoration.

The book of Daniel is often called the "_____ of the Old Testament" because of its surprisingly _____ prophecies of the near and distant futures of the world. Scholars have oft said that to understand the book of Revelation, (the N.T. Apocalypse) one must first understand the book of Daniel (the O.T. Apocalypse). The book of Daniel is unique in that it is written using two different _____. Writing of the Gentiles' future, Daniel uses the Gentile language of _____. Writing of the Jews' future, Daniel reverts back to his native _____ language.

Daniel's name means "God is my _____," and Daniel clearly showed by his own devotion to God that he took his name seriously, for Daniel is one of the few major Bible characters about whom _____ bad has been recorded.

The book of Daniel can be outlined as follows:

<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Theme</u>
1	The History of _____
2–7	The Future of the _____
8–12	The Future of _____

Some key verses:

1. Daniel and his three friends are _____ to and _____ in Babylon (Dan. 1:3–7).
2. Daniel and his friends _____ the king's food and end up _____ (Dan. 1:8,15).
3. Daniel and his friends “_____” at the _____ of their class (Dan. 1:17–20).
4. Daniel _____ and _____ King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the _____ image (Dan. 2:31–34).
5. Daniel's three friends _____ to bow to the king's statue, are _____ into a flaming furnace, but miraculously _____ (Dan. 3:16–18,24,25).
6. Nebuchadnezzar's _____ leads to seven years of boanthropy, followed by _____ and the _____ of God (Dan. 4:24,25,34,37).
7. Belshazzar literally sees the _____ on the wall and then is _____ (Dan. 5:1–6,25–30).
8. Daniel is thrown into the _____' den for _____ to God, but God _____ him (Dan. 6:3–7,10,13–16,19–24).
9. Daniel dreams of the _____, seeing four _____ that represent four future _____ (Dan. 7:2–7,17).
10. Daniel sees a _____ and _____ kingdom, _____ Kingdom (Dan. 7:9,10,13,14,18).
11. Daniel has a vision of a _____ and a _____, depicting the future _____ and _____ Empires (Dan. 8:3–8,19–21).
12. Daniel has a vision of a small _____, depicting both the future _____ ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and the future _____ (Dan. 8:9–11,23–25).

13. Seventy _____ (_____ years) of Israel's future is revealed to Daniel, including the seven-year _____ period (Dan. 9:24–27).
14. Daniel _____ for three weeks, and in response, an _____ comes to reveal the future (Dan. 10:2,14).
15. Daniel is given an overview of world history from _____ time until the _____ of time (Dan. 11:2,36).
16. It is revealed to Daniel that after the unprecedented _____ of the Tribulation, there will be a _____ of saints, followed by Christ's Millennial _____ (Dan. 12:1,2,13).

Addendum

Question: "Who was Antiochus Epiphanes?"

Answer: Antiochus Epiphanes was a Greek king of the Seleucid Empire who reigned over Syria from 175 BC until 164 BC. He is famous for almost conquering Egypt and for his brutal persecution of the Jews, which precipitated the Maccabean revolt. Antiochus Epiphanes was a ruthless and often capricious ruler. He is properly Antiochus IV, but he took upon himself the title "Epiphanes," which means "illustrious one" or "god manifest." However, his bizarre and blasphemous behavior earned him another nickname among the Jews: "Epimanes," which means "mad one."

An altercation between Antiochus Epiphanes and a Roman ambassador by the name of Gaius Popillius Laenas is the origin of the saying "to draw a line in the sand." When Antiochus brought his army against Egypt in 168 BC, Popillius stood in his way and gave him a message from the Roman Senate ordering him to stop the attack. Antiochus responded that he would think it over and discuss it with his council, at which point Popillius drew a circle in the sand around Antiochus and told him that, if he did not give the Roman Senate an answer before crossing over the line in the sand, Rome would declare war. Antiochus decided to withdraw as Rome had requested.

But the most famous conflict connected to Antiochus Epiphanes is the Maccabean revolt. During that time of history, there were two factions within Judaism: the Hellenists, who had accepted pagan practices and the Greek culture; and the Traditionalists, who were faithful to the Mosaic Law and the old ways. Supposedly to avoid a civil war between these two factions, Antiochus made a decree outlawing Jewish rites and worship, ordering the Jews to worship Zeus rather than Yahweh. He wasn't just trying to Hellenize the Jews but to totally eliminate all traces of Jewish culture. Of course, the Jews rebelled against his decrees.

In an act of brazen disrespect, Antiochus raided the temple in Jerusalem, stealing its treasures, setting up an altar to Zeus, and sacrificing swine on the altar. When the Jews expressed their outrage over the profaning of the temple, Antiochus responded by slaughtering a great number of the Jews and selling others into slavery. He issued even more draconian decrees: performing the rite of circumcision was punishable by death, and Jews everywhere were ordered to sacrifice to pagan gods and eat pig flesh.

The Jewish response was to take up arms and fight. In 167—166 BC, Judas Maccabaeus led the Jews in a series of victories over the military forces of the Syrian-Greeks. After vanquishing Antiochus and the Seleucids, the Jews cleaned and restored the temple in c. 165.

Antiochus Epiphanes is a tyrannical figure in Jewish history, and he is also a foreshadowing of the coming Antichrist. The prophet Daniel predicts an atrocity in the temple in the end times (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). Daniel's prophecy concerns a coming ruler who will cause the offerings to cease in the temple and set up "an abomination that causes desolation." While what Antiochus did certainly qualifies as an abomination, Jesus speaks of Daniel's prophecy as having a still-future fulfillment (Matthew 24:15–16; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20–21). The Antichrist will model Antiochus Epiphanes in his great pride, blasphemous actions, and hatred of the Jews.

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