

- Good evening Arising Church!

We hope you have been looking forward to this evening as much as we have. Tonight, we begin our study on the Book of Daniel!



Our goal is to teach this book as faithfully and thoroughly as we can, drawing on every resource available. We are grateful to stand on the shoulders of our brothers at LCM — Pastor Eric, Pastors Judah, Nik, Payton, and Justin Treaster — as well as contributing some of our own observations. Our hope is that you would do more than absorb information, but develop lasting habits of listening, learning, and studying for yourself.

Here are the topics we will be covering tonight:

Introduction to Daniel: Table of Contents

1. Introduction: Method Before Conclusions
2. Daniel's Place in History and the Hebrew Bible
3. The Three-Part Purpose of Scripture
4. Historical Context and the Purpose of the Visions
5. Jesus' Endorsement of Daniel's Future Fulfillment
6. Structural Keys to Reading Daniel
7. Chapter-by-Chapter Survey, Part 1: Chapters 1–6
8. Chapter-by-Chapter Survey, Part 2: Chapters 7–12
9. The Physical, Not Merely Spiritual, Kingdom
10. Living as a Prophetic People

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You have likely come to realize how vital one skill is becoming in our day: the ability to study and find truth from a reliable source. This proverb says it well:

1. **Proverbs 18:17 (ESV)**

- 17 The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.

The first voice always sounds convincing — until a second one

speaks and we realize we never considered another perspective.

We cannot afford to be naive about the dominant way information travels in our world today: through media and influencers, most of whom we have never met. Their arguments can seem compelling because of how well they are packaged — but are they reliable? That can only be determined by going to the Word. This is exactly what we seek to do as we teach through Daniel.

If we serve you well tonight, you will leave with some conclusions — but more importantly, you will have a firm grasp of the questions that remain. That will position you to ask the Revealer of Mysteries for His thoughts, and that kind of knowledge makes you truly rich.

As we begin, we want to borrow an essential attitude from the Bereans:

1. Acts 17:11 (ESV)

- 11 Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Simply put: do not accept what you hear until you have examined it for yourself.

1. Proverbs 25:2 (ESV)

- - 2 It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.

If the media already has it in print, or a blogger already made the video, it cannot be a secret thing of God. We want you to experience the "kingly" blessing that comes when the Lord of Glory shares His thoughts with you. Daniel and his friends lived in perilous times among wicked people — yet they counseled kings and were placed in positions of influence. They carried themselves like kings because

they searched the Scriptures to know how to live and obeyed the commands of the Lord. That is our goal in studying Daniel together: that each of us would know what it means to tap into the Spirit while searching the Word and receive His thoughts — because that is a kingly pursuit.

Our prayer is that as we work through this book, you would do your best to put yourself in the shoes of these young Jewish men — to feel, as much as possible, what they felt and to ultimately imitate their behavior.

The great stories of the Bible are not meant to present unrelatable figures from another world. They are meant to give us examples of how to live in a wide range of situations.

The book of Job is not there to make your suffering feel small by comparison — it is there to show you how a righteous man can navigate devastating loss.

The story of David's sin is not included to make you feel better about yourself — it is there to teach you how to cry out to the Lord and get back up after a sinful setback, no matter how bad the sin may be.

And Daniel's story is not meant to set an impossible standard of righteousness in wicked times — it is meant to show that such a standard is achievable, no matter how difficult things get.

Let's begin to set the stage and survey Daniel's place in History and in the Hebrew Bible.

2. Daniel's Place in History and the Hebrew Bible

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1. Deuteronomy 4:5–8 (NIV 1984)

- **5** See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it.
6 Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "**Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.**"
7 What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him?
8 And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

God's desire was for the nation of Israel to stand out among the nations as they followed His righteous decrees. Obviously the book of Daniel starts with the people of Israel in Babylon. In our introduction tonight we want to give context and lay a foundation for understanding how we should read the book of Daniel. To start, we

need to visit how the people of Israel ended up here.

Israel was taken into Babylonian exile, in part, because they had ignored the Sabbath rest that God commanded for the land. In the Law, the LORD said that every seventh year the land was to rest as a Sabbath to Him:

1. **Leviticus 25:3-4 (ESV)** "3 For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, 4 but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the Lord. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard."

-

He also warned that if Israel disobeyed, the land would finally receive its missed Sabbaths while they were in exile among their enemies:

1. **Leviticus 26:34–35 (ESV)**

-

34 “Then the land shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest, and enjoy its Sabbaths. **35** As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest that it did not have on your Sabbaths when you were dwelling in it.

That is exactly how Chronicles explains the Babylonian exile: the survivors were carried away to Babylon, and “the land enjoyed its sabbath rests... until the seventy years were completed”

1. **2 Chronicles 36:17-21 (ESV)**

-

17 Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged. He gave them all into his hand. **18** And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he

brought to Babylon. **19** And they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels. **20** He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, **21** to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

So the seventy years in Babylon were not random; they were covenant discipline. The land rested because Israel had refused to let it rest.

Without us going into the sequence of events that led up to this moment in great detail, we want to direct your attention to Leviticus 26. While few may be aware of this chapter, it perfectly outlines exactly what took place among the people of Israel in Judah leading up to the Babylonian exile. It begins with commands that Israel is to follow

1. **Leviticus 26:1-3 (ESV)**

- You shall not make idols for yourselves or erect an image or pillar, and you shall not set up a figured stone in your land to bow down to it, for I am the Lord your God. **2** You shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.

3 “If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them...

Notice the two major commands that are given: Don't make idols and keep my Sabbaths.

The next 10 verses go on to say that the Israelites will be given food in abundance, peace in their land, that they would advance and expand. They would be shown favor and increase in numbers and

that God himself will dwell among them.

After this between verses 14-33 we see 5 rounds of discipline that increase in severity. Each of these rounds of discipline are meant to get the attention of the Israelites and cause them to listen to the Lord.

(Do Not Read)

FIVE ROUNDS OF DISCIPLINE

Leviticus 26:14-33 (ESV)

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | Initial Discipline — Panic, disease, fever, futile labor, military defeat (Lev. 26:16-17) |
| 2. | Land becomes hostile — heavens like iron, earth like bronze (Lev. 26:18-20) |
| 3. | Wild Beasts — Animals kill children, destroy livestock, empty the roads (Lev. 26:21-22) |
| 4. | Sword and Siege — Pestilence, famine, ten women baking bread in one oven (Lev. 26:23-26) |
| 5. | Scattered among the nations — Cannibalism, destroyed sanctuaries, desolated land (Lev. 26:27-33) |

Round 1 — vv. 16-17: Initial discipline

Triggered simply by *not listening* and breaking the covenant (v. 14-15). God responds with panic, wasting disease, fever, futile labor (enemies eating their crops), and military defeat — being struck down and ruled over by those who hate them. No "sevenfold" language yet; this is the first strike.

Round 2 — vv. 18-20: The Land becomes Hostile

Triggered by *still* not listening after round one ("if in spite of this..."). This is the first verse to use the phrase "**discipline you again sevenfold for your sins**" (v. 18). The land itself becomes hostile — heavens like iron, earth like bronze, strength spent in vain, no harvest.

Round 3 — vv. 21-22: Wild beasts

Triggered by continuing to "walk contrary" and not listen (v. 21). God repeats: **"striking you, sevenfold for your sins."** This round unleashes wild animals that kill children, destroy livestock, and empty the roads.

Round 4 — vv. 23-26: Sword and siege

Triggered when the previous discipline doesn't turn them back to God: "if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary to me" (v. 23). Again: **"I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins"** (v. 24). This brings the sword of covenant vengeance, pestilence inside besieged cities, and famine so severe that ten women share one oven, doling out bread by weight without satisfaction.

Round 5 — vv. 27-33: Scattered among the nations

Triggered by the final escalation: "if in spite of this you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to me" (v. 27). God says he will walk contrary to them **"in fury"** and once more **"discipline you sevenfold for your sins"** (v. 28). This is the worst round by far — cannibalism of their own children (v. 29), destruction of high places and idols, desolated cities and sanctuaries, devastated land, and finally scattering among the nations with the sword unsheathed behind them (vv. 30-33).

The pattern: Each round is introduced by some version of "if in spite of this you will not listen" / "walk contrary to me," and rounds 2 through 5 are explicitly marked by the repeated phrase "sevenfold for your sins" (vv. 18, 21, 24, 28). The severity escalates from disease and military defeat, to a hostile land, to wild animals, to siege and famine, to total covenant collapse and exile. It's a deliberate five-step staircase, each step worse than the last, each one a response to continued refusal to turn back — which sets up the promise of restoration that follows in verses 40-46 once the people finally confess.

So this is the story Daniel walks into. The very chapter that predicted exile also promised something on the other side of it — and that

promise is worth pausing on, because it reframes everything that follows. Long before any of this happened, when God first gave Israel his commands, he told them that their obedience would cause surrounding nations to take notice — to look at them and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." That promise did not expire when Israel went into exile. The book of Daniel puts it on display in enemy territory, in the very kingdom that carried them away. In it, the rulers of Babylon observe Daniel and his companions and are struck by their wisdom and understanding.

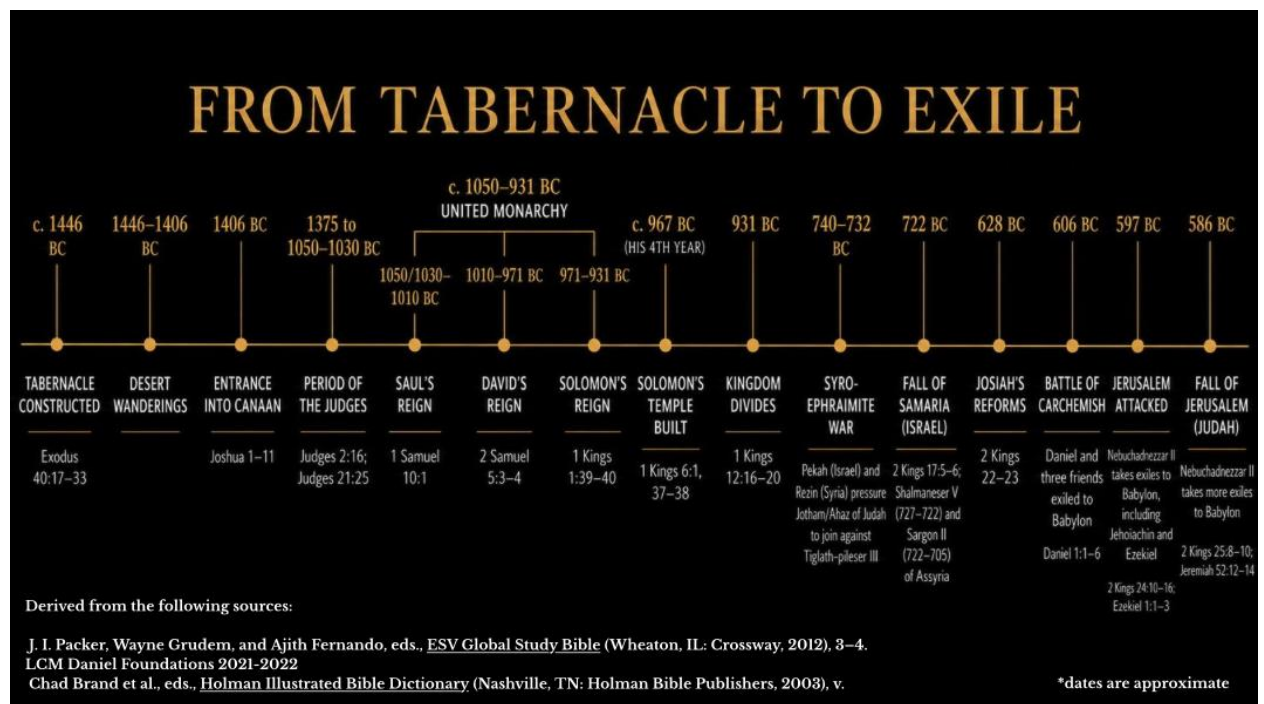
When Daniel and his friends pray, it becomes undeniable that their God is near to them in a way no other god is near to his people. Kings witness the greatness of the Jewish people — a greatness rooted in the righteous decrees and laws God gave them.

We're going to continue to give you some context by providing a brief overview of all that has transpired since the construction of the Tabernacle that we just finished studying. Check a look at this slide showing you all the books of the Bible and their relation to Daniel.



This slide helps us locate Daniel within the flow of the Old Testament. Everything on the left represents Israel's history leading up to the Babylonian exile—the Law, the conquest, the monarchy, and the prophets who warned of coming judgment. At the center stands Daniel, living and ministering during the exile itself, alongside contemporaries like Jeremiah and Ezekiel. To the right are the books that unfold after the exile during the Persian period, as God restores His people to the land. Some of the other Writings sit somewhat outside this timeline because they are not historical narratives. In many ways, Daniel serves as a bridge between Israel's past and God's prophetic revelation of the future, looking beyond the exile and beyond his own lifetime to the rise and fall of kingdoms and ultimately to the establishment of God's everlasting kingdom.

Let's look at this another way.



Together we followed Abraham as his family multiplied supernaturally into a nation. Jacob and his family found themselves in Egypt. Just a

few months ago we studied Exodus and saw Israel leave Egypt and receive the Law and tabernacle around 1446 BC. Much happens after those events that leads us to Daniel.

Israel spent the next several centuries conquering Canaan, living under the judges, and finally uniting as one kingdom under Saul, David, and Solomon. Under Solomon the temple was built as a further revelation of what we saw constructed in the wilderness.

Around 930 BC the nation split into Israel in the north and Judah in the south, and both slid into the same idolatry the Exodus generation had been warned against. Assyria wiped out and scattered the northern kingdom in 722 BC. Judah held on longer, with Jeremiah beginning to prophesy under King Josiah around 627 BC, but Babylon's rise — crushing Assyria at Nineveh in 612 BC and Egypt at Carchemish in 606 BC — set up Judah's own fall. That same year, 606 BC, Babylon's first deportation carried Daniel off into exile.

This is the setting Daniel opens with—the lowest point of a story already centuries in motion. By the time he is deported to Babylon, the warnings of Amos, Hosea, and Jeremiah have all come true: the covenant people, both houses, have been struck. Things look so grim, Jeremiah says things like this in chapter 30.

1. Jeremiah 30:13–14 (NIV)

- ¹³ There is no one to plead your cause,
no remedy for your sore,
no healing for you.
¹⁴ All your allies have forgotten you;
they care nothing for you.
I have struck you as an enemy would
and punished you as would the cruel,
because your guilt is so great
and your sins so many.

Daniel is living inside the very labor pains the prophets described — what Jeremiah calls "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7). Daniel's perspective is standing on the prophets as well as the Torah. What began as the actual life of Jacob in Haran, is now a prophetic motif Jeremiah is using for his day and Israel's future.

Daniel is not a bystander to this crisis; he is one of its casualties, a deportee serving in the court of the empire God raised up as the rod of His own discipline.

Yet despite all of this, he carries with him the same prophetic library that promised this devastation would not be the end of his people, consider the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 30:

1. Deuteronomy 30:1–4 (NIV)

- **30** When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come on you and you take them to heart wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations,² and when you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today,³ then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.⁴ Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back.

Moses is the source material for Jeremiah, and together their works are the hope that Daniel opens his windows towards as he prays.

1. Jeremiah 30:10–11 (NIV)

- 10 “ ‘So do not be afraid, Jacob my servant;
do not be dismayed, Israel,’
declares the Lord.
‘I will surely save you out of a distant place,
your descendants from the land of their exile.
Jacob will again have peace and security,
and no one will make him afraid.
11 I am with you and will save you,’
declares the Lord.
‘Though I completely destroy all the nations
among which I scatter you,
I will not completely destroy you.
I will discipline you but only in due measure;
I will not let you go entirely unpunished.’

This is the tension Daniel lived in. His faithfulness in a foreign court, his visions of successive empires rising and falling, and his prayer of national confession in chapter 9 are not isolated events but direct continuations of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah. You will see Daniel explicitly read Jeremiah's words and act on them in prayer and confession and bold acts of faith. This is the setting of Daniel, and it will be essential in its interpretation.

Now with the Historical Context in mind, let's consider the book of Daniel's placement within the larger canon. Most of us in this room grew up understanding the Old Testament in this way:

Divisions of Old Testament Books

| LAW | HISTORY | POETRY | PROPHETS | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genesis • Exodus • Leviticus • Numbers • Deuteronomy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joshua • Judges • Ruth • 1 Samuel • 2 Samuel • 1 Kings • 2 Kings • 1 Chronicles • 2 Chronicles • Ezra • Nehemiah • Esther | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job • Psalms • Proverbs • Ecclesiastes • Song of Solomon | MAJOR | MINOR |
| | |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaiah • Jeremiah • Lamentations • Ezekiel • Daniel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosea • Joel • Amos • Obadiah • Jonah • Micah • Nahum • Habakkuk • Zephaniah • Haggai • Zechariah • Malachi |

Bauer Bible Class

As you can see, this has sections like: *history*, and *poetry*. It also places Daniel in a section called the Major Prophets.

This is not the way the Hebrew people organize their God breathed text. You are hopefully by now more familiar with this organization of the Older Testament, or the Tanakh.



The Tanakh is made up of the Law (the Torah), the Nevi'im, and the Ketuvim. The Law is the first five books of Moses — the first five books of the Bible.

In the Nevi'im, we have the Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the book of the twelve.

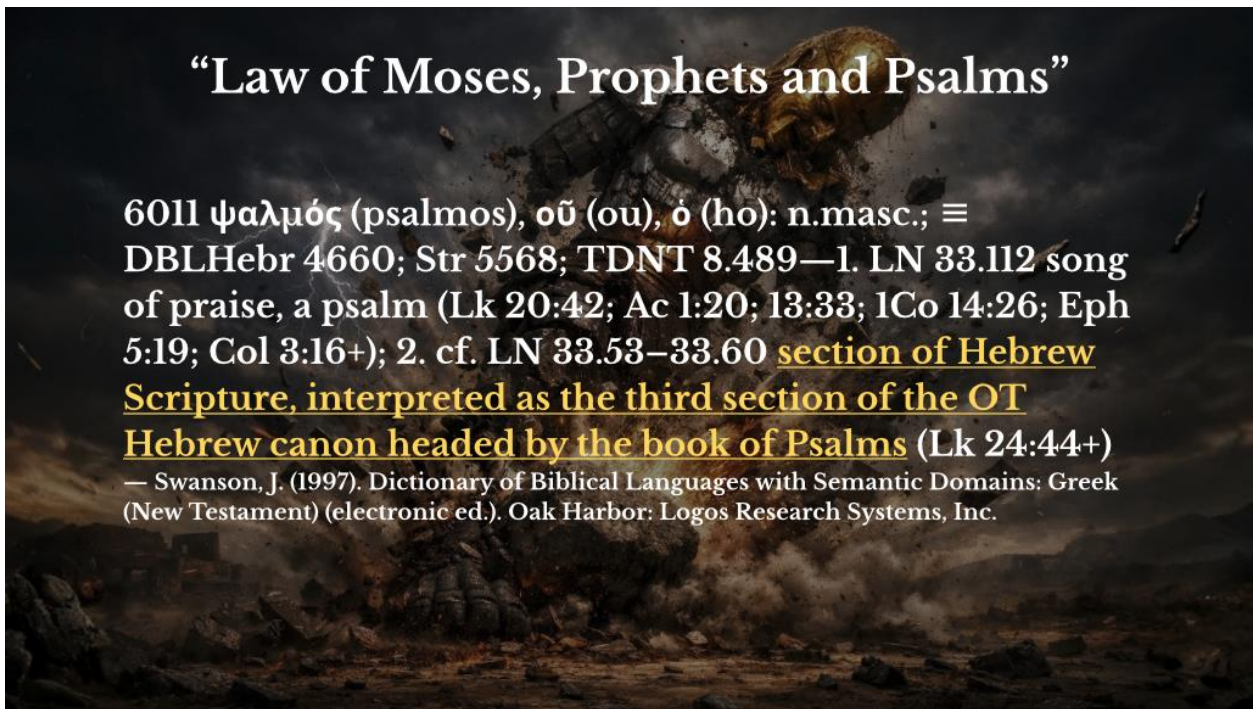
Then we have the Writings, the Ketuvim. Notice that Daniel is in the Writings, not the Prophets! This is common to Jews who are learning the Bible, because this is the Jewish organization of the Bible. This is not common in Christian circles — Christian circles put Daniel in the Prophets! This in many ways actually changes the way many people see the book of Daniel.

Remember that the construction of the Hebrew Bible was endorsed by the Messiah Himself. This is what Jesus is referring to in:

1. Luke 24:44 (NIV)

- He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

Here we have Jesus referring to the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible, and endorsing them. The Law of Moses is referred to as the Torah. The Prophets are referred to as Nevi'im. And while you think of "the Psalms" as simply a book of the Bible, this is what the *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains* says about the Greek word "psalmos" (translated "Psalms" in Luke 24):



“Law of Moses, Prophets and Psalms”

6011 ψαλμός (psalmos), οὔ (ou), ὁ (ho): n.masc.; ≡
 DBLHebr 4660; Str 5568; TDNT 8.489—1. LN 33.112 song
 of praise, a psalm (Lk 20:42; Ac 1:20; 13:33; 1Co 14:26; Eph
 5:19; Col 3:16+); 2. cf. LN 33.53–33.60 **section of Hebrew
 Scripture, interpreted as the third section of the OT
 Hebrew canon headed by the book of Psalms (Lk 24:44+)**
 — Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek
 (New Testament)* (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

This is crucial to understanding the importance, structure and meaning of the Book of Daniel.



Pop Quiz #1

In the Tanakh, Daniel is placed in the Ketuvim rather than the Nevi'im. Which of the following books is grouped with Daniel in that same section?

A. Ezekiel

B. Isaiah

C. Job

D. Joshua

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3. The Three-Part Purpose of Scripture

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In seeking to understand the purpose of each divinely attested to section of scripture, we see that the three sections of the TaNaKh each address a distinct dimension of the human person. In Deuteronomy 6:4–5—the Shema, Israel’s foundational confession—the LORD commands His people:

1. **Deuteronomy 6:4–5 (ESV)**

- 4 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

The Torah addresses the heart. It establishes the character of God through His commands, and its purpose is to incline the human heart toward His own. God’s emotional investment in this purpose is audible in His exclamation after giving the Law at Sinai:

1. **Deuteronomy 5:29 (ESV)**

- 29 **Oh** that they had such a **heart** as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!

The five books of Moses narrate the founding of Israel, but their deeper work is the formation of the heart.

The Nevi'im address the soul—the mind, will, and emotions. The prophets cover the historical period from Israel's entrance into the Promised Land through the nation's descent into captivity, and their unified theme is the warning of what happens when a people whose hearts have been addressed by the Torah refuse to heed what they know. Isaiah captures the prophetic anguish:

1. **Isaiah 38:15–17 (ESV)**

- 15 What shall I say? For he has spoken to me,
and he himself has done it.

I walk slowly all my years
because of the bitterness of my **soul**.

16 O Lord, by these things men live,
and in all these is the life of my spirit.

Oh restore me to health and make me live!

The prophets acted out their messages in dramatic, even shocking ways—Ezekiel shaving his head with a sword, Hosea marrying a woman of harlotry—because they were striving, as led by God's Spirit, to engage the entire reasoning and emotional center of the human being, the soul. As 2 Kings summarizes:

1. **2 Kings 17:13 (ESV)**

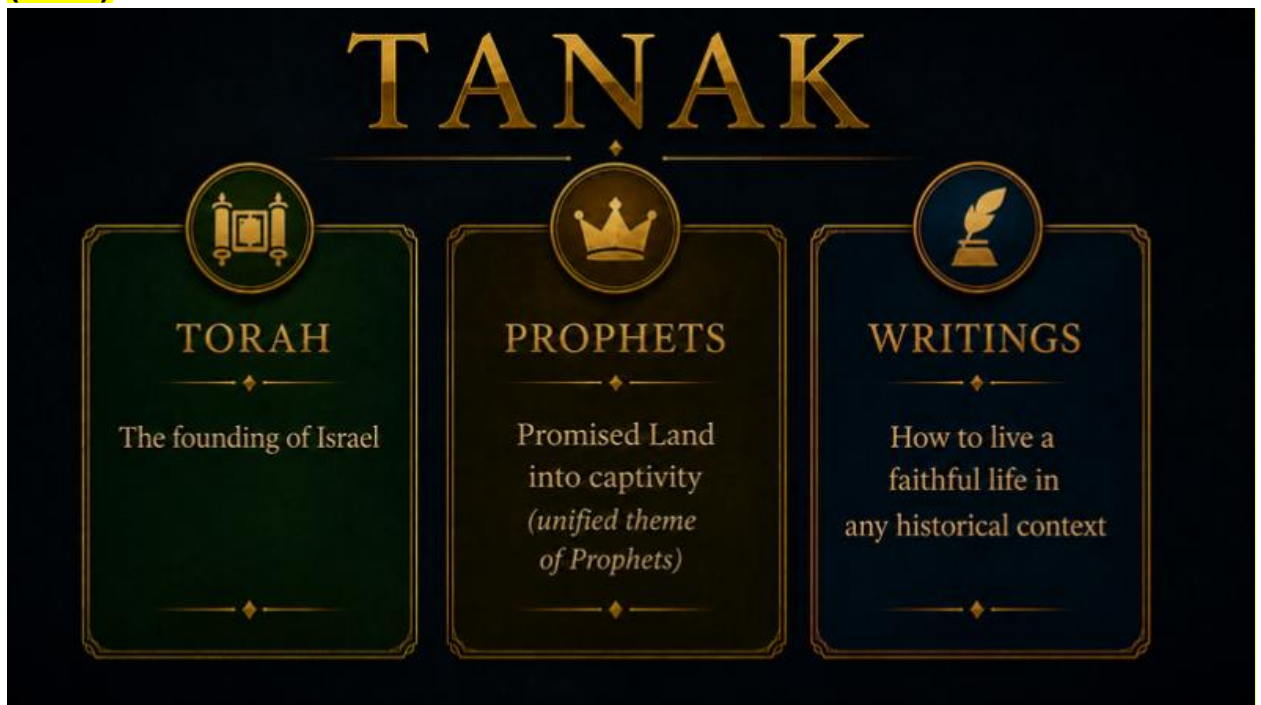
- 13 Yet the LORD **warned** Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the Law that I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets."

The Ketuvim address strength—the practical outworking of faith in historical context. Books like, Job, Esther, and Ruth are placed here not because they lack prophetic content but because they depict faithful living under particular circumstances, often outside the land of Israel.

This threefold structure constitutes a divine educational program. A young Jewish student would begin with Torah—having the heart formed first—then move to the Nevi'im—having the reasoning center addressed—and finally to the Ketuvim—learning to walk faithfully in action. To reverse or collapse this order is to distort the education of the disciple. If one addresses only actions without first forming the heart and engaging the soul, one produces slaves rather than sons. If one addresses only the heart without the prophetic warning and the practical instruction, one produces emotionalists incapable of action. The genius of the canonical structure is that it addresses the whole person in the proper sequence.

It is also worth noting what happens when this order is disrupted. Much of Christianity, has minimized or effectively discarded the Torah—and in doing so, has lost the heart-formation that the Law was designed to provide. The believer needs the Law to address the heart, the Prophets to engage the soul, and the Writings to instruct the hands. To amputate any one of these is to cripple the whole.

(DNR)



Another way to look at these divisions is that the TORAH focuses on the founding of Israel, the Prophets take you from entering the

promised land, into the captivity, and the writings teaches you how to properly walk out the commandments in any and every historical context!

Although many people see the complex dreams and visions contained within the book of Daniel and assume it must be in the prophets, the truth is that Daniel is in the writings section of scripture. It is our understanding that it is placed here because it teaches you how you should walk in any historical context.

For most of the past 2,000 years the Jewish people have lived in Diaspora away from the land of Israel, under the laws of another country. The book of Daniel is the perfect book to learn how to properly live in such historical contexts! Daniel also lived away from the Jewish homeland and had to wrestle through how to apply God's law when living under gentile rulers.

The book of Daniel is also exemplary to us as it teaches us how to eagerly await the restoration of Israel as we humbly pray for the peace of Jerusalem. This book will teach us how to know the times we are in and act properly in ways that will bless the entire world! Have you ever had hesitation to study eschatology because you are not sure how it really applies to you?! Maybe you have seen it as confusing and not useful to your life and avoided it completely. During this study, we hope to change that mindset. We want to show that the book of Daniel is one of the greatest and most useful tools for learning how to be an effective minister in any historical context! Do you want to learn how to be a blessing to the world? Do you want to learn how to live properly in your own historical context? Do you want to learn the proper way to pray for Israel as we await their full redemption? Then you may want to follow along and pay close attention to what the book of Daniel teaches us through this study!



Pop Quiz #2

According to tonight's teaching, what happens when the canonical order of Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim is reversed or collapsed — addressing actions before the heart and soul are formed?

A. Nothing changes; the order is incidental

B. It produces emotionalists incapable of action

C. It produces slaves rather than sons

D. It produces prophets without revelation

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4. Historical Context and the Purpose of the Visions -

Now that you understand where Daniel fits in the greater context of the scripture, it is important to understand Daniel's immediate cultural

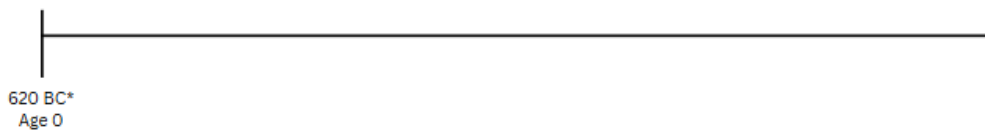
context.

"All Dates are Approx"

Current Events In Daniel's Day

Daniel 620BC - 536BC

Daniel's Birth



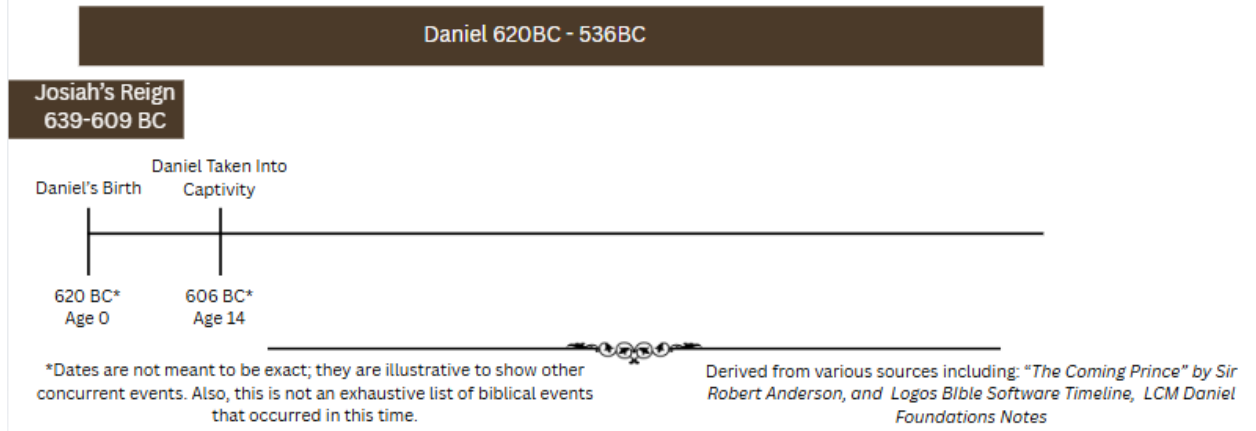
*Dates are not meant to be exact; they are illustrative to show other concurrent events. Also, this is not an exhaustive list of biblical events that occurred in this time.

Derived from various sources including: "The Coming Prince" by Sir Robert Anderson, and Logos Bible Software Timeline, LCM Daniel Foundations Notes

Daniel was born sometime around 620BC under the reign of King Josiah. Remember, under king Josiah, the Torah scrolls were rediscovered, idolatry was forbidden and a national revival took place. This is the context Daniel was born into. For those of you who remember biblical history, Josiah died in battle and was succeeded by Jehoahaz and then Jehoiakim who were both wicked kings. In the third year of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem and took captive some youths, including Daniel who would have been approximately 14 years old.

"All Dates are Approx"

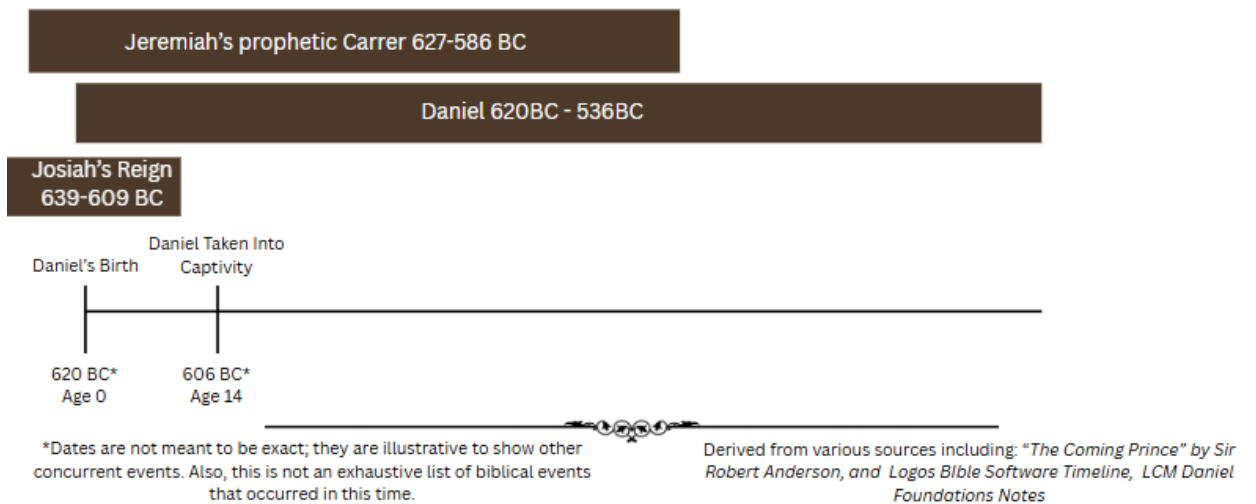
Current Events In Daniel's Day



Further, from the time Daniel was in Israel, all the way until he was at least in his 30s Jeremiah was prophesying consistently to Israel. Daniel likely would have grown up hearing the words of Jeremiah well into his adult life. Later in his life we see him going back and reading the scrolls of Jeremiah.

"All Dates are Approx"

Current Events In Daniel's Day

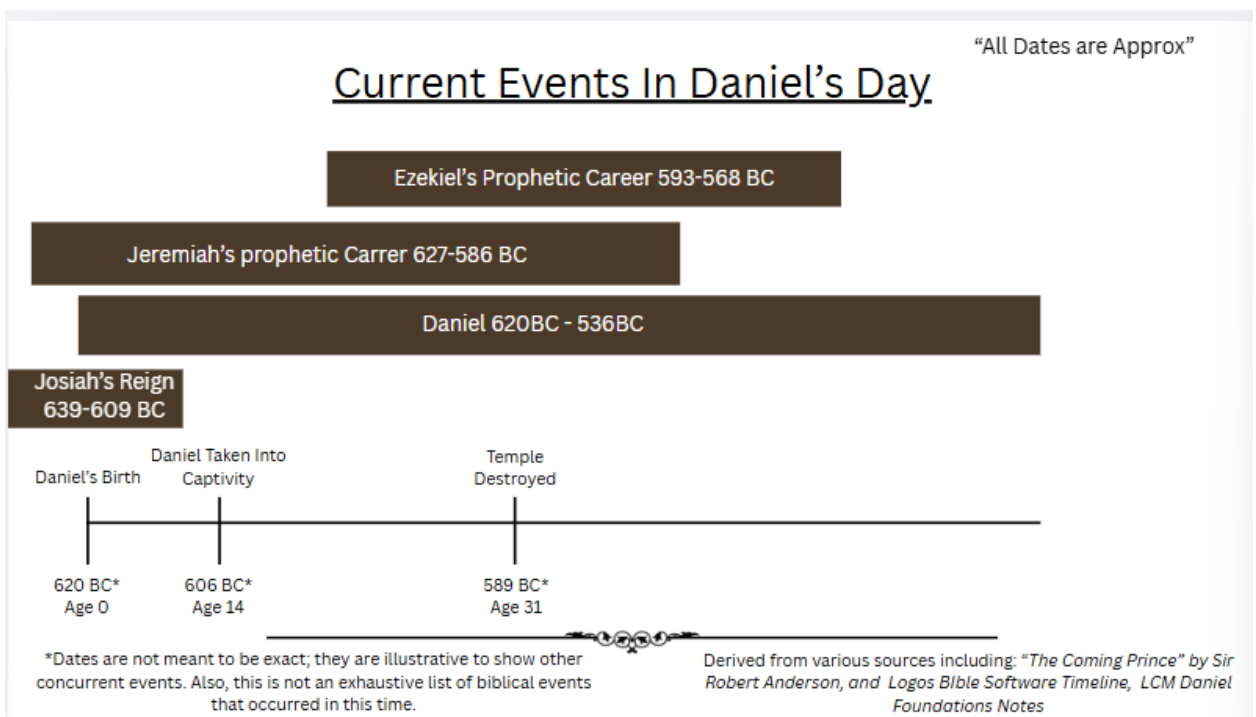


Further, while in Babylon, Daniel would have lived while Ezekiel was prophesying concerning the destruction and rebuilding of the temple. Given that Ezekiel and Daniel were both in exile together for decades, it is very likely that Daniel would have known Ezekiel and or heard his prophesies while they were being given. He may have had the following prophesies top of mind as he was praying for his people:

1. Ezekiel 37:21 (ESV)

- 21 then say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land.

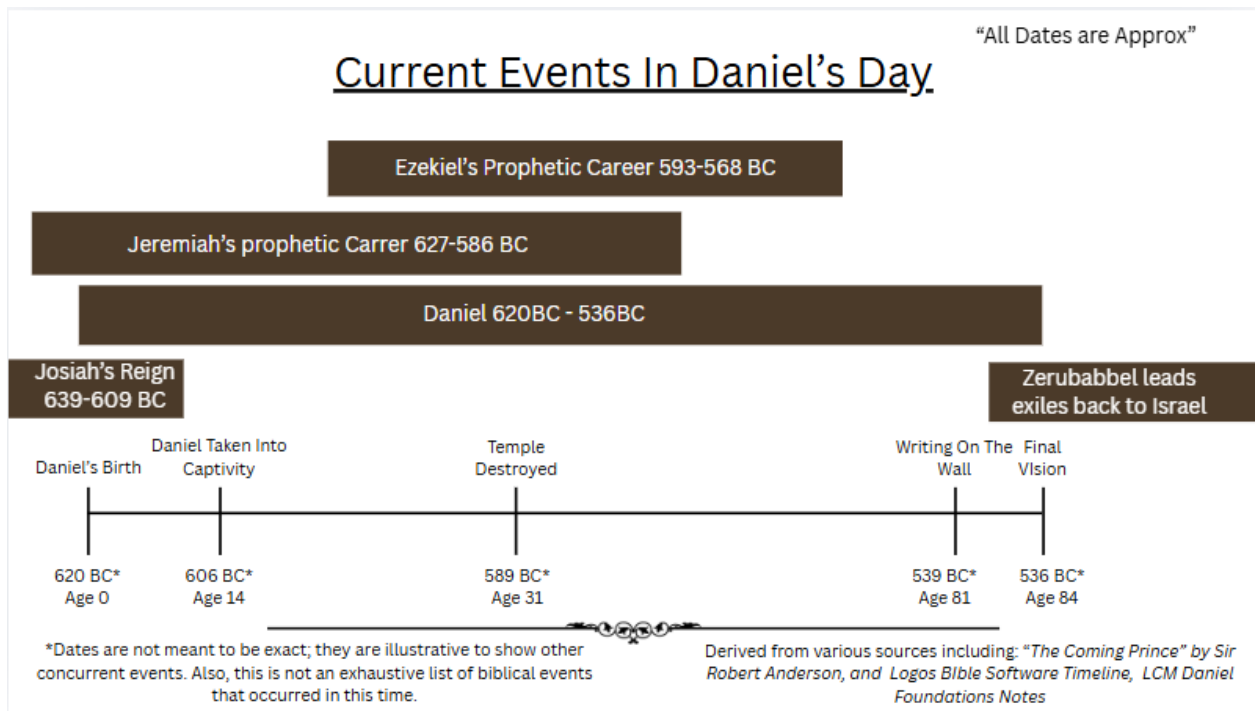
Imagine how encouraging these words would have been to Daniel who was currently exiled in the nations eagerly awaiting the regathering of the 12 tribes.



Daniel would have lived through the destruction of the temple. This fact makes the later prophecies about the temple once again being

built and then desecrated, all the more impactful! He knew the temple would both be rebuilt and desecrated, yet he still prayed for a restoration of the God's holy sanctuary in Daniel 9! This is exemplary for us as believers, although we know God's Temple will once again be overthrown, we can still pray for God's glory to return to Israel through the rebuilding of the temple!

Further, a detail many miss is that he lived through the first wave of Jewish exiles returning from Babylonia to rebuild the temple under Joshua and Zerubbabel!



In the past when you have read through the book of Daniel, have these events been top of mind for you? They certainly were top of mind for Daniel. As good bible students, you should always seek to view the text from the lens of the first audience; what were they thinking and feeling as they were writing the events described in the holy writ. In order to properly understand Daniel, you must properly understand the context he grew up in!

While a full survey of what life was like in ancient Babylon and Persia for a man in Daniel's position is not in the purview tonight, we would like to discuss a few important points that will help in your view of the book.

Now that you know Daniel was a younger peer of Jeremiah consider the words Daniel would have heard from Jeremiah's prophecies.

1. **Jeremiah 29:4–7 (ESV)**

- 4 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, **to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:** 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 **But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile,** and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah is encouraging Israel to submit to the king of Babylon and pray from their welfare. Consider how encouraging this message would have been to Daniel who was actually applying the message! We will see throughout our study, Daniel continually seeks the peace of the very people who took him captive! Consider that next time you are tempted to complain about how terrible things are getting in the world around us. We can learn how to walk in our present setting from Daniel's example, by seeking the peace of the land we are in.

Consider also how Jeremiah's message was received:

1. **Jeremiah 20:2 (ESV)**

- 2 Then Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD.

Jeremiah was consistently rejected and hated for the message he was preaching; a message calling others to submit to the king of

Babylon. Now consider the fact that Daniel is actually applying the message Jeremiah spoke, how do you think Jews back home may have viewed Daniel?

Consider if Vladimir Putin attacked America and took some of president Trump's children captive, and then Trump's children started praying for and advising Vladimir Putin. How do you think American's would view Trump's children, as American Heros, or Traitors?

Daniel may have been viewed the same way. Although we don't see many interactions between Daniel and other Israelites, (save Hananiah Mishael, and Azeriah) it is not hard to imagine his fellow countrymen may have viewed him as a traitor.

Consider also that Daniel may have viewed his life as relatively unremarkable compared to men like Jeremiah and Ezekiel who were prophesying consistently 'thus saith the LORD'. Daniel lived in the luxuries of working for the king of Babylon, Jeremiah lived persecuted in Israel while the kingdom was falling apart. Jeremiah prophesied consistently from youth, Daniel only has three recorded events before his 60s. Jeremiah is a constant witness to his fellow Jews, Daniel ministered before crazy gentile kings. It is very possible that Daniel did not view his life as very remarkable at all when compared to his peers the prophets.

Even though Daniel may not have viewed large portions of his life as worth mentioning, it is important to note that his faithfulness overtime, his consistency in both trial and comfort, has impacted generations for thousands of years and been a consistent source of encouragement for those who love Adonai!

It is clear that through good times and bad that Daniel held to the principles laid out in Psalm 119:

1. **Psalm 119:49–50 (ESV)**

- 49 Remember your word to your servant,
in which you have made me hope.
50 This is my comfort in my affliction,
that your promise gives me life.

In good times and bad, luxury and slavery, Daniel held fast to God's promises and found true life through a hope-filled perspective!

His time in the lion's den and his friend's time in the furnace and the deliverance thereof shows that God is always with his faithful ones even when they are taken captive by gentile beastly powers. When Israel was in Egypt, God called it an Iron Furnace:

1. **Deuteronomy 4:20 (ESV)**

- 20 But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.

In this Iron Furnace, God was with them and heard their cry and was faithful to his covenant:

Exodus 2:24–25 (ESV)

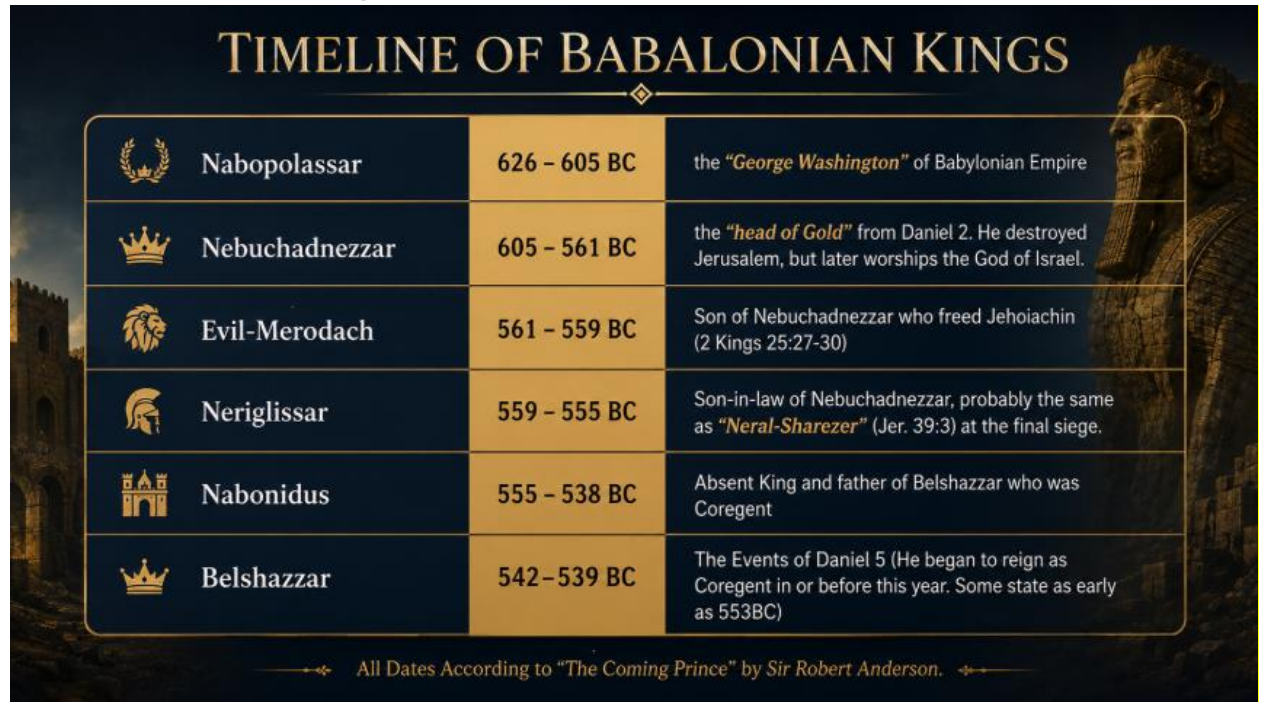
24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. 25 God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.







In the book of Daniel, we will see that God's faithful ones are literally in a furnace in a foreign land and God is still with them! This is a major message of Daniel, God will certainly ALWAYS be faithful to his people, no matter what trial he puts them through.

Before moving to the next section of our teaching tonight, we wanted to give you a timeline of the kings of Babylon and Persia to guide you as you begin to follow along with us in this study. Just like the above

timeline we showed, many of the dates are highly debated and we will not have time to defend every date we have used in our timelines. Although there is room for some variance in the dates we are presenting, we believe the understanding they bring make it worth bringing up despite the uncertain nature of the exact dates.

(Read names of kings)



| TIMELINE OF BABALONIAN KINGS | | |
|--|--------------|--|
|  Nabopolassar | 626 – 605 BC | the “ <i>George Washington</i> ” of Babylonian Empire |
|  Nebuchadnezzar | 605 – 561 BC | the “ <i>head of Gold</i> ” from Daniel 2. He destroyed Jerusalem, but later worships the God of Israel. |
|  Evil-Merodach | 561 – 559 BC | Son of Nebuchadnezzar who freed Jehoiachin (2 Kings 25:27-30) |
|  Neriglissar | 559 – 555 BC | Son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, probably the same as “ <i>Neral-Sharezer</i> ” (Jer. 39:3) at the final siege. |
|  Nabonidus | 555 – 538 BC | Absent King and father of Belshazzar who was Coregent |
|  Belshazzar | 542 – 539 BC | The Events of Daniel 5 (He began to reign as Coregent in or before this year. Some state as early as 553BC) |

—❖— All Dates According to “The Coming Prince” by Sir Robert Anderson. —❖—

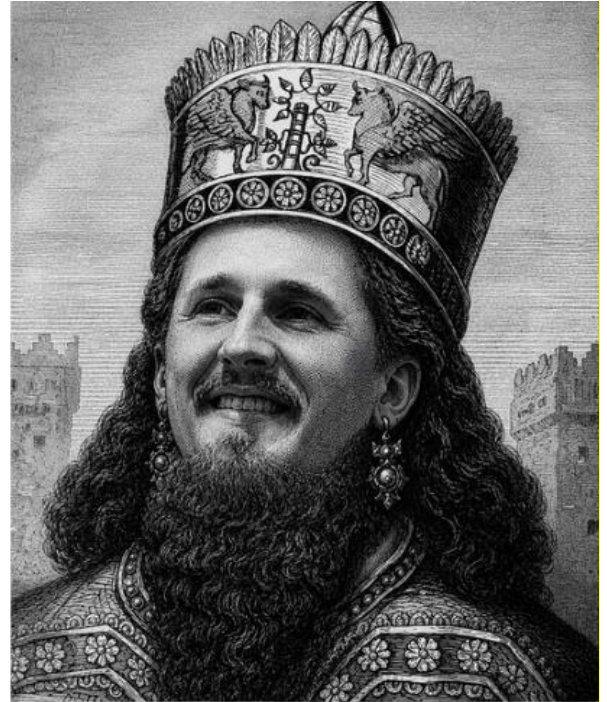
Some of these names should sound familiar to you if you have read through the book of Daniel or various other biblical works. We understand that we are going through this quick and some names may also be very unfamiliar to you, however, as we continue in our study you will become very familiar with some of the characters on this slide.

We want to draw your attention to Nebuchadnezzar, one of the most prominent kings in the book of Daniel. We have a picture for you of this king and his excellent beard.

(DO NOT READ)

NebuCHADnezzar

A mythical anomaly mixing both ancient strategy and modern millennial style. His Persian beard complements his pure-bred Dutch complexion. For more details on this enigmatic figure, please consult with pastor Chad.



Before we move on we wanted to briefly touch on the kings of Persia to give some bearings on where we are headed. Rather than fully unpacking this slide, we go over a brief few highlights, but you can find it in the notes for further study.

(DO NOT READ)

KINGS OF PERSIA

|  PERSIAN KING |  DATES (BC) |  BIBLICAL CONNECTIONS |
|--|--|---|
|  Cyrus II <i>(The Great)</i> | 559–530 | Permitted return of the Jews from exile; facilitated rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem (Ezr 1:1–4; 6:3–5); "his anointed" (Is 45:1) |
|  Cambyses II | 530–522 | Not mentioned in the Bible |
|  Darius I Hystaspes | 522–486 | Haggai and Zechariah preached during the second year of Darius I (~520 BC); temple rebuilt and dedicated (~515 BC; cp. Ezr 6:1–15) |
|  Xerxes I | 486–465 | Possibly Ahasuerus of the book of Esther |
|  Artaxerxes I Longimanus | 485–425 | Nehemiah, cupbearer to Artaxerxes; came to Judah (~444 BC; cp. Neh 2:1); traditional date of Ezra's mission in the seventh year of his reign (~458 BC; cp. Ezr 7:7) |
|  Xerxes II | ~423 | Not mentioned in the Bible |
|  Darius II Nothus | 423–404 | Not mentioned in the Bible; Jews in Egypt appealed to Samaria and Jerusalem for help in rebuilding their temple (~about 407 BC). |
|  Artaxerxes II Mnemon | 404–359/8 | Some scholars place Ezra's mission in the seventh year of Artaxerxes II, ~about 398 BC. |
|  Artaxerxes III Ochus | 359/8–338/7 | Not mentioned in the Bible |
|  Arses | 338/7–336 | Not mentioned in the Bible |
|  Darius III Codomannus | 336–330 | Alexander subdues the Levant; Tyre and Gaza besieged, ~332 BC; conquest of Egypt by Alexander, ~332 BC. |

Carl R. Anderson, "Ezra," in CSB Study Bible: Notes, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 699.

As you can see on the slide, out of 11 Persian Kings there are only 3 that are clearly named in the Holy Writ. This leads to significant debates even among competent scholars regarding which King was in power during any given event in the Biblical period. This fact is compounded by the possibility that a particular ruler may also not yet be known to secular historians and archeologists.

Those of you familiar with the book of Daniel may also have noticed that "Darius the Mede" is not listed on this slide. That is because there is much debate over his identity, however, we think it likely that he was a regional ruler under Cyrus the Great. We will unpack this more in future lessons.



Pop Quiz #3

Approximately how old was Daniel when he was taken captive to Babylon in 606 BC?

A. 8 years old

B. 14 years old

C. 21 years old

D. 30 years old

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Section 5: Jesus' Endorsement of Daniel's Future Fulfillment

As we embark on this exciting journey together — we're going to dive

into things that are deeply debated, but we're going to come to conclusions together — it is fitting that we start with the perspective of the Messiah on the importance of the book of Daniel.

1. **Matthew 24:15 (NIV)** — "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel — let the reader understand—"



Jesus expected you to have read Daniel. He expected Daniel to inform his followers as history unfolded beyond his earthly ministry. This is precisely why, in Matthew 24:15, he says "*let the reader understand*" — a third-person imperative in the Greek, *voείτω* (noh-AY-toh), meaning not merely "read this" but "perceive it, reckon with it." This is not a suggestion. It is a command. The same posture is called for in Revelation 13:18 and 17:9, where the reader is urged toward wisdom and discernment rather than a surface reading of the words. In each case, the call echoes Daniel's own repeated promise that *the wise will understand* the visions given to him.

Daniel himself modeled this. He understood the prophecies of Jeremiah, and that understanding positioned him to intercede effectively for the nation of Israel. He did not passively receive revelation — he engaged it. Jesus is calling his followers to do the same.

You are going to discover in this book a repeating historical pattern that began before Daniel, ran through his lifetime, and extended well beyond it — all the way to Jesus, and further still. When Jesus said "*when you see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation,*" he was treating Daniel's revelation as unfinished business. The events were still future. The pattern was still turning. It is clear that Daniel's prophecy extended beyond the first advent of the Messiah — and Jesus assumed his followers would know it well enough to recognize the moment when it began to unfold.

In short, you are not merely invited to understand the book of Daniel.

According to Scripture, you are instructed to.

The events of Daniel — their ultimate fulfillment — are still in our future and were not all completed during the Messiah's first advent. This should stir you about the importance of studying the book of Daniel in its entirety, because those fulfillments are still to come, and Jesus' own words prove that to us.

Have you ever been in a situation and you were greatly discouraged by it, and then you realize: wait, we've been in this situation before? Daniel is a series of "wait, we've been in this situation before" — and in fact we know we're going to go through it several more times. Men can argue endlessly over the abomination that causes desolation — there's been more than one — there have been more than one beastly, gentile, oppressing nation — but the truth still remains that the kingdom of God will be established in Israel. That is the overriding, overarching point, and as a Writing, you can take so much from that: you've gone through a tragedy and survived it, and God's promise still remains for you. You can know, when you go to the next tragedy — not knowing how many more there'll be — that God's promise will still remain for you.



Pop Quiz #4

The Greek word *noeito* in Matthew 24:15 ("let the reader understand") is described as functioning similarly to which other New Testament passage?

- A. John 1:1, on the nature of the Word
- B. Revelation 13:18, calling for wisdom to calculate the number of the beast
- C. Romans 8:28, on all things working together for good
- D. 1 Corinthians 13, on the nature of love

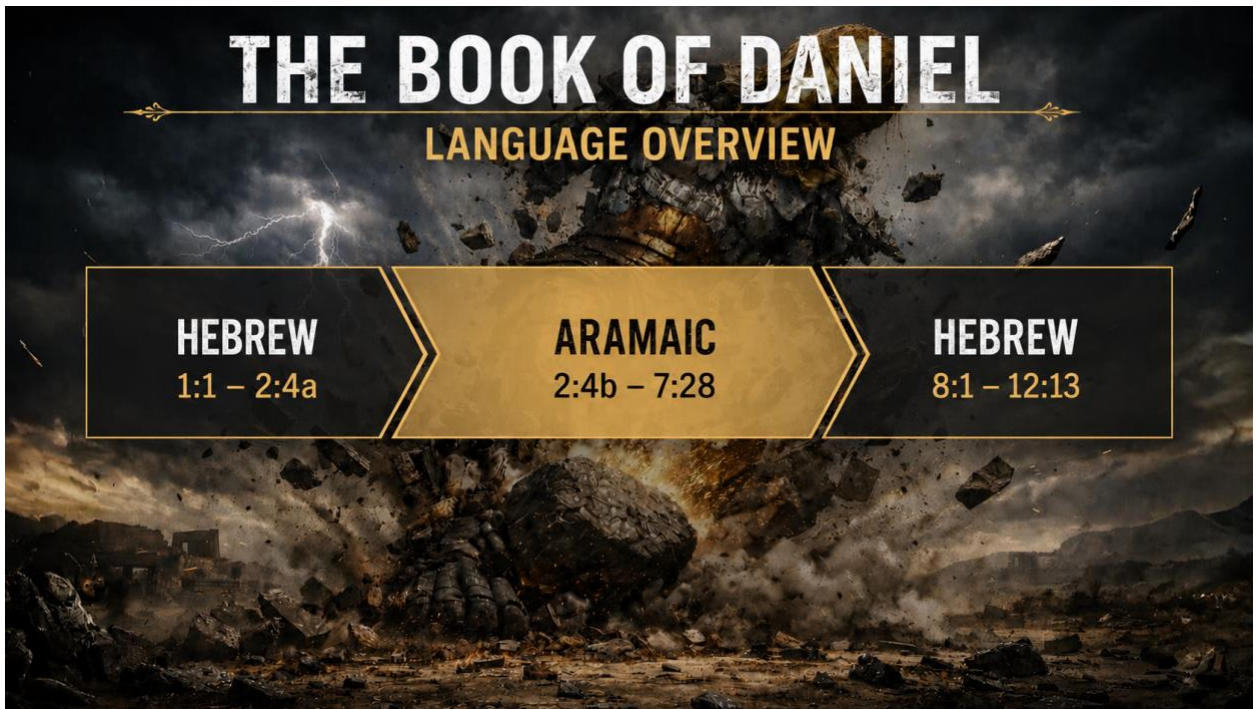
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SECTION 6: STRUCTURAL KEYS TO READING DANIEL

We want to highlight part of the structure of Daniel. Chapter 1 is written in the Hebrew language, but from chapters 2 through 7 there

is a language shift in the text, and it's written in Aramaic.



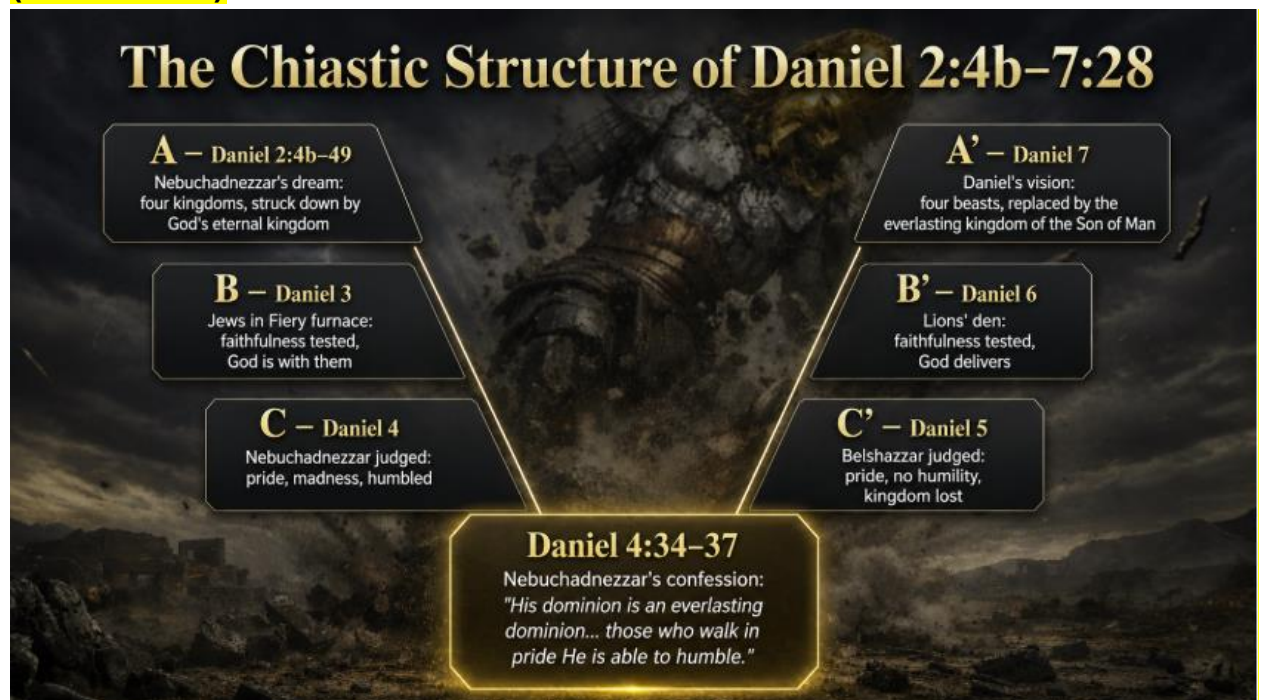
The language shift in Daniel is not a random detail; it happens at a very meaningful moment in the story. Daniel begins in Hebrew, the language of the covenant people, but in Daniel 2:4 the Chaldeans answer Nebuchadnezzar “in Aramaic,” and from that point forward the book itself moves into Aramaic. In other words, the Aramaic section begins the moment Babylon speaks. The empire’s wise men step forward in the international language of the age, but immediately their wisdom is exposed as powerless. They can interpret a dream if the king tells it to them, but they cannot reveal mysteries. That sets the stage for Daniel’s great declaration: there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. So the language of the nations becomes the platform where the God of Israel announces His superiority over the wisdom, kings, and kingdoms of the world.

That Aramaic section continues all the way through Daniel 7:28, and its content is overwhelmingly concerned with Gentile empires: Babylon’s statue, Babylon’s furnace, Nebuchadnezzar’s humiliation,

Belshazzar's judgment, Darius's decree, and finally the beastly kingdoms of Daniel 7. It begins with the kingdoms of men pictured as a glorious statue, and it ends with those same kingdoms pictured as beasts, until one like a son of man receives everlasting dominion from the Ancient of Days. Then, after this universal message has been declared — that all peoples, nations, and languages will ultimately come under the rule of God's appointed King — the book returns to Hebrew in Daniel 8:1. From there the focus narrows again toward Israel's future, the sanctuary, Jerusalem, suffering, and final deliverance. So the movement of the languages helps tell the story: Hebrew frames the covenant people, Aramaic confronts the nations, and Hebrew returns to the hope of Israel.

The change in language therefore becomes somewhat of a book within a book and speaks a message entirely complimentary to what is plainly written. The section in Aramaic then presents as a chiasmic structure looking something like this:

(Read Slide)



We will walk through these more in the coming weeks, we just thought it was cool and wanted to get it to you as soon as possible.

The book of Daniel begins with enormous pressure on the Jews who have been entrusted with Torah. The opening chapter introduces you to four of them by name. They are all youths pressed between two allegiances of opposing kingdoms. They must choose between loyalty to the King of the Universe or the king of their locality. Their names, functions, and identities are being assaulted — they are brought into captivity and their names are changed, from Jewish names to names that honor the gods of the nation they were in.

This is the context for the rest of the book. The people of the God of Israel living out the commands of God, pressured to abandon the commands and torn between saving their lives or remaining faithful to their God. The loyalty of the exemplary and central figures causes them to receive favor and be exalted.

However, like so many aspects of the Word, the book of Daniel really is a jewel that you can turn slightly and it will reflect the light in new and beautiful ways. Not only does it speak a message when you read it in the order it appears, it speaks another message when you look at where the language switches from Hebrew to Aramaic and then back to Hebrew again. It also speaks another message when you consider this:

(Do Not Read)

CHRONOLOGY OF DANIEL

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| CHAPTER 1 | Babylonian Captivity and Training in Babylon |
| CHAPTER 2 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 3 | Nebuchadnezzar's Image and the Fiery Furnace |
| CHAPTER 4 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree, Interpretation, and Pride |
| CHAPTER 7 | The Dream of the Four Beasts and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 8 | The Vision of the Ram and the Goat and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 5 | The Writing on the Wall: Babylon Falls to Persians |
| CHAPTER 9 | Daniel's Prayer and Vision of Seventy Weeks |
| CHAPTER 6 | The Lions' Den |
| CHAPTERS 10-12 | Closing Visions |

Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 make sense linearly— but chronologically chapter 7 happens after 4, then 8, then chapter 5, then chapter 9, and then we come back around for chapter 6. We will help you with this throughout the book, but for now you might put this in your notes: when Daniel is speaking to Belshazzar in Chapter 5, Daniel has already had the vision recorded in chapter 7 and is 81 years old!

To explain this a bit further: Daniel covers a period of history with major events involving a king, and then there's a chapter that goes back and tells you a revelation he received in the midst of that reign. So when Daniel is speaking to Belshazzar — bold as can be, because he is a man of God — he basically tells him he's not a tenth of the man his father was, that he's prideful, arrogant, and going to die that night. Daniel had already had the vision in Daniel 7 of what would happen to the kingdoms and the changing of powers. He already had insight into this — not simply that God put His word in his mouth and it came out, but it was based on the previous revelations he had received and his study of the Word already.

(One note on that: in Amos, God says He does nothing without revealing it to His servants the prophets. Having an idea of God's overall plan helps Daniel very literally stand in the moment and speak what he needs to speak, because he knows the ultimate outcome. Chapter 7 came before chapter 5. So did chapter 8 — there are hundreds of years of history that Daniel understood before he stood before Belshazzar, and knowing that gives him a kind of confidence and boldness. Chapter 5 has the tenor of "I knew your dad, your granddad — he was a king. You? Not much of a king. In fact, it's about to be taken from you." It's also striking what Daniel didn't tell him — he felt no need to explain all that was going to happen, since Belshazzar was going to be dead by morning. This historical context, and how Daniel acts faithfully within it, is vastly strengthening once you grasp it — instead of treating the book as just a technical manual for how seven bowls, seven trumpets, and seven seals will play out.)

Next we're going to walk through the chapters with a few highlights to try and help you start to see themes and their connections. **People like to dissect the book of Daniel; what we would like you to do is connect the book of Daniel. We believe the right way to understand this is in the broadest possible picture** — this way you don't end up in an eclectic group of internet fanatics promoting a pet idea inconsistent with the biblical narrative, which is all too popular these days.



Pop Quiz #5

At what point in the book does Daniel shift from Hebrew into Aramaic?

- A. When Daniel begins praying in chapter 9
- B. The moment the Chaldeans answer Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 2
- C. When Daniel is thrown into the lions' den in chapter 6
- D. When the four beasts appear in chapter 7

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7. Chapter-by-Chapter Survey, Part 1: Chapters 1–6 - **PETER**

In our effort to connect Daniel instead of dissecting Daniel, we are going to spend the majority of our time remaining, giving you a brief

overview of the entire book so everything is in view as we progress.



STRUCTURE OF DANIEL

| | |
|----------------|---|
| CHAPTER 1 | Babylonian Captivity and Training in Babylon |
| CHAPTER 2 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 3 | Nebuchadnezzar's Image and the Fiery Furnace |
| CHAPTER 4 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree, Interpretation, and Pride |
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| CHAPTER 8 | The Vision of the Ram and the Goat and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 9 | Daniel's Prayer and Vision of Seventy Weeks |
| CHAPTERS 10-12 | Closing Visions |

Chapter 1: The book of Daniel begins with enormous pressure on the Jews who have been entrusted with Torah. The opening chapter introduces you to four of them by name—Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They are all youths pressed between two allegiances of opposing kingdoms. They must choose between loyalty to the King of the Universe or the king of their locality. Their names, functions, and identities are being assaulted. The faithful Jews remain loyal even down to their diet. The testing period is 10 days, and they are 10 times better for it. The context of the first chapter fits the purpose of the Ketuvim — how to live in your historical context faithfully. The first chapter begins under Nebuchadnezzar and mentions Daniel's ministry until the first year of Cyrus. It is important as we move forward to understand that the chapters are sequential but include anachronisms.

Chapter 2: The second chapter of Daniel contains a vision that only the Jewish people are able to interpret — though the vision itself is

given to a gentile king. This vision was of a rock cut out of a mountain that will crush empires.

Mountains in the Bible are often nations, and this mountain is Israel, and the rock is the Jewish Messiah that will crush all gentile empires and fill the earth. That is an important, strengthening hope for exiles to faithfully hold on to in the historical setting of Daniel — there is a rock coming to crush the empire oppressing them.

We are going to see parallels with Joseph from the seed book, as we encounter another faithful son of Abraham interpreting dreams for National Rulers. As we saw in Genesis, the God of Israel is the Revealer of Mysteries, not the gentile magicians and their foreign gods. The Kingdom of God is not merely a spiritual one, but rather a real, physical Kingdom that crushes all others.

The Jewish men involved in the chapter lived in obedience to a Jeremiah 29 kind of setting

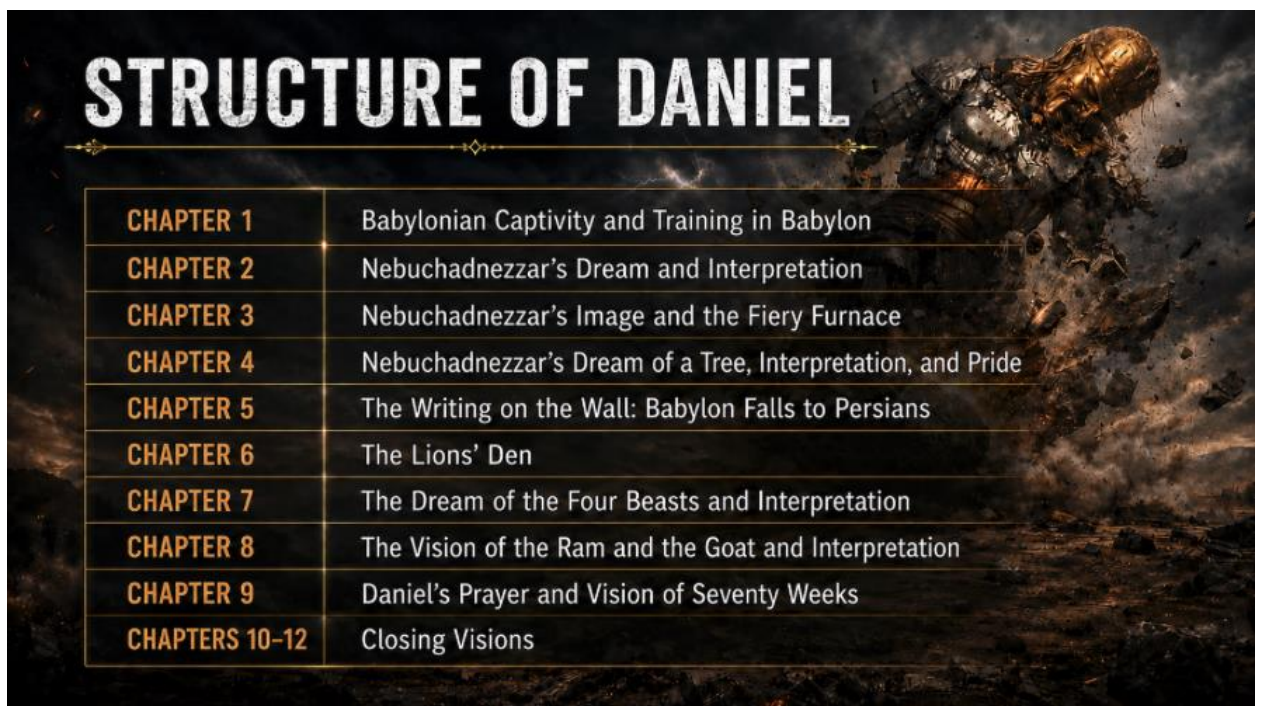
1. **Jeremiah 29:11–13 (ESV)**

- **11** For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. **12** Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. **13** You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Despite being exiled in a foreign land, these men are at no disadvantage and worked faithfully in a team. The Chapter ends with a Jewish man being exalted over the counterfeit wise men and recognized as having superior spiritual insight, because he and his friends were faithful to their God under pressure. He then advocates for his friends that were with him in the trial to be exalted as well.

A note on application: when we read "Shadrach, Meshach, and

Abednego," or "Daniel," or the word "saints" in the book of Daniel, we should avoid the temptation to take that in the broadest possible interpretation — reading 600 years later, "Gentiles could be included," back into the text. Understand first how the original audience could only have taken it: Babylon was a real kingdom oppressing them; the kingdoms after Babylon were real, physical, tangible kingdoms oppressing them. It is implausible that anyone reading this originally would think the rock that filled the whole earth was merely a mystical spiritual kingdom. When men have spiritualized this kingdom in the past, it has led to all kinds of insane doctrines and neglected the fact that there is going to be a very physical, earthly rule and reign that Messiah and Israel will indeed have — it's still to come.



| STRUCTURE OF DANIEL | |
|---------------------|---|
| CHAPTER 1 | Babylonian Captivity and Training in Babylon |
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| CHAPTERS 10-12 | Closing Visions |

Chapter 3: As we move to the third chapter there is a repeating theme that relates to chapters 1 and 2: the Jews enlightened by Torah are oppressed because of the revelation given them by the God of Israel, and again must choose between obedience to the King of the Universe or the king of their locality. They are threatened with

assimilation or destruction. (Assimilation is as big a threat to the people of God as physical destruction — they would live—yes, but they would cease to be the distinct, special people of God honoring the revelation they alone had received.) The chapter ends with an edict against the oppressors.

Already by this point in the first three chapters, a pattern is forming: God gives His people revelation; that revelation is tested (even in fire, as in this chapter); and then God delivers His people, and all the gentile nations see the deliverance of a Jewish king with his people.

Jacob's trouble is a necessary part of the process — Israel does not get to receive revelation from God and jump straight to deliverance. The revelation is their hope in times of difficulty and persecution, so that the rock of Daniel 2 can be cut out and take over the whole earth.

Chapter 3 highlights, as a pattern, the coming of Jacob's trouble and what must be done to reach the outcome of the vision regarding the rock of Daniel 2. One of the amazing things about Daniel 3 is that it ends with an edict against the very people who oppressed the Jewish people for their revelation — God allows His people to be in a fiery furnace precisely so He can then take the oppressors and show them to be wrong before the whole world.

Interestingly, the chapter also mentions "one like a son of the gods" in the fire with the Jewish people. When we sing "*there's another in the fire, standing next to me*" and get excited about it personally, we can miss the point of the story for those who wrote and received it: they were actual Jews in actual fire, while the whole gentile world was against them. But one like the Son of God stood with them. This *can* apply to us — but we make a terrible mistake applying it to ourselves before applying it to Israel. The Bible is not merely Jewish-centric, but it is Israel-dependent, because God loves His people, and He also loves those grafted in.

You will never participate in the blessings of Israel without participating in the tribulation of Israel — the great failing of the Christian community has been to try to claim every blessing given to Israel without standing with Israel in the very same trial. Theology that leads to this conclusion is both cowardly and incorrect.

Chapters 4 and 5: The gentile nations are viewed as beasts unable to understand the revelation that the Jewish people have been given. Nebuchadnezzar himself loses his mind and becomes like a beast — this detail, introduced in Daniel, carries all the way through the book of Revelation. Although the gentiles rule over the Jews, the Kingdom that will crush all others will be Jewish. There is a beautiful truth displayed in the humbling of the beast Nebuchadnezzar, in that he acknowledges the God of the Jewish people and becomes a proto-evangelist of sorts — sending word to all tribes, tongues, and nations that the God of these Jewish men is the only true God.

There are even hints of Isaiah's description of gentile kings aiding the sons of Israel in this chapter. Where Nebuchadnezzar truly missteps is in standing against God's divine plan, and whether the Lord fell on him or he fell on the Lord, it did not end well — he ended up eating *grass* like a...beast.

However, in chapter 5, his son Belshazzar (not to be confused with Belteshazzar, which is Daniel) does not humble himself, and even does blasphemous things — taking the plundered vessels from the Temple in Israel and using them at a party. This results in his immediate demise.

When you connect chapters 4 and 5 you see a stark comparison: two kings of the same lineage and nation — one repents and comes into right relationship with God's people and plan, proclaiming to the earth a message about a King above all gods; the other does not repent, and God puts him to death. This is a pattern you'll see repeat in other kings, since Daniel lives through multiple dynasty changes, and

God's pattern shows up in each of them.

Chapter 6: As we move to chapter 6, we are repeating the themes of the 3rd chapter — Daniel, a royal son of the tribe of Judah, is thrown into a pagan lion's den and walks out unharmed; his oppressors, however, are thrown into the den and crushed—this is not unlike the fire in chapter 3. Are you beginning to see the connection between chapter 6 and 3?

Again, the prosperity of the Jewish people is envied by the gentiles and they oppress the Jew by working to trap him. The repeating theme is always the same: the God of the Jews is exalted and will establish His physical, earthly Kingdom through His people.

Interestingly, like in chapter 4, chapter 6 contains another letter from a gentile king to the known world proclaiming the greatness of the God of Israel — shorter, but echoing the same theme: there is an eternal God above the gods they had been serving, and the king wants the known world to know about the God of Daniel.

Before we move on to chapter 7, consider one last beautiful connection: Daniel's loving care of Nebuchadnezzar contributed to Nebuchadnezzar's conversion, and his loving affection for Darius who reluctantly threw him into the lion's den is clear in the text and results in his conversion as well. Nothing in the New Testament — including the call to love your enemies — can be properly understood apart from the Old.

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8. Chapter-by-Chapter Survey, Part 2: Chapters 7–12

Chapter 7: Chapter 7 is, in our view, the highlight of the book and the bottom of a Chiastic structure in the whole book of Daniel. The key verse is verse 26-27:

1. **Daniel 7:26–27 (NIV — Anglicised)**
- "But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed for ever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him."

This chapter again features the Jewish people receiving special revelation about the final outcome for Israel. Again the Jewish nation must suffer under the gentile beasts, but this ultimately ushers in the permanent kingdom of God and its dominion over all other kingdoms. Moreover, this chapter features the appearance of one like a son of man coming on the clouds of Heaven.

This is not a kingdom we should picture as merely spiritualized —with fat naked babies on clouds, and ethereal cities floating in the clouds. It is a *real* physical kingdom, every bit as much as the kingdoms of the oppressors were. The Biblical texts on the millennial reign describe it occurring on earth, with ongoing commerce, fishing — even eating barbecue and aged wine with Abraham. (see *Revelation 5:10, 20:4-6, Isaiah 65:21-23, Amos 9:13-14, Ezekiel 47:8-10*). Spiritualizing this away skews your understanding of the whole Bible. Is it spiritual? Yes — in the same way David's kingdom or Solomon's kingdom was spiritual — but a real kingdom nevertheless.

Consider what the kingdom of David and Solomon actually looked like historically: real dominion over the land, with surrounding nations fearing David's name even in territories he had never occupied. With that picture in mind, a Judean of the tribe of Judah, sitting captive in Babylon and hearing of a coming "son of man," was not imagining some ethereal, spiritualized kingdom. He was imagining one like David's — but greater in every respect — a kingdom that would drive back the nations now holding his people captive. This is the context in which Jesus speaks of the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with the holy ones: the crushing of every rival kingdom and the establishment of the Jewish monarchy, forever restored.

STRUCTURE OF DANIEL

| | |
|----------------|---|
| CHAPTER 1 | Babylonian Captivity and Training in Babylon |
| CHAPTER 2 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 3 | Nebuchadnezzar's Image and the Fiery Furnace |
| CHAPTER 4 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree, Interpretation, and Pride |
| CHAPTER 5 | The Writing on the Wall: Babylon Falls to Persians |
| CHAPTER 6 | The Lions' Den |
| CHAPTER 7 | The Dream of the Four Beasts and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 8 | The Vision of the Ram and the Goat and Interpretation |
| CHAPTER 9 | Daniel's Prayer and Vision of Seventy Weeks |
| CHAPTERS 10-12 | Closing Visions |

Chapter 8: Chapter 8 continues the cycle of gentile beastly nations oppressing the Jewish people who have been given special revelation. The chapter describes two beasts — a ram and a "super goat" (*which flies/floats from west to east and headbutts the ram, killing it*). If you read Daniel without commentaries, the interpretation is right there in chapter 8: the two beasts represent Gentile kingdoms, specifically Medo-Persia and Greece. They continue the same pattern already established in chapters 4 and 5 with Nebuchadnezzar, who aids the sons of Israel, and his son Belshazzar, who must die for his blasphemies. The ram is Medo-Persia, the goat is Greece. Historically, Cyrus and Darius of Medo-Persia aid the Jewish people — you see this also in Nehemiah and Ezra, in the rebuilding of the Temple. But a king of Greece following Alexander the Great will die for his blasphemies against the God of Israel. Those who come after Medo-Persia will suffer for it.

So the cycle is this: a Gentile beast is humbled because of the revelation given through the Jewish people, and the one who comes

after refuses to humble himself — and dies for spurning that revelation, **namely the God of Israel**. This pattern repeats through Greek history, Roman history, Islamic history, and on into today: as soon as a king rises who favors the Jewish people, he is blessed by God; as soon as one rises after him who spurns the Jewish people, he is destroyed.

Chapter 9: The end of Daniel chapter 9 has some of the most supernatural prophecies about the future that you'll ever read in the Bible — so much so that most people skip over the first two-thirds of the chapter. Considering that Daniel 9 is a Writings, the entire chapter is important in teaching us how to properly live in our times. In Daniel 9, Daniel reflects on the scroll of Jeremiah, and realizes there is a future event that will happen at the end of 70 years — a type of restoration for the desolation God had brought upon them. Daniel begins to pray and intercede for the Jewish people, and God hears his prayer and answers him with the great revelation at the end of the chapter.

Do we need to know eschatology — what's going to happen in the future? Yes, because it tells us how to intercede for the Jewish people, and because God may give us revelation we need for the times ahead. In this chapter, Daniel, a Jewish man from the tribe of Judah, is entrusted with yet further revelation, this time concerning heptadic periods of time — cycles of years that Israel has experienced in the past, is experiencing in the present, and will experience in the future, completing this larger cycle of Gentile beastly oppression. God did not structure history around units of ten; He counted in sabbatical cycles, by sevens. Ancient Jewish works like the Book of Jubilees count years this way literally — forty-nine years plus a year of Jubilee.

Chapters 10–12: These chapters again enumerate the cycles of beastly gentile oppression through the various kingdoms, up to the final northern beastly gentile kingdom to oppress the people of God

and oppose the God of Israel. This northern gentile beast is reminiscent of the gentile beast from Babylon (the direction from which Babylon invaded Israel) — and reminiscent, too, of the "mystery Babylon" imagery in Revelation. Chapter 12 even includes the resurrection of the dead and God's establishment of His kingdom — Michael standing up and his people rising. These chapters are strongly related to the vision of chapter 2, and there is continuity tying them back to earlier chapters as we work through the book.

As we have said several times, during this study we want to *connect* Daniel instead of *dissect* Daniel. That is the path to understanding its true meaning and purpose.

Before we move into our next section, we wanted to take a few moments before closing our review to show you some of the key dates and highlights in the life of Daniel.

(Do Not Read)

KEY DATES IN THE TIME OF DANIEL



612 B.C.

Nineveh falls to an alliance of Babylon and Media

- Daniel is about 8 years old during this event



609 B.C.

Pharaoh Necho leads army against Assyria. Josiah fights Pharaoh Necho and gets killed (2 Chr 35:20–24)

- Daniel is about 11 years old during this event



606 B.C.

Battle of Carchemish. Nebuchadnezzar vs. Pharaoh Necho (Jer 46:1–6). Jehoiakim bound with shackles and taken to Babylon (2 Chr 36:5–8)

- Daniel is about 14 years old during this event, meaning that he is about this age when he arrives to Babylon with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah during the first siege and exile of Jerusalem

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(Do Not Read)

HIGHLIGHTS IN THE LIFESPAN OF DANIEL

-  Daniel was born around **620 B.C.**
-  Daniel is about **14 years old** when he arrives to Babylon after the first siege and exile of Jerusalem and begins his training
-  Daniel is in his **mid-teens** when he dictates and interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue in Daniel 2
-  Daniel is about **81 years old** when he confronts Belshazzar before Babylon falls to the Persians in Daniel 5, having already received the dream of the four beasts in chapter 7 and the vision of the ram and goat in chapter 8
-  Daniel is about **81 years old** when he receives the vision of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9
-  Daniel is about **83 years old** when he is thrown in the lions' den in Daniel 6
-  Daniel is probably in his **mid-80s** when he has the closing visions of Daniel 10–12

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Pop Quiz #6

The contrast between Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4) and Belshazzar (Daniel 5) establishes a pattern that recurs elsewhere in the book. Which later chapter explicitly repeats this same pattern of a gentile ruler being humbled versus refusing to humble himself?

- A. Chapter 6, contrasting Daniel's deliverance with his oppressors' destruction
- B. Chapter 8, contrasting the kings of Medo-Persia who aid Israel with a later Greek king who blasphemes and dies
- C. Chapter 9, contrasting the seventy years of exile with the seventy weeks of years
- D. Chapter 1, contrasting Daniel's faithfulness with the king's officials

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9. The Physical, Not Merely Spiritual, Kingdom

By the end of our study in Daniel you should clearly understand why John, another Jewish man, received special revelation while standing

in captivity. Like Daniel, his visions were regarding the final manifestation of the Satanic Gentile Beast that is against the people of God, and how that is followed by the establishment of the kingdom of God.

In our study, we will be exploring the gentile beastly efforts of Antiochus (Epiphanes), the gentile beastly efforts of Rome (some thoughts you should affirm, and some you should strongly question), and even the gentile beastly efforts of an Islamic Caliphate, as we study this prophetic pattern that results in the kingdom of God being established on earth.

Daniel is in the *Writings*, and thus shows us how to live faithfully in the process that will bring about the consolation of Israel and the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. There will be a physical throne of David on the earth — the very one Jesus' mother was told He would sit on, and which He has not yet sat on. There is a repeating emphasis on the people who received the revelation that must go through the furnace, must go through a lion's den, and must endure the beast in order to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Whether the gentiles fall on the stone, or the stone falls on them, the result is the same: the beast will be crushed, and the kingdom of God will be established on earth as a real, physical Kingdom — not some ethereal, superstitiously spiritual fulfillment.

Let's give you a few beautiful hints as to our direction:

1. **Daniel 2:35 (NIV — Anglicised)** — Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing-floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.

•

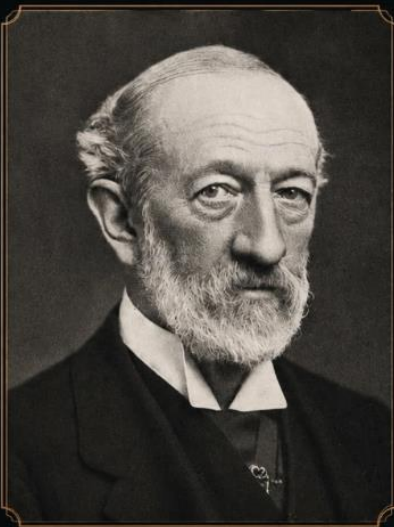
The over-spiritualization of the prophecies of Daniel has caused

many — including us, including many theologians and pastors — to misinterpret these statements. The Peshat (plain sense) of these verses predicts something more than the rise and spread of a "spiritual empire" in the middle of earthly ones. They actually foretell the establishment of a kingdom which breaks the gentile beastly empires to pieces. This means that the Kingdom of God on earth in Israel is a real, physical entity, and not an ethereal, mystical one — it cannot be, while gentile beastly empires are still afoot.

This fact alone should sober anyone who doubts that this age has a clock running on it. The worst thing a Christian can believe is that history simply gets better and better until the Messiah arrives to reign. That is not the hope. The hope is in a real, physical kingdom, established by a Jewish Messiah, and His throne on the ground in Israel. That is the Biblical hope, and that is what we have been made sharers in. Not replacements for Israel—sharers with Israel. We can have this with Israel. We will never have it without Israel.

We would like to quote Sir Robert Anderson (a Scottish scholar, knighted, who worked for Scotland Yard in the late 19th/early 20th century) on the nature of prophecy and fulfillment, in an effort to keep us from allegorizing prophecy to our own detriment:

Do Not Read



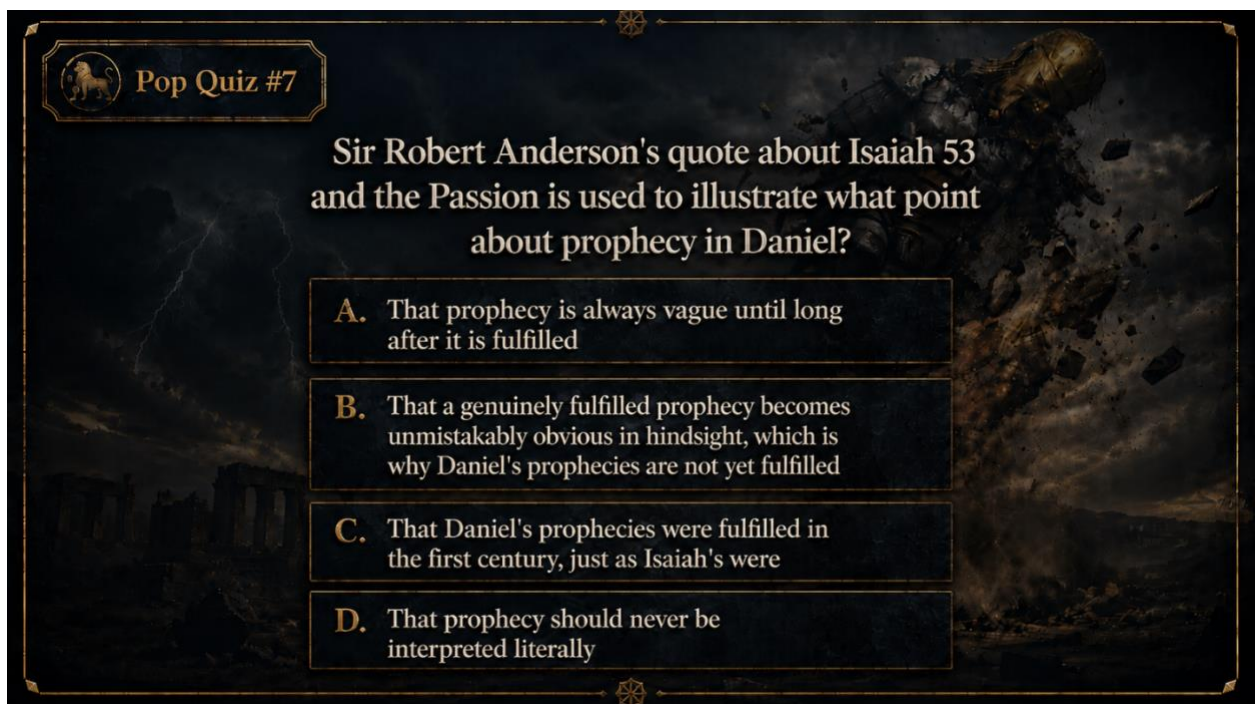
SIR ROBERT ANDERSON
K.C.B., LL.D.

“ If any one will learn the connection between prophecy and its fulfillment, let him read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and compare it with the story of the Passion: so vague and figurative that no one could have acted out the drama it foretold; but yet so definite and clear that, once fulfilled, the simplest child can recognize its scope and meaning. If then the event which constitutes the epoch of the seventieth week must be as pronounced and certain as Nehemiah’s commission and Messiah’s death, it is of necessity still future. ”

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We are drawing your attention to this in advance, because it does not seem likely that the events prophesied in Daniel could have been fulfilled in any century up to this point and still be up for debate among the serious biblical student. Nobody today can point back and say *"I am as confident that this prophecy in Daniel has already been fulfilled as I am that Isaiah 53 was about the crucifixion of Jesus"* — because it is not that obvious. Daniel remains one of the most misunderstood books of the Bible precisely because it is not yet fulfilled. When an event is fully fulfilled, it ought to be as obvious as the connection between Isaiah 53 and the crucifixion of Jesus.

It is a matter of opinion which historical elements of Daniel may or may not have already been fulfilled. It is a matter of fact that they are not completely fulfilled. We approach this book without trying to cram it into a system already given to us by some commentator, and instead, as a body, with a circumcised heart — open to discovery, still learning, avoiding unnecessary conclusions in the hope that God will speak to us as a community about things we are genuinely wrestling with.



Pop Quiz #7

Sir Robert Anderson's quote about Isaiah 53 and the Passion is used to illustrate what point about prophecy in Daniel?

- A. That prophecy is always vague until long after it is fulfilled
- B. That a genuinely fulfilled prophecy becomes unmistakably obvious in hindsight, which is why Daniel's prophecies are not yet fulfilled
- C. That Daniel's prophecies were fulfilled in the first century, just as Isaiah's were
- D. That prophecy should never be interpreted literally

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10. Living as a Prophetic People -

We want to highlight the importance of fighting for learning from and studying even the seemingly minute details of the text.

2 Samuel 23:11–12 — Next to him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. When the Philistines banded together at a place where there was a field full of lentils, Israel's troops fled from them. But Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field. He defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the Lord brought about a great victory.

To others, it may have looked like little more than a patch of weeds — hardly worth dying for. But to Shammah it was a portion of the divinely given inheritance, and beyond that, a position the enemy could have used as a foothold to take greater ground.

So it is with the details of the book of Daniel, and with the biblical text as a whole. If it was given by God, it is of intrinsic value — all of it.

The sentence that seems throwaway, the detail a commentator skips

over, the verse no one preaches on — any one of these may be a link in a chain of truth that our very lives depend on. Shammah could not afford to abandon that field, and we cannot afford to abandon a single syllable. Every word is God-breathed. Fight to understand every one of them, because what feels minor may be the thing that unlocks everything.

A note on the Spirit of Prophecy:

1. **2 Peter 1:21 (NIV)** — For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

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We want to encourage you that you have been given the Spirit of Prophecy. Peter described prophecy as "men spoke from God as they were carried along," and this is usually how we think of prophecy — the formula being "Thus saith the Lord...," meaning the Lord is putting His words in your mouth and you speak them. Isaiah certainly had that kind of prophetic speech ("The Lord says..."). Jeremiah certainly had that kind of prophetic speech ("Says the Lord"). Ezekiel, Amos, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi did as well. In our introduction to Daniel we noted that Jesus calls Daniel "the prophet" in Matthew 24:15 — even though Jesus knows very well that Daniel is in the Writings — and nowhere in Daniel does he say "Thus saith the Lord," as if God is putting His Word in his mouth in that kind of formula. Instead: Daniel prayed, and the Lord revealed. Daniel dreamed, and recorded what he saw. Daniel read Jeremiah, and was given insight.

In this we can see that it is not simply adding "The Lord says" or "Thus sayeth the Lord" that makes someone a prophet. Let's go back for a moment to our Genesis study where we first saw the word prophet speaking of Abraham.

(Do not Read)

What Makes a Prophet?

| Prophetic Action | Torah Examples (Prophets & References) |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Stands in God's counsel | Abraham (Gen 18:22-33); Moses (Ex 32:11-14) |
| 2. God reveals His plans | Abraham (Gen 18:17-21); Isaac (Gen 26:2-5); Jacob (Gen 28:13-15; 35:9-12) |
| 3. Sees God (visions/dreams) | Isaac (Gen 26:2, 24); Jacob (Gen 28:12-17; 32:30); Moses (Num 12:6-8) |
| 4. Prophetic dreams / interpretations | Joseph (Gen 37; 40-41) |
| 5. Hears from / speaks for God | Abel (Lk 11:49-51); Moses (Ex 3-4); Aaron (Ex 4:14-16) |
| 6. Carries out miracles | Moses (Ex 7-14); Aaron (Ex 7-12; Num 16-17) |
| 7. Accurately prophesies | Isaac (Gen 27); Jacob (Gen 49); Joseph (Gen 40-41) |
| 8. Intercedes on others' behalf | Abraham (Gen 18:22-33; 20:7, 17); Joseph (Gen 50:15-21); Moses (Ex 32-34); Aaron (Num 16:46-48) |

As we surveyed the Torah to acquire a scripturally sound understanding of what makes a prophet, we saw from men like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, Moses and Aaron that a prophet:

1. Stands in God' counsel
2. Sees revealed plans of God
3. Sees God (through visions/dreams)
4. Has prophetic dreams/interpretations
5. Hears from/speaks for God
6. Carries out miracles
7. Accurately prophesies
8. Intercedes on other's behalf

These men were friends of God, close to Him.

Daniel was close to the Lord, and the Revealer of Mysteries revealed His secrets to Daniel. We are sure that you will have many "Thus saith the Lord" moments, but we believe that Daniel's method might be even more

efficacious. It also seems to be the way John wrote Revelation — note that John, too, never says "Thus saith the Lord" in Revelation; he simply had insight from studying the Tanakh and was given a vision as he engaged with the Word of God. Daniel 5:11, 5:14, and 9:22 all indicate that Daniel has wisdom and insight like unto "the gods."

We are not against commentaries or other teachers. We own plenty of them, read them, and often agree. But we want you to search the Scriptures for yourself rather than simply inherit someone else's interpretation. The goal here is not to collect the best-sounding argument — it's closeness with God. Daniel did not have access to a library of commentaries. He had nearness to the Lord, and the Lord met him there. We want that same nearness for you. Commentaries can confirm what you find, or they can be a caution if something seems off — but they should never replace the search itself, because it is in the searching that closeness with God is formed.

If we fight for every word of the text and ask the God of Israel to reveal in response to our prayer; if we meditate on the text until we dream about it and then record what He shows us; if we read the text with an open heart — the God of Israel will give us insight, and we will all progress together in asking the right questions, so that God can give us His answers — instead of defending positions that weren't really ours in the first place.

