

**The World of Daniel**  
**In spite of present appearances, God is in control**

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Jerome wrote a commentary on the book of Daniel.

He is also responsible for the vulgate version of the Bible completing it in 404AD and lived from 347AD dying in 420 AD.

I wish to stress in my preface this fact, that none of the prophets has so clearly spoken concerning Christ as has this prophet Daniel. For not only did he assert that He would come, a prediction common to the other prophets as well, but also he set forth the very time at which He would come. Moreover he went through the various kings in order, stated the actual number of years involved, and announced beforehand the clearest signs of events to come. (Jerome 1958, 15)

For so striking was the reliability of what the prophet foretold, that he could not appear to unbelievers as a predictor of the future, but rather a narrator of things already past. (Jerome 1958, 15-16)

The world that Daniel and his friends, who we will meet in the book, was born into was one of apostasy and unbelief.

For one shining moment, after the death of Manasseh who had misled the nation, in the end he tried to undo it, but it was too late and his son Amon was totally worthless, revival broke out in the nation. Josiah, the grandson of Manasseh, made an interesting discovery

When Manasses set up a carved image in the house of the Lord, and built altars in the two courts of the house to all the host of heaven, and used enchantments and witchcraft, and familiar spirits, and for his great wickedness was invaded by the army of Asserhadon king of Assyria, and carried captive to Babylon; the book of the law, was lost till the eighteenth year of his grandson Josiah. Then Hilkiah, the High Priest, upon repairing the temple, found it there: and the king lamented that their fathers had not done after the words of the ship of their own gods; and by persevering in what they had been taught, they preserved this book of their law in the original character of the Hebrews, while the two tribes, after their return from Babylon, changed the character to that of the Chaldees, which they had learned at Babylon. (Newton 1831, 3-4, Newton 1831, Newton 1831, Newton 1831, Newton 1831, Newton 1831)

## 2 Chronicles 33:1–25

“Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, “In Jerusalem shall My name be forever.” And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers—only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.” So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel. And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God. After this he built a wall outside the City of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate; and it enclosed Ophel, and he raised it to a very great height. Then he put military captains in all the fortified cities of Judah. He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem; and he cast them out of the city. He also repaired the altar of the LORD, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. Nevertheless the people still sacrificed on the high places, but only to the LORD their God. Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, indeed they are written in the book of the kings of Israel. Also his prayer and how God received his entreaty, and all his sin and trespass, and the sites where he built high places and set up wooden images and carved images, before he was humbled, indeed they are written among the sayings of Hozai. So Manasseh rested with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house. Then his son Amon reigned in his place. Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done; for Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and served them. And he did not humble himself before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more. Then his servants conspired against him, and killed him in his own house. But the people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.” (NKJV)

Manasseh, at the end of his life repented, but the damage was done. The nation was no longer loyal to YAHWEH.

Josiah would try to turn things around, but one good king could not undo what had already been set in motion. It had become politically correct to be an idolater

#### 2 Chronicles 34:1–7

“Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images. They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which were above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered it on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And so he did in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes. When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.” (NKJV)

Josiah was the complete opposite of his father obviously having spent a little time with his grandfather before his death.

Many times we underestimate the impact of grandparents, but while a very young boy up to the age of 5, he apparently learned lessons his grandfather had bitterly learned and observed his grandfather desperately trying to undo what he had done.

#### 2 Chronicles 34:14–28

“Now when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD given by Moses. Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. So Shaphan carried the book to the king, bringing the king word, saying, “All that was committed to your servants they are doing. And they have gathered the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen.” Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king. Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes. Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, “Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for those who are left in Israel and Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book.” So Hilkiah and those the king had appointed went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke to her to that effect. Then she answered them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to Me, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah, because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. Therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place, and not be quenched.’ ” ’ But as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, in this manner you shall speak to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Concerning the words which you have heard—because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you,” says the LORD. “Surely I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants.” ’ ” So they brought back word to the king.” (NKJV)

Geopolitically, at this time, Judah, what is left of the once was the Kingdom of Israel, which then was divided into northern and southern kingdoms due to Solomon's sin, is technically still independent. In reality, they are vassals of whatever army passed through recently.

The world that Daniel was born into.

The prophet's birth fell about the very year which was reckoned the epoch of the second Babylonian Empire. He was still a boy at the date of Pharaoh Necho's unsuccessful invasion of Chaldea. In that struggle his kinsman and sovereign, the good king Josiah, took sides with Babylon, and not only lost his life, but compromised still further the fortunes of his house and the freedom of his country. (Anderson 2004, 21)

Josiah made a decision, being in between two powers, Egypt and the Babylonians, he aligned with Babylon against Pharaoh Neco.

Josiah decided to cutoff Neco at Megiddo before he would engage Babylon at Carchemish, about 60 miles northeast of Aleppo on the Euphrates River. It did not end well for him.

2 Chronicles 35:20–24

“After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by the Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him. But he sent messengers to him, saying, “What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I have not come against you this day, but against the house with which I have war; for God commanded me to make haste. Refrain from meddling with God, who is with me, lest He destroy you.” Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself so that he might fight with him, and did not heed the words of Necho from the mouth of God. So he came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am severely wounded.” His servants therefore took him out of that chariot and put him in the second chariot that he had, and they brought him to Jerusalem. So he died, and was buried in one of the tombs of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.” (NKJV)

Accordingly he (Neco) pressed forward till he reached the Euphrates, where he was completely routed by the Babylonian army under Nebuchadrezzar in the decisive battle of Carchemish, 604 BC. The battle left the Chaldaeans undisputed masters of Western Asia, and Judah exchanged the yoke of Assyria for that of Babylon. (Nicol 1915, 572)

As a result of the death of Josiah, the revival ended, almost immediately. The people never really had their hearts in it.

Josiah was warned by Neco, of all people, and as it says in the scriptures, Josiah did not listen and it cost him his life.

This changed everything.

2 Chronicles 36:1–5

“Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem. Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. Now the king of Egypt deposed him at Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. Then the king of Egypt made Jehoahaz's brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother and carried him off to Egypt. Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD his God.” (NKJV)

Neco, on his way home, and with Judah technically his as a result of the battle at Megiddo, set about the business of taxation and king making.

Young Daniel, a member of the tribe of Judah, born during the revival and raised to love and serve YAHWEH has seen his beloved king killed, and then the next king deposed by Neco after only three months.

Heavy taxes were assessed and geopolitically, things do not look good in Judah.

2 Chronicles 36:1–5

After this, the people of the land installed Josiah's son Jehoahaz in Jerusalem as king to take his father's place. Jehoahaz was 23 years old when he became king, and he reigned for three months in Jerusalem, after which the king of Egypt dethroned him and imposed a fine on the land of 7,500 pounds of silver and 75 pounds of gold. King Neco of Egypt installed Jehoahaz's brother Eliakim as king over Judah and Jerusalem, changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim, and took his brother Joahaz back to Egypt. Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem, but he practiced what the LORD his God considered to be evil." (ISV)

So as a young boy, Daniel's world has been turned upside down. It was politically correct to worship YAHWEH when he was born, suddenly, that is no longer the case.

Taxes are up, Judah is a vassal of Egypt, but remember, Egypt did not win the battle, a young military commander and prince did, from Babylon.

Jehoiakim has been called the Solomon of the last days of Judah. He was an irresponsible spendthrift even in a time of national poverty. He conscripted laborers to build for himself a magnificent new palace, though the country was hard pressed to make its annual payments to Neco (Jer 22:13–14). This king was a bigot, an arrogant and irreverent tyrant. He had one faithful prophet extradited from Egypt and executed (Jer 26:21). He destroyed the first scroll produced by Jeremiah, and placed that prophet under an arrest warrant (Jer 36:23–26). (Smith 1994, 373)

2 Kings 24:1–4

In his days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldeans and bands of the Syrians and bands of the Moabites and bands of the Ammonites, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servants the prophets. Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the LORD, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, and also for the innocent blood that he had shed. For he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD would not pardon. (ESV)

Why is this happening? Manasseh is why.  
The people had been warned.

Deuteronomy 28:49–53

The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young. It shall eat the offspring of your cattle and the fruit of your ground, until you are destroyed; it also shall not leave you grain, wine, or oil, the increase of your herds or the young of your flock, until they have caused you to perish. They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land. And they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout all your land, which the LORD your God has given you. And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemies shall distress you. (ESV)

In the summer of 605 B.C., shortly after the Battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and subjugated it. He then did three things: (1) He placed Jehoiakim, Judah's king, under tribute; (2) he carried away some of the holy vessels of the Jerusalem temple to the treasure house of his god in Babylon; and (3) he deported a certain number of the choice young men of Judah to Babylon

(these youth were chosen from the family of the king, the families of the nobles, and the families of the other upper classes). (Gingrich 1994, 9)

Isaiah 39:5–7

“Isaiah said to Hezekiah, ‘Listen to the message of the LORD of Heaven’s Armies: ‘Look, a time is coming when everything in your palace and the things your ancestors have accumulated to this day will be carried away to Babylon; nothing will be left,’ says the LORD. ‘Some of your very own descendants whom you father will be taken away and will be made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’ ” (NET 2nd ed.)

Again, this should not be a surprise.

The inference is, that in Daniel this prediction was fulfilled, as Josephus also states, and that in suffering and privation he was formed for the place in which he became so conspicuous and notable. (Seiss 1879, 19-20)

Daniel was raised in a time of great geopolitical uncertainty.

There were numerous enemies to Judah and the nation itself, until recently, had been operating and become worse than the nations surrounding them.

Josiah made YAHWEH politically correct again, but it was too late.

2 Chronicles 33:9

“But Manasseh misled the people of Judah and the residents of Jerusalem so that they sinned more than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed ahead of the Israelites.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Recall the problem with the Nephilim that Moses addressed in Bashan and Joshua dealt with. The problem with Baal worship. Recall as well that the nations had been divorced by God in favor of Him establishing a relationship with Israel.

All Israel had to do is be loyal and exhibit faithfulness by following the law and not worshipping the gods of the nations.

The gods of the nations were in reality, fallen divine beings who had originally been placed over the other nations (Deuteronomy 32) but rebelled and demanded worship instead.

Simply stated, the nation of Israel, followed by Judah, had turned their back on YAHWEH exiling Him to be on the outside looking in.

God would rather have His people living in shameful captivity in a pagan land than living like pagans in the Holy Land and disgracing His name. (Wiersbe 2000, 12)

When the Word of God is ignored and violated, divine judgment sooner or later is inevitable. The spiritual lessons embodied in the cold fact of the captivity may well be pondered by the church today, too often having a form of godliness but without knowing the power of it. Worldly saints do not capture the world but become instead the world’s captives. (Walvoord 2008, 30)

Daniel = Judge of God; i.e., one who delivers judgment in the name of God; my judge is God; God is my judge; he that judges. (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 58)

The book of Daniel is authored by Daniel with one chapter by Nebuchadnezzar.

The book of Daniel, according to its own testimony, is the record of the life and prophetic revelations given to Daniel, a captive Jew carried off to Babylon after the first conquest of Jerusalem by

Nebuchadnezzar in 605 b.c. The record of events extends to the third year of Cyrus, 536 B.C., and, accordingly, covers a span of about seventy years. Daniel himself may well have lived on to about 530 b.c, and the book of Daniel was probably completed in the last decade of his life. (Walvoord 2008, 11)

The first division of the book (chaps. 1–6) consists of historical material and some prophecy (chap. 2); the second division (chaps. 7–12) contains both history and prophetic apocalyptic messages. Prophetic-apocalyptic may be the best designation, for Daniel takes on the character of both prophecy and apocalyptic. (Miller 1994, 45)

The book is in two languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. I take my authorship of the book from the comments of Jesus in Matthew 24.

Matthew 24:15–16

“So when you see the desolating sacrilege standing in the holy place, **as was spoken of by the prophet Daniel** (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains;” (NRSV)

But we must also consider the fact that the Book of Daniel was written by the Prophet in two languages. The first chapter is written in Hebrew and so are chapters 8–12. But chapters 2:4–7:28 are written in Aramaic, the language of these eastern empires. The reason for this is very simple. What concerns these empires is written down in their own language and what concerns the Jews is written in Hebrew. Both languages are evidences that Daniel wrote the Book. The Hebrew especially is the same in style as the Hebrew of Ezekiel. (Gaebelein 1911, 8-9)

Thousands of pages have been written concerning this book in the last two hundred years calling into question the time in which it was written as well as the author.

Josephus records that when Alexander the Great reached Jerusalem, he was shown a copy of Daniel.

And when the book of Daniel was showed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present, but the next day he called them to him, and bade them ask what favors they pleased of him: (338) whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired: and when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired: (339) and when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army on this condition, that they should continue under the law of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars. (Josephus 1987, 307)

Daniel is identified, not only by Jesus, but is referenced by Ezekiel (Ezekiel 14:14 & 20; 28:3), a contemporary who was part of the second deportation and ministering to the Jews who were dispersed in the countryside around Babylon.

If you read through some commentaries, you will find some that question the dating, authority and authorship of the book. Things which were not questioned until the 17th century.

For perspective, what else was going on the time that Daniel was in Babylon.

1. Construction on the Acropolis began in Athens.
2. Mayan civilization flourished in Mexico.
3. Aesop wrote his fables.
4. Confucius and Buddha lived.
5. Greek art began to truly excel.
6. The Greeks introduced the olive tree to Italy.
7. The Phoenicians made the first known sea journey around Africa. (Guzik 2013, Da 1:1-2)

Daniel was in the greatest credit amongst the Jews, till the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian: and to reject his prophecies, is to reject the Christian religion. For this religion is founded upon his prophecy concerning the Messiah. (Newton 1831, 25)

The great and most important theme of Daniel is that there is but one God, who is Jehovah, and that he is sovereign over the events of history. (Boice 2003, 15)

Daniel 1:1–4

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. (ESV)



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