

THE BOOK OF
DANIEL

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. (Da 2:44)

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PREFACE

Why is the Book of Daniel so important? Why is this book of prophecy commented on by both religious and non-religious persons alike? Why are the fiery darts of doubt and skepticism flung at the Book of Daniel more than any other Old Testament book? I believe, one primary reason, is because the Book of Daniel reveals the timeline for the establishment of God's Kingdom on the earth, a subject that the god of this world vehemently opposes. The

importance of this time schedule cannot be overstated, for without it the student of the Bible has nowhere to hang all the prophetic passages found scattered throughout the prophets, passages concerning the latter days. Daniel is the key to unlocking the "when" of prophetic events. When does the Tribulation period transpire? When is the abomination setup in the holy place? When does the



Antichrist come against Israel and when does God establish His long-awaited Kingdom on the earth? Daniel answers the "when." And while we may not be able to agree on all the nuances contained in this great book, we can all agree on the overall theme laid out before us in Daniel; that the God of heaven will establish His Kingdom on this earth and will reign forever.

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INTRODUCTION

Historical Captivities:

Northern Tribes: Assyria took the ten northern tribes of Israel into captivity under King Shalmaneser (*2 Kings 17:1-6, 23*). Fourteen years later, Sennacherib, King of Assyria, came against Judah and took the fenced cities (*2 Kings 18:13*). King Sennacherib desired to take Jerusalem as well, but God miraculously delivered it (*2 Kings 19:32-35*).

Southern Tribes: Even though God had miraculously delivered Jerusalem from the Assyrian King Sennacherib, He would later allow the Babylonians to come and take it. The reasons for God allowing the captivity of Judah are as follows:

1. Hezekiah, king of Judah, allowed the heathen kings from Babylon to see all the treasures of the house of the Lord (*2 Kings 20:12-21*)
2. Judah worshiped heathen gods, turning from the one true God, just as the northern tribes had done previously (*Israel: 2 Kings 17:7-18! Cf. Judah: 2 Kings 21:10-16*)
3. Israel had not kept the land Sabbath. While the people were removed from the land in exile, the land could enjoy its Sabbaths, which had not been kept. (*2 Chronicles 36:21*).

The Destruction of Jerusalem: The destruction of Jerusalem took place in **three sieges**: The **first siege** was in approximately 606 B.C., during the reign of **Jehoiakim**. During this time Daniel and others were taken to Babylon (*2 Kings 24:1,2, 10; Daniel 1:1*). The **second siege** was during the reign of **Jehoiachin**, in approximately 598 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar again came against Jerusalem, and more people were taken, including Ezekiel (*2 Kings 24:11-17*). It was at this time that Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah king of Jerusalem. The **third and final siege** was in approximately 586 B.C., when Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon (*2*

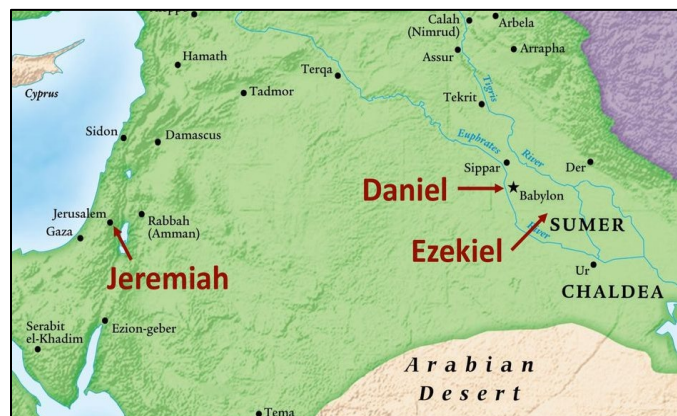


Figure 1 Geographic location of the prophets prior to the final siege against Jerusalem.

Kings 25:1-21). It was at this time the final destruction of Jerusalem took place, and the remaining Jews were taken into Babylon in a final deportation.

Therefore, the Book of Daniel records events from the first siege of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem, until the third year of Cyrus the Persian King. This covers a span of about 70 years.

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. (Daniel 1:1)

And Daniel continued *even* unto the first year of king Cyrus. (Daniel 1:21)

Nebuchadnezzar and the First Revelation: At the time of Daniel's writing, God's people are in a scattered state. The natural tendency would be to lament and wonder if God had cast them away for good. The exiles located by the river Chebar sing of this lamentation (Psalm 137). It is needful therefore, that God reassure His people of the hope of His return and the fulfillment of His promises to them. This reassurance comes by way of revelation, a revelation that does not come through Israel, but a heathen king, Nebuchadnezzar. Through the other tongues of this heathen nation, God would reconfirm His promises to His people (*Jeremiah 5:15; Isaiah 28:11, 33:19; Zeph. 3:9*).

Placement of the Book of Daniel: Daniel is almost directly in the middle of all the prophets, sitting at the end of the major prophets and the beginning of the minor prophets. This shows the importance of the Daniel's writing, and the wisdom of God in its placement¹. It is the connecting point to all the other prophets. With Daniel's book, all the prophetic information contained in the prophets now has a timeline.

The book of Daniel also has an inordinate number of apocryphal² additions, such as The Prayer of Azarias, Song of the Three Holy Children, Susanna, and Bel the Dragon.

Writing of the Book of Daniel: It is also notable that the book of Daniel was originally written in two languages. Daniel 1:1 - 2:4a and 8:1 - 12:13 were written in *Hebrew*, while chapters 2:4b - 7:28 were written in Aramaic (*or Chaldean*).

¹ The book of Daniel was contained in the portion known as the "writings." The Hebrew bible is divided into the Law, Prophets, and the Writings.

² These are obviously tainted additions, but I cite them here as way to emphasize the popularity of the book.

Daniel Himself: Daniel was just a young Hebrew man when he was taken into captivity during the first siege against Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel was one of the “wisemen of Babylon” in the high court. He lived through the entire Babylonian captivity, 70 years. Though we are not told of Daniel’s death, it is believed he never returned from Babylon. Though a young man, he was devoted to God and he had a witness of prayer, fasting and scriptural study, all of which the book of Daniel records.



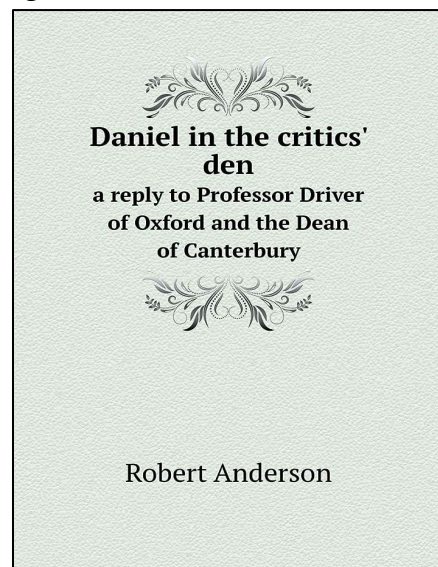
Figure 2 Modern day picture of the Tomb of Daniel, in Susu, Persia.

The Critics of the Book of Daniel: There have been many critics³ of Daniel's book. Its first critic was Porphyry (third century A.D.). Porphyry wrote fifteen books, one with the revealing title *Against the Christians*. Porphyry became of polytheist. He was a pagan writer who did everything to prove the Book of Daniel was written in 164 B.C., and that all its events were written after they had already passed.

Then came the higher critics in the 17th century who tried to topple the historical accuracy of the book. They followed suit with Porphyry, teaching it was written during the first or second centuries under the fictitious name "Daniel" during the time of the Maccabees.

Although there are many critics of the Bible that came out of the "higher criticism" and "Oxford Movement" of the late 1800's to early 1900's, there are a few worth mentioning, as they pertain to the Book of Daniel specifically. The late, great writer and defender of the Bible, Sir Robert Anderson⁴ fought by word and pen to defeat the attacks from these liberal critics in his great work, *Daniel in Critics Den*. His defensive work was aimed at two higher critics of the Bible, **Samuel Rolles Driver** (1846–1914) and **Frederic William Farrar** (1831–1903). I will not go into the details concerning the masterful defense that Sir Robert Anderson has done in answering all seven of Driver's and Farrar's attacks, but will merely direct the student to read Sir Robert's book for themselves.

I will however give an overview of both Frederic Farrar and Samuel Driver, the two higher critics of the Bible in the later 1800's and early 1900's; These men were on the forefront of casting doubt on the Book of Daniel, Farrar in his work *The Expositor's Bible: the Book of Daniel* (1923) and Driver in his work *The Book of Daniel* (1900). The combined attacks from these men are as follows:



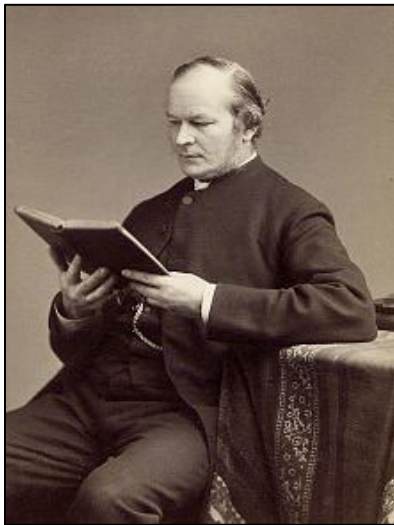
³ For detailed arguments defending the historical veracity of the Book of Daniel see *Daniel in the Critics Den: A Reply to Professor Driver of Oxford and the Dean of Canterbury* by [Robert Anderson](#) and *Daniel in the Critics' Den: Historical Evidence for the Authenticity of the Book of Daniel* by [Josh McDowell](#).

⁴ Sir Robert Anderson was not only head of Scotland Yard, presiding over the infamous Jack the Ripper case, but was also a biblical scholar who adamantly defended the faith. He was especially close to some of the greatest biblical teachers of his day, including [James Martin Gray](#), [Cyrus Scofield](#), [A. C. Dixon](#), [Horatius Bonar](#) and [E. W. Bullinger](#). He also preached with [John Nelson Darby](#) in the west of Ireland. Anderson was a member of the [Plymouth Brethren](#), first with Darby, then with the [Open Brethren](#) party, before returning to his Presbyterian roots. He wrote numerous theological works. [C. H. Spurgeon](#) commented that Anderson's book *Human Destiny* was "the most valuable contribution on the subject" that he had seen.

1. "There was no deportation in the third year of Jehoiakim."
2. "There was no King Belshazzar."
3. "There was no Darius the Mede."
4. "It is not true that there were only two Babylonian kings – there were five."
5. "Nor were there only four Persian kings – there were twelve."
6. "Xerxes seems to be confounded with the last king of Persia."
7. "All correct accounts of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes seem to end in about 164 B.C."

Frederic William Farrar (1831 – 1903)

Farrar was a classical scholar and a comparative philologist, who applied Charles Darwin's ideas of branching descent to the relationships between languages, engaging in a lingering debate with the anti-Darwinian linguist Max Müller. While Farrar was never convinced by the evidence for evolution in biology, he had no theological objections to the idea and urged that it be considered on purely scientific grounds. On Darwin's nomination, Farrar was elected to the Royal Society in 1866 for his philological work. When Darwin died in 1882, Farrar was one of ten pallbearers at his funeral in Westminster Abbey, and helped get the church's permission for Darwin to be buried there. Farrar even preached the sermon at his funeral.



Frederic Farrar argued the Book of Daniel was not "the work of a prophet in the exile (if indeed such a personage as Daniel ever really existed) but of some faithful Hasid in the days of the Seleucid tyrant⁵." Now this is very telling. Not only is Farrar arguing for a later date of Daniel's work, but he goes as far as to doubt if Daniel ever existed. The reason for insisting on a later date of the writing is the critics' continual motivation to see all prophetic portions of Daniel, regarding the captivity, deportation of the Jews, the rise of the Median and Persian kingdoms, the Grecian empires, and the "cutting off the Messiah" as merely written from a historical perspective.

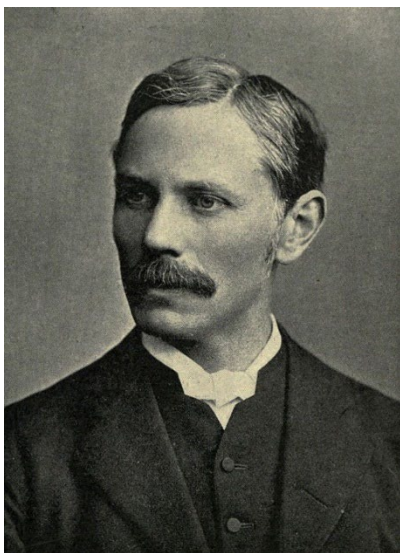
They thereby desire to remove all that is miraculous. Sir Robert Anderson covers this in detail in his book.

⁵ Seleucid empire 312 B.C. – 63 A.D.

Samuel Rolles Driver (1846 - 1914)

Samuel Driver was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford. In 1883 Driver succeeded Pusey⁶ as Regius Professor of Hebrew and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford until his death in 1914. Spearheaded by Westcott and Hort, Driver was a member of the Old Testament Revision Committee of the Revised Version (1876-1884) and was contributor to the Brown, **Driver**, Briggs⁷ *Hebrew - English Lexicon*.

Driver denied inspiration of the Bible as did his higher critic contemporaries. Driver said, "No part of the Bible, nor even the Bible as a whole is a logically articulated system of theology ... None of the historians of the Bible claim supernatural enlightenment for the materials of their narrative: it is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that these were derived by them from such human sources as were at the disposal of each particular writer..."



Driver charges Jesus with not being scientific, stating, "In no single instance, so far as we are aware, did He participate the results of scientific inquiry or historical research". Drivers was critical of Jonah and the Psalms, stating, "The majority of the Davidic Psalms are thus certainly not David's; is it possible to determine whether any are his?" Driver continues, "Though it may be ancient, it can hardly have been composed by David."

I close this brief section on **The Critics of the Book of Daniel** where Sir Robert Anderson closed in his book, *Daniel in the Critics Den*:

⁶ Edward Bouverie Pusey was part of the "Oxford Movement," a movement of high church members of the Church of England which began in the 1830s and eventually developed into Anglo-Catholicism. The movement, whose original devotees were mostly associated with the University of Oxford, argued for the reinstatement of some older Christian traditions of faith and their inclusion into Anglican liturgy and theology. They thought of Anglicanism as one of three branches of the "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic" Christian church. Many key participants subsequently converted to Roman Catholicism.

The movement's philosophy was known as Tractarianism after its series of publications, the *Tracts for the Times*, published from 1833 to 1841. Tractarians were also disparagingly referred to as "Newmanites" (before 1845) and "Puseyites" after two prominent Tractarians, John Henry Newman and Edward Bouverie Pusey.

⁷ Charles Augustus Briggs was also part of the higher criticism movement and very much a heretic. This is not an exaggeration, for Briggs was tried and convicted of heresy by his own liberal denomination. The Presbyterian church tried Briggs for heresy and "refused his appointment at the seminary." All this stemmed from his inaugural address in 1893 in Washington D.C. Briggs was excommunicated from the church and six years later he was ordained a priest in the Episcopal church.

“The religious revolt of the sixteenth century rescued the Bible from the Priest: God grant that the twentieth century may bring a revolt which shall rescue it from the Professor and the pundit.” - Sir Robert Anderson

The Internal Evidence: Laying aside the critics let us note the internal evidence that points to Daniel being the writer (**8:1; 9:2,20; 10:2**). The Lord spoke of the Book of Daniel being written by Daniel (**Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14**). And Ezekiel himself acknowledged Daniel,⁸ along with Job and Noah (**Eze 14:14 cf. 20**). And Ezekiel, in mocking the pride of the earthly prince of Tyre, referenced the wisdom of Daniel: **“the Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:”** (**Eze 28:3**)

There is also the testimony of Christ Himself. He said, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)” (**Matthew 24:15 cf. Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11**). Christ obviously must have regarded Daniel as a factually historical author of these prophecies to speak in this authoritative manner. Also, according to Christ’s own testimony in the Olivet discourse, the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy was yet future (after 30 A.D.), making it impossible to be fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 -165 B.C., as critics suggest. Christ’s statement in Matthew 24:15 is even more significant since Daniel’s three references to the “abomination of desolation” come from sections that all the liberal critics believe to be of Maccabean origin.

The visit of the wise men to Jesus is but one more nail in the coffin to the critics that insist Daniel was not writing at the time of the captivity. The visit from the wise men of the east can only be explained by the fact that they knew of a prophecy concerning the Christ child; this aligns perfectly with the timing of Daniel’s prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27). The book of Daniel records that Daniel was made “chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon” (Daniel 2:48). These wise men of the east are those who traveled looking for the “King of the Jews” (Matthew 2:2).

Babylon was an ancient city-state in the plain of Shinar, the eastern end of the fertile crescent. It was the center for intellectual life in western Asia and especially noted for its study of the stars. Thus, Babylon became the center for magicians, sorcerers, diviners, and other occult practitioners.

⁸ Thus, Daniel was around at the time of Ezekiel and not, as critics claim during the Maccabean period. However, higher critics claim while Daniel was a real person, the book of Daniel was written by someone under the pseudonym name of Daniel.

E. W. Bullinger in his great work *Witness of the Stars* proves the reality that before there was ever corrupt worship of the stars, there was such a thing as biblical study of the stars. The Zodiac, before corrupted by the heathens, was biblical. There was such a thing as a gospel in the stars⁹.

Thus, it is without dispute we rest assured that the book of Danile along with “To reject Daniel is to reject the Christian Religion”. - Sir Isaac Newton

The External Evidence: Flavius Josephus (*Antiquity of the Jews*, Vol. 1p. 388) also records an incident during the time of Alexander the Great which supports the early authorship of Daniel. Alexander the Great (330 B.C.), angry with the Jews who refused to give him their allegiance, was going to Jerusalem to punish them and make them an example. When he arrived, however, a procession of priests, which he had foreseen in a dream, met him. In this dream, God had promised him victory, and for this reason he spared the Jews. Josephus adds that the priests showed Alexander the prophecies in Daniel concerning a Greek conquering the Persian empire. This pleased Alexander, and he treated the Jews with no little kindness.

Circumstances in history support Josephus’ story. Alexander marched through that area on his way to Egypt, capturing every city as he went. Without question, he treated the Jews kindly.

Theologically: The book itself focuses on the sovereignty of God, God fulfilling His plan and purpose for the earth and His covenant people. The Book of Daniel, with the book of Revelation, reveals the consummation of all things pertaining to God’s promises. The LORD will establish His Kingdom over all the kingdoms of this world. The Book of Daniel gives us the time schedule¹⁰ from the Babylonian captivity to the Kingdom of Heaven. Daniel gives us the outline into which all other prophetic passages are to be placed. The time schedule (Daniel 9:24-27) even in its rawest form still gives us the basic order of events, from the captivity unto the Messiah the Prince, and after the cutting off of the Messiah, the Prince. Another “prince” shall come and confirm a covenant, only to break that covenant in the midst of it, wreaking havoc on God’s people and God’s land.

⁹ See also Joseph A. Seiss’ work originally published as *The Gospel in the Stars: or, Primeval Astronomy* (1882, E. Claxton & Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania).

¹⁰ Daniel’s schedule must be understood considering the mystery given to the Apostle Paul. It is only then that we can understand the delay of the establishment of the Kingdom.

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, **to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.** (Daniel 9:24)

Know therefore and understand, *that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks:* the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. (Daniel 9:25)

And **after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off,** but not for himself: and the people of the **prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;** and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and **unto the end of the war desolations are determined.** (Daniel 9:26)

And **he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:** and **in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,** and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Daniel 9:27)

Practically: We see Daniel live for the Lord in the midst of a corrupt world. Babylon was a city filled with heathenism, moral corruption and false gods, and yet Daniel would maintain his integrity being subservient to four kings and two world empires.