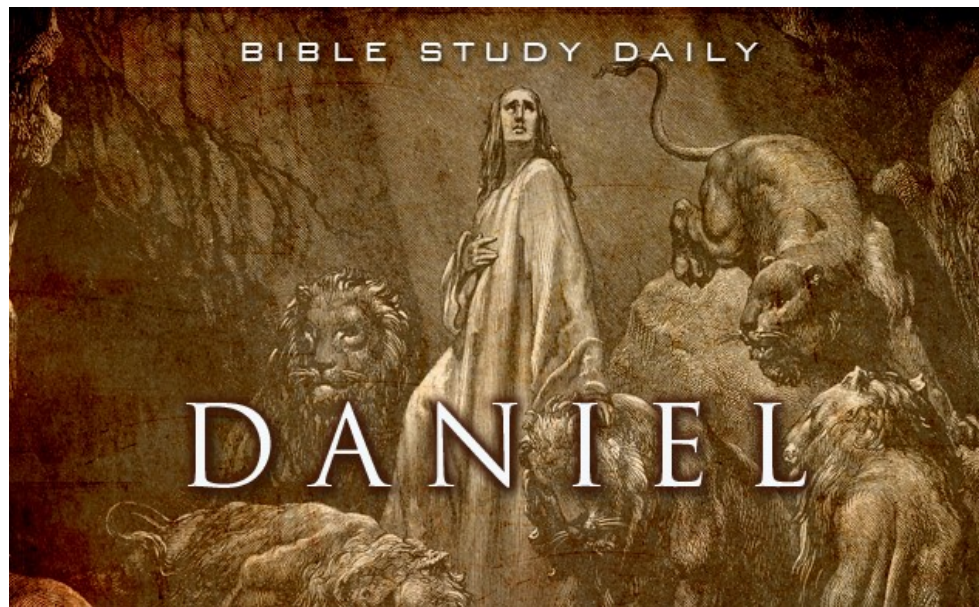




BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of Daniel as well as my study notes for the book.



Name

The book of Daniel derives its name from its author and the central character in the book. The name "Daniel" means "God Judges" or "God's Judge" .

Author

Daniel is the generally accepted author of the book of Daniel. He claimed authorship of visions from God in Daniel 8:2, 9:2, 9:20, and 12:5. Jesus attributed authorship to Daniel in Matthew 24:15 and 13:14.

Genre

Narrative

Literary Form

Apocalyptic Prose, Prophecy, and History

Time Frame

Daniel was taken into captivity during the reign of King Jehoiakim (605-604 B.C.) and wrote about events that occurred through about 536 B.C. His role as a government official ended during the first year of King Cyrus and his prophetic ministry ended during the third year of King Cyrus or about 532 - 530 B.C. Assuming David was a teenager when he was exiled to Babylon he would have been 85-90 years old by the time the book of Daniel was completed.

Most scholars accept a dating for the book of 530 B.C.

Emphasis

While Daniel certainly provided an excellent example of how the exiled Israelites should live among the Babylonians the emphasis of the book is on God's sovereignty:

- God raises up and puts down Gentile kings and nations to fulfill His greater purpose.
- God demonstrates His faithfulness to His people with whom He has established a covenant promise.
- Prophecies given to Daniel indicate what will happen to the Israelites during the "Time of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24) leading up to the Tribulation.
- Prophecies given to Daniel also depict Israel's future deliverance and the ultimate blessings of being restored to their land and in relationship to God during the Millennial reign of Christ.



Language

The book of Daniel has sections written in Hebrew and Aramaic: Daniel 1:1-2:3 is Hebrew, Daniel 2:4-7:28 is Aramaic, and Daniel 8:1-12:13 is Hebrew. Note that the sections of the book primarily directed to the Hebrews are written in Hebrew, while the sections directed to the Gentile nations are written in Aramaic (the international language of the time).

Outline

- There are three main sections to the book of Daniel.
- Daniel's personal history (Daniel 1:1-1:21)
- God's sovereignty over the Gentile nations (Daniel 2:1-7:28)
- God's sovereignty over Israel (Daniel 8:1-12:13)

What I Noticed Today (Daniel 1-3)

Daniel 1

In verses 1-2 Daniel was taken to Babylon in the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city and captured it. He brought Jehoiakim and some of the items from the house of God to Babylon.

In verses 3-6 Nebuchadnezzar's chief eunuch, Ashpenaz, was ordered to bring some of the royal family and young men without blemish who were wise and knowledgeable. He brought them to the king's palace where they were to be trained for three years and then enter the service of the king.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were among those taken to Babylon. Their Hebrew names were changed.

Daniel which means "God has judged" was changed to Belteshazzar which means "Lady protect the king."

Hananiah which means "Yahweh has been gracious" was changed to Shadrach which means "I am fearful of a god."

Mishael which means "Who is what God is?" was changed to Meshach which means "I am despised, humbled before my god."

Azariah which means "Yahweh has helped" was changed to Abednego which means "servant of Nebo." (Nebo was the name of a Babylonian god.)

Note: The Hebrew word used for young men literally means children or boys, which would suggest they were teenagers 15 years old or younger.

In verses 8-16 Daniel didn't want to eat the food or wine provided by the king, so he made a deal with Ashpenaz to give David, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah vegetables and water for ten days and compare their fitness with others. At the end of the ten days, David and his companions looked better than those who ate the king's food, so they were allowed to continue eating vegetables and drinking water.

Note: David likely refused the king's rations for several reasons: 1) they would have been prepared by Gentiles (unclean), 2) many of these foods were forbidden by Jewish law, and 3) likely included flesh offered to pagan gods.

Note: The Hebrew word translated vegetables meant "sown things" which included grains as well as vegetables.

In verses 17-21 God gave Daniel and his companion's knowledge and wisdom, and Daniel had an understanding of visions and dreams. At the end

of the three-year training period, they were brought before Nebuchadnezzar who found them to be 10 times better than all the enchanters and magicians in the kingdom so the four men served the king. Daniel remained in that capacity until the first year of King Cyrus of Persia (539 B.C.)

Daniel 2

In verses 1-3 during Nebuchadnezzar's second year as king, he was troubled by dreams. He summoned his magicians, enchanters, and sorcerers to come and he told them he had a dream that troubled him and he wanted to know the meaning.

In verses 4-6 the "wise men" asked the king to tell them his dream and they would provide an interpretation but the king said, no, they must tell him what he dreamed and its interpretation. If they could not, he would have them killed and tear down their houses. If they did, he promised them great rewards and honor.

In verses 7-11 the "wise men" asked the king a second time to tell them the dream and he refused again saying he would carry out his death sentence upon them. They protested saying what he was asking was too hard, no king had ever asked that before. They admitted that no one knew the king's dreams except the gods who do not dwell among men.

Note: If their admission that only gods know the future was true it meant they had spoken lies to the king before when they pretended to tell the future to the king.

In verses 12-16 the king was furious at this admission from his wise men so he issued an order that all the wise men of Babylon were to be executed. Daniel and his companions were considered wise men so this death sentence also fell on them. When the captain of the king's guard, Arioch, came to kill them, Daniel asked to be appointed a time when he would explain the dream and its interpretation to the king.

In verses 17-18 Daniel went to his companions, told them what was going on, and asked them to pray asking God's mercy and for God to reveal the king's dream.

Note: Daniel's appeal to the "God of Heaven" for mercy occurs six times in the book: 2:18-19, 28, 37, 44, and 5:23).

In verses 19-23 the king's dream was revealed to Daniel that same night and Daniel praised God for his wisdom and power. As examples, Daniel says God establishes the season, sets up and takes down kings, gives wisdom and understanding, and reveals hidden things. Daniel closed his prayer thanking God for revealing the king's dream to him.

In verse 24 Daniel approached, Arioch the captain of the king's guard, and asked him not to kill the wise men of Babylon, he would reveal the king's dream and its meaning.

In verses 25-30 Arioch took Daniel to the king and told the king he had

found someone who could interpret the dream.

Note: Arioch must have had great faith in Daniel's ability to claim he had found the man who could interpret the dream.

The king asked Daniel if he could interpret the dream and Daniel said no wise men could know the answer but only God in Heaven can reveal such mysteries.

Daniel interpreted the dream as being God sending a prophecy to Nebuchadnezzar of things that would happen in the future. Daniel again humbly said that he had no ability to interpret the dream but that it was made known to him by God so that he could tell the king.

In verses 31-35 Daniel said the king had seen a large statue in his dream. The head of the statue was made of gold, the chest and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of bronze, the legs of iron, and the feet made of iron mixed with clay. This statue was struck on the feet, and the entire statue shattered into small pieces (like chaff) and blew away in the wind. The rock that struck the statue grew into a large mountain that filled the earth.

In verses 36-43 Daniel interpreted the dream. The head of gold was Nebuchadnezzar; whom God had given the kingdom as the head of the Babylonian empire. The chest and arms represented another empire (the Medes and Persians, Daniel 5:28).

Note The Media-Persian empire lasted over 200 years (539-330 B.C.), compared to the Babylonian empire which lasted about 87 years (626-539 B.C.).

The third empire that grew up, the belly and thighs of bronze, represented the Grecian empire (Daniel 8:20-21).

The fourth empire, the legs of iron, represented the Roman empire. Iron was stronger than silver and it crushed the Media-Persian empire.

The continuation of the Roman empire had feet of clay mixed with iron and was partly strong and partly brittle.

Note: Each empire was less valuable than the previous which may represent the decline in morals from one empire to the next. Each succeeding empire was stronger than the previous which may represent the harshness of their domination over their subjects.

In verses 44-45 Daniel explained that in the days of those kings God would establish a kingdom that will crush the previous kingdom and will never be destroyed. A stone will break off of the mountain without a hand touching it and it will smash the statue (the other kingdoms).

Note: A mountain is often a reference to a kingdom in scripture. The stone that strikes the feet of the Roman empire is Jesus Christ, and when he returns for His Millennial reign, His kingdom will fill the earth.

In verses 46-49 King Nebuchadnezzar was so struck by Daniel's

interpretation that he fell on his face before Daniel and ordered incense and an offering be made to him (in recognition of Daniel's divine interpretation). Nebuchadnezzar recognized Daniel's god as the Lord of gods. He then promoted Daniel to be the ruler of the city of Babylon and Daniel asked that his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be appointed to help him.

Note: Babylon was divided into several provinces and each province was led by a satrap (Daniel 3:2).

Daniel 3

In verses 1-7 Nebuchadnezzar had a golden image 18 cubits (90') tall made and placed in the plains of Dura in the province of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar gathered all the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, justices, and magistrates together for the dedication of the statue. A herald proclaimed that when the musicians played the people were to bow down and worship the image and whoever does not bow down will be thrown into a fiery furnace.

Note: The location of the plain of Dura is unknown, but archeologists have found a base made of brick some six miles southeast of the city which may have been the base of the statue.

Note: Satraps were representatives of the king, prefects were military commanders, governors were the civil administrators, counselors advised those in government, treasurers administered the kingdom's money, judges administered the law, and magistrates passed judgments according to the law.

In verses 8-12 certain Chaldeans (men of Babylon, in this reference they were priests/astrologers)) came to the king and accused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego of failing to bow down and worship the golden image as ordered.


Note: Daniel was probably not at the dedication ceremony or he would have been included in the accusation.

In verses 13-18 when the king heard that the three had not bowed down, he was furious but asked them if the allegation was true. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego said they had no need to answer the king; that if the God they serve wanted to deliver them from the furnace he would but regardless, they would not serve Nebuchadnezzar's gods or worship the golden idol.

In verses 19-25 the king ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than normal (a term meaning as hot as possible) and had strong soldiers tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the furnace.

Note: the furnace likely had an opening at the top where fuel was dropped in and an opening on the side.

The heat from the furnace was so intense that the men who threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace were killed. But moments later the king saw, probably through the side entrance, the three men along with a fourth man who had the appearance of a son of the gods.



In verses 26-30 Nebuchadnezzar approached the furnace and ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God to come out of the furnace. Those present noted that their clothes were not burned, their hair was not singed, and they did not even smell like smoke. Nebuchadnezzar blessed the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who had sent His angel to protect them because they had refused to worship another god.

Nebuchadnezzar issued a decree that no one is to speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego because there is no other god who could save his people like this. He then promoted the three men.

Note: This event has prophetic significance as we will see when we study Revelation. During the Tribulation period a Gentile ruler (the Antichrist) will demand to be worshiped and anyone who refuses will be killed. Most will bow down but a small remnant will refuse and these will be delivered when Jesus Christ returns.

Some thoughts for additional consideration:

- *Because Daniel and his men were faithful to God, God remained faithful to them by blessing them with special knowledge and wisdom that put them in a position to serve King Nebuchadnezzar.*

What I Noticed Today (Daniel 4-6)

Daniel 4

Note: There is a gap in time between Daniel 3 and 4. Nebuchadnezzar's insanity lasted seven years, occurring shortly before he died (562 B.C.). Scholars estimate the insanity described in Daniel 4 may have occurred around 570 B.C., or approximately 30-years after the fiery furnace episode in Daniel 3.

In verses 1-3 Daniel records a pronouncement made by Nebuchadnezzar and sent to all the people in the empire speaking of the miracles and wonders the Most High God had done for him (in preserving the lives of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego).

In verses 4-9 Nebuchadnezzar reveals a second dream that alarmed him. Nebuchadnezzar calls in the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and enchanters. This time, he tells them the dream but they cannot provide an interpretation. Finally, Daniel arrived and Nebuchadnezzar asked Daniel to interpret the dream because he knew the spirit of the holy gods was in him.

Note: it is interesting that in the proclamation recounted in verses 1-3 Nebuchadnezzar refers to God as the Most High God. But when Daniel arrives in verse 8 he refers to him by his Babylonian name Belteshazzar (which is a reference to his god Bel), then he says the spirit of the holy gods (indicates Nebuchadnezzar was still a polytheist) are in him.

In verses 10-12 Nebuchadnezzar describes a large tree that grew up and was visible over all the earth. It was beautiful and bore fruit. Animals rested in its shade and birds nested in its branches.

In verses 13-18 Nebuchadnezzar continues with the description of his dream. A watcher (messenger), a holy one came from heaven and order the tree to be chopped down, its branches stripped, and its fruit scattered. The stump was to be left in the ground with an iron and bronze band around it. Let him be in the grass of the field and receive dew from heaven. Let a beast's mind be given to him and let a period of seven times pass over him (7 years). This sentence proclaimed by the watchers (messengers) so that the living might know that the Most High God sets up and takes down as He pleases.

In verses 19-27 Daniel interprets the dream saying the tree represents Nebuchadnezzar and it is his kingdom that will be cut down. Nebuchadnezzar himself will be driven away from men and dwell in the fields with animals for seven years until he recognizes that the Most High God is sovereign. The stump represents the kingdom that will be returned to him once he realizes that God rules from heaven.

Daniel concludes imploring the king to listen to him; break away from sin

and practice righteousness and mercy in hopes that his prosperous reign might be lengthened.

In verses 28-33 Nebuchadnezzar ignored Daniel's appeal. Twelve months later, Nebuchadnezzar was walking on his palace balcony thinking of all he had built for his own glory and majesty. A voice from heaven came to him announcing the judgment depicted in his dream the year before. He was driven away from men and lived in the fields eating grass until his hair grew as long as feathers and his nails like bird's claws.

Note: There is an actual mental illness called *boanthropy* in which the individual maintains the ability to reason, but believes themselves to be cattle.

In verses 34-37 at the end of the seven years, Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to heaven and had his sanity restored. He blessed the Most High God for His dominion over the earth and recognized God's sovereignty.

His kingdom was restored, and even made larger, but now he praises and honors the King of Heaven. He also recognizes his own sin when he says that God is able to humble those who walk in pride.

Daniel 5


There is another jump in time of about 23-years between Daniel 4 and 5. Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 B.C. His son Evil-Merodach ruled for two years (562-560 B.C., 2 Kings 25:27-30). He was murdered by his brother-in-law Neriglissar who ruled for four years (560-556 B.C., Jeremiah 39:3). When he was murdered, his son Labashi-Marduk ruled for two months (in 556 B.C.). Labashi-Marduk was murdered and succeeded by Nabonidus who reigned 17-years (556-539 B.C.). Belshazzar was Nabonidus' eldest son and was appointed as co-regent (co-ruler) which is why he is referred to as king while his father was still alive.

In verses 1-4 King Belshazzar sponsored a feast for 1,000 of his lords (nobles). He commanded the gold and silver goblets taken from God's temple be used to serve wine as they praised the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

Note: Belshazzar's name means "Bel has protected the king." Remember, Bel is another name for Marduk, a Babylonian god.

In verses 5-9 the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster wall. The king was greatly alarmed and fell to the floor. He called for the enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers to come and interpret the writing on the wall. He offered them riches and the third highest position in the kingdom behind his father and himself but none of them could interpret the writing.

In verses 10-12 the queen remembered Daniel in whom she said was the spirit of the gods. She suggested that Daniel be summoned so he could interpret the writing.



Note: The queen refers to Nebuchadnezzar as your father. Nebuchadnezzar was his grandfather, Naonidus was his father and the reigning king. This reference implies that the queen mentioned is actually Belshazzar's grandmother.

In verses 13-16 Belshazzar brings Daniel in and asks him to interpret the writing and promises to give him riches and make him the third highest ruler in the kingdom.

In verses 17-23 Daniel refuses to accept the king's promised rewards but agrees to interpret the writing. Before he does, though, he recounts what happened to his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar; how he was stricken and made to dwell with the animals for seven years until he acknowledged the Most High God. Then Daniel accused Belshazzar of being the same even though he knew what happened to his grandfather. He had not humbled himself before God. In fact, he had openly challenged God by drinking out of the temple goblets while praising the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

In verses 24-28 Daniel interpreted the writing (Aramaic), "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin." Mene, God has numbered your days and your kingdom is at an end. Tekel, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Pares (the singular form of Parsin), your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

In verses 29-31 Belshazzar rewarded Daniel with riches and made him the third highest ruler in the kingdom but that very night Belshazzar was killed and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom.


Note: The city of Babylon anticipated a siege and had a 20-year supply of food. Cyrus the Persian diverted the water of the Euphrates river that ran through the city into a nearby lake. With the water diverted, the Persians were able to enter the city under the city wall and take the city without a fight. This occurred October 12, 539 B.C. fulfilling a prophecy of Isaiah 47:1-5.

Daniel 6

In verses 1-3 Darius established an organization of 120 satraps (provincial governors) who reported to one of three presidents. Daniel was made one of the presidents. Daniel became distinguished above all the others because of the spirit within him and the king planned to put him over the entire kingdom.

In verses 4-9 the other two presidents and the 120 satraps tried to discredit Daniel but they could find no fault in him. Then they realized the way to trap him was in regard to his faithfulness to God. So they came together to the king suggesting that no one worships any god or man other than the king for thirty days. Darius signed the injunction into law.

Note: According to the laws of the Medes and Persians a law signed by the king could not be revoked.



In verses 10-13 even though Daniel was aware of the injunction he continued to pray to God in front of an open window facing Jerusalem three times a day just as he had always done. The men found Daniel praying just as they expected so they confronted the king with the fact of the injunction he had signed prohibiting this prayer to God.

In verses 13-18 the king was greatly distressed and tried to find a way to save Daniel but by evening the men came to him insisting that he could not change the order. So the king ordered Daniel to be cast into the lion's den saying, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you." The opening to the lion's den was closed with a stone and sealed with the king's seal. The king was so upset that he did not eat or sleep all night.

In verses 19-24 at dawn, the king went to the lion's den hoping that Daniel's God had delivered him. Daniel cried out from inside the den saying God had sent an angel who had closed the mouths of the lions because Daniel was blameless before God and the king.

The king was thrilled that Daniel was still alive and commanded him to be lifted out of the den. Then he commanded that all the men who had conspired against Daniel along with their entire families be cast into the den of lions. The lions killed them all.

Note: 120 satraps plus two presidents plus their wives and children (average two children per family, four total), suggests there were 488 people thrown into the lion's den). This lion's den must have been significantly larger than the usual picture we see of Daniel in the lion's den! While cruel, it was not an uncommon practice among the Medes and Persians to execute an entire family.

In verses 25-28 King Darius issued a proclamation that was sent throughout the kingdom ordering everyone to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; He is living, enduring forever, His dominion will never end, He delivers and rescues, He does signs and wonders, He had saved Daniel from the lions.

Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian.

What I Noticed Today (Daniel 7-9)

Daniel 7

In verses 1-8 Daniel records a vision he had during the first year of the reign of Belshazzar (553 B.C., he was about 67 years old, and had been in captivity about 36 years).

Note: This vision came about 14 years prior to the Lion's Den which occurred about 539 B.C.

Daniel describes the four winds stirring up the seas. The word for "winds" can also be translated "spirits" meaning angels and is often used in conjunction with God interceding through angels.

Four great beasts came out of the sea. Each beast represented a kingdom (Daniel 7:17).

The first beast was a lion with wings of an eagle. Two symbols associated with Babylon are the lion and the eagle.


The second beast was a bear. The bear was known for its strength and it had three ribs in its mouth. This may represent the Medo-Persian kingdom and the three ribs may represent Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon which preceded the Medo-Persian Empire. Or they may represent Egypt, Babylon, and Lydia which they conquered.

The third beast was like a leopard, known for its swiftness and agility. This beast had four wings like a bird and four heads and was given authority to rule. This may represent the kingdom of Greece which conquered the Medo-Persian Empire.

The fourth beast was a combination of a lion, bear, and leopard represents the Roman Empire. It had large iron teeth and 10 horns. Another smaller horn emerged and when it grew it uprooted three of the larger horns. This beast had the eyes of a man and spoke boastfully. (Horns most often refer to kingdoms.)

In verses 9-12 the vision continues as Daniel sees the judgment throne of the Ancient of Days (a reference to God and His eternal nature). Thousands served him and tens of thousands stood before him as He sat in judgment and the books were opened (in Revelation 20:12 the opening of books is a reference to the judging of individuals).

As Daniel was listening to the little horn that was boasting, the fourth beast was killed and thrown into the fire (indicating the end of the Time of the Gentiles, Luke 21:24). The other three beasts were stripped of their power but allowed to continue living for a time.



In verses 13-14 the Son of Man (Jesus) came to the Ancient of Days (God the Father). When he approached, He was given dominion over all peoples, nations, and languages and they worshiped Him. His dominion is everlasting and his kingdom will never be destroyed.

In verses 15-28 Daniel explains the vision of his dream. He was anxious and perplexed by this vision. He called on one standing nearby (from Daniel 8:16 we learn it was the angel Gabriel). The angel described the four beasts as four kingdoms that will rise up, but in the end times, the saints of the Most High God will receive the kingdom forever.

Daniel asked specifically about the fourth beast, the 10 horns, and the little horn that grew up. This little horn will persecute the saints of the Most High until the Ancient of Days comes. The Ancient of Days will judge the saints and the kingdom will be given to them.

The angel describes the fourth beast as one who devours the whole earth breaking it into pieces (a description of the one-world order and government).

The angel described the 10 horns as representing 10 kingdoms that will arise after the fourth beast. The little horn will arise after them and destroy three of the ten kings. He will speak against the Most High God and His saints. The saints will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time (3-1/2 years of the Great Tribulation, see 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6). But this little horn will be brought to judgment and his dominion (kingdom) taken away and he will be destroyed (Christ's return or second advent). This kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom and all dominions will serve them.

This vision so disturbed Daniel that he said nothing about it to anyone.

Daniel 8


Daniel 8 reverts back to Hebrew (recall Daniel 2:4b-7:28 were written in Aramaic).

In verses 1-2 this vision came to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar (2 years after the vision in chapter 7). In the vision, he saw himself in Susa the capital city of Elam, by the bank of the Ulai Canal.

Note: Susa is located 200 miles east of Babylon where 100 years later the events of Esther took place and Nehemiah served as Artaxerxes' cupbearer.

In verses 3-4 he saw a ram by the bank of the canal. The ram had two horns one was larger than the other and the larger one came up last. The ram charged west, north, and south. Wherever it charged, it conquered. He did as he pleased and became very great.

In verses 8-14 a goat came from the west. He came so fast his feet did not touch the ground. He had a single horn between his eyes. The goat charged the ram and broke both his horns and trampled him. The goat became great but when he was strong his great horn was broken and in its place grew four



horns pointed toward the four winds of heaven.

Out of one of the four horns came a little horn which grew toward the south, east, and the glorious land (Israel). It grew even to the host of heaven when some of the host and some of the stars threw it down. He became great comparing himself to the Prince of Host (God referred to Himself as the Prince of Princes in Daniel 8:25). The sanctuary was overthrown. He prospered and despised the truth of God's Word (throw truth to the ground). Another angel spoke to the other angel who was revealing the vision asking how long this would continue and the revealing angel said for 2,300 evenings and mornings and after that the sanctuary would be re-consecrated.

In verses 15-18 Daniel could not interpret this vision so Gabriel was called to interpret its meaning. Daniel referred to him as "a son of man" (not to be confused with Jesus "the son of man"). Gabriel explained this vision was in regards to the "time of the end."

Note: This vision has a double fulfillment. Antiochus was the little horn described in Daniel 8 and he fulfilled these prophecies in the second century. However, this reference to the events pertaining to the end times will be fulfilled by the Antichrist during the Tribulation period.

In verses 19-26 the angel explained that the ram with the two horns were the kings of Media and Persia. The goat is the king of Greece and the horn between his eyes is the first king (Alexander). When this horn was broken it was replaced by four kingdoms. Alexander had no children so he was replaced by his four generals but this divided the kingdom and they never had the power that existed under Alexander. Some time later a king (horn) arose who was a master of deceit (Antiochus IV Epiphanes). He oppressed the people of Israel and came against their God (the Prince of Princes). He was removed from power by supernatural means.

Daniel was so upset by the visions that he remained in bed sick for several days.

Note: The 2,300 mornings and evenings in which the temple remained desecrated was 1,150 days (if the "mornings and evenings" were references to sacrifices then the desecration lasted 1,150 days. This is the exact time between Antiochus's desecration of the temple on December 16, 167 B.C. and the restoration of the temple in 163 B.C.

Daniel 9

In verses 1-2, the first year of the reign of King Darius the Mede, son of Ahasuerus, was 539 B.C. Daniel had been in exile 66 years. Daniel knew from the scripture (Jeremiah) that 70-years must pass before the end of the exile so he knew the exile was nearly over.

In verses 3-19 Daniel prayed with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes (three ways of demonstrating mourning or sorrow).

Note: Daniels uses the Hebrew name of Yahweh (translated

LORD) in verses 3-14).

Note: Some translations capitalize LORD when translating Yahweh. Other translations do not.

Daniel refers to the covenant promise God made Abraham (Genesis 12:1-7), while admitting that the people had sinned greatly. It was due to their sin that God had removed them from the land as prescribed in the Law (Leviticus 26:27-33). Even after being exiled the people remained in sin having turned away from God.

David petitions the Lord (vv. 15-19) to remember the people. He asked the Lord to turn away from His wrath and restore them, not because of their righteousness, but because of His mercy.

In verses 20-23 in the midst of Daniel's prayer, the angel Gabriel came at the time of the evening sacrifice to explain the vision.

Note: The evening sacrifice is mentioned only as a reference to the time of day. The sacrifices to God had not been made during the entire time the people were in exile in Babylon. Perhaps this is one of the three times a day Daniel chose to worship the Lord.

In verses 24-27 Gabriel explains the vision and the meaning of the 70-weeks. The word translated "weeks" can also mean "sevens". 70 "sevens" would be 490-years.

Note: The case for considering the 70 sevens to refer to years is consistent with Daniel's reference when he meant weeks he said "three sevens of days" or three weeks in Daniel 10:2-3. Also, since Israel had failed to keep the Lord's required Sabbath rest for the fields every seven years, the Lord required 70 Sabbaths of rest (Leviticus 26:34-35), or 490 years!

At the end of this period of time (490 years), God will end the time of Israel's sin with the second coming of Christ. God will issue a decree and then Israel will be restored to the land and Jerusalem rebuilt. The 490-year period is divided into three periods: 49 years (7 "sevens"), 434 years (62 "sevens") and 7 years (1 "seven"). The rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem will occur in the first period of 49 years. The second period of 434 years runs until Messiah is cut-off (crucified).

Note: These two periods ran consecutively for a total of 483 from March 5 444 B.C. to March 30, A.D. 33.

Gabriel explained that at the end of the 62 sevens the anointed one would be cut off and have nothing.

Note: The Hebrew word translated "cut off" is used in reference to a criminal's death sentence.

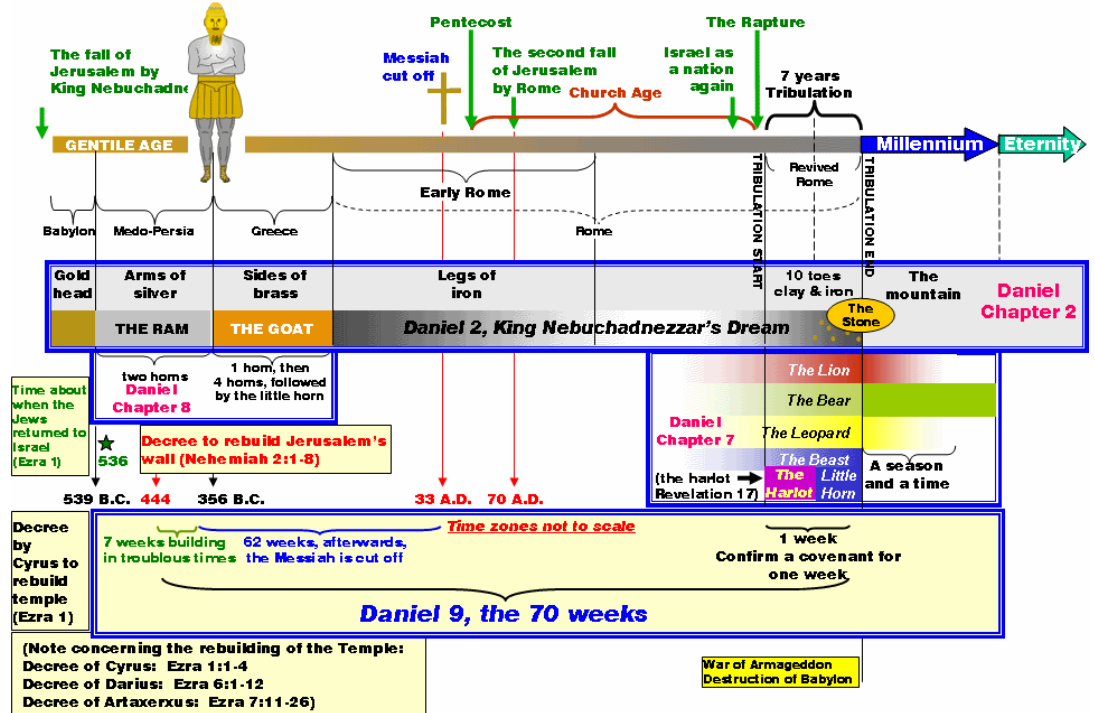
The people who serve the prince (Antichrist) will destroy the city (the little horn of Daniel 7:8).

In verse 27 the 70th seven years will begin after the rapture of the church. The

Antichrist will make peace with the people but Jesus described this time as a time of great distress (Tribulation). This will last for 3-1/2 years. The Antichrist will break his covenant and begin a ruthless persecution of the Jewish people and Jesus' followers. During this time the Antichrist will stop the sacrifices and commit abominations (Matthew 24:15). The Antichrist's desolation will end at the end of the seven years.

The image below provides an excellent graphical representation of the "weeks" of Daniel 9 from www.thesecondcomingofchrist.org :

Timeline of Daniel Chapter 9



What I Noticed Today

(Daniel 10-12)

Daniel 10

In verses 1-3 Daniel receives his final vision from the Lord in the third year of the reign of Cyrus (536 B.C.). Daniel fasted for three weeks and did not anoint himself with oil (literally says “three sevens of days”). According to Daniel 10:12, he was concerned for the people who had returned to Israel.

Note: If Daniel was 15 or 16 when he was exiled to Babylon he would now be 84-85 years old.

Note: The exiled Jewish population of some 50,000 people left Babylon in 535 B.C. to return home to Israel.

In verses 4-11 Daniel was standing on the bank of the Tigris river (20 miles from Babylon) and saw an angel. The men who were with Daniel could not see the vision but they either saw the light of the angel or sensed something because they all fled leaving Daniel alone. Daniel fell to the ground face down in a deep sleep. The angel touched him and told him to get up saying Daniel was greatly loved and he had a message for him.

Note: Some think the description in verses 4-11 is of preincarnate Christ because it is similar to the description in Revelation 1:13-16. However, this is improbable since Christ would not be hindered by the prince of Persia nor would He need the help of the angel Michael (Daniel 10:13).

In verses 12-14 the angel told Daniel not to be afraid. God had sent him (the angel) as soon as he heard Daniel’s prayer but the angel had been delayed 2-days by the prince of Persia (a demon assigned to Persia). Michael, one of the chief princes of angels (often referred to as an archangel) came to help free the angel from the battle with the demon. The angel explained he was sent to explain things that are yet to come in the latter days (end times).

In verses 15-21 Daniel heard the angel and fell down mute. The angel touched his lips and he spoke to the angel saying the vision had left him with no strength. The angel explained as he was leaving and that when he returned he would fight the prince of Persia, and the prince of Greece would come (another demon), and Michael would help him.

Note: Daniel addressed the angel as “my lord.” This is a term of respect like saying “sir” or “master.” It is not a reference to Christ.

Daniel 11

Note: In Daniel 11:1-35 the prophecies are given in Daniel’s time and have been fulfilled. The prophecies of Daniel 11:36-12:3 will be fulfilled during the Tribulation period.

In verses 1-2 the angel continued his explanation. He said three more kings would arise in Persia, then a fourth and when this fourth king grew strong enough he would stir up the kingdom against Greece.

Note: The four Persian kings who succeeded Cyrus were Cambyses, his son (529-522 B.C.), then Pseudo-Smerdis (522-521 B.C.), Darius I Hystaspes (521-486 B.C.), and finally Xerxes (485-465 B.C. referred to in the book of Esther as Ahasuerus). Xerxes did wage war against Greece in 480 B.C.

In verses 3-4 a mighty king will arise (Alexander) whose kingdom will be split among his four generals because he had no children: Seleucus (Syria and Mesopotamia), Ptolemy (Egypt), Lysimachus (Thrace and portions of Asia Minor), and Cassander (Macedonia and Greece).

Note: These are the four heads of the leopard described in Daniel 7:6 and the four horns of the goat in Daniel 8:8.

In verses 5-6 the king of the south is Ptolemy I Soter (one of Alexander's generals). The commander referred to in verse 5 is Seleucus I Nicator (another of Alexander's generals). Ptolemy II (Ptolemy I's son) and Antiochus II (Seleucus's grandson) made an alliance (about 250 B.C.) when Ptolemy II's daughter Berenice married Antiochus II. Berenice was killed by Antiochus' first wife, Laodice (she did not retain the strength of her arm). Laodice then poisoned Antiochus II and made her son Seleucus II king (246-227 B.C.).

In verses 7-8 Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III (246-221) avenged the murder of his sister in a battle with the Syrian army. He put Laodice to death and returned to Egypt.


In verses 9-10 Seleucus II Callinicus (north) attempted to invade Egypt (south) but was unsuccessful. He was succeeded by his son Seleucus II Soter (227-223 B.C.) who was killed by his brothers and was succeeded by his brother Antiochus III (223-187 B.C.).

In verses 11-13 the king of the south was Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-204 B.C.). He came against Antiochus III and slaughtered tens of thousands, but Antiochus returned with a larger army and drove Ptolemy back.

In verses 14-17 Philip V of Macedonia formed an alliance with Antiochus III against Egypt. Many of Daniel's own people joined in the fight against Egypt. The fortified city was Sidon which Antiochus captured in 203 B.C. He attempted to forge a peaceful alliance by giving his daughter in marriage to Ptolemy V of Egypt but was unsuccessful.

In verses 18-19 Antiochus III attempted to conquer Asia Minor (197 B.C.) and Greece (192 B.C.) but he was told to turn back to Rome (188 B.C.) and died there in 187 B.C.

In verse 20 Antiochus III's son, Seleucus IV (187-176 B.C.) taxed his people heavily to pay Rome but was poisoned by his treasurer Heliodorus (he shall be broken neither in anger nor in battle).



In verses 21-22 Antiochus IV described as a contemptible person became king because of his flatteries and ability to defeat an invader. The prince of the covenant was a high priest known as Onias III.

In verses 23-24 Antiochus' power increased because he redistributed the kingdom's wealth to a few powerful friends.

In verses 25-28 Antiochus waged war with Egypt in 170 B.C. The Egyptians had a larger army but were defeated by Antiochus. Antiochus and Egypt feigned friendship with each other but both were deceitful. Antiochus carried a great deal of plunder home.

In verses 29-30 Antiochus waged war against Egypt again two years later (168 B.C.). Rome opposed him (ships from Kittim) and forced him to withdraw. On his way home, enraged, he desecrated the holy temple, abolished the daily sacrifices, killed thousands, took women and children as slaves, and burned the city. He set up an abomination (altar to Zeus) on December 16, 167 B.C. Many Israelites worshiped the false god, but a small remnant remained faithful.

In verses 33-35 He persecuted those who remained faithful to God through famine and killing with the sword. The persecution would continue until the appointed time.

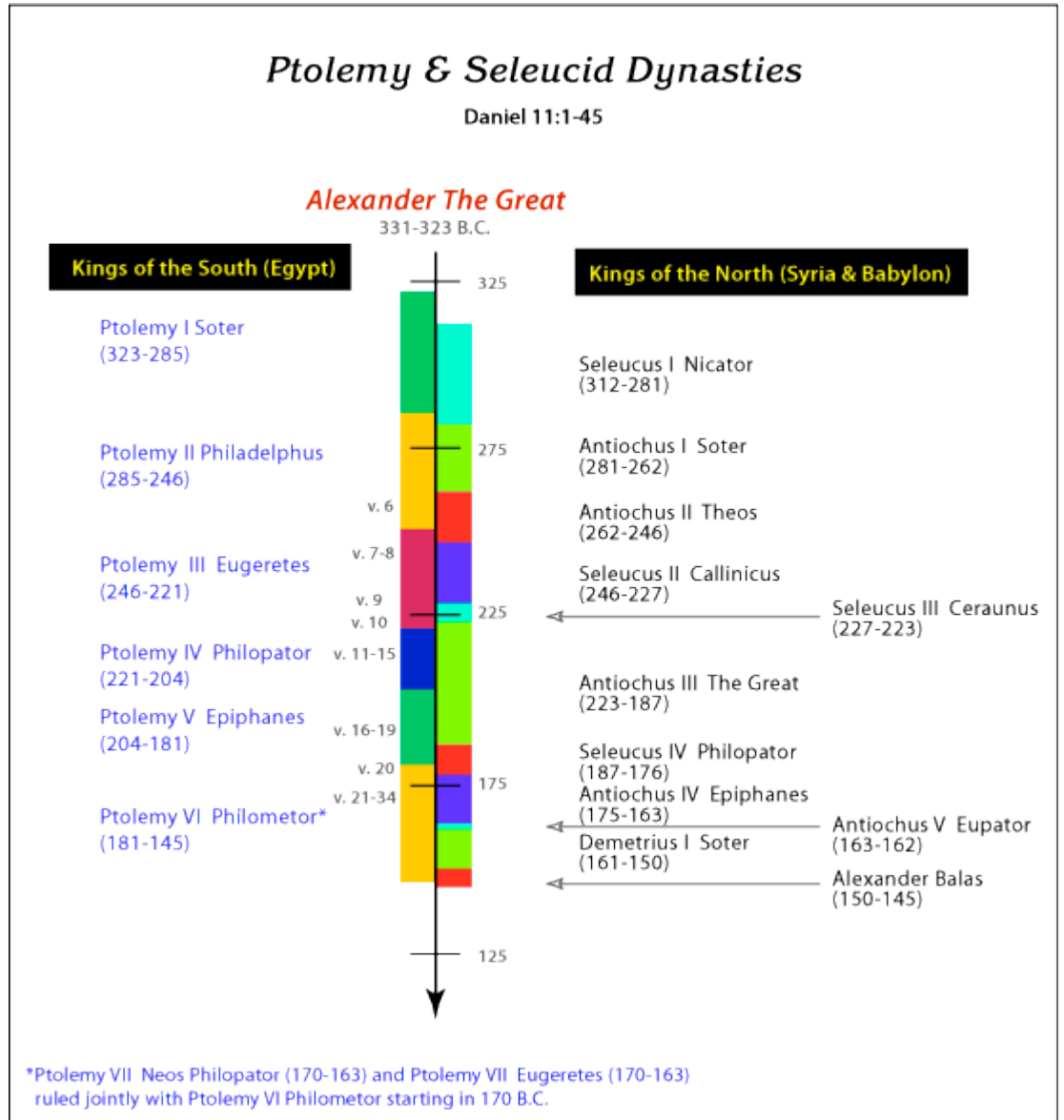
Note: This was the beginning of the Maccabean revolt in 166 B.C., so named for Judas Maccabean who led the revolt.

In verses 36-45 the focus of the prophecy shifts to the end of days. The "king" referred to in these verses is the Antichrist, the "little horn" of Daniel 7:8, 20, 24-25.

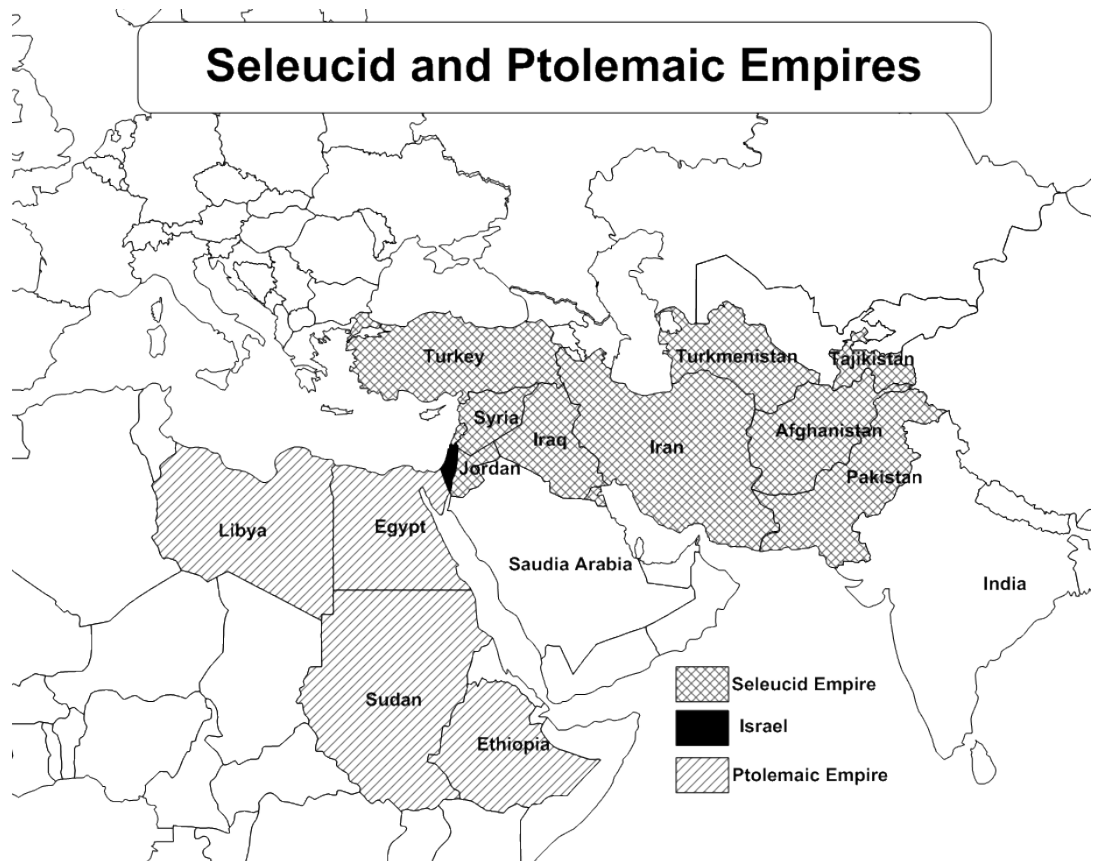
In verses 36-39 the Antichrist exalts himself and prospers paying no attention to the gods of his fathers. He will magnify himself above all. He will build his military power and accumulate riches. Those who submit to him will be rewarded with riches in the form of land.

In verses 40-45 "At the time of the end" is the second half of the 70th seven of years (the middle of the tribulation period). The king of the south (Egypt) will attack Israel. At the same time, the king of the north (Gog and Magog) will also attack Israel. They both will fight against the Antichrist. The armies of the Antichrist will sweep through many countries like a flood into Israel (the Beautiful Land). He will strike first against Egypt, then when he hears news about an attack from the north, he will go out and pitch his tent between the seas (the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean) at the glorious mountain (probably Jerusalem). No one will come to help him and he will die there.

Here's a great graphic that illustrates who's who in the Ptolemy and Seleucid dynasties from Neverthristy.org:



This map illustrates the land referred to in the Ptolemy and Seleucid dynasties from Schwartzenerover.com:



Daniel 12


In verses 1-4 the angel assured Daniel that at that time the angel Michael, who is appointed to protect the people of Israel (your people), will intervene against the Antichrist. It will be a time of great distress but those whose name is written in the book of life, even those who have died, will be resurrected. Some to everlasting life and some to shame. Those who remain faithful throughout this time of persecution will shine like stars forever.

With the vision and the explanation concluded Daniel was ordered seal the book until the end times.

Note: the resurrection of believers martyred during the Great Tribulation will occur when Christ returns for his Millennial reign (Revelation 20:4).

In verse 5-7 Daniel saw two men (angels) standing on either side of the banks of a river. One angel asked how long will it until the end of these wonders (referring to the events in the vision). The angel clothed in linen said it would be for a time, times, and half a time (3-1/2 years).

In verses 8-10 Daniel heard the angel but did not understand what the final outcome would be. The angel told him the words of the book were sealed



until the end of times. The wise will understand but the wicked will not.

In verses 11-13 the angel said from the time the sacrifices are stopped and the abomination takes place it will be 1,290 days. The person who waits 1,335 days will be blessed (perhaps the day of Christ's return). With that, the angel tells Daniel to go rest he will be in his allotted place at the end of days.