

The Book of Daniel-Lesson Two: The Five “W’s”
Dr. Luther Smith

Introduction

We are seeking to follow the LGH(C) hermeneutic to examine the book of Daniel.

So far, we have looked at *some* of the history and the culture of where these events in the Book of Daniel have taken place.

In this lecture, we will examine some of the words in this context to answer some of these questions before we dive into a "line-by-line" examination of the book.

The First “W” (The “Who” of the Book of Daniel)

- **Who** wrote this book?
 - Daniel (c.f., Dan. 7:1, 12:1-9)
 - King Nebuchadnezzar (c.f., Dan. 4:1-37)
- **Who** is the main subject?
 - Although the book bears Daniel's name, the main subject of the book is not Daniel, nor is it Nebuchadnezzar, **but it is the God of Israel** (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).
 - Israel's Captivity (Daniel 1:1-2)
 - God's activity w/Daniel and Company (Daniel 1:4)
 - The Declaration of the Rulers of Babylon (Daniel 4:34-36, 6:25-27)
- **Who** are the people mentioned in this book?
 - King Nebuchadnezzar (c.f., Dan. 1:1)
 - Daniel (Belteshazzar) (c.f., Dan. 1:1)
 - Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah (Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego) (c.f., Dan. 1:6, 19, 3:16, 19-20, 22, 26, 28-30)
 - King Darius the Mede (c.f., Dan. 5:3, 6:1-28)
 - Cyrus the Great (c.f., 6:28)
 - King Belshazzar (c.f., Dan. 8:1)
 - Gabriel the divine messenger (c.f., Dan. 9:21)
 - Michael the divine prince (c.f., Dan. 10:21, 12:1-4)
- **Who** Was This Written To?
 - **For the Jews who remained in the region of Babylon (and those living outside of Babylon)**
 - It is recorded that God gave them knowledge and wisdom (Daniel 1:17).
 - The "God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego." (Daniel 3:29)
 - The "God of Daniel" (Daniel 6:26)
 - Discusses the future of Israel as a nation (Daniel 9 & 11-12)
 - **For the Gentiles who remained in the region of Babylon and those outside of Babylon**
 - King Nebuchadnezzar's account (Daniel 4)
 - King Darius's praise to God (c.f., Dan. 6:25-28)

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- Future Gentile history (Daniel 2:39-45, Chaps. 10-11)

The Second “W” (The “What” is the book of Daniel)

- **What** are the main themes of this book?
 - To show that the God of Israel is the true God (Dan. 4:34-36, 6:25-27)
 - To reveal the future history of the kingdom of Babylon (Dan. 2:36-43)
 - To show the future history of the nation of Israel (Dan 9-12).
 - To show God's faithfulness to Israel in captivity (Dan. 9:20-27)
 - To inform Babylon of God's rule over all kingdoms (Dan. 4:34)
- **What** are the genres of this book?

There are **two** genres in this book.

 - Historical Genre (c.f., Daniel 1:1)
 - The period of time mentioned (third year)
 - The governing authorities mentioned (Jehoiakim/Nebuchadnezzar)
 - Regions mentioned (Judah/Babylon/Jerusalem)

These characteristics that underscore the historical genre are found throughout the Book of Daniel.

- Prophetic Genre
 - Daniel 2:1-45
 - Daniel 4:1-27
 - Daniel 7:1-28
 - Daniel 8:1-27
 - Daniel 9:20-27
 - Daniel 10, 12
- **What** are some of the important features of Daniel?
 - The Book of Daniel is written in Hebrew and Aramaic.
 - **Aramaic Section: Daniel 2:4-7:28**
 - Dreams and visions (and their explanations) make up more than half of the book of Daniel!
 - This book is NOT written in chronological order.

The Third “W” (The “When” of the book of Daniel)

- **When** was this book written?
 - Observations from the Book of Daniel (specifically Dan. 1:1)
 - The raid of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar happened in **605 BC** since the reign of Jehoiakim occurred in **608 BC**.
 - The reign of Nebuchadnezzar was from **605-562 BC**.
 - **The reign of Nebuchadnezzar: 605-562 BC.**

Series of short-term rulers between 561-555 BC

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- **Nabonidus becomes King of Babylon: 555-539 BC.**
 - Belshazzar (Nabonidus's son) becomes the vice-regent to his father, 550-539 BC.
- **The reign of Cyrus the Great: 559-529 BC. (Iranian Empire)**
 - Darius the Mede (i.e., the Iranian) became a viceroy during the time of Cyrus the Great and began his rulership of Babylon in 522 BC respectively.
- **Putting It All Together**
 - King Nebuchadnezzar's personal account is more than likely written between 563-561 BC respectfully (561 is when King Nebuchadnezzar died). It is more likely that King Nebuchadnezzar's account was penned on Nebuchadnezzar's behalf by Daniel.
 - Daniel's portion could have been and was more than likely written later right before he passed away (539-537 BC) (c.f., Daniel 12:13).

The Fourth “W” (The “Where” of the Book of Daniel)

- **Where** was this book written?
 - This book is written in Babylon.
 - The book mentions the rulers of Babylon (and the vice-regents).
 - The book discusses the location of the Jews in captivity (c.f., Daniel 9:2).
 - The location of the Jewish people in captivity (i.e., Babylon) is mentioned 15 times in this book.

The Fifth “W” (The “Why” of the Book of Daniel)

- **Why** was this book written?
 - To show the faithfulness of God to the nation of Israel in captivity
 - To reveal that the God of Israel is also the God of the Babylonians
 - To reveal Gentile history as it pertains to Babylon
 - To reveal Israelite history in light of Gentile history (and Babylon)

Next Up... The Book of Daniel: Outline, Subpoints, and Questions

Daniel's Possible Timeline

