

# Book of the Daniel the Prophet: Introduction

Jesus is the Pinnacle of Human History. Praise Him!

**I. Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC: Completed about 534bc

- Years get **numerically higher** before Jesus and after Jesus

## Jesus is the pinnacle of time and history

- Time Splits as Jesus enters the dimension of time from eternity
- **BC:** Before Christ
  - Latin Translation "Before the Lord's incarnation"
- **AD:** Anno Domini; The Year of Our Lord

**John 8:58** ..."Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

**Colossians 1:17** He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

**Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

- **Educational Community/Cults**
  1. BCE: Before the common era
  2. CE: Common era
- Written during **Collapse of Israel's Monarchy**
- Confucius, Buddha, Daniel, Ezekiel all contemporaries of this time period
- Written about 534bc

**II. Author:** Jesus quotes Daniel "the Prophet" as the author ...**case closed**

... when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' **spoken of by Daniel the prophet.** [Mat 24:15 and Mark 13:14]

- Role model for Men/Woman of God
- 2 people where no sin is mentioned: Joseph and Daniel; both executive rulers
- **Daniel and 3 Friends of Royal Blood:**
  - Josephus: Daniel and three friends related last King Judah, Zedekiah
  - **These 4:** Handsome, brilliant, under God's care to be His witness for His Name in Babylon...for such a time as this

**III. Critics:** Time between 175-164bc described in such detail critics believe written after it happened during time of the Maccabees [between OT and NT period]...really?

*...written by an unknown author, who, living 400 years after the days of Daniel, assumed Daniel's name, and palmed off on his own generation his own spurious work as the genuine work of a hero long dead [Halley]*

- **Question:** If today I wrote a book describing in detail what was going to happen on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 what would you do with the book?

- **Useless.** Throw it away?
- **Daniel wrote this before it took place...**

**Isaiah 46:10** [I declare...] the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand...'

*We suspect that the real crux of the attempt to discredit the Book of Daniel is the unwillingness of intellectual pride to accept the marvelous miracles and amazing prophecies recorded in this book. [Halley]*

- As a matter of fact...In 322bc Alexander the Great discontinues his conquest of Jerusalem after being shown **references of himself** the Book of Daniel by the priest Jaddua [Josephus]
- **New Discoveries:** Daniel had to have been an eye witness!

#### **IV. Setting:** Babylon [Modern day Iraq]

- **"Wonder city"** of the ancient world
- Most powerful empire since that time but lasted only about 70 years
  - Daniel was alive during time of **Seven Babylonian Kings:**

1. Nabopolsasser	625-604bc
2. Nebuchadnezzar	606-561bc
3. Evil-Merodach	561-560bc
4. Neriglissar	559-556bc
5. Labash-Marduk	556bc
6. Nabonidas	555-536bc
7. Belshazzar	536bc
- **Daniel was in Babylon from 606-534bc:** 72 years. **Saw its rise and fall:**
  1. From 1<sup>st</sup> yr. of Jewish Captivity to 2 yrs. after return captivity
  2. From 1<sup>st</sup> yr. of Nebuchadnezzar through last 5 kings of Babylon
  3. Daniel was there past fall of Babylon into Persian Empire
  4. Through Darius the Mede into 3<sup>rd</sup> year of **Cyrus the Persian**
    - Called by Name 150 years before his birth [Is. 44:28]
- Babylon known as "Cradle of Human Race" near what some believe was near:
  - Garden of Eden
  - Tower of Babel
- **Hot spot for kings:** Babylonian, Assyrian, and Greek [Alexander the Great]
- Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 45 years at while Babylon at its peak
- Streets paved with 3 ft. sq. stone slabs. Can still walk where Daniel walked
- Walls: 60 miles around the city, 300 feet high and 80 feet thick
  - 35 Feet below the ground to stop enemy tunneling
  - Bricks: 1 foot square and 3-4 inches thick
- Between wall and city was 1/4 mile of nothing all the way around Babylon
- Recent excavations show that protection for the city included:

- Canals [moats] filled with water
- 250 Towers on wall
- Guard rooms for soldiers
- 100 brass gates
- Euphrates river split city in two equal sections
- Both banks guarded by brick walls with 25 gates connecting
  1. Streets
  2. Ferry boats
  3. Bridge on stone piers 1/2 mile long and 30 ft. wide, 12 ft. high

**Dragged to another nation by your enemies and seeing greatest of human accomplishments. Left home for a place that is not your home!**

**Hebrews 14:21** ...here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

**Boys will have to be Holy in an unholy land!**

**1 Peter 2:11** Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**Looking forward to a city made by God that will dwarf Babylon!**

**Hebrews 11:10** [Abraham...] waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God... **16** [God's people] desire a better... heavenly country...[God] **has prepared a city for them.**

**Discouragement when we set our sights on what man can do...**

**John 14:1** "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

**Sometimes we think we are living under tremendous oppression from our leaders**

- **Nebuchadnezzar: King of Babylon** [World]
  - Daniel was Nebuchadnezzar's friend and advisor
  - Ruled Babylon 45 out of its 70 years of existence
  - **Father Nabopolassar** revolted against Assyrian oppression in 625bc
    1. Nabopolassar ruled Babylon from 625-604bc
  - 609bc little Nebuchadnezzar was placed over armies by dad
    1. Took Israel and some Jewish captives in 606bc
    2. Of them were Daniel and 3 friends [12-15 yrs old] Royal Line
    3. **This first siege** begins prophesied 70yrs. of Jewish servitude
      - Why? Why taken away by enemies for 70 Years?
      - 1 Ch. 36: 490 yrs. Jews failed to keep Sabbath for land
        - Work land six years and let it rest one year

- God "You owe me 70 years"
- 605bc Nebuchadnezzar conquers Egypt famous battle of Carchemish
  - 1. Beginning of Babylonia Empire**
- Jeremiah tells those left in Judah to surrender to Babylon...they don't
  1. Jeremiah/Ezekiel both warn that Nebuchadnezzar God's instrument of judgment...advice disregarded
- 597bc Nebuchadnezzar goes back to Israel for **Second Siege**
  1. Takes King Jehoiachin [aka Jeconiah] and more captives
  - 2. One being Ezekiel:**
    - Ezekiel and Daniel contemporizes
    - Ezekiel writes in book that God says:
    - "Daniel is the standard of righteousness"

**Ezekiel 14:14** [God said] Even if these three men, Noah, **Daniel**, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness," says the Lord God.

- 586bc Nebuchadnezzar Burned Temple/Jerusalem: **Third Siege**
  - **Cannibalism** after disregarding Jeremiah and Ezekiel
    - After Assyria [N] and Babylon [S]
  - Consequences of Disregarding God. **Told to leave**

**Lamentations 2:20** [After Babylonian Sieges] See, O LORD, and look! With whom have You dealt thus? Should women eat their offspring, The little ones who were born healthy? Should priest and prophet be slain In the sanctuary of the Lord?

**Lamentations 4:10** The hands of compassionate women Boiled their own children; They became food for them Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

**Ezekiel 5:10** [Prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem] 'Therefore, fathers will eat their sons among you, and sons will eat their fathers; for I will execute judgments on you and scatter all your remnant to every wind.

- Why such harsh judgment?

**Deuteronomy 28:47** "Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, 48 therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. [c.f. entire chapter]...

**Deuteronomy 28:53** "...Then you shall eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy will oppress you.

**God means what he says and says what He means.**

- **Harsh leaders? Complaints?**

1. 3<sup>rd</sup> siege Nebuchadnezzar took more captives including King Zedekiah

- **Ezekiel prophesies:** "King Zedekiah you will never see Babylon..."

**Ezekiel 12:13** I will also spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. **I will bring him to Babylon**, to the land of the Chaldeans; **yet he shall not see it**, though he shall die there. [You're not going to see Babylon...but you will die there?]

- **Jeremiah records fulfillment:**

**Jeremiah 39:6** Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the nobles of Judah. 7 Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with bronze fetters to carry him off to Babylon. 8 And the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people with fire, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem.

- Next 13 years Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre [585-573bc]
- Nebuchadnezzar died in 561bc and **is now with the Lord**

**Nebuchadnezzar Cameo** cut by his order has this inscription: *"In honor of Merodach, his lord, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in his life-time had this made"*



- **Nebuchadnezzar Palace**

- Daniel would "hang out"
- One of most amazing building ever constructed
  1. South walls of throne room were 20 feet thick

2. North side protected by three walls
3. In front of them more walls 50ft. thick
4. 1899-1917 Banquet Hall excavated 173'x56' [Josephus]
  - Rebuilt by Saddam Hussein

○ **Hanging Gardens of Babylon**

- One of Seven Wonders on the ancient world
- Built by Nebuchadnezzar for his Median Queen
  1. Beautiful daughter of Cyaxeres who had helped Nebuchadnezzar conquer Nineveh
- 400 sq. feet
- Terraces and top covered by flowers, shrubs, trees
- Garden on roof watered from reservoir
  1. Water raised from river by hydraulic pumps"
- Under Arches: Luxurious apartments
- Built while Daniel was Chief of wise men



**V. Religion:**

- Great Temple of Marduk [Bel] adjoined Tower of Babylon [Tower of Babel?]
  - Golden idol of Bel and Golden table: 50,000 lbs. gold
  - Top of Great Temple of Marduk:
    1. Golden idols of Bel and Ishtar [Baal/Ashtoreth]
    2. Two Golden Lions
    3. Golden Table 40 ft. Long and 15 ft. wide
    4. Human figure of solid gold 18 ft. high

**Isaiah 14:3** [Babylon the **Golden City**] It shall come to pass in the day the Lord gives you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to

serve, 4 that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: "How the oppressor has ceased, The **golden city** ceased!"

- 53 Temples and 180 Altars to Ishtar
- Know as birthplace of false-religion
  - Tower of Babel
  - God would destroy it [false-religion] [Revelation 18]

## **VI. Daniel-Revelation Connection:**

- Book of Daniel lays foundation for Book of Revelation
- Book of Revelation explains Book of Daniel
- Daniel explains ALL of Gentile [non-Jewish] history in advance

## **VII. Breakdown:**

- **Ch. 1-6: Moral Lessons:** Historical Narrative
  - 1: Deportation of the 4 Teenagers: Courage to Stand
    1. Confronted with compromise: Diet change
    2. Nebuchadnezzar "slow roast" those who opposed
  - 2: Daniel and friends raised up after Daniel interprets dreams
  - 3: **Refusing to Bow: Furnace**
  - 4: Conversion of Evil King: Written by Nebuchadnezzar
  - 5: Babylon Falls
  - 6: Lions Den; Daniel Delivered
    1. Magi: Persian priesthood under Daniel's leadership revolt
- **Ch. 7-12 Prophetic Visions:** Origin from outside of dimension of Time
  - 7: History from Daniel into our future
  - 8: Alexander the Great
  - 9: 7 Weeks [69-70] Church parentheses in God's dealing with Israel
  - 10: **God's governing in unseen realm/ Spiritual Warfare**
  - 11: Historic events including Cleopatra
    1. 400 Silent years between OT and NT covered here in advance
  - 12: Second Coming of Jesus Christ: Consummation of ALL things

## **VIII. Language:** Aramaic [Chaldee] from 2:4-7:28

- Commercial and Diplomatic language of the day
  - Expected as Chapter 4 written by Nebuchadnezzar
- Rest of the book is Hebrew

*One commentator would suggest that if you are...*

- Surrounded by a godless crowd
- People taking the name of God in vain every moment
- People who agree with the ideas and attitudes of the world and its ways
- People who ridicule/make fun of the things of God
- People who show little interest in what God says to mankind

**...then I suggest that you read carefully the book of Daniel.**

**Deuteronomy 28:47** "Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything..."

**Daniel and the 3 Boys will show us how to serve God with joy and gladness of heart giving thanks for the abundance of everything and in every situation**



