

Preface

Disclaimer: This booklet assembles the handouts from a Bible study on **Daniel** that I led at Crossroads Church of the Nazarene in the summer of 2021. Necessarily, the handouts were written from my perspective and understanding of **Daniel** at that time. Its purpose was to be informative and to provide a starting point for group discussion and for learning the perspectives and understanding of others who attend the class. For transparency, I've outlined, below, some of the guiding principles that inform my personal perspective on **Daniel**. It is beyond the scope of this Bible study to explore or defend these principles in this booklet.

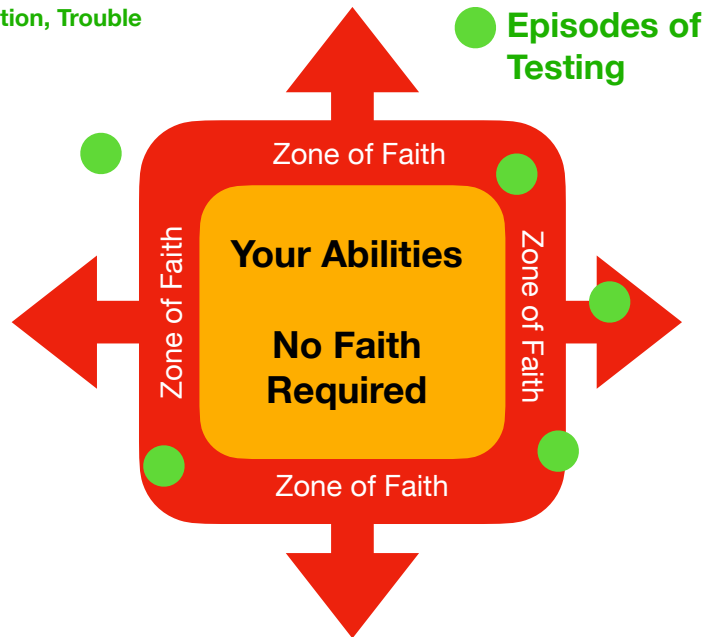
- I believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. The Holy Spirit inspired and guided men to write the Bible so that the exact message God intended to convey is available to us, without loss or distortion. No transcriptional, typographical, or human errors have been sufficient to scramble that message.
 - I believe the book of **Daniel** was written exactly when it says it was written — the 7th & 6th centuries B.C. I disagree with commentators who assert that **Daniel** was written in the “Second Temple Period”, the 2nd or 3rd centuries B.C.
 - I believe the author of **Daniel** was Daniel, just as the book claims.
- I believe the book of **Daniel** is prophetic — not just that it reveals the will of God in Daniel's day — but also that it reveals God's plan for the future, even our future. And it means that I reject a strictly preterist interpretation of **Daniel**.
 - I believe that Bible prophecies are often fulfilled on “many levels”; they can address a current event, which can foreshadow prophetic future events,.
 - I believe that, although **Daniel** can be regarded as apocalyptic literature, the Bible symbolism used in the book is consistent with that used throughout the Bible - including in non-apocalyptic books — and that these symbols refer to actual, literal events, people, or actions that have happened or will happen. The book of **Daniel** does not just tell moral stories using symbolic language; it is a factual accounting of reality and history, using symbols to enhance the flexibility and “bandwidth” of the message.
- I hold the Scriptures of the Old Testament in equal esteem with the Scriptures of the New Testament. Each testament informs our understanding of the other, although the New Testament is a more complete revelation of the Messiah and the work of the Holy Spirit. Scripture must be understood in the context of Scripture. It must not be interpreted in the light of current events, popular opinions or fads, or other philosophies or religions.
- Although this is a matter of theological debate, I believe the plain reading of scripture informs the conclusion that there will be a literal, physical, earthly reign of Christ that some people call the Millennium. I have rejected Amillennial and Post-millennial eschatologies because I do not believe they fully comport with the whole counsel of God's word. I am a “chiliasm”.
 - I believe God's promises to the nation of Israel have not been revoked by the birth of the Christian church. I believe the Scripture teaches that Israel still plays a vital role in God's plan.
 - I do not believe that God deals with people differently in different “dispensations”, however. People always have been saved by grace through faith. I do believe that God works out His plan in different ways at different times, as He sovereignly chooses, according to the counsel of His will. I believe my personal eschatology is not fully “dispensational”, but rather, is Biblical.
 - I believe the Bible clearly teaches a post-tribulation resurrection and rapture, but any eschatological opinion must be held with humility and an open mind.
 - No one knows when Christ will return, but informed saints will recognize the season of its proximity.
- Our understanding of prophetic scripture must be guided by the wisdom and insight of the Holy Spirit. Study Bible footnotes and Bible commentaries can be helpful, but are not infallible - including this one! Prayer is important for understanding God's Word.

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As you study Daniel, don't get lost in all the details. Try to keep the "big picture". For example, look for these "spiritual principles" as you read. Try to apply these lessons of Daniel to your life as you learn.

1. Faith is proven by faithfulness, but faithfulness is only tested beyond the boundaries of your abilities & resources. This region is the "**Zone of Faith**".

Testing = Temptation, Trouble



2. You live in two realms simultaneously; the physical realm and spiritual realm. Both are equally real. Both are equally impactful. Because of our fallen nature, we tend to ignore — or, even deny — the spiritual world, to our detriment. The spiritual realm becomes more apparent in the "Zone of Faith". (See 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Pet 2:9; etc.)
3. There is a war waging right now between two pre-existing kingdoms, with real armies in both physical and spiritual realms. You are a conscripted combatant in that war; you must choose sides & can't opt out. There are real casualties in this war, real deaths. It's God vs. Satan (& his world system). (Eg. Eph 6:12; Rev 12, etc.)
4. In this physical realm, Abraham was conscripted to be in God's army. So was Israel. So was the Church. The gentile nations initially were conscripted to be in Satan's army — a "parting of the ways" at Babel.
 - a. God abandoned the nations to the idol-demons they sought at Babel. (See handout entitled 'The Nations')
 - (i) "When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the **sons of God**." (Deut 32:8, ESV,)
 - The Dead Sea Scrolls affirms the use of "according to the sons of God" in the English translation. These documents date from around the time of Christ to a century before. The ESV, New Jerusalem, NET, and Message embrace this wording - "sons of God".

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- The Septuagint translates as “according to the number of the angels of God.” It dates from 250 BC. (i.e. “sons of God” = “angels of God”)
 - The Jewish Masoretic text, which dates from the 9th century AD (the “Aleppo Codex”), translates to “according to the number of the sons of Israel.” The NASB and NIV followed the Masoretic text, even though it may have not been the best resource.
- (ii) Pagan idols-gods are hierarchical & geographic or territorial. Pagan nations identify with their idol-gods “overlord”, whom they fear and honor. (Heiser, Michael. *Unseen Realm*)
*“And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. 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.” **Deuteronomy 4:19-20 (ESV)***
- (ii) God allows “the nations” time to dominate Jerusalem while He is disciplining Israel for unfaithfulness. This is the “Age of the Gentiles”. (Eg. **Luke 21:24**)
- b. God claims Israel as His nation. God enforces His relationship with Israel through blessings and discipline (See **Deut 29-30**). But Israel struggles with unfaithfulness and experiences God’s discipline.)
- The “Babylonian Exile” is a 70-year time of divine discipline for Israel
 - There was a prolonged exile for Israel, in 70 AD, after they rejected Christ.
 - The 9th of Av is a special date related to both exiles.
- (i) God will save Israel because of this relationship, not because they are meritorious. This salvation is eschatological and is associated with the Parousia. (See **Is 45:17; Rom 11:26, etc.**)
- (II) God will save many from among the gentiles through Israel, through the ministry of Christ.
5. Two competing kingdom “systems” of government. These systems represent the basis of the eternal dispute between God and His “sons”. The wisdom of these “systems” is being arbitrated by the events of a fallen creations. God wins, vanquishing all dissenters. (See **Ephesians 3:6-10**)

<u>“World Government”</u>	<u>“God’s Government”</u>
Pride	Humility
Coercion	Gentleness
Guile	Wisdom
Vengeance	Justice
Fault-finding	Grace
Selfishness	Generosity
Competition	Cooperation
Passion	Compassion
Sensuality	Love
Corruption	Purity
Demanding	Patient
<i>Etc.</i>	<i>Etc.</i>

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CHAPTER ONE

Dan. 1,1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god.

Background: One of the world superpowers when Daniel wrote **chapter 1**, was Babylon, which existed in the region of modern Iraq. Judah geographically was caught between Babylon, to the east, and Egypt, to the southwest. The Assyrians, a waning regional power in the area of modern Syria and northern Iraq, was then allied with the Egyptians. They put additional pressure on Judah’s northern frontiers. Judah was “outflanked” and “outgunned” and could not help but become embroiled in political and military struggles for power. They could only survive if they trusted God. They didn’t.

Figure 1, below, shows Judah’s geopolitical dilemma.

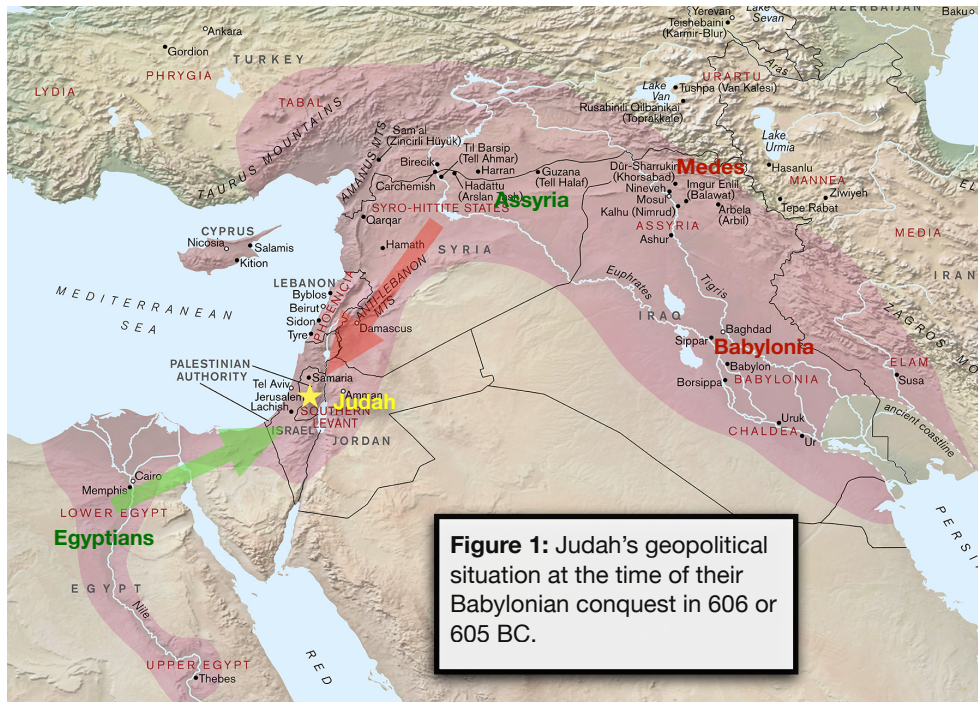


Figure 1: Judah’s geopolitical situation at the time of their Babylonian conquest in 606 or 605 BC.

Jehoiakim (609 to 598/7 BC)* was the 18th king of Judah when **Daniel 1** was written. He was placed on the throne when his younger brother, Jehoahaz, was deposed by Pharaoh Neco II, after reigning only 3 months. Jehoahaz had been elected to the throne when his father, Josiah, was killed by Neco at the Battle of Megiddo, in 609 BC (**2 Kings 23:29**). When Neco returned from battle, he carried

Jehoahaz off to Egypt and substituted Jehoiakim (*aka* Eliakim) to be his puppet king. (See **2 Kings 23** & **2 Chronicles 36**)

Nebuchadnezzar II was king of Babylon from August 605* to October 562, BC. He was locked in a political struggle with Assyria and Egypt when he conquered what was left of the Assyrian army at Haran (modern Turkey) in 610 BC, leaving Egypt without her northern ally. Nebuchadnezzar led his army against Carchemish, an Egyptian-controlled city on the Euphrates River, in 605/6 BC, defeating the Egyptians there. Shortly after the Battle of Carchemish, in 605/6 BC, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem, but king Jehoiakim heeded Jeremiah’s warning (**Jeremiah 25**) not to oppose the Babylonian invaders. As a result, Jerusalem offered little resistance during the siege. The city of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple were spared destruction. Jehoiakim was captured and taken to Babylon, along with the first wave of Jewish exiles. The prophet Daniel, along with his three friends, Hannaniah, Mishael, and Azariah, were part of this first wave. Many scholars date the “Time of the Gentiles” (see **Luke 21:24**)

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with the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

* (Note: Exact Biblical dates from this era are a matter of research, discussion, and debate.)

Comments:

- Judah's disastrous fate can be traced to her ungodliness. Their conquest and exile is a direct fulfillment of God's detailed, explicit warning to them. (See **Deuteronomy 28**). God allowed Judah's defeat by Nebuchadnezzar, by giving them "into his hand". (**V.2**)
- Notice that God also allowed the Babylonians to take sacred vessels from the Temple ("the house of God"), and put them in the Babylonian temple ("house of his god") and its associated treasury. The Babylonians probably felt this demonstrated the superiority of "their gods", but our Lord is not threatened by this. He easily could have humbled them (see **1 Samuel 5:3**).
- In fact, it was the Babylonians who were the unwitting instruments and servants of God and His divine purpose for His people, Israel. (**Jeremiah 25:1-11**) But God also held Babylon accountable for her willful excesses and unbelief. (**Isaiah 13:1-14:23; Jeremiah 25:12-14; 50:11-16**).
- "Jehoiakim" means "he whom Jehovah has set up" and "Eliakim" means "whom God will raise up". Both his names emphasize the sovereign choice of God. King Eliakim/Jehoiakim did not really receive his throne because of the the decision of the man, Pharaoh Neco! God is in control! But the sin of man definitely led to his downfall.

Dan. 1,3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles, ⁴ youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every *branch of* wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and *he ordered him* to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵ The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and *appointed* that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service. ⁶ Now among them from the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. ⁷ Then the commander of the officials assigned new names to them; and to Daniel he assigned *the name* Belshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach and to Azariah, Abed-nego.

Comments:

- Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were from the upper class of Jewish society. He probably was born about 621 to 623 BC. Babylon exiled the best and brightest from Israel in 605/6 BC. Daniel was a young man when he was taken to Babylon. He was well-educated, bright, and handsome. But the Babylonians worked hard to change him into another Babylonian. They renamed him after their own god, re-educated him in their language, literature, arts, and culture, and even tried to change his diet.
- Some scholars suggest that Ashpenaz (his name means "guest") was chief of Babylon's royal eunuchs. The word being translated as "official" (**v. 3**) is the Hebrew word, "saris", which usually means "eunuch". If so, Daniel may have given up more than his freedom, home, name, and diet. Castration of male servants of a royal court was a common practice in ancient Middle Eastern cultures.
- The name, "Daniel", means "God is my Judge". But the Babylonians renamed him as *Belshazzar* ("Bel protect the king"). Bel is the Aramaic form of Baal, a national god of Babylon (**Isaiah 46:1; Jeremiah 50:2; 51:44**). *Hananiah* means "Yahweh is gracious", *Mishael* means "Who is like God", and *Azariah* means "Yah(weh) is help".

Dan. 1,8 But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the

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commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. ⁹ Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials, ¹⁰ and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, “I am afraid of my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king.” ¹¹ But Daniel said to the overseer whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹² “Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ “Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king’s choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see.”

Comments:

- Daniel and his friends elected to obey God’s dietary restrictions, even though it endangered their lives. (**Leviticus 11:1-23, 41; Deuteronomy 14:3-21**) God rewarded their faith. Also, Daniel remained respectful of those whom God placed in authority over him, even though they were cruel, unbelievers.
- Ashpenaz may have thought ten days would be sufficient to know if the Hebrew diet would harm the youths and jeopardize his own safety.

Dan. 1,14 So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days. ¹⁵ At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king’s choice food. ¹⁶ So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables. ¹⁷ As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every *branch of literature and wisdom*; Daniel even understood all *kinds of visions and dreams*.

Comments:

- The favorable outcome to Daniel’s obedience to God’s requirements must have been a strong testimony to Ashpenaz! It also improved Daniel’s standing and safety at the court.
- As Daniel and his friends continued to obey God and heed His instructions, they grew in knowledge, insight, understanding, and wisdom. These are among the many blessings to believers.

Dan. 1,18 Then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them, the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ The king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king’s personal service. ²⁰ As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and conjurers who were* in all his realm. ²¹ And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king.

Comments:

- Having passed the test, Daniel now is examined by the king himself. This usually took place after a period of three years of instruction. This is a high stakes exam, with life and death resting on the outcome. Thus, Daniel’s witness to Nebuchadnezzar himself begins.
- Cyrus (the Great) was the Persian (Iranian) king who presided over the conquest of Babylon and was the founder of the Persian Empire. (**Figures 2 & 3**) He gained control over Babylon in 539 BC, when

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the Persian army defeated the Babylonians at Opis, about 50 miles from modern Baghdad. By October 539 BC, the city of Babylon was occupied by Persian-Mede forces commanded by Gobryas (Greek version of his name), a Mede general of Cyrus' army. Gobryas ruled the city until Cyrus renamed him Darius ("Darius the Mede"), giving him official authority over Babylon.

- [Verse 21](#) does not say that Daniel died then. It merely asserts that Daniel's ministry continued into the reign of the first year of the reign of king Cyrus. Later, Daniel relocated to the Mede city of Ectabana for a time.



Figure 2



Figure 3: Tomb of Cyrus the Great

CHAPTER TWO

Dan. 2,1 Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. ² Then the king gave orders to call in the magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. ³ The king said to them, “I had a dream and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream.”

Comments:

- The Babylonian method of reckoning the reigns of their kings means the date of these dreams is about 602 BC, the second full year of his reign, but the third year of schooling for Daniel and his friends. Nebuchadnezzar became king in 605 BC, when his father, Nabopolassar, died.
- Scripture says that Nebuchadnezzar “*had dreams*” (plural), while the king said that he had “*a dream*” (singular). It is likely that Nebuchadnezzar had the same dream repeatedly. In fact, the verses imply that this repeated dream was so persistent, that Nebuchadnezzar couldn’t sleep. For this reason, he felt the dream must have had significance that required understanding. He was greatly troubled by it — the word translated as “*anxious*” (v.3, NASB) is from a Hebrew word (*pa’am*) which means “*to thrust, or to impel*” (BDB), which may describe the sudden impact of the dream on the king.
- The nature of the dream caused Nebuchadnezzar to look for a supernatural explanation; it was no ordinary dream. God used this dream to set the stage for Daniel to testify about the Lord and to change Nebuchadnezzar into a “believer” — of sorts.

Dan. 2,4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic: “O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation.” ⁵ The king replied to the Chaldeans, “The command from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb and your houses will be made a rubbish heap. ⁶ “But if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor; therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation.” ⁷ They answered a second time and said, “Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation.” ⁸ The king replied, “I know for certain that you are bargaining for time, inasmuch as you have seen that ²the command from me is firm, ⁹ that if you do not make the dream known to me, there is only one decree for you. For you have agreed together to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the situation is changed; therefore tell me the dream, that I may know that you can declare to me its interpretation.” ¹⁰ The Chaldeans answered the king and said, “There is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king, inasmuch as no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer or Chaldean. ¹¹ “Moreover, the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with mortal flesh.”

Comments:

- From **verse 4**, through **Daniel 7:28**, are written in Aramaic, the dominant gentile language of that age. Some commentators say this is because these verses are prophecies about the gentile powers that will dominate the western world while subjugating Jerusalem. The book of **Daniel** shifts back into Hebrew after **Daniel 7:28**, when its content is more focused on Israel.
- Nebuchadnezzar suspected (correctly) that his soothsayers and diviners were charlatans. He reasoned that if their powers were true, they should be able to divine both his dream and its meaning. Their ability to reveal both to him meant that both were trustworthy. The king’s incredulity — unbelief in

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occult powers, really — opened his mind to believing God’s testimony through Daniel. It also shows that Nebuchadnezzar valued the truth — at least, when it came to this dream.

- The Babylonian magicians knew they were phonies. Although they claimed supernatural powers, in the same breath, they denied them (verses 10-11). The king wagered their lives that he was being hoodwinked. They also did not know that the Spirit of God can indwell mortal flesh, should God permit it — He does so in believers today!

Dan. 2,12 Because of this the king became indignant and very furious and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. ¹³ So the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they looked for Daniel and his friends to kill *them*. ¹⁴ Then Daniel replied with discretion and discernment to Arioch, the captain of the king’s bodyguard, who had gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon; ¹⁵ he said to Arioch, the king’s commander, “For what reason is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter. ¹⁶ So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him time, in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king.

Comments:

- Nebuchadnezzar went from being a pagan idolater to secular cynic after his priests and magicians were shown to be powerless hoaxes. Godly Daniel, and his friends, got swept up in the king’s wrath — their lives were imperiled. Apparently, the death sentence for soothsayers applied throughout the Babylonia.
- But Daniel knew and trusted God. He confidently told the king’s commander that he could answer Nebuchadnezzar’s questions — with God’s help, of course.
- *Arioch* means “*lion-like*”. As commander of Nebuchadnezzar’s guard, no doubt he was a fierce, seasoned warrior who needed to be violent when required. He would not shrink back from executing this command.
- Daniel needed tact and skill to gain Arioch’s attention to avoid swift death. Daniel was impressive enough to win an immediate audience with the king to petition for a delay in his death sentence. He already had access to the king after completing his 3-year training. Depending on Nebuchadnezzar’s mood, even Arioch may have been gambling by not promptly obeying the king. God definitely was working in all these events!

Dan. 2,17 Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter, ¹⁸ so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven;

²⁰ Daniel said,

“Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever,
For wisdom and power belong to Him.

²¹ “It is He who changes the times and the epochs;
He removes kings and establishes kings;
He gives wisdom to wise men
And knowledge to men of understanding.

²² “It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things;
He knows what is in the darkness,
And the light dwells with Him.”

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23 “To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,
For You have given me wisdom and power;
Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You,
For You have made known to us the king’s matter.”

Comments:

- There is power in prayer, but a group of believers praying together can be even more effective. For this reason, Daniel sought out Hannah, Mishael, and Azariah, whose faith, it later would be shown, matched his own.
- The word translated as night “*vision*” (**v. 19**) is from the original language, “*chezu*”, which means “*thunderbolt*” or “*lightning flash*”. (HALOT) In other words, Daniel didn’t slowly come to understand Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and its meaning; he grasped it all in one crashing moment. If Daniel literally “saw” a vision of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, he instantly understood what it meant. Daniel did not gain these insights from pondering the problem using his own natural powers; God gave all he needed in an instant. Daniel’s prayer of praise appropriately acknowledges this (**verses 20-24**).
- God “*changes the times and the epochs*” (**v. 21** from “*shena*”, which also could mean “*hasten*” - HALOT). His sovereignty over time is absolute. In fact, He is the author of time, from beginning to end. Each segment of time is designed by Him to accomplish His purposes. God does not make mistakes (**Num 23:19**). The changes God makes in times and epochs are planned and purposeful.

Dan. 2,24 Therefore, Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and spoke to him as follows: “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon! Take me into the king’s presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the king.”

Comments:

- God reinforced Daniel’s confidence in what he learned by the way he learned it. The “thunderbolt” night vision and sudden insight enforced the divine imprimatur. He’s laying everything on the line with this royal audience.
- Notice the generous nature of God’s grace! Even the pagan priests, soothsayers, diviners and magicians will be saved from destruction because of God’s faithfulness (“*Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon!*”). Many unrighteous people can benefit from the righteous, faithful testimony of one godly man! In the economy of God’s Kingdom Justice, it must be so for sinners to be redeemed by Christ!

Dan. 2,25 Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king’s presence and spoke to him as follows: “I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can make the interpretation known to the king!” ²⁶ The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation?” ²⁷ Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king. ²⁸ “However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed. ²⁹ “As for you, O king, *while* on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place. ³⁰ “But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than in any other living man, but for the purpose of making the

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interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

Comments:

- It seems like Arioch is notifying the king about something the king should already have known (**v. 25**) because **verse 16** said Daniel “went in and requested of the king that he would give him time, in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king.” Perhaps Arioch alone carried the request for a reprieve to the king. At any rate, Arioch is claiming credit for finding Daniel, a man who can answer the king’s questions.
- Don’t underestimate the risk that Arioch is taking. If Daniel fails to answer Nebuchadnezzar’s questions correctly, Arioch could lose his head too. He may have been a fierce warrior, but he was no fool. It would have been far less risky for him just to have executed the king’s command. This also implies that Arioch had some faith in Daniel, such as Daniel’s reputation for integrity. The reputation of a believer is part of his or her witness to the world.
- Daniel seems to be making excuses for the “wise men, conjurers, magicians” and “diviner” not being able to know or understand the king’s dream (**verse 27**). In fact, he is verifying their powerlessness, while at the same time, acknowledging the true omnipotence of the “God in heaven” (**verse 28**).
- Notice Daniel’s humility and his respect for the king — even though Nebuchadnezzar is a pagan and his enemy.
- **Verses 28, 29** - Daniel says that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is about the “future” (**v. 29**), more specifically, about the “latter days”. (**v. 28**) The phrase translated as “latter days” is from the Hebrew words *beaharit yomayya* (“in days to come”). The NASB translation gives these words an eschatological connotation because of how it is used in Scripture elsewhere. See the following.
 - **Gen 49:1** - Jacob’s prophecy about Israel after the conquest of Canaan.
 - **Deut. 4:30** - predicts Israel’s eventual return to God after rebellion, while **Deut 31:29** predicts that future rebellion.
 - **Ezek 38:16** - predicts the end-times war of Gog against Millennial Israel
 - **Dan 10:14** - introduces foreshadowed tribulation by Antiochus Epiphanes (c. 167 BC)

FIGURE 4:
Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream



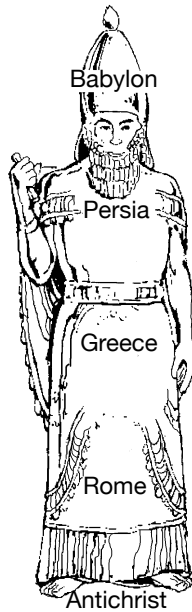
Dan. 2,31 “You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. **32** “The head of that statue was *made* of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, **33** its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. **34** “You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. **35** “Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.”

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Comments:

- Notice there was nothing intrinsically horrifying about the statue. The text does not say the statue was an image of Nebuchadnezzar himself. Although the dream ends with the violent destruction of the statue, the king was not threatened in the dream. Perhaps the dramatic, unusual, and repetitive nature of the dream made it so disturbing to Nebuchadnezzar? (**Figure 4** attempts to illustrate what the king saw in his dream.) Apparently, Nebuchadnezzar himself was in the dream as a witness, as the statue was standing “in front” (**v. 31**) of him.
 - Daniel saw (“night vision”, **v. 19**) the king’s dream in exquisite detail. He even had a sense of the size and location of the dream statue in reference to where Nebuchadnezzar was in his dream.

Figure 5:



Dan. 2,36 “This was the dream; now we will tell its interpretation before the king. **37** “You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory; **38** and wherever the sons of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given *them* into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold. **39** “After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. **40** “Then there will be a

fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces. **41** “In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. **42** “As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. **43** “And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery. **44** “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. **45** “Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

Comments: (See Image 2)

- Daniel made it clear to Nebuchadnezzar that the Babylonian king gained his power by the will of God. But the parts of the statue represented “kingdoms”, and their founding rulers. Nebuchadnezzar was the prototypical founder of the Babylonian kingdom or empire.
- The identities of the other “metallic kingdoms” are not so explicitly identified in Daniel’s interpretation of this dream. Commentators have worked this out from the context of history and the clues that have been provided by other Bible verses, including other chapters in **Daniel**, which will be covered elsewhere. The following represents the consensus interpretation.
 - Silver arms and chest - Medo-Persian Empire. The Medes abandoned their alliance with the Assyrians to team up with the Persians to conquer Babylon in c.539 BC. Silver is a harder metal than gold; it is able to deform the gold. Also, silver is less valuable (“inferior”, **v. 39**) than gold.

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No doubt proud Nebuchadnezzar was modified to learn he was represented by the most precious metal.

- [Bronze belly and thighs](#) - Greek Empire. The Greek empire replaced the Persians as the dominant world power when Alexander the Great conquered them between c. 334 and c. 330 BC. Bronze is less valuable, but stronger than silver.
- [Iron legs](#) - Roman Empire. The Roman Empire followed the Greek Empire to become the strongest ancient world power in the world. After many centuries, the Roman Empire split into separate eastern and western empires — the two legs. Iron is less precious than bronze, but much harder.
- [Iron/Clay feet and toes](#) - Final Empire. The identity of this final empire is a topic of much speculation. Because the feet followed the legs and also are made partly from iron, most commentators believe they represent European &/or Mediterranean nations that emerged from the Roman Empire. Others speculate that iron feet, loosely adherent to clay, that divides into separate toes, reinforces this conclusion because these are allied but separate nations. Still other commentators believe the feet and toes represent a loose alliance of Muslim nations that will be attack Jerusalem in the final days. Many Muslim countries encircle Israel geographically, reside in territory formerly in the Roman Empire, do not strongly united with one another (like iron does not cleave to clay), and represent the peoples of many divine judgments in Scripture. For example, [Obadiah](#) is a divine prophetic judgment against Edom, which is represented by Jordan, today. In fact, no one really knows. (See [Figure 5](#))
- All these world empires will be toppled and replaced by “. . . a stone (that) was cut out of the mountain without hands . . .” ([v. 46](#)) “in the days of those kings” ([v. 44](#) - referring to the era of statue feet and toes). This stone represents the Kingdom of Christ, which will be established when Jesus comes again in glory ([Matt 24:29-31](#)). No human effort will establish this Kingdom — it’s all God’s doing ([Rev 11:15; 19:11-20](#)). A rock frequently represents Christ in Scripture (see [Ps 118:22; Is 8:14; 28:16; 1 Pet 2:6-8](#)). The stone topples the statue becomes a mountain that fills the whole earth ([v. 35](#)) and is eternal ([v. 44](#)).

Dan. 2,46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and did homage to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and fragrant incense. ⁴⁷ The king answered Daniel and said, “Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery.” ⁴⁸ Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ And Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel was at the king’s court.

Comments:

- Nebuchadnezzar changed from a cynic to a form of believer; he now believed in Daniel’s God — he just hadn’t adopted the Lord as his God yet. This is a watershed event. It sets the stage for God working more in the king’s life through Daniel.
- Note the great trust that Nebuchadnezzar had in Daniel! As ruler of the province of Babylon, Daniel had ready access to the king and his court. And Daniel was permitted to empowered Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah to administer the main district of the empire with him.
- “Shadrach” was the Babylonian name given to Hananiah. It means “Aku’s Commands”. “Meshach” also is a Babylonian name given to Mishael. It may mean “Who is like Aku”. “Abed-nego” is the Babylonian name given to Azariah. It means “Servant of Nebo”. Nebo was the Babylonian patron god of the art of writing and of vegetation. Aku is believed to have been another Mesopotamian god of unknown identity (*HALOT*).

CHAPTER THREE

Dan. 3,1 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, the height of which was sixty cubits and its width six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. **2** Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent *word* to assemble the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. **3** Then the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the rulers of the provinces were assembled for the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. **4** Then the herald loudly proclaimed: “To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and *men of every language*, **5** that at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up. **6** “But whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire.” **7** Therefore at that time, when all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Comments:

- This was a big statue! A cubit was about the length of your forearm, or about 18 inches. So, Nebuchadnezzar’s statue would have been about 9 stories high and 9 feet in width. It appears as though the king built this image after his prophetic dream because Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego had already been installed in their Babylonian administrative positions under Daniel (see [v. 12](#) and [Daniel 2](#)). It is doubtful this statue was made of solid gold. The statue would have displaced a volume of about 5725 cubic feet and would have weighed more than 6.9 million tons. Its value in gold would have exceeded \$32 trillion today — an amount the US Federal Government wouldn’t even spend. It seems more likely to have been a gold covered statue, constructed mainly from some other material, such as pottery. Even yet, it’s huge. The surface area of this gigantic image was more than 2672 square feet. If a pottery statue were surfaced with gold leaf that was about 1 micron thick, the cost of the gold would approximate \$4.5 million, today. This seems more likely. Even yet, the human labor and workmanship required to construct this statue was colossal. Nebuchadnezzar did nothing by half measures and his dream was impactful.
- What did this statue look like and why did Nebuchadnezzar do this? The verses do not tell us. It seems likely that this statue was prompted by the king’s startling dream. It does not appear to be an image of a Babylonian god because the Chaldeans, when referring to the statue, distinguished it from their gods ([v. 12](#)), as did Nebuchadnezzar ([v. 14](#)). Scripture does not call the image a statue of Nebuchadnezzar himself. Mesopotamian kings had no problem erecting statues of themselves, or even deifying themselves in engraved images and idols. But the Nebuchadnezzar had recently encountered the sovereign power and wisdom of God through Daniel. It seems reasonable to speculate that, while not willing to challenge the authority of the God of Israel, whom is he just met, but having become aware of his exalted position as the head of gold in God’s plan, Nebuchadnezzar was willing to erect a gold-covered statue to represent his kingdom, rather than himself or another idol. Regardless of what the statue represented, people in the kingdom were required to worship it — something no faithful Jew would do.
- Scholars debate where “. . . *the plain of Dura . . .*” ([v. 1](#)) was located. Some place it within the ancient city walls of Babylon because the Septuagint (LXX), in Greek, could be translated to say the image “*stood in the level area of the encircling wall of the place of Babylon*”. Also, Shadrach, Meshach and

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Abed-nego had direct administrative authority in the city. They get swept up in the drama. But there are many dissenting opinions, all lacking certainty.

Dan. 3,8 For this reason at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges against the Jews. ⁹ They responded and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king: “O king, live forever! ¹⁰ “You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, and bagpipe and all kinds of music, is to fall down and worship the golden image. ¹¹ “But whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire. ¹² “There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, namely Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. These men, O king, have disregarded you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up.”

Comments:!

- The established Babylonian powers in the Babylonian seized this opportunity to eliminate their upstart Jewish overlords, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Apparently, they did not feel bold enough yet to challenge Daniel directly; he is not accused of disobeying the king’s command, although Daniel undoubtedly would not have worshipped Nebuchadnezzar’s stature.
- There are three (3) parts to their allegation, making it a sweeping indictment. They told the king that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego disobeyed the king’s command, would not bow to the golden image, and did not worship the king’s gods. These accusers knew the young Jewish men would not do any of these things; their case against them was “bullet-proof”!

Dan. 3,13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego; then these men were brought before the king. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar responded and said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? ¹⁵ “Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, *very well*. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?”

Comments:

- The Chaldeans also knew Nebuchadnezzar. They knew he was bold and decisive — perhaps, even impetuous. There would be no lengthy trial of the accused Jewish youths. They also knew the king’s judgment would be a death sentence for Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.
- Notice that these are not false, or even exaggerated, charges being made against Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. They absolutely are true, but with evil intent. This blending of truth with malice (or half-truths) to bring an unjust accusation against a righteous person is exactly the strategy Satan used in the Garden against Eve. Wickedness usually does masquerades as righteousness.

Dan. 3,16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. ¹⁷ “If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸ “But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

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Comments:

- Unlike Eve (or Adam), Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego did not take the “Satanic bait” offered by the Chaldeans. They did not worship the image or even, deny the charges. They relied completely on the Word of God and His holy, gracious power to vindicate or deliver them.
- Notice that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego said to Nebuchadnezzar that they did not “. . . need to give you an answer concerning this matter.” (v. 16) They were in the immediate presence of this very intimidating king! And they asserted that the correct answer to his question was self-evident.

Dan. 3,19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ He commanded certain valiant warriors who were in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in order to cast them into the furnace of blazing fire. ²¹ Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their other clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire. ²² For this reason, because the king’s command was urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. ²³ But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire still tied up.

Comments:

- Nebuchadnezzar was not accustomed to being denied. He had a temper tantrum and everyone around him panicked. The result was a furnace hotter than required to incinerate three young men and the incidental and unnecessary deaths of the king’s valiant, faithful soldiers. This tragic event validates the Scripture, which declares “The wages of sin is death . . .” (Rom 6:23) Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans share responsibility for these deaths.

Dan. 3,24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, “Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?” They replied to the king, “Certainly, O king.” ²⁵ He said, “Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!” ²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire. ²⁷ The satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king’s high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them.

Comments:

- Nebuchadnezzar encountered the Living God again through the testimony of the Lord’s faithful servants! The survival of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego was undeniable proof that the “God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego” (v. 38) is “the Most High God” (v. 26).
- Who is the fourth “man” in the furnace with Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego? While he could have been a heavenly angel, I do not think it is unreasonable to propose that He was the pre-incarnate Christ. The reasons for this idea are as follows.

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- He was seen to be “*like a son fo the gods*” (**v. 25**). His appearance was divinely noteworthy. Jesus is called the Son of God. This does not prove this assertion, though. Adam was call a “*son of God*” (**Luke 3:38**) — and by extension, so are all men. Also, angels are called “*sons of God*” (**Gen 6:2-4; Job 1:6-12; 38:7, Psalm 82**), depending on whether the Masoretic text or Septuagint are used as the source translations. For more information on this topic, see Heiser, Michael S., *The Unseen Realm*. Bellingham, WA, Lexham Press, 2015).
- The “Fourth Man” literally redeemed Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego from destruction by entering the fire, and the death it represented, with them as a “man”. In like manner, Christ redeems us from destruction by having entered this world as a man to overcome death. In this way, the three youths “*overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.*” (**Rev 12:11**) The pronoun “*him*” in **Revelation 12:11**, refers to the “dragon”, a symbol for Satan (**Rev 12:9**). Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were on the front lines of a spiritual battle being waged by demonic forces against the Kingdom of God. **Daniel 3** also seems to foreshadow the deliverance of the saints from Satan’s assault by Christ’s appearance.
- Although **verse 38**, calls the man “*His angel*”, this statement is made by the unbeliever, Nebuchadnezzar.

Dan. 3,28 Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king’s command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God. 29 “Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way.” 30 Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

Comments:

- Notice that, to Nebuchadnezzar, God is still “*the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego*” (**v. 38**) — not “*his God*”. The king is “connecting the dots” between God, faith, and salvation, however. As a result of this event, Nebuchadnezzar believed and confessed the power of God. Consequently, the king commanded the subjects of his empire to respect God, but he does not appear to have rejected the rest of Babylon’s pantheon of idols.
- The penalty for “bad-mouthing” the “*God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego*” (**v. 29**) must have greatly alarmed the Chaldean accusers of the youths! Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were now secure in their positions and the king caused them to prosper (**v. 30**).
- I have often wondered if Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were prophetic foreshadows of the raptured Great Tribulation saints, who will rule and reign with Christ in the age to come, but this is beyond the scope of this lesson.

CHAPTER FOUR

Dan. 4,1 Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language that live in all the earth: “May your peace abound! ² “It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for me.

³ “How great are His signs
And how mighty are His wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom
And His dominion is from generation to generation.

Comments:

- King Nebuchadnezzar is writing most of this chapter in the Bible - a singular event, because he is gentile. It is written in the gentile *lingua franca* of the day, Aramaic.
- Notice that the king claims an exalted title - “*king to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language that live in all the earth.*” (**v. 1**). It may be boasting, but this is the very title God gave him through the dream interpreted by Daniel (**Dan 2**). There may be other nations and kings doing great things elsewhere on earth, but God’s plan for mankind was playing out in this part of the world. Nebuchadnezzar here provided his personal testimony about “*the Most High God*” (**v. 2**), whom he praises and acknowledges. It is extraordinary that the king now exalts “Daniel’s God” above his own gods and idols in this proclamation, but he hasn’t yet let go of his own idols and pagan beliefs. These things die hard because they are rooted in culture, history, custom, and spiritual deception.
- Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed the eternal existence of the Kingdom of God, meaning he knew it would outlast his own kingdom. He is beginning to understand God’s divine attributes.

Dan. 4,4 “I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace. ⁵ “I saw a dream and it made me fearful; and *these fantasies as I lay* on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. ⁶ “So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. ⁷ “Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me. ⁸ “But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream ²to him, *saying,* ⁹ “O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery baffles you, tell *me* the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.

Comments:

- Nebuchadnezzar certainly had an active dream life! This single dream spilled over into his waking hours in bed. This warrior-king was finally at peace at home, rather than at war in a foreign land, but he had no peace. God was pursuing him for His divine purposes. Nebuchadnezzar knew he wouldn’t get peace until he knew what these dreams meant — and he knew how to find out.
- The Babylonian magicians and soothsayers repeated their dismal failure of **Daniel 2**, by not being able to interpret the king’s dream. They seem to be spared Nebuchadnezzar’s wrath this time because he had ready access to Daniel, whom he knew to be blessed with God’s wisdom. It is surprising that the Babylonian charlatans weren’t fired from their positions, though. This also illustrates the power of the hold of spiritual darkness on an idolatrous culture.
- Daniel is summoned again to tell the king both his dreams and their meaning. Nebuchadnezzar calls Daniel the “*chief of the magicians*” (**v. 9**, from the Hebrew words “*rab chartom*”, or “*great soothsayer*”). He recognizes that Daniel’s wisdom is not natural, but is spiritual.

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- Belteshazzar was the Babylonian name given to Daniel when he was taken captive from Judah. It means “*Bel is the keeper of secrets*” — “*bel*” being the Babylonian name for the Hebrew word “*Baal*”, which means “*lord*”, “*master*”, or even “*husband*”. This was the name of a common idol god in the cultures of that era (see **Figure 6**, below).

Dan. 4,10 ‘Now *these were* the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed: I was looking, and behold, there was a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great.

11 ‘The tree grew large and became strong
And its height reached to the sky,
And it was visible to the end of the whole earth.

12 ‘Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant,
And in it was food for all.
The beasts of the field found shade under it,
And the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches,
And all living creatures fed themselves from it.

Figure 6: Baal/Bel



Comments:

- Trees in Scripture sometimes symbolize earthly kingdoms, and/or the kings who rule over them. For example, some commentators suggest the fig tree represents religious Israel, when worshiping in her Promised Land (e.g. **Zech 3:10**), while the cedar tree represents Lebanon (e.g. **Is 14:8**). The symbolic nature of trees in Scripture is reinforced when one considers verses like **Isa 55:12**, which portrays the “*trees of the field*” as clapping their hands — something actual trees cannot do. As always, one must read Bible verses in their context to know whether they are literal or symbolic.
- In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, this large tree seems to represent him. His fate also strongly impacts the stability and fate of the Babylonian Empire. The verses do not tell us what kind of tree was in the dream. As we will see later, “*beasts of the field*” can symbolize worldly kingdoms. Some commentators assert that “*birds of the sky*” represent spiritual powers associated with earthly kingdoms (more of this is revealed in **Daniel**, later). The dream appears to portray Babylon as a great kingdom-*tree* that even reaches the sky, can be seen all over the earth, and is the benefactor of its many citizens, “*beasts and birds*” — e.g. it provided “*food for all*” (**v. 12**).

Dan. 4,13 ‘I was looking in the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed, and behold, an angelic watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven.

- 14** ‘He shouted out and spoke as follows:
“Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,
Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit;
Let the beasts flee from under it
And the birds from its branches.
- 15** “Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground,
But with a band of iron and bronze *around it*
In the new grass of the field;
And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven,
And let him share with the beasts in the grass of the earth.
- 16** “Let his mind be changed from that of a man
And let a beast’s mind be given to him,

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And let seven periods of time pass over him.

- 17 “This sentence is by the decree of the *angelic* watchers
And the decision is a command of the holy ones,
In order that the living may know
That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind,
And bestows it on whom He wishes
And sets over it the lowliest of men.”

18 ‘This is the dream *which* I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belshazzar, tell *me* its interpretation, inasmuch as none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.’ 18⁹ Then Daniel, whose name is Belshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, ‘Belshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.’ Belshazzar replied, ‘My lord, *if only* the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your adversaries!’ 20 ‘The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth 21 and whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt and in whose branches the birds of the sky lodged — 22 it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth. 23 ‘In that the king saw an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, “Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze *around it* in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let 2^him share with the beasts of the field until seven periods of time pass over him,” 24 this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: 25 that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes. 26 ‘And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that *it is* Heaven that rules. 27 ‘Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by *doing* righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.’

Comments:

- This dream is packed with significance! The context of the scriptures shows that it was symbolic; it uses a complex mixture of metaphors. Notice that this “tree” (Aramaic/Hebrew: *etz*) initially has the mind of a man, which later becomes the mind of a beast (v. 10), before it is restored again. Although the tree is designated with the English personal pronoun, “*him*” (vv. 15, 16, NASB), gender assignment in Hebrew & Aramaic is based on word structure, as well as a person’s gender, so it is not as helpful as one might think. Clearly, this “tree” is a person, whom we later learn to be Nebuchadnezzar. The dream predicts that the king will lose his human mind for “*seven periods of time*” (v. 16, NASB - Aramaic, “*shivah yahelfun*”, or “*sevens to have passed*”). Some commentators say this phrase means “*seven years*”; the verses are not that definite. We only know that these changes are temporary, lasting more than seven days or weeks, based on the changes in the king’s body during these changes (see v. 33 - “*his hair had grown like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws*”).

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- This verdict came from the judgment of a group of “*watchers*” (v. 17, Aramaic: “*iyr*”, “*an angelic watcher*” - *Hebrew Strong’s Dictionary*) and was announced to him by a “*watcher*” (v. 13). There is evidence in Scripture that, just as men are “overlords” of the earth, angels have been appointed as “overlords” under God, over men — at least, for a time. For example, the Mosaic Law was ordained by angels for Israel because of transgressions (see [Acts 7:53](#); [Gal 3:19](#), [Heb 2:2](#)). It appears as though heavenly angelic “*watchers*” warned and later, judged Nebuchadnezzar for his pride and unbelief. They were called “*holy*”, meaning they act solely on behalf of God, and not on their own independent authority. A more thorough discussion of the angelic role in managing mankind can be found in a book by Heiser, Michael S., *The Unseen Realm*. Bellingham, WA, Lexham Press, 2015.
- The tree in the dream is severely pruned, while not being chopped down and destroyed. I am told that trees are pruned to influence how they grow, to rid them of disease, and to extend their lifespan. Nebuchadnezzar seems to be “infected” with a serious case of proud idolatry that, so far, has been resistant to divine interventions. As a result, he too had to be “pruned”. In this case, the interventions by the angels intended to teach Nebuchadnezzar that “*the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, . . .*” (v. 17). It seemed to have worked.
- It is remarkable that some other tyrant in Babylon did not seize Nebuchadnezzar’s throne while he was mad, but this is exactly what the angel proclaimed. When the king finally acknowledged the sovereignty of God, his reason and kingdom were restored to him.

Dan. 4,28 “All *this* happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king. ²⁹ “Twelve months later he was walking on the *roof* of the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ “The king reflected and said, ‘Is this not Babylon the great, *which I myself have built* as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?’ ³¹ “While the word was in the king’s mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, ³² and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.’ ³³ “Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws.”

Comments:

- Daniel advised the king to repent of his pride and unbelief. Nebuchadnezzar did not do so, as he claimed to be solely responsible for all his achievements, even though his first dream informed him that God was responsible for it. Nebuchadnezzar did not experience the penalty of this sin until twelve months after he received the heavenly warning. When grace runs out, all that is left is judgment; he had 12 months of grace. His fate was announced by a voice from heaven (v. 31). But even in God’s judgment, there can be grace. With repentance, the judgement on the king was lifted. “*God’s word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled.*” (v. 33)
- It would have taken months or years, not days or weeks, for Nebuchadnezzar to grow hair “*like eagles’ feathers*” and “*nails like bird’s claws*”. Most commentators say he was mad for seven years, although perhaps the same outcome could be seen in seven months.

Dan. 4,34 “But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever;

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.

Keeping Cool in the Furnace: A Bible Study in **Daniel**

Handouts

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35 “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,
But He does according to His will in the host of heaven
And *among* the inhabitants of earth;
And no one can ward off His hand
Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’

36 “At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. 37 “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”

Comments:

- Nebuchadnezzar is pardoned when he blessed, honored, and praised God. He still sounds pretty boastful, but such is the patience and mercy of God. The king also acknowledged the justice of God’s judgments, which implies that he confessed that he was treated fairly, even though severely.
- I can’t help but wonder if Nebuchadnezzar truly abandoned his Babylonian idolatry and became a “God Seeker”. We don’t really know for sure.

CHAPTER FIVE

Dan. 5,1 Belshazzar the king held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand. **2** When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. **3** Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God which was in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. **4** They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.

Comments:

- Nebuchadnezzar died c. 562 BC, after reigning for 43 years. There is a considerable time gap between **Daniel 4** and **Daniel 5**. The Babylonian kingdom experienced significant decline and political turmoil following Nebuchadnezzar's death. Several sons and sons-in-law ascended to his throne, often succeeding each other through assassination. In about 556 BC, Nabonidus became king of Babylon. Many historians and commentators assert that he was not from the royal blood line, although he may have been married to one of Nebuchadnezzar's daughters. Nabonidus was devoted to the Babylonian moon god, Sin. He became entangled in disputes with the priests of the other Babylonian gods. In about 552 BC, Nabonidus withdrew to Arabia, leaving Belshazzar as regent over Babylon, while he continued to be king over the entire empire.
- Belshazzar may have been the great, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, through his mother. He was the son of Nabonidus. His name in Babylonian means, "*Bel protect the king*". Belshazzar played an important role in helping Nabonidus come to power through a palace *coup d'etat*. For this reason, he was trusted by his father and he was regarded to be king in Babylon during his father's absence.
- Babylon kept the sacred vessels of the Jewish Temple, which they took when they sacked Jerusalem in 586/7 BC, and placed in their treasury. The Jews remained in exile in Babylon during the predicted 70 years. Belshazzar was having a party. Perhaps because of his father's devotion to idols, Belshazzar had no respect for God, or for the items from God's Temple. He had these sacred vessels retrieved from the treasury to repurpose them in exalting Babylonian gods, instead.

Dan. 5,5 Suddenly the fingers of a man's hand emerged and began writing opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the back of the hand that did the writing. **6** Then the king's face grew pale and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together. **7** The king called aloud to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners. The king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, "Any man who can read this inscription and explain its interpretation to me shall be clothed with purple and *have a necklace of gold around his neck, and have authority as third ruler in the kingdom.*" **8** Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the inscription or make known its interpretation to the king. **9** Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, his face grew *even paler*, and his nobles were perplexed.

Comments:

- In these verses, we learn the origins of the famous sayings, "**See the handwriting on the wall.**" When Belshazzar saw this, he became exceedingly afraid. He knew this was important!
- This spectacle clearly was supernatural. Belshazzar regarded this singular phenomenon to be so vital, that he promised wealth, glory, and power to whomever could explain it to him. He summoned the Chaldean soothsayers to explain to him, but they were as useless as before. The "*third ruler in the*

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kingdom” means that this honored person would only be subject to the authority of Nabonidus and Belshazzar.

Dan. 5,10 The queen entered the banquet hall because of the words of the king and his nobles; the queen spoke and said, “O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts alarm you or your face be pale. ¹¹ “There is a man in your kingdom in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of your father, illumination, insight and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. And King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father the king, appointed him chief of the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans and diviners. ¹² “This was because an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight, interpretation of dreams, explanation of enigmas and solving of difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Beltshazzar. Let Daniel now be summoned and he will declare the interpretation.”

Comments:

- The queen probably was Nabonidus’ wife and the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, according to some commentators. She was more informed about the events of her father’s life. She remembered her father’s dreams and the help Daniel provided to him.
- Notice the queen refers to Daniel by both his Hebrew and Babylonian names. The Babylonians had not been able to erase Daniel’s Jewish identity, in spite of all their efforts! Daniel’s identity was secured by his faith in and faithfulness to God. This is an important principal to be observed by all believers.

Dan. 5,13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the exiles from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? ¹⁴ “Now I have heard about you that a spirit of the gods is in you, and that illumination, insight and extraordinary wisdom have been found in you. ¹⁵ “Just now the wise men and the conjurers were brought in before me that they might read this inscription and make its interpretation known to me, but they could not declare the interpretation of the message. ¹⁶ “But I personally have heard about you, that you are able to give interpretations and solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the inscription and make its interpretation known to me, you will be clothed with purple and wear a necklace of gold around your neck, and you will have authority as the third ruler in the kingdom.”

Comments:

- These verses merely repeated what had been said before. Belshazzar calls Daniel by his Jewish name and knows that he came from Judah. He calls Nebuchadnezzar “*my father*” (v. 13), but this was a vernacular express for any paternal ancestor. Belshazzar is offering Daniel the same “deal” that he offered the Babylonian soothsayers.

Dan. 5,17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, “Keep your gifts for yourself or give your rewards to someone else; however, I will read the inscription to the king and make the interpretation known to him. ¹⁸ “O king, the Most High God granted sovereignty, grandeur, glory and majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father. ¹⁹ “Because of the grandeur which He bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations and men of every language feared and trembled before him; whomever he wished he killed and whomever he wished he spared alive; and whomever he wished he elevated and

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whomever he wished he humbled. ²⁰ “But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was deposed from his royal throne and his glory was taken away from him. ²¹ “He was also driven away from ¹mankind, and his heart was made like *that of* beasts, and his dwelling place was with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind and *that* He sets over it whomever He wishes. ²² “Yet you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this, ²³ but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways, you have not glorified. ²⁴ “Then the hand was sent from Him and this inscription was written out.

Comments:

- The mysterious hand that was seen to write on the wall was sent by God (**v. 24**). Daniel deciphered the message, but he also revealed the reason for the message first. Belshazzar should have learned from his father’s mistakes, but he did not. He was arrogant, ungodly, and contemptuous of the Lord.
- Daniel knew Belshazzar’s promised gifts were worthless. The “handwriting on the wall” was written as much for the benefit of others as for Belshazzar, who would not survive the night. Daniel would have to begin his witness to another pagan conquering king that very night.
- It is vital to understand this lesson from Scripture. God holds us accountable for obeying the truth we know, no matter how we know it. Nebuchadnezzar had to learn this truth first hand, but when he didn’t, he was punished for seven years until he learned it. Belshazzar should have learned it from his father. He didn’t.

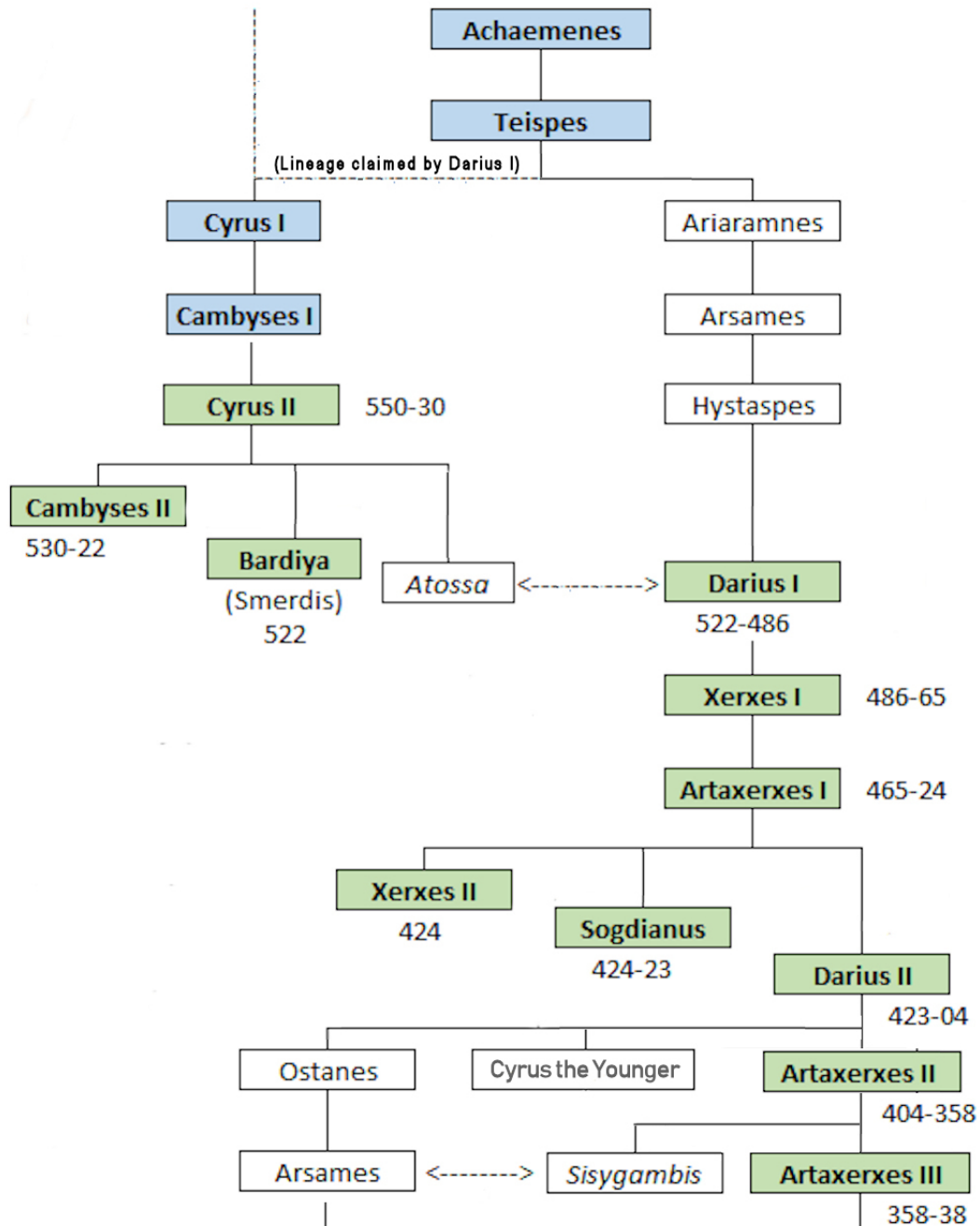
Dan. 5,25 “Now this is the inscription that was written out: ‘MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.’ ²⁶ “This is the interpretation of the message: ‘MENE’ — God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. ²⁷ “‘TEKEL’ — you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. ²⁸ “‘PERES’ — your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.” ²⁸ Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and *put* a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he *now* had authority as the third *ruler* in the kingdom. ³² That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. ³¹ So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.

Comments:

- The wall handwriting is in Aramaic. Daniel interpreted it for Belshazzar. The Persians, led by Cyrus, and their allies, the Medes, led by Darius, would conquer Babylon that very night, in 539 BC. Belshazzar was killed that night.
- See **Figure 7**, for a listing of relevant Persian and Mede kings.

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Figure 7: Persian and Mede Rulers



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/93/Achaemenid_lineage.jpg

CHAPTER SIX

Dan. 6,1 It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom, ² and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss. ³ Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. ⁴ Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or *evidence of corruption*, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was *to be found* in him. ⁵ Then these men said, “We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find *it* against him with regard to the law of his God.”

Comments:

- “*Darius*” in these verses is not to be confused with “Darius the Great”, a Persian king who ruled several generations later. The “Darius” of **Daniel 6**, refers to as “Darius the Mede” according to most Bible historians. His identity and very existence is debated by some secular critics. Bible scholars believe that Darius the Mede was really “Ugbaru” (alternative spelling: “Gugaru”, or “Gobryus”, from the Greek). He was the principal general of King Cyrus and was the governor of Gutium, a region in western Asia. General Ugbaru conquered Babylon on October 12, 539 BC, entering the city of the night of Belshazzar’s feast. Historical evidence suggests the sympathetic Babylonians opened the gates to the city for him. He ruled on behalf of Cyrus until the king entered the city on October 29th. Cyrus then appointed Ugbaru to be ruler of Babylon; he took the name of “Darius”. Persian emperors, in general, and Cyrus in particular, usually left conquered “kings” in charge of their kingdoms, granting them great autonomy and support. These were local sovereigns beholden to the “king of kings”, the Persian king, alone. As long as they paid their taxes and acknowledged the Persian emperor, they remained kings in their own right. Darius the Mede probably was like such a “king”.
- Darius established a Persian bureaucracy over Babylon consisting of 120 satraps, who were district governors with considerable autonomy (“Satrap” is from a Persian word that means “*protector of the province*”). This form of government was borrowed from the Medes and was maintained by Darius the Great, who reigned several generations later. The satraps of larger provinces were allowed to keep troops under their command and appoint “*hyerarchs*”, who were like assistant governors. The satraps sometimes were dishonest and would divert royal taxes to their own funds. They sometimes initiated rebellions against the throne. To keep the satraps in line, Persian kings would appoint highly-trusted commissioners (“*sarkiyn*”) as royal auditors and overseers of the satraps. The sarkiyn were part of the royal court and lived in closer proximity to the king than did the satraps.
- Darius planned to promote Daniel to leadership over all the commissioners and satraps, a “sarkiyn”, which they resented. Although they may have been jealous of Daniel, they also knew that he was trustworthy and honest, which may have been contrary to their own interests. They would have to find a way to use Daniel’s faith and integrity to destroy him.

Dan. 6,6 Then these commissioners and satraps came by agreement to the king and spoke to him as follows: “King Darius, live forever! ⁷ “All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions’ den. ⁸ “Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and

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Persians, which may not be revoked.”⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.

Comments:

- This appears to be an empire-wide conspiracy against Daniel. Given the size of the Persian Empire and the slow speed of travel, it may have taken weeks or months to finalize the plot. The ancient Greek historians estimated that it took three months for a message to be carried throughout the entire Persian Empire. Their plan was simple — trick the king into making a law that Daniel could not keep because it would violate his faith in God. In essence, this royal decree temporarily elevated the king above every other man and god in the empire. The Persians were very tolerant of the religions of their subjugated peoples and regions. A temporary religious mandate was less disruptive to the empire than a permanent one and it would be more acceptable to the king. For this reason, they proposed the decree be limited to thirty-days. The trap for Daniel was set.
- There is some scholarly debate about whether royal decrees really were irrevocable. These verses clearly state that even the king was constrained by his own laws. This custom clearly would tend to help check foolish royal impulses and whims. As it turned out, it also imposed a greater duty for care and due diligence in royal counsellors and advisors.

Dan. 6,10 Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously.¹¹ Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.¹² Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king’s injunction, “Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions’ den?” The king replied, “The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.”¹³ Then they answered and spoke before the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the injunction which you signed, but keeps making his petition three times a day.”

Comments:

- Daniel prayed to the Lord three times a day. Not having the Jewish Temple, he faced Jerusalem, where the Temple was located, when he prayed. His faithful customs and habits were well known in the court, apparently. The conspirators knew how catch Daniel violating the king’s recent command.
- The trap for Daniel — and the king — was sprung.

Dan. 6,14 Then, as soon as the king heard this statement, he was deeply distressed and set his mind on delivering Daniel; and even until sunset he kept exerting himself to rescue him.¹⁵ Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, “Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed.”

Comments:

- Daniel had won the respect and admiration of the king, who now understood that he had unwittingly doomed Daniel to confinement in the lion’s den.
- The king’s advisors, all being co-conspirators, would not lift a finger to rescue Daniel or the king from their predicament. Daniel’s fate was sealed; he would be taken to the lions.

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Dan. 6,16 Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you." ¹⁷ A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel. ¹⁸ Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him.

Comments:

- The Persian king, apparently, was restrained by Persian laws, which his command became, but he delivered Daniel to his fate with a blessing, based on the hope that God would intervene. The king spent the night fasting in his palace. Perhaps he also was praying. If so, it would be interesting to know whether his prayers petitioned the God of Daniel or some Persian idol.
- Daniel's confinement was secured by royal and official seals. No one was going to rescue him prematurely.

Dan. 6,19 Then the king arose at dawn, at the break of day, and went in haste to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?" ²¹ Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever! ²² "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime." ²³ Then the king was very pleased and gave orders for Daniel to be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no injury whatever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. ²⁴ The king then gave orders, and they brought those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, and they cast them, their children and their wives into the lions' den; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

Comments:

- The text suggests that Darius was so concerned about Daniel that he was awake all night and hurried to the lion's den as soon as possible in the morning. Darius was about to learn about the singular power of the One True Living God, the God of Daniel! Notice that Darius was aware of Daniel's faithfulness ("*your God, whom you constantly serve*" - **v. 20**). Daniel was valued by the king because of Daniel's faithfulness.
- Apparently, an angel spent the night with Daniel and protected him from the lions. We do not know if Daniel actually saw this angel or spoke to him. Angels did appear to Daniel in other chapters of the book.
- Even though Daniel violated the king's decree, he stated that he "*committed no crime.*" (**v. 22**). It is not a crime to violate immoral laws and the Laws of God cannot be revoked or amended by man (see **Acts 5:29**). Daniel also reaffirmed his loyalty to the king.
- The conspirators now found themselves ensnared by the consequences of their trap (**v. 24**), a common fate for wicked men who seek to subvert God's justice (see **Esther 7**, for another example).

Dan. 6,25 Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language who were living in all the land: "May your peace abound!"

Keeping Cool in the Furnace: A Bible Study in **Daniel**

Handouts

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26 “I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel;

For He is the living God and enduring forever,
And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed,
And His dominion *will be* ²forever.

27 “He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders
In heaven and on earth,
Who has *also* delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.”

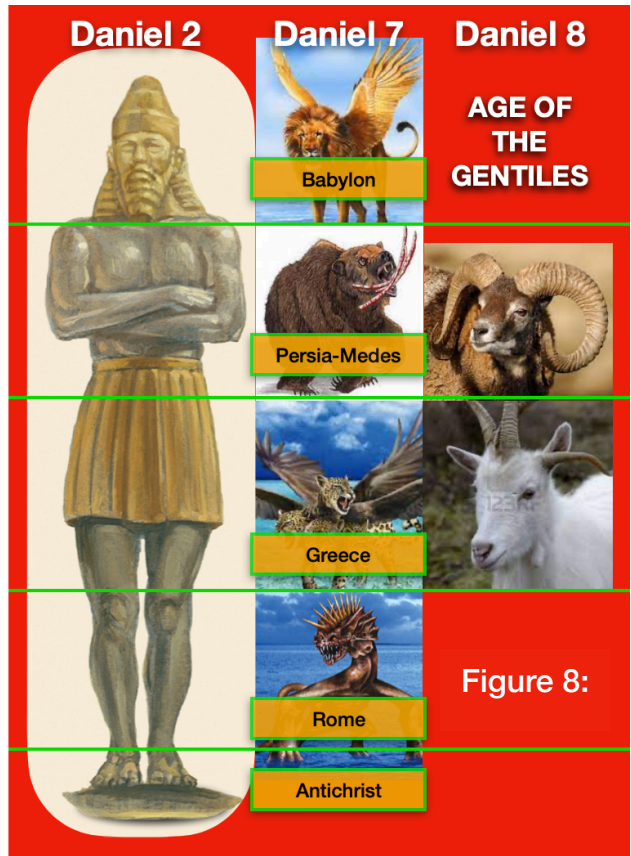
Dan. 6,28 So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Comments:

- Daniel’s faithfulness through the most harrowing test of his faith resulted in an empire-wide proclamation of God’s glory! Notice that this royal decree had no expiration date! Great spiritual victories are gained through great spiritual battles that may endanger the reputation and well-being of saints. We are called to be spiritual warriors, like Daniel, to be guided by our faith in God and by His wisdom, and not by fear.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Dan. 7,1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it. **2** Daniel said, “I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. **3** “And four great beasts were



coming up from the sea, different from one another. **4** “The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. **5** “And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, ‘Arise, devour much meat!’ **6** “After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. **7** “After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. **8** “While I was contemplating the

horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts.

Comments:

- The **Figure 8**, shown above, correlates Nebuchadnezzar’s dream statue (**Dan 2**) with Daniel’s dream beasts (which continue into **chapter 8**)
- The first year of Belshazzar would be c. 553 BC. Daniel was probably about 68 years old. Notice that this dream occurred well before his “lion’s den adventure”, under Darius, by about 14 years. The chapters in the book of Daniel are not in chronological order.
- Daniel envisioned the same successive gentile world powers that were dreamed by Nebuchadnezzar in his statue dream (**Dan 2**). The language of the text suggests that he saw visions, in addition to his dreams (**v. 1**). In Daniel’s dreams and visions, these gentile empires were seen as beasts, behaving in strange ways and doing terrifying things. His dream unfolded in successive stages, each stage presenting a new “future history”, with its own significance. This sequence also refutes the amillennial contention that prophetic scripture does not outline a prophetic chronology.

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- Beasts represented worldly powers, like Babylon, because they are “natural-earthly”, “unreasoning”, and unwisely followed the dictates of their territorial idol-gods, rather than God. Nebuchadnezzar was given the mind of a beast (**Dan 4:16**) to illustrate the unreasoning nature of his foolish pride and stubborn unbelief.
- The “*four winds of the earth*” were stirring up the sea in Daniel’s vision - storms were brewing. Winds represent spirit powers; their effects can be experienced, but they are invisible. Indeed, the Hebrew word translated as “*wind*” is also the word for “*spirit*” (Hebrew: *ruach*). The “*winds*” came from all corners of the earth; they are territorial demonic spiritual powers that controlled portions of all the earth, who converged for this purpose.
- Daniel saw each beast arising out of this restless sea. There is a dual meaning in the use of this symbolic language, because the phrase “*great sea*”(v. 2) often refers to the Mediterranean Sea, telling us something about where these world events will transpire (see **Num 34:6-7; Josh 1:4; 9:1; 15:12,47; 23:4; Ezek 47:10,15,20; 48:28**). The Holy Spirit was experienced in Jerusalem as a heavenly “*rushing wind*” (**Acts 2:2**) at Pentecost. The restless sea also represents the violent, turbulent world of international politics (see **Is 17:14; Rev 17:1; 15**) — it is never at rest, never at peace. Also, Leviathan, the dragon, who represents Satan, is known “to live” and reign in the “sea” (**Is 27:1**); he presides over the affairs of these gentile empires, through his legions of demonic underlings. This should be contrasted with the “*sea of glass*” that is found before the throne of Christ, who is the Prince of Peace (**Rev 4:6**).
- Each new beast that arose in Daniel’s dream violently destroyed and replaced the previous one. The appearances of the first three beasts were different in strange and symbolic ways from their natural, earthly forms. They were “unnatural”.
- The winged lion (see **Figure 9**), or lion-eagle (v.4), symbolized Babylon (**Jer 4:7, 13; Ezek 17:3**). The transformation of the lion-beast to something with more human characteristics may symbolize the impact of God’s humbling of Nebuchadnezzar and his acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty and



- power (see **Dan 4**). Babylon was conquered by Persia-Medes in c. 539 BC.
- The bear (v.5) represented the alliance of the Medes and Persians. The bear, a large ungainly animal, stood partially raised on one side in the dream to indicate the unequal nature of this alliance. Persia soon eclipsed the Medes in power. The Persians fielded some of the largest, unwieldy armies in the ancient world. The Persian empire arose by consuming three prior empires — the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Assyrians — with the help of their Mede allies. The three ribs may symbolize these conquests.
- The “*four-winged leopard*” (v.6) represented Greece, which rose to power to subdue the Persians under Alexander the Great. Although Greece fielded smaller armies than Persia, it deployed coordinated rapid troop movement to win battles. A leopard is more agile and fleet than a bear, so the symbolism seems to fit. Soon after the Greeks conquered Babylon, Alexander died (**323 BC**), leaving his empire to his four principal generals, represented by the four wings. They divided the empire

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among themselves. (Please see the supplement on *Prophetic Kingdoms* for more information and dates).

- Because the fourth beast (**v.7**) in his dream was not any known natural, earthly animal (See **Figure 10**), Daniel struggled to describe it. Perhaps it was a mongrel made up of parts of the prior beasts? If so, this would be the same beast the Apostle John saw and recorded in **Rev 13:1-2**. This beast also had ten horns and was part leopard, part lion, and part bear, indicating that it came from parts of the Babylonian, Persian, and Greek empires. It is useful to compare **Dan 7** to **Rev 13**.
- The fourth beast corresponded to the iron legs of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream statue (**Dan 2**) and symbolized the Roman Empire. It morphed into a future kingdoms that are symbolized by ten horns, probably represented by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream statue. Later, Daniel sees three of the horns supplanted by an arrogant, boasting little horn. Some commentators believe the little horn represents Antiochus IV (“Epiphanes”), a Greek king who ruled over Israel in the second century BC. Other commentators believe the horns events represents the final gentile coalition empire under Antichrist, while the small, arrogant, boasting horn represents Antichrist himself. Perhaps both of these theories are true to some extent (*i.e* Antiochus IV may have been a prophetic prototypical antichrist, as there have been many antichrist-like characters in history — see **1 John 2:8**)
- “Horns” are symbolic of powers or rulers, as are “heads.” This will become more apparent later in the text. “Eyes” represent seeing and knowing, or intelligence. The fourth beast had the “eyes of a man”, but it wasn’t a man; it saw and understood things like a man. To make this last beast more complicated, its horns begin behaving as though they too were beasts, having minds and wills of their own!



Dan. 7,9 “I kept looking
Until thrones were set up,
And the Ancient of Days took His seat;
 His vesture was like white snow
 And the hair of His head like pure wool.
 His throne was ablaze with flames,
 Its wheels were a burning fire.

10 “A river of fire was flowing
 And coming out from before Him;
 Thousands upon thousands were attending Him,
 And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him;
The court sat,
And the books were opened.

11 “Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. **12** “As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.

13“I kept looking in the night visions,

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And behold, with the clouds of heaven
 One like a Son of Man was coming,
 And He came up to the Ancient of Days
 And was presented before Him.

- 14 “And to Him was given dominion,
Glory and a kingdom,
 That all the peoples, nations and *men of every language*
 Might serve Him.
 His dominion is an everlasting dominion
 Which will not pass away;
 And His kingdom is one
 Which will not be destroyed.

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Comments:

- After the little boasting horn arose, Daniel’s vision shifted to the heavenly realm. There, he saw a court (Aramaic: *din* - “*judgment*”, HALOT). Notice there are multiple “*thrones*” (Aramaic: *korse*’, HALOT) present. This scene is reminiscent of what was seen by the Apostle John and recorded in **Revelation 4**. In the Bible, a judgment was rendered in the trial when the judge sat on the judgment seat (*i.e.* the court “sits” for judgment.). This appears to be happening in this vision (**v. 10**).
- The “*Ancient of Days*” (Aramaic: “*attiq yom*”) is God. He is the Judge. God is eternal. He “predates” time itself, and is the Creator of time. He is ancient “over” the days — the “Ancient of Days”. God’s throne in Daniel’s vision is similar to what Ezekiel saw in his vision (**Ez 10**). Notice the “*Son of Man*” coming with the “*clouds of Heaven*” (**v. 11**). This clearly is a reference to Christ’s Second Coming, and not to his incarnation in Bethlehem. Jesus used a similar description of His Second Coming in **Matthew 24**, which he placed in an end-times setting. This provides strong evidence that **Daniel 7**, moved from describing historical kingdoms to future end-times events.
- Evidence is provided in trials to render a judgment. This trial in **Daniel** appears to be proceeding based on the evidence already recorded in “*the books*” (**v. 10**). Presumably, these books document the intentions, words, and deeds of everyone who must be judged, as these events transpired in life.
- As a result of the trial, the final gentile Beast Empire perishes and the Kingdom of Christ takes its place, but is eternal, without end. Christ’s Kingdom presides over the nations of the earth, for which purpose they are granted a reprieve from destruction (“*but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time*” - **v. 12**). This part of Daniel’s dream corresponds to the uncut stone that struck Nebuchadnezzar’s dream statue’s feet, destroyed it, and became a mountain to fill the whole earth (**Dan 2**) — see **Figure 1**.

Dan. 7,15 “As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. **16** “I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: **17** ‘These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. **18** ‘But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.’

Comments:

- Daniel’s dream was distressing to him. He needed to know what it meant. His dream also allowed him to interact with one of the individuals of the myriad who were present in his dream. We are not told the identity of this individual, but he seemed to understand what Daniel’s dream meant.
- The heavenly interpreter reassured Daniel that the saints were not destroyed by these beasts; rather, they will inherit an eternal kingdom.

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Dan. 7,19 “Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, ²⁰ and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates. ²¹ “I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them ²² until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

Comments:

- In these verses, Daniel reveals more about the fourth beast. The fourth beast-kingdom destroyed the preceding beasts. Then, another smaller horn arose on the beast’s head, rooting out three of the ten prior horns and taking their place. This new horn was arrogant, boastful, and went to war against God’s saint, even overpowering them.
- The saints ultimately prevail against the arrogant horn because God (“Ancient of Days”) “came” and passed “judgment” in their favor ([v.22](#)).

Dan. 7,23 “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. ²⁴ ‘As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. ²⁵ ‘He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. ²⁶ ‘But the court will sit *for judgment*, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. ²⁷ ‘Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.’ ²⁸“At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself.”

Comments:

- The fourth beast kingdom is “*different from all the other kingdoms*” ([v. 23](#)), according to the heavenly interpreter. I think this is important. One of the prior kingdoms, represented by the winged-leopard, was Greece. The kingdom that descended from one of the wings of this leopard began with Alexander the Great’s general, Seleucus I Nicator. His ancestors presided over Israel and the lands around Israel during the 4th to 2nd centuries B.C. From him, arose a descendant named Antiochus IV “Ephiphanes” (c. 215 BC to 164 BC). Antiochus persecuted the Jews (“*the saints*”), outlawed Jewish religious rites and traditions, and defiled the Jewish Temple. He was deposed during a Jewish revolt in 167 BC, resulting in an independent Jewish state (“Hasmonean dynasty”). These events are recorded in [1 Maccabees](#) and [2 Maccabees](#), which are in the Catholic Bible, and are available online. Some commentators argue that [Daniel 7](#), is all about these events. But the Seleucid kingdom was not different from the other kingdoms and the “saints” did not inherit “an everlasting kingdom” ([v. 27](#)) in that day. It seems more likely that these verses in [Daniel](#) refer to the final gentile kingdom, governed by the Antichrist, who initiates Great Tribulation that must be ended by God’s judgment and the Second Coming of Christ. The events in Israel during the Seleucids more likely represent prophetic foreshadowing of the end-times.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Dan. 8,1 In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously. ² I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal. ³ Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last. ⁴ I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no *other* beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified *himself*.

Comments:

- This entire chapter in **Daniel** was written in Hebrew, rather than the prior five chapters, which were written in Aramaic. It contains prophetic details focused on the nation of Israel.
- This vision appeared to Daniel about two years after his vision recorded in **Dan 7**. In his vision, Daniel finds himself standing over 200 miles east of Babylon, near a canal, in the Persian city, Susa. About a hundred years in Daniel's future, Susa would be the place where the events recorded in the book **Esther** would take place.
- These verses tell us Daniel's dream. Later verses in this chapter interpret the dream for us. In his dream, Daniel sees a ram with different sized horns, who was attacking everyone in all directions and prevailing.

Dan. 8,5 While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat *had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.* ⁶ He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. ⁷ I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. ⁸ Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

Comments:

- In Daniel's vision, once the ram establishes his power over everyone around him, a male goat from the west of him quickly moves to challenge him. This goat has a single, prominent horn between his eyes. The conspicuous horn represented Alexander the Great — more about this later, when the dream is interpreted. In the battle that ensued, the ram (Persia) was defeated (the battles of Marathon, c. 490 BC, and Salamis, c. 481 BC). Alexander went on to conquer Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Mesopotamia by 334 BC.
- Following the goat's victory, the conspicuous horn was immediately broken, but the goat quickly sprouts 4 horns "*toward the four winds of heaven*" (**v. 8** - pointing to all points of the compass, so to speak). Alexander did not live long after his conquests. He died about 323 BC, at the age of about 32, in Babylon, possibly of malaria, complicated by alcoholism. After Alexander's death, his four main generals fought over his empire. Ultimately, they divided it among themselves and are symbolized by the 4 horns.

Dan. 8,9 Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land. ¹⁰ It grew up to

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the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down. ¹¹ It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down. ¹² And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform *its will* and prosper. ¹³ Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, “How long will the vision *about* the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?” ¹⁴ He said to me, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored.”

Comments:

- A small horn joined the four horns in Daniel’s dream. Recall the four horns pointed in all four directions of the compass, but the small horn exerted great power to the south and east. The small horn symbolized Antiochus IV “Epiphanes”, who seized power from his brother by murdering him c. 175 BC. He then invaded Egypt (“to the south”), defeating Ptolemy VI. Antiochus IV later attacked Cyprus, to the “east”, in about 168 BC. Rome checked the territorial ambitions of Antiochus IV.
- The “Beautiful Land” (v.9) refers to Israel. Trouble in Israel pulled Antiochus back to subdue it. His interventions there were of “Biblical proportions”.
- These verses revealed the battles in the unseen, spiritual realm, that were raging while earthly kingdoms clashed. “Stars” symbolize angels and the “host of heaven” represent armies in heaven.
 - Claiming honor and power to himself that should only be reserved to God, the “small horn”, Antiochus IV, boasted and was arrogant. He claimed to be like God, worthy of worship. The phrase “Commander of the host” (v.11), is “sar hazaba”, in the original language; it also could be translated as “Prince of the army”.
 - The small horn, Antiochus IV, stopped the normal functions of the Jewish sanctuary, included its sacrificial offerings and worship services (vv. 11,12). This is discussed further, below.
 - Notice that the little horn is allowed to prevail (presumably, by God) for a time “on account of transgression” (v. 12 - “transgression” is from “peshah”, in the original language. This word also can mean “rebellion” - HALOT.)

Dan. 8,15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man. ¹⁶ And I heard the voice of a man between *the banks of Ulai*, and he called out and said, “Gabriel, give this *man an understanding of the vision.*” ¹⁷ So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, “Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end.”

Comments:

- Although Daniel instantly received full understanding of Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams from the Holy Spirit, he received the explanation of this dream from the archangel Gabriel. The mighty angel’s presence and appearance overwhelmed Daniel — a common experience of men confronted with these heavenly beings.
- Gabriel tells Daniel that the vision is about the future — even to the “time of the end” (v. 17, “leet-geetz”, in the original language - HALOT). As we later will see, these events foreshadow eschatological events.

Dan. 8,18 Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright. ¹⁹ He said, “Behold, I am

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going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for *it* pertains to the appointed time of the end.²⁰ “The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.²¹ “The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king.²² “The broken *horn* and the four *horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which* will arise from *his* nation, although not with his power.

²³ “In the latter period of their rule,
When the transgressors have run *their course*,
A king will arise,
Insolent and skilled in intrigue.

²⁴ “His power will be mighty, but not by his *own* power,
 And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree
 And prosper and perform *his will*;
 He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.

²⁵ “And through his shrewdness
 He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence;
 And he will magnify *himself* in his heart,
 And he will destroy many while *they are* at ease.
 He will even oppose the Prince of princes,
But he will be broken without human agency.

²⁶ “The vision of the evenings and mornings
 Which has been told is true;
But keep the vision secret,
For *it* pertains to many days in the future.”

²⁷ Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up *again* and carried on the king’s business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain *it*.

Comments:

- Gabriel interpreted Daniel’s vision for him. The ram was the Persian-Mede Empire and the bear in his prior dream (**Dan 7**). The disparity in horn size is represented by the lopsided posture of the bear, symbolizing Persia’s great power in the alliance. The shaggy goat represented Greece, which corresponded to the bronze belly and thighs of the dream statue (**Dan 2**) and the winged leopard in Daniel’s prior dream (**Dan 7**). The large horn, between the eyes of the goat, is the first king of the Greek empire, whom we now know to be have been Alexander the Great.
- Alexander the Great was born in Macedonia (Greece) in June 356 BC, in Pella. His father was King Phillip II of Maceodon and he was a member of the Argead dynasty. He succeeded his father to the throne at age 20, spending most of his kinship on military campaigns. He never was defeated in battle. Alexander invaded the Persian empire in 334 BC, overcoming it in a series of campaigns that lasted about 10 years. He launched military invasions of the regions of Turkey, and even India, but lacked support from his army to press his wars furthur. Alexander retired to Babylon, where he soon died in 323 BC. His empire was divided among his four major generals —Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy — often called the “Diodachi” (Gr: “*successors*”). None of these smaller kingdoms ever gained the power of the empire established by Alexander the Great. These four generals and their descendants engaged in frequent warfare and power struggles. Seleucus retained control of the region around Israel. He granted a large amount of autonomy to the Jews to govern themselves and practice their religion. (See **Figure 11**)

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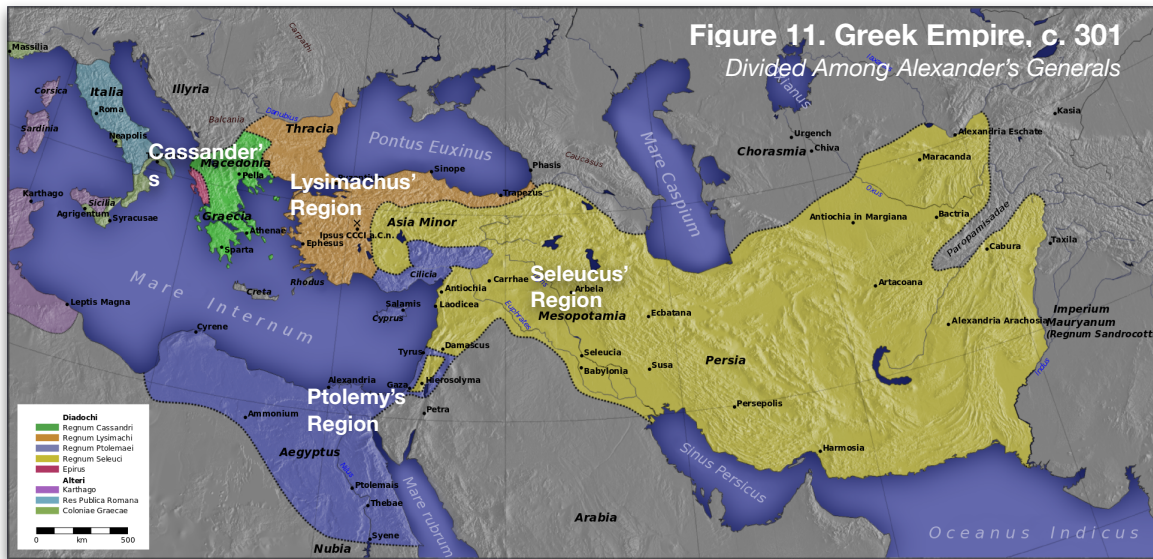


Figure 11. Greek Empire, c. 301
Divided Among Alexander's Generals

- The small horn (**Dan 8:9**), however, represents a Seleucid king named Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Born about 205 BC, he gained power over this region in about 175 BC, through a combination of clever plotting, assassination, political maneuvering, and usurpation.
 - He was extremely eccentric — so much so, that many people thought he was mad, calling him “Epimanes” (Gr: “The Mad One”). Antiochus IV Epiphanes (**Figure 12**) began a campaign of persecuting the Jews that ultimately led to the Maccabean Revolt, which lasted from 167 to 160 BC.
 - Antiochus compelled the Jews to dissolve their Mosaic Laws, prohibited circumcision, and

Figure 12: Antiochus IV Epiphanes



and according to some accounts, erected a statue of Zeus in the Temple, to whom he demanded the Jews sacrifice pigs. Many Jews and Christian theologians considered this act to foreshadow the “abomination that makes desolation” (**Dan 9:27**), later prophesied by Daniel and spoken of by Jesus as an end-times event (**Mark 13:14-20; Matt 24:15**).

- Religious Jews responded by organizing an armed rebellion, conducting mainly guerrilla warfare under the leadership of Judas Maccabee, and his family. An account of this rebellion can be found in the books of **1 Maccabees** and **2 Maccabees**, found in the Catholic Bible.
- When the Maccabees conquered Jerusalem in 164 BC, reclaimed the Jewish Temple and engaged it in a ritual cleansing, followed by celebratory sacrificial services that are commemorated by the Jewish holiday. Antiochus sent a large Seleucid army to quash the rebellion, but the army was recalled when Antiochus IV Epiphanes suddenly and unexpectedly died in 160 BC. The upstart military power centered in Rome guaranteed Jewish independence and religious freedoms. An autonomous Jewish kingdom resulted, called the Hasmonean Dynasty, that lasted until about 37 BC., although Rome invaded Israel in 63 BC, making them a Roman client state. In 37 BC, Herod the Great was given authority of Israel, establishing the Herodian dynasty and ending the Hasmonean one.
- Hanukkah, also called the “Festival of Lights”, occurs in late November to early December, lasting eight (8) days to commemorate the eight days that a one day supply of oil lasted to light the ceremonial Temple menorah in the restored, cleansed Temple after the Maccabean Revolt.
- All that Daniel saw was so distressing, that he could not function for days. Notice that this dream does not include the fourth beast seen in the prior dream. Rome, and her progeny kingdoms, do not appear to be foreshadowed prophetically in this dream.

CHAPTER NINE

Dan. 9,1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans — ² in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. ³ So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. ⁴ I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, ⁵ we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. ⁶ “Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land. ⁷ “Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day — to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You. ⁸ “Open shame belongs to us, O LORD, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. ⁹ “To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; ¹⁰ nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets. ¹¹ “Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. ¹² “Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. ¹³ “As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. ¹⁴ “Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.

Comments:

- We know the date of Daniel’s prayer (**vv. 1, 2**) and God’s answer to it here. The Persians and Medes conquered Babylon in 539 BC., about 66 years after Daniel was exiled from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. It seems likely that this momentous event motivated Daniel to search the Scriptures to discover what God would do next for His people, Israel.
- In these verses, Daniel refers to the prophecy spoken by Jeremiah to Israel and written in c.605 BC, or before. Jeremiah’s prophecy was given to Israel in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. By this time, Jeremiah had been warning Judah about the consequences of her sins for about 23 years (**v. 11**).

“This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,” declares the LORD, “for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.” (Jeremiah 25:11, 12. NASB)

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- Since 66 of the 70 predicted years of exile had elapsed, Daniel knew it was time for confession, repentance, prayer, fasting, and intercession. Daniel understood that the sins of believers were transgressions against God Himself ([v. 7](#)) because they knew God, were taught by Him, and bore His name.

Dan. 9,15 “And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day — we have sinned, we have been wicked. **16** “O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. **17** “So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. **18** “O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. **19** “O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

Comments:

- Daniel was well aware of Israel’s sinful history; he included himself as a sinner. Daniel acknowledged that Israel should have been grateful to God for His kindness to them in the past ([v. 15](#)). He knew God was gracious and faithful ([v. 18](#)), so he anticipated that Israel’s time of discipline would end ([v. 16](#), [Deut 30](#)). Both he and Jeremiah, like all religious Jews, were aware of God’s explicit warnings to them, through Moses, about His discipline for their unfaithfulness ([v. 13](#); [Deut 28:48-57, 64-68](#)). In fact, God disciplines those whom He loves! ([Prov 3:12](#); [Heb 12:6](#)) — but His discipline can be harsh because of the stubborn nature of sin ([Heb 10:31](#)).
- Prayer, fasting, and intercession are the trademarks and tools of a righteous, faithful saint. Daniel knew God. He understood that he was God’s servant ([v. 17](#)). His prayer was as much in service to his God as it was intercession for Israel. Daniel was asking God fulfill keep His word for God’s own sake ([v. 19](#)). This is a critical point. We can be confident in the power of our prayers when they are rooted in God’s Word. In essence, our prayer merely asks God to do what He already said He would do. No power in heaven or on earth can stand against this prayer!
- Recall that people in Daniel’s day understood the territorial nature of people’s gods (see Heiser, Michael, *Unseen Realm*). Israel was God’s people ([v. 16, 19](#)) — other peoples had their own gods. Jerusalem was God’s city ([vv. 16, 18](#)). Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, was God’s mountain ([v. 16](#)). Daniel also knew that God reigned over all.

Dan. 9,20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, **21** while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. **22** He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. **23** “At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

Comments:

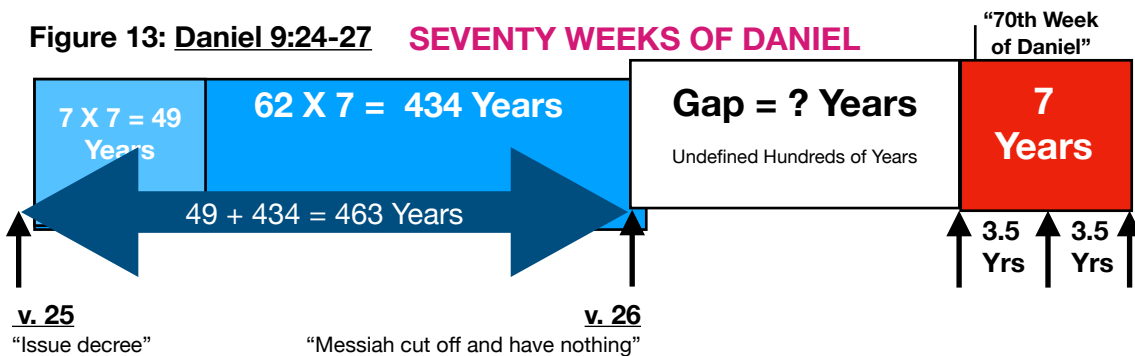
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- Gabriel is believed by most theologians to be an archangel, sent to Daniel by God to give him "insight and understanding" (v. 22). Notice that although the Jewish Temple had been destroyed 66 years earlier, Daniel continued to observe prayer during the times of the Temple offerings, even if he was experiencing "extreme weariness" (v. 21). In this case, Gabriel appeared to Daniel "about the time of the evening offering" (v. 21, around 3 PM)

Dan. 9,24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. ²⁵ "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. ²⁶ "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. ²⁷ "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

Comments:

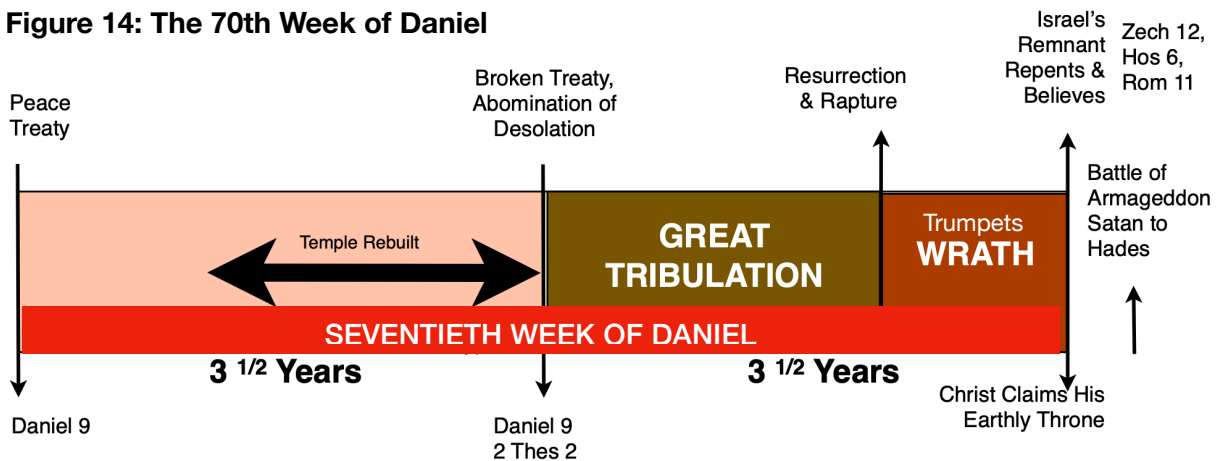
- It is helpful to break these verses down to understand what they are saying.
 - "Seventy weeks" (v. 24), is from "shivim shavuim", literally "seventy sevens" (BDB), but the word "shavua" was used by Jews to mean a week, or a period of 7 days. If these were literal weeks, "seventy weeks" would mean 490 days, but this can't be true. During this time, sin ends and is atoned for, righteousness reigns, prophecy is fulfilled, and Messiah resides in the Temple holy place — all future events requiring years, not the specified 490 days. (v. 24).
 - In ancient Hebrew, "one week" was an idiom that meant "seven years". This idiom is used in **Genesis 29:27**, saying that Jacob worked for Laban for a "week" (shavua), when in fact, he had worked for seven years. The "year-for-a day" formula is seen in **Ezekiel 4:5-6**, where each day represents a year.
 - Thus, from the context on **Daniel 9**, "Seventy weeks" is (70 X 7) years, or 490 years. These verses do not demand 490 consecutive years. Notice these verses break the "70 weeks" into three time segments. **Segment one:** 7 X 7 "weeks", or 49 years. **Segment two:** 62 X 7 "weeks", or 434 years, and **Segment three:** 1 X 1 "week", or 7 years.
 - **Segment one:** Refers to the 49 years required to rebuild the Temple and Jerusalem, destroyed by the Babylonians. The "decree" (v. 25), by Persia, allowed this to happen. **Segment two:** Refers to the additional time required for Messiah to come, but be "cut off and have nothing." (v. 26)
 - **Segment three:** Refers to the future "70th Week of Daniel" (v. 27, discussed later)
 - There is a gap of many years between **Segment two** and **Segment three**, when there will be "wars" and "desolation". (v. 25, See **Matt 24:4-8**, where Jesus addresses this.)
 - As a result, **Daniel 9:24-27**, can be interpreted graphically like **Figure 13**.



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- Segment three, the “70th Week of Daniel”, begins when he makes a treaty (“*firm covenant*”, v. 27) among “*many*” parties/peoples that is broken mid-way (*i.e.* after 3.5 years), when the Temple sacrifices & offerings are stopped. This implies that the Temple has been rebuilt and becomes active again, which appears to be a condition of the treaty. “*He*” (v. 27) is interpreted to be Antichrist, based on other Scripture (covered later). The revelation of Antichrist, the broken treaty, the desolation of the Temple (the “*abomination of desolation*”, Dan 11:31; 12:11; Mat 24:15, Mk 13:14-19; 2 Thes 2:3, 4; Rev 14: 14,15), the ensuing great tribulation, and the divine Trumpet judgments, leads to desolation and “*complete destruction*” (v. 27). This is the time of Christ’s second coming (to be discussed later). These events culminate during the last 3.5 years of Daniel’s vision. The last, or “70th Week of Daniel“, can be expressed graphically in Figure 14, which adds detail from other Bible verses.

Figure 14: The 70th Week of Daniel

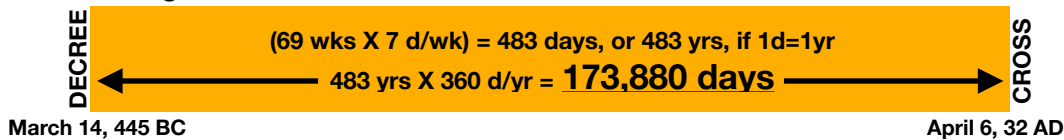


- Since Daniel 9:24-27, outlines the major end-times events, beginning with documented historical dates now known to us, one would think it would be simple to predict future prophetic events with this Biblical “roadmap” in hand. It’s not! Here’s why.
 - There is a time gap of unknown duration between the end of 69th Week, when Messiah is “*cut off*” (v. 26, *i.e.* - Christ is crucified) and the beginning of the 70th Week, when Antichrist makes the treaty. We are living in that gap now (June 2021). This is discussed later.
 - Assigning firm dates to well-documented ancient historical events can be difficult because . . .
 - * Ancient calendars were based on the moon (lunar calendar), rather than the sun, like today’s solar calendar. Lunar years only had 360 days in them, whereas our modern, solar calendar year has about 365.25 days in it. Ancient peoples had to add multiple “leap days”, and even “leap months”, to re-align their calendars the seasons of the year. These times adjustments were not always systematic.
 - * Major historical events in the Bible, and in other ancient documents, were often dated by when they occurred in a king’s reign (*i.e.* “in the 4th year of Jehoiakim”, *etc.*). Sometimes ancient chroniclers counted the first partial year of a king’s reign as his first year, whereas other chroniclers only credited the first year of king’s reign to his first full year on the throne. For some kingdoms, each new year began in the fall (Tishri), whereas in other kingdoms, each new year began in the spring (Nisan).
 - * There were four (4) “*decrees*” (v. 25) issued during the Persian period of Israel’s Babylonian exile. Commentators differ on which decree should be used to interpret Daniel 9.
 3. The decree by Cyrus to rebuild the Temple (2 Chron 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:3-5)
 4. The decree by Darius the Mede, confirming the decree by Cyrus (Ezra 5:3-17; 6:1-12)

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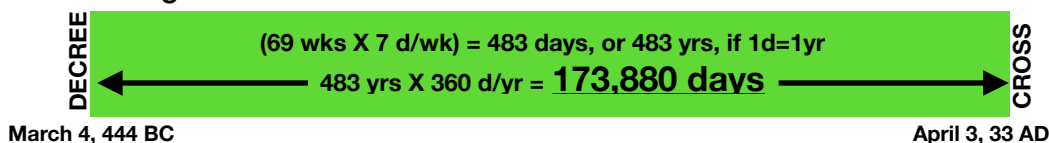
5. The first decree by Artaxerxes, to Ezra, enhancing the Temple and encouraging Jews to return to Judah (**Ezra 7:11-26**)
 6. The second decree by Artaxerxes, now to Nehemiah, commanding that Jerusalem be rebuilt, including its walls and defenses (**Neh 2:1-8**). Only this decree explicitly commands rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, together with its defenses.
- Sir Isaac Newton spent many years trying to decipher **Daniel 9:24-27**. Newton chose the first decree of Artaxerxes, issue to Ezra, in about 457 BC, as the starting point for his **Daniel 9** calculations. He added 70 full years to this date, resulting the 34 AD as the year of Christ’s crucifixion. There are many problems with this approach; even Newton was not completely happy with it.
 - One of the first credible dating solutions to the **Daniel 9** puzzle was published by Sir Robert Anderson, in 1894, in his book *The Coming Prince* (available from Amazon and online for free). Anderson was the Assistant Commissioner of the London Police from 1888 to 1901. Anderson used **March 14, 445 BC**, as the date for the second decree of Artaxerxes, to Nehemiah, as his starting point. He calculation method now is generally accepted, and is as follows.
 - 69 (“weeks”) X 7 days/week = 483 days, or 483 years, using the day-for-a-year model
 - He assumed 360 days in one (1) prophetic year - a lunar calendar year, not a solar calendar year
 - 483 years X 360 days/year = 173,880 days from the decree until when Christ is “cut off and have nothing” (**v. 26**).
 - Calculating from **March 14, 445 BC**, Anderson arrived at **Nisan 10, 32 AD**, as the date of Christ’s rejection in Jerusalem. When reckoning his calculations from the lunar calendar back to the solar calendar, Anderson had to add back leap year days to arrive at **April 6, 32 AD**, as the date of Christ’s crucifixion. (There is only 1 day from 1 BC to 1 AD).
 - Problems with Anderson’s solution include questions about the exact date of the decree, the days he had to add to his calculations, and the fact that April 6, 32 AD is a Tuesday, an unlikely day for Christ’s crucifixion. Still, his methods are considered to be a breakthrough for this puzzle.
 - See **Figure 15**, below, showing Anderson’s model of **Daniel 9:24-27**.

Figure 15: Anderson’s Calculations



- Anderson’s model was adopted but updated by Professor Harold W. Hoehner (Dallas Theological Seminary) in his 1971 book, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*. Based on newer evidence, he assumes the decree to Nehemiah by Artaxerxes was issue on **Nisan 1, 444 BC**, which was about **March 4th or 5th, 444 BC**, depending on when the new moon actually was seen. He adds back in the calculated 173,880 days to arrive at **April 3, 33 AD**, which he states is the Friday Jesus went to the dross. **Figure 16**, below, shows Hoehner’s model of **Daniel 9:24-27**.

Figure 16: Hoehner’s Calculations

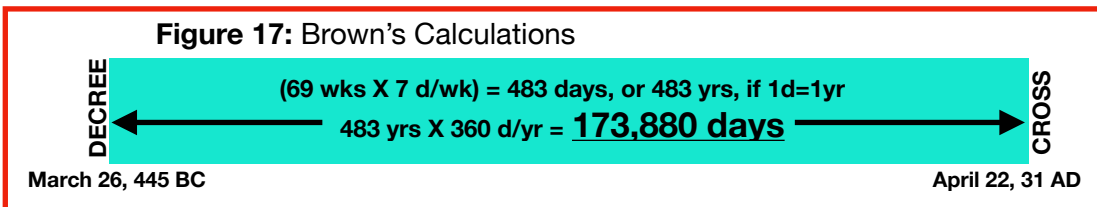


- Steve Brown¹ used the second decree of Artaxerxes to be **Monday, March 26, 446 BC**, as his starting point, after extensive research into the astronomical, archeological, sabbatical year, and calendar methods used through out the millennia. His rigorous methods shows that 173,880 days later, one

¹ Steve Brown, *The Seal*: (Unpublished draft copy: Chandler, Arizona). May 2021.

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arrives at Sunday, April 22, 31 AD. The year 31 AD was excluded as a solution to Daniel’s puzzle by prior investigators because it lands on the wrong day of the week. But Steve’s method takes into account the calendar that Jews used, prior to 359 AD. Earlier investigators failed to do this. See **Figure 17**. But more than this, his startling thesis proposes that each of the four different Persian decrees serves a prophetic purpose; each one can be used to predict the date of a different critical advent of Christ, such as His birth, His bar mitzvah, His baptism, and His triumphal entry. **Figure 18** shows Cyrus’ Decree. This book soon will be print and is highly recommended for students of the Bible. I believe these calculations give us the correct dates.. They prove the incredible accuracy and reliability of divinely inspired Scripture!



- Following the sixty-ninth week and the rejection of Christ by the Jews, comes an unspecified period of time during which “wars will continue, and desolations have been decreed.”
- The Jews were to continue to suffer during this unspecified period of time until Christ would establish His Church (**Matthew 16:18**) and then return to earth again to claim His Kingdom for God. This suffering would resume when “the people of the ruler who will come” destroys Jerusalem and the Temple. This took place in 70 A.D., when the Roman general, Titus, burned the city and destroyed



Figure 18 The first decree by Cyrus, found in a cuneiform cylinder.

the Temple in response to a Jewish rebellion against the Roman Empire. Titus ended the Jewish ceremonial sacrifices and scattered the Jews all over the world (“Diaspora”) so that they would be forced to live as exiles until the re-founding of the nation of Israel in 1948. Although this gap of 1,878 years between the Diaspora and the founding of the modern nation of Israel is not detailed in Daniel, it is predicted by the other prophet of the Babylonian exile, Ezekiel.

- Like Daniel, Ezekiel was carried off into captivity by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar during the Babylonian exile of Israel. He prophesied for about twenty years while living in exile. The Lord appeared to Ezekiel in a vision to give him this prophecy.

Ezekiel 4:3-6

3. . . This shall be a sign to the house of Israel. Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year. (KJV)

- In **Ezekiel 4**, God gave Ezekiel the total number of years of punishment that He had decreed for Israel to complete her iniquity. According to this prophesy, 390 years were appointed for Israel while 40 years were appointed for Judah bringing a total of 430 years of punishment. This means that after the 70 year Babylonian exile, Israel still had 360 years of discipline prophesied for them by the Ezekiel. Following the 70 years of Babylonian captivity, the great majority of Jews were perfectly content to remain in the gentile Persian Empire. Furthermore, there is no historical record that the Jews ever repented of the sins that caused the exile and judgment by God in the first place. In fact, the majority of Jews simply settled down as colonists in the many countries of the world to which they were

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relocated. A general resettlement of the Jews back to their homeland did not begin to occur until the Nazi holocaust of the mid-twentieth century.

- In the book of Leviticus, God clearly warns the Jews that their failure to repent of their sins would cause their discipline to be increased by seven-fold.

Leviticus 26:18

18. *If also after these things, you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. (NAS)*

- It should be noted that God repeated this warning to Israel four times! (Also see Leviticus 26:21, 23-24, 27-28) Since Israel did not repent of her sins, the penalty for her unrighteousness would be increased from Ezekiel's remaining 360 years to 7 times 360 years, or 2,520 Biblical years. Since each Jewish year was 360 days, this would be equivalent to 2,520 years times 360, or 907,200 days of additional penalty for Israel. Flavius Josephus recorded the end of the Babylonian captivity to have occurred in the spring of 536 B.C. Dividing the 907,200 days by the 365.25 days in our calendar year, we find that 2,483.8 calendar years would elapse from the spring of 536 B.C. until the end of unrepentant Israel's discipline by the Lord. It is interesting to note that the nation of Israel was re-established after the Nazi holocaust in the spring of 1948 (May 14, 1948); 2483.8 years after the recorded end of the Babylonian captivity!
- Although the nation of Israel was re-established in 1948, Jerusalem itself did not come under Jewish control until 1967. Prior to the famous Six Day War of 1967, the city of Jerusalem was divided by barbed wire cutting off East Jerusalem and the Temple Wall from Jewish access. Within hours of the onset of the Six Day War, Israeli troops enter East Jerusalem to seize and control the Temple Mount for the first time in 1,897 years. God began His divine movement towards this incredible event 50 years previously when General Edmund Allenby captured the holy city from the Axis powers on December 9, 1917, which was the first day of Chanuka, or the 24th of Chisleu. Fifty years later, during the Year of Jubilee, which was to occur every fifty years, Jerusalem reverted back to Jewish control. This ended over 2,500 years of gentile domination over Jerusalem.



Figure19: Roman sculpture showing the looting of the Jewish Temple after its destruction in 70 A.D. by Titus.

Luke 21:24

24 *and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (NAS)*

- The end of the “times of the gentiles” has immense prophetic significance since it means that generation will see the Seventieth Year of Daniel and the Second Coming of Christ, as taught by Christ (Luke 21:31-32).

Luke 21:31-32

31 *“Even so you, too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place. (NAS)*

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- During the final Seven Years, a ruler will arise out of the general geographic area and peoples of the Roman Empire. This ruler will establish a covenant with Israel and many surrounding nations, which will begin the final Seven Years of history. This covenant, treaty, or agreement, will allow Israel to recommence her ceremonial sacrificial system and rebuild her Temple. In the middle of the last seven years of history, the Antichrist will break his covenant with the Jews and will put an end to the re-established sacrifices and offerings. He will then sit in the Temple, claiming he is God, the “abomination of desolation” (**2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4**). Perhaps an animated idol will represent him when he is not present in the Temple (**Revelation 13:15**). The appearance of this abomination is a sign of the approaching Great Tribulation, as prophesied by Jesus. The Great Tribulation is ended when Christ returns to rapture His church.

Matthew 24:15, 16:21, 22:27

15. “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short. For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. (NAS)

References And Suggested Reading

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CHAPTER TEN

Dan. 10,1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the message was true and one of great conflict, but he understood the message and had an understanding of the vision. **2** In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. **3** I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed. **4** On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, **5** I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, whose waist was girded with a belt of pure gold of Uphaz. **6** His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult. **7** Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves. **8** So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength. **9** But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

Comments:

- Daniel tells the date and place of his last vision. The third year of Cyrus was Nisan 24, c. 536 or c. 535 BC — the Spring. Judah’s captivity, initiated by the Babylonians, had ended under the Persians. Daniel had not returned to Jerusalem with them, probably because of his age. He was standing on the bank of the Tigris River, about a thousand miles from Judah, when the holy angel appeared to him.
- Daniel was in mourning, possibly because Jerusalem was reported to be in a sorry state and he couldn’t return home with his countrymen. He wanted to know what would happen to his people in the future. Would God fully forgive and restore them, perhaps? His prayer and fasting continued for 21 days - three weeks, 3 X 7 days. Whatever the reason for his distress, God sent the angel to him to answer Daniel’s questions. The angel’s appearance was extraordinary.
- Uphaz is probably the same as Ophir, as the Hebrew spelling is almost identical. Apparently, it was a region rich in gold, but its exact location now is unknown. Beryl is a translucent mineral of varying pastel colors. The appearance of this angel was so overwhelming to Daniel that he appears to have fainted. This is a common response by mortal men who encounter holy beings (e.g. Isaiah’s experience, **Is 6**; the Apostle John, **Rev 1:17**, etc.). Although the people standing around Daniel did not see this angel, his mere presence was enough to make them flee. They experienced a “*great dread*” (“*charmdah gadolah*”, or “*a great trembling*” - HALOT). Perhaps the proximity of such pure holiness was enough to have these effects on sinful men? Or perhaps they saw the brilliance of the angel, without seeing the angel?
- Although some commentators speculate the angel was the pre-incarnate Christ, this is unlikely because God in Christ would not be hindered by the demonic prince of Persia for for 21 days (**v. 13**). Based on information from other verses in **Daniel**, most commentators believe the angel is Gabriel (see **Dan 8:16; 9:21**). If this is so, he is the same angel who informed Zacheus that his wife, Elizabeth, was pregnant with John the Baptist, and who informed Mary that she was pregnant with Jesus (**Luke 1:19, 26**). For the sake of simplicity, we will call him “Gabriel”.

Dan. 10,10 Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. **11** He said to me, “O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. **12** Then he said to me, “Do not be

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afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding *this* and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. ¹³ “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ “Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet *future*.”

Comments:

- Daniel needed strength from the angel to stand in his presence and receive the answer to his prayers. The angel gave him both the answer to his prayers and the ability to receive it. Thus does God give us what we need, when we need it.
- Notice that Daniel’s prayers were heard and answered by God on the first day of his 21-day fasting and prayer vigil (**v. 12**), but Daniel did not become aware of this response until 3 weeks later (**v. 13**). The angel gave Daniel a startling explanation for the delay; he was being opposed (“withstanding me”, **v. 13** - “*omed neged*”, or “to stand in front of” - HALOT) by the “prince of the kingdom of Persia” — a “fallen angel” with authority over Persia. This “prince of Persia” was opposing the angel by trying to obstruct God’s answer to Daniel. Indeed, this “prince of Persia” appears to have been reinforced in his rebellion by other “kings of Persia” (**v. 13**). That such a high-ranking demon would oppose Gabriel in this way perhaps suggests that the message to be delivered to Daniel was important to God plan of salvation for His people.
- Even Gabriel could not overcome his opponent until he received reinforcements from the archangel Michael (see **Dan 12:1; Jude 9; Rev 12:7**). This suggests the power of the “prince of Persia” was great. Later, we learn that Michael has territorial authority over Daniel’s people, Israel (**v. 21**, and **Jude 9**).
- From these verses, and ones that follow, we learn several things about the unseen spiritual world.
 - There are spirit beings in rebellion to the word of God. It would not be unreasonable to call these rebellious or evil spirits “demons”, although credible scholarship assigns a different identity to demons. (Michael Heiser, *Unseen Realm*).
 - These rebellious spirits appear to have differing ranks, as the ones in these verses were called “princes” and “kings”.
 - Some demons appear to have geographic identities or regions of authority. From other Scripture, we know that different demons have different powers and influences on people (e.g. **Judg 9:23; 1 Sam 16:14, 23; 1; 18:10; 19:9; Matt 17:18; Mark 7:26, 29; 9:25; Luke 8:29; Acts 19:15, etc.**)
 - Since we know Satan reigns over the demonic realm, it is not unreasonable to conclude that “Kingdom of Satan” mirrors the Kingdom of God. Both kingdoms appear to be composed of angels of various ranks, such as archangels and angels, some of whom also have geographic authority.
 - Man’s worldly kingdoms appear to mirror the unseen spiritual kingdoms. It would not be unreasonable to assume that there are opposing territorial angels and demons with authority over the United States, for example.
 - There appears to be an interplay between the unseen spiritual realm and the visible material world, with actions in one realm influencing outcomes in the other one. In fact, these two realms really are one continuous reality that is part of God’s creation. Our inability to “see” the spiritual realm does not render it separate from our visible world.
 - For whatever purposes, God has chosen to allow these rebellious spirits to prosper in their wickedness to a limited extent, for a limited time. This may make it seem like God’s purposes are being delayed, frustrated, or hindered. These “delays” in righteousness are opportunities to exercise faith in God.
 - Ultimately, God allows His forces to be reinforced to whatever extent is required to insure His commands are obeyed. Without any angelic soldiers at all, God could sweep aside all opposition in an instant.

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- Daniel's experience suggests that God hears our prayers immediately, but that we may not experience His divine response until later because of rebellion in the spiritual realm. It is not unreasonable to conclude that Daniel's persistent prayers may have helped his angel receive the reinforcement needed to complete his mission. This illustrates the importance for saints to realize that their prayers are part of a cosmic spiritual battle and they need to persevere in prayer!

Dan. 10,15 When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. ¹⁶ And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, "O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷ "For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me."

Comments:

- Daniel could hear and understand everything the angel was telling him, but he literally was speechless and breathless. He was still weak. It took several touches from the angel to restore Daniel's full capacities.
- Notice the great respect Daniel gives to the angel. The angel had a human form, but he definitely had a supernatural, awesome appearance. Also, the angel was sent to serve God and Daniel, but Daniel calls himself the angel's servant. Angels are spirits who are given authority over men for a time to minister to them according to men's needs (**Hebrews 1:14**). Angelic authority is exercised according to divine principals, which require a "servant-leader" model. In the Kingdom of God, the more powerful, exalted ones must serve the less powerful, weaker ones. This is diametrically opposed to Satanic principals that require the weaker to serve and be exploited by the more powerful.

Dan. 10,18 Then *this* one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. ¹⁹ He said, "O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!" Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, "May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." ²⁰ Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. ²¹ "However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince.

Comments:

- The angel reaffirms Daniel's high standing in the Kingdom of God. Although angels now have authority over men as caretakers, this changed when Christ was raised to glory. Since the saints now reign with Christ, we receive His more exalted status over the angels (**Ps 8:5; Heb 2:7-9**). As reigning saints, we serve the angels by proving God's wisdom through faithful obedience (**Eph 3:6-10**). To be sure, these are things into which angels long to see (**1 Pet 1:12**). So, in God's model of governance, everyone serves everyone else — as is fitting for exercise of *agape* love!
- Although Daniel's angel was released from battle for a time, he had to return to it because of demonic reinforcements. One of these demons is called "*the prince of Greece*" (**v. 20**). This next demonic prince reflected the changing landscape of worldly human empires. Gabriel said the prince of Greece "*is about to come*" (**v. 20**), but Alexander the Great and the Greek empire did not arise until over 100 years later. Perhaps these spiritual battles begin long before they are evidenced in this physical world? Or, perhaps to an eternal being, like Gabriel, time is less imposing than it is for mere mortals.
- Gabriel and Michael were all that God required to oppose the kings of Persia and the prince of Greece - perhaps with the assistance of Daniel's prayers, and ours!

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Dan. 11,1 “In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him. **2** “And now I will tell you the truth. Behold, three more kings are going to arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all *of them*; as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, he will arouse the whole *empire* against the realm of Greece. **3** “And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. **4** “But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his *own* descendants, nor according to his authority which he wielded, for his sovereignty will be uprooted and *given* to others besides them.

Dan. 11,5 “Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with *one* of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain *will be* a great dominion *indeed*. **6** “After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in *those* times. **7** “But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against *their* army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display *great* strength. **8** “Also their gods with their metal images *and* their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will ²refrain from *attacking* the king of the North for *some* years. **9** “Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his *own* land.

Dan. 11,10 “His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his *very* fortress. **11** “The king of the South will be enraged and go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the latter will raise a great multitude, but *that* multitude will be given into the hand of the *former*. **12** “When the multitude is carried away, his heart will be lifted up, and he will cause tens of thousands to fall; yet he will not prevail. **13** “For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former, and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment.

Dan. 11,14 “Now in those times many will rise up against the king of the South; the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they will fall down. **15** “Then the king of the North will come, cast up a siege ramp and capture a well-fortified city; and the forces of the South will not stand *their ground*, not even their choicest troops, for there will be no strength to make a stand. **16** “But he who comes against him will do as he pleases, and no one will *be able to* withstand him; he will also stay *for a time* in the Beautiful Land, with destruction in his hand. **17** “He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to

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ruin it. But she will not take a stand *for him* or be on his side. ¹⁸ “Then he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him; moreover, he will repay him for his scorn. ¹⁹ “So he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more.

Dan. 11,20 “Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of *his* kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle. ²¹ “In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue. ²² “The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant. ²³ “After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small *force of people*. ²⁴ “In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest *parts* of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but *only* for a time. ²⁵ “He will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South with a large army; so the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war; but he will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him. ²⁶ “Those who eat his choice food will ¹destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain. ²⁷ “As for both kings, their hearts will be *intent* on evil, and they will speak lies *to each other* at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still *to come* at the appointed time. ²⁸ “Then he will return to his land with much plunder; but his heart will be *set* against the holy covenant, and he will take action and *then* return to his *own* land.

Dan. 11,29 “At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but ¹this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. ³⁰ “For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action; so he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹ “Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation. ³² “By smooth *words* he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action. ³³ “Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for *many* days. ³⁴ “Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy. ³⁵ “Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because *it is* still *to come* at the appointed time.

Dan. 11,36 “Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak ¹monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done. ³⁷ “He

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will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any *other* god; for he will magnify himself above *them* all. ³⁸ “But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor *him* with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures. ³⁹ “He will take action against the strongest of fortresses with *the help of* a foreign god; he will give great honor to those who acknowledge *him* and will cause them to rule over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.

Dan. 11,40 “At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow *them* and pass through. ⁴¹ “He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many *countries* will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon. ⁴² “Then he will stretch out his hand against *other* countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. ⁴³ “But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians *will follow* at his heels. ⁴⁴ “But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵ “He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

Comments:

- See separate handout for verse-by-verse commentary on [Daniel 11](#) (next).

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, <i>I</i> took my stand to support and protect <i>him</i>.</p>	<p><i>I</i>: Gabriel, an angel. <i>him</i>: Michael, an angel</p>	<p>Daniel 11:1, picks up from the end of Daniel 10, where Israel’s “prince”, Michael, is revealed as an angelic protector of Israel. Darius is Darius the Great (Darius I), a Mede who co-ruled as king over the Persian Empire with Cyrus, the Persian.</p>
<p>2 Now then, <i>I</i> tell you the truth: <i>Three more kings</i> will appear in Persia, and then a <i>fourth</i>, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.</p>	<p><i>I</i>: Gabriel, an angel. <i>Three more kings</i>: Cambyses, Darius II, Xerxes I <i>fourth</i>: Darius III (Artashata)</p>	<p>Xerxes I succeeded his father, Darius I, in about 485 BC. Cambyses followed his father, Cyrus, to the Persian throne. Darius II, often surnamed “Nothus” (Greek for “bastard”) was a distant cousin to the throne, who usurped power and ruled the Persian Empire for a time. Darius III, was the Persian King that was defeated by Alexander the Great.</p>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Darius I</p> </div>		<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Alexander the Great</p> </div>
<p>3 Then <i>a mighty king</i> will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases.</p>	<p><i>a mighty king</i>: Alexander the Great</p>	
<p>4 After <i>he</i> has appeared, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, not will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others.</p>	<p><i>he</i>: Alexander the Great</p>	<p>Alexander the Great died in Babylon in 323 BC. at age 32 years. His empire was divided among his four principal generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus (“parceled out toward the four winds”)</p>

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>5 "The <i>king of the South</i> will become strong, but <i>one of his commanders</i> will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power.</p>	<p><i>king of the South (Egypt): Ptolemy I Soter</i> (323-285), a general who served under Alexander the Great. Soter means "Savior" in Greek.</p> <p><i>one of his commanders: Seleucus I Nicator</i> (312-281). Nicator means "Victorious One" in Greek.</p>	<p>Ptolemy I Soter ruled Egypt after Alexander the Great died in 323 BC. Seleucus I Nicator, also a general under Alexander, was a commander in Ptolemy I's army, and ruled over Babylon. When Seleucus I was attacked by Antigonus, another general, in 316, Seleucus I sought help from Ptolemy I, and prevailed. As a result, Seleucus I Nicator expanded his territorial rule to Media and Syria, as well as Babylon, and became stronger than Ptolemy I Soter.</p> <p>Antiochus I Soter (281-262), not mentioned in Daniel, came to power when his father, Seleucus I Nicator was murdered.</p>
<div data-bbox="258 810 534 1178" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="293 1178 498 1205">Seleucus I Nicator</p>	<div data-bbox="607 837 850 1152" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="643 1178 815 1205">Ptolemy I Soter</p>	<div data-bbox="945 810 1308 1184" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1068 1178 1185 1205">Antigonus</p>
<p>6 After some years, they will become allies. The <i>daughter of the king of the South</i> will go to the <i>king of the North</i> to make an alliance, but she will not retain her power, and he and his power will not last. In those days she will be handed over, together with her royal escort and her father and the one who supported her.</p>	<p><i>daughter of the king: Bernice</i>, daughter of Antiochus II Theos.</p> <p><i>king of the South: Ptolemy II Philadelphus</i> (285-246), son of Ptolemy I Soter. Philadelphus means "brotherly love" in Greek.</p> <p><i>king to the North (Syria): Antiochus II Theos</i> (262-246), grandson of Seleucus I Nicator.</p>	<p>Ptolemy I Soter died in 285 BC. Ptolemy II Philadelphus, his son, became king.</p> <p>Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Antiochus II Theos were enemies, but the marriage of Berenice, Ptolemy II's daughter, Berenice, to Antiochus II, formed a treaty and brought peace for a while.</p> <p>To marry Berenice, Antiochus II Theos divorced his first wife, Leodice, who was also probably his cousin. Leodice had Berenice killed and poisoned Antiochus II Theos, making her son, Seleucus II Callinicus, the king.</p>

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
 <p>Antiochus II Theos</p>	 <p>Berenice, shown with Ptolemy I</p>	 <p>Ptolemy II Philadelphus</p>
<p>7 <i>"One from her family line</i> will arise to take her place. He will attack the forces of the <i>king of the North</i> and enter his fortress; he will fight against them and be victorious.</p>	<p><i>One from her family line:</i> Ptolemy III Euergetes</p> <p><i>the king of the North:</i> Seleucus II Callinicus</p>	<p>Bernice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, succeeded her brother to the throne of Egypt, avenged the death of his sister, defeating Seleucus II Callinicus in battle, and put Laodice to death.</p>
 <p>Ptolemy III Euergetes</p>		 <p>Seleucus II Calinicus</p>
<p>8 <i>He</i> will also seize their gods, their metal images and their valuable articles of silver and gold and carry them off to Egypt. For some years he will leave the king of the North alone.</p>	<p><i>He:</i> Ptolemy III Euergetes</p>	<p>Ptolemy III Euergetes returned to Egypt, much enriched. There was a period of peace between the Egyptian (Southern) and Syrian (Northern) empires.</p>

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>9 Then the <i>king of the North</i> will invade the realm of the <i>king of the South</i> but will retreat to his own country.</p>	<p><i>king of the North:</i> Seleucus II Calinicus</p> <p><i>king of the South:</i> Ptolemy III Euergetes</p>	<p>After his defeat by Ptolemy III Euergetes, Seleucus II Callinicus tried to invade Egypt, but was unsuccessful.</p>
<div data-bbox="203 577 560 934" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="284 934 495 966">Seleucus III Soter</p>		<div data-bbox="966 577 1307 1060" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="998 1060 1274 1092">Antiochus III, the Great</p>
<p>10 <i>His sons</i> will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will sweep on like an irresistible flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress.</p>	<p><i>His:</i> Seleucus II Calinicus</p> <p><i>sons:</i> Seleucus III Soter and Antiochus III the Great</p>	<p>After the defeat of their father by Ptolemy III Euergetes, the sons of Seleucus II Calinicus, Seleucus III Soter and Antiochus III, the Great, sought to restore Syria's power by invading Asia Minor and Egypt. When Seleucus II Calinicus fell from his horse and died, his son, Seleucus III Soter, succeeded him. He too was eventually killed by conspirators while on a military campaign. His brother, Antiochus III the Great, succeeded his brother to the throne.</p>
<p>11 "Then the <i>king of the South</i> will march out in a rage and fight against the <i>king of the North</i>, who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated.</p>	<p><i>king of the South:</i> Ptolemy IV Philopater, son of Ptolemy III Euergetes</p> <p><i>king of the North:</i> Antiochus III, the Great</p>	<p>Antiochus III, the Great, drove Ptolemy IV Philopater's Egyptian army to the southern border of Israel but was stopped there by the Egyptian army of Ptolemy IV.</p>

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
 <p>Philip V, of Macedon</p>	 <p>Ptolemy V Epiphanes</p>	 <p>Ptolemy IV Philopater</p>
<p>12 When <i>the army</i> is carried off, the <i>king of the South</i> will be filled with pride and will slaughter many thousands, yet he will not remain triumphant.</p>	<p><i>the army</i>: Syrian army of Antiochus III</p> <p><i>king of the South</i>: Ptolemy IV Philopater</p>	<p>Ptolemy IV's army killed thousands in the army of Antiochus III, halting the Syrian advance into Egypt for a while.</p>
<p>13 For the <i>king of the North</i> will muster another army, larger than the first; and after several years, he will advance with a huge army fully equipped.</p>	<p><i>king of the North</i>: Antiochus III, the Great</p>	<p>Antiochus III raised another army and began to recruit allies and materiel.</p>
<p>14 "In those times many will rise against the <i>king of the South</i>. The <i>violent men among your own people</i> will rebel in fulfillment of the vision, but without success.</p>	<p><i>king of the South</i>: Ptolemy IV Philopater</p> <p><i>violent men among your own people</i>: Jews who join the army of Antiochus III</p>	<p>Philip V, of Macedon, joined his army with that of Antiochus III. Jews from Israel also enter the Syrian campaign against Egypt, hoping to win their independence, which doesn't happen.</p>
<p>15 Then the <i>king of the North</i> will come and build up siege ramps and will capture a <i>fortified city</i>. The <i>forces of the South</i> will be powerless to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to stand.</p>	<p><i>king of the North</i>: Antiochus III, the Great</p> <p><i>fortified city</i>: Sidon</p> <p><i>forces of the South</i>: Egyptian army under Ptolemy IV.</p>	<p>Antiochus III laid siege to and captured Sidon, a heavily fortified city, in 203 BC.</p>



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Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>16 <i>The invader</i> will do as he pleases; no one will be able to stand against him. He will establish himself in the <i>Beautiful Land</i> and will have the power to destroy it.</p>	<p><i>The invader:</i> Antiochus III</p> <p><i>Beautiful Land:</i> Israel</p>	<p>Antiochus III used Israel as a military base of operations and a buffer zone between his empire and Egypt.</p>
<p>17 <i>He</i> will determine to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will make an alliance with the <i>king of the South</i>. And he will give him a daughter in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom, but his plans will not succeed or help him.</p>	<p><i>He:</i> Antiochus III</p> <p><i>king of the South:</i> Ptolemy V Epiphanes</p>	<p>Antiochus III then sought to obtain peace with Egypt by marrying his daughter to Ptolemy V Epiphanes, but the marriage did not sustain the peace.</p>
<div data-bbox="228 869 566 1203" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="305 1207 496 1239">Scipio Asiaticus</p>	<div data-bbox="618 905 865 1142" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="669 1176 813 1236">Seleucus IV Philopator</p>	<div data-bbox="992 869 1305 1180" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1003 1211 1295 1243">Mannius Achilius Glabrio</p>
<p>18 Then he will turn his attention to the coastlands and will take many of them, but a commander will put an end to his insolence and will turn his insolence back upon him.</p>		<p>Antiochus III turned his army to the conquest of Asia Minor to secure the coastal towns that belonged to the Ptolemaic empire. Rome became concerned and Antiochus III was routed at Thermopylae by the Roman general, Mannius Achilius Glabrio and decisively beaten at Magnesia by Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus.</p>
<p>19 After this, he will turn back toward the fortresses of his own country but will stumble and fall, to be seen no more.</p>		<p>Antiochus III returned to his own country in 188 BC, only to die one year later.</p>

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Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>20 <i>"His successor</i> will send out a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor. In a few years, however, he will be destroyed, yet not in anger or in battle.</p>	<p><i>His successor:</i> Seluecus IV Philopator</p>	<p>Seleucus IV Philopator succeeded his father, Antiochus III. Rome had imposed heavy war reparations on Syria. Seleucus IV Philopator heavily taxed his people to make these payments, but he was poisoned by his treasurer, Heliodorus, in about 176 BC.</p>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Eumenes II</p> </div>		<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Antiochus IV Epiphanes</p> </div>
<p>21 "He will be succeeded by <i>a contemptible person</i> who has not been given the honor of royalty. He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue.</p>	<p><i>a contemptible person:</i> Antiochus IV Epiphanes</p> <p>Antiochus IV Epiphanes is the "little horn" of Daniel 8:9.</p>	<p>Antiochus IV Epiphanes seized the throne from Demetrius Soter, the rightful heir to the throne of Seleucus IV Philopator, with the help of the king of Pergamon, Eumenes II..</p>
<p>22 Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and <i>a prince of the covenant</i> will be destroyed.</p>	<p><i>a prince of the covenant:</i> High Priest Onias III</p>	<p>Antiochus IV then turned away the Egyptian army attempting to invade Israel and deposed the Jewish High Priest, Onias III, who was later murdered.</p>
<p>23 After coming to an agreement with him, <i>he</i> will act deceitfully, and with only a few people he will rise to power.</p>	<p><i>he:</i> Antiochus IV Ephiphanes</p>	
<p>24 When the richest provinces feel secure, <i>he</i> will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did. <i>He</i> will distribute plunder, loot and wealth among his followers. <i>He</i> will plot the overthrow of fortresses-but only for a time.</p>	<p><i>he:</i> Antiochus IV Ephiphanes</p>	

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>25 "With a large army <i>he</i> will stir up his strength and courage against the <i>king of the South</i>. The <i>king of the South</i> will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but <i>he</i> will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against <i>him</i>.</p>	<p><i>he</i>: Antiochus IV Epiphanes</p> <p><i>king of the South</i>: Ptolemy VI Philometer</p> <p><i>him</i>: Antiochus IV Epiphanes</p>	<p>Antiochus IV Epiphanes attacked Ptolemy VI Philometer, of Egypt, in 170 BC, near Pelusium, and eventually prevailed.</p>
<p>26 Those who eat from the king's provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle.</p>		
<p>27 The <i>two kings</i>, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time.</p>	<p><i>two kings</i>: Antiochus IV Epiphanes and Ptolemy VI Philometer</p>	<p>Both leaders entered into peace negotiations, but neither was truthful, and the peace could not last.</p>
<p>28 The <i>king of the North</i> will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it and then return to his own country.</p>	<p><i>king of the North</i>: Antiochus IV Epiphanes</p>	<p>Antiochus IV removed the vessels in the Temple after killing many Jews, established a fortress in Jerusalem, and imposes a tax there.</p>
<p>29 "At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before.</p>		<p>In 168 BC, Antiochus IV attacked Egypt again.</p>
<p>30 Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant.</p>		<p>Rome sent Gaeus Popillius Laenas, with a letter from the senate forbidding him to war against Egypt. When Antiochus IV requested time to consider Rome's demand, Laenas drew a "line in the sand" (from whence the common saying comes) around Antiochus, telling him to answer before he stepped over the line. Antiochus turned back rather than risk war with Rome.</p>

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>31 <i>His</i> armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation.</p>	<p><i>His</i>: Antiochus IV Epiphanes</p>	<p>In 167 BC, while Antiochus IV was in Egypt, the deposed High Priest Jason captured Jerusalem with 1000 men. Antiochus ordered the slaughter of 40,000 inhabitants of the city over 3 days. He sold a similar number into slavery. (2 Maccabees 5) Antiochus then outlawed the Mosaic Law, put Jews to death who circumcised their sons, placed a statue of Zeus in the Temple, and required a pig to be sacrificed to it on December 16, 167 BC, his birthday. (2 Maccabees 6) This is the abomination that causes desolation.</p>
<p>32 With flattery <i>he</i> will corrupt <i>those who have violated the covenant</i>, but <i>the people who know their God</i> will firmly resist him.</p>	<p><i>he</i>: Antiochus IV Epiphanes</p> <p><i>those who have violated the covenant</i>: Hellenistic Jews</p> <p><i>the people who know their God</i>: faithful Jews, the Maccabees</p>	<p>The Hellenistic Jews abandoned their faith to receive rewards from Antiochus, but a small group of orthodox Jews (the “Maccabees”) refused to abandon their faith, led by the Mattathias family.</p>
<p>33 “Those <i>who are wise</i> will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered.</p>	<p><i>who are wise</i>: faithful Jews</p>	
<p>34 When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them.</p>		<p>The faithful Jews, called the Maccabees (“hammer”) receive some help from Rome, establish a Jewish state again and rule it for 103 years (called the “Hasmoneans”). Eventually, Israel becomes part of the Roman Empire.</p>
<p>35 Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.</p>		<p>From the Maccabean zealots arise the Pharisees (Hebrew, “set apart’), who are leaders in Roman Israel but rejected Christ as Messiah. Israel’s rejection of Christ leads to a partial blinding and hardening of Israel (see Luke 19:39-44, Romans 11), culminating in the diaspora of 70 AD, and two millennia of exile (see Deuteronomy 28). This brings us to the current era, anticipating the appointed time of the end.</p>

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>36 <i>"The king</i> will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.</p>	<p><i>The king: the Antichrist</i></p>	<p>Although some argue verses 36-45, speak more of Antiochus IV, the historical facts do not support these events. Also, Daniel 12, continues to explain Daniel 11, which refers to a time of unparalleled tribulation (12:1), the resurrection of the dead (12:2), and the 3.5 years of time required for Israel's great persecution and refinement, leading to her national salvation (12:7). Since the meaning of Daniel 11:36-45, is obscure, detailed explanation will not be attempted.</p>
<p>37 <i>He</i> will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all.</p>	<p><i>He: the Antichrist</i></p>	
<p>38 Instead of them, <i>he</i> will honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts.</p>	<p><i>he: the Antichrist</i></p>	
<p>39 <i>He</i> will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. <i>He</i> will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price.</p>	<p><i>He: the Antichrist</i></p>	
<p>40 "At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. <i>He</i> will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood.</p>	<p><i>He: the Antichrist</i></p>	<p>Who the king of the South and the king of the North might be in the end-times is unknown, at this time.</p>
<p>41 <i>He</i> will also invade the <i>Beautiful Land</i>. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand.</p>	<p><i>He: the Antichrist</i> <i>Beautiful Land.: Israel</i></p>	

Daniel 11, Verse-by-verse Explanation

Scripture Verse	Identities	Notes
<p>42 <u>He</u> will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape.</p>	<p><u>He</u>: the Antichrist</p>	
<p>43 <u>He</u> will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Nubians in submission.</p>	<p><u>He</u>: the Antichrist</p>	
<p>44 But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and <u>he</u> will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many.</p>	<p><u>he</u>: the Antichrist</p>	
<p>45 <u>He</u> will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.</p>	<p><u>He</u>: the Antichrist</p>	

CHAPTER TWELVE

Dan. 12:1 “Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands *guard* over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. ² “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace *and* everlasting contempt. ³ “Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. ⁴ “But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.”

Comments:

- Notice that Archangel Michael is the guardian angel of Israel, no matter where they reside. He also stands vigil over their offspring, through the generations. In this sense, he is more than the territorial, geographic rebellious spirits in Satan’s kingdom.
- **Verse 1** begins a historically singular time of great “*distress*”, one from which Israel must be rescued. Israel has suffered greatly throughout their millennia in captivity and when dispersed among the nations. There have been many pogroms, including the “Holocaust” perpetrated by the Nazis, during World War II. This appears to be an event that is their future. The word translated as “*distress*” is “*tsarah*” in Hebrew, which can also mean “*anguish, trouble, tribulations*” (NAS Hebrew). It is not unreasonable to speculate that this time of great distress will be the end-times “Great Tribulation”, spoken of by Christ in **Matt 24:9**. Indeed, the Septuagint (LXX) translates the Hebrew into Greek as “*thlipsis*” - the very same Greek word used by Christ to describe this “Great Tribulation”. “Thlipsis” is also translated as “tribulation” in **Rev 7:14**, which refers specifically to the end-times “Great Tribulation”.
- This time is when Michael “*will arise*” (**v.1**, Hebrew: “*omed*” - “*take ones stand in opposition to*” - BDB). If the time of the “Great Tribulation” is referenced by **Daniel 12**, then it is not unreasonable to propose that Michael rising to action also is revealed in **Revelation 12**. This chapter in John’s writings reveal Michael, and his angels, engaging in heavenly war with Satan and demons, at a time when Israel is “on the ropes”, hiding in the desert, being pursued for destruction by Antichrist and the nations. **Chapter 12** of **Revelation** ends with Satan losing this war in heaven, resulting in his banishment to earth, where he continues the war. At this time, Israel has evaded destruction, but again is exiled to the desert, where they are being pursued by Satan and his earthly proxy, Antichrist.
- **Verse 2** seems to clinch the eschatological interpretation of **Daniel 12**, as it specifically refers to the resurrection of the righteous. The resurrection precedes the rapture by mere moments (**1 Thes 4:13-18**). It also ends the Great Tribulation, when the saints are delivered by Christ’s second coming.
- The timing of the rapture to the Great Tribulation should not be controversial. Carefully read the sequence of events in **Matt 24**. Notice that Jesus says, “*But immediately AFTER THE TRIBULATION (“thlipsis”) of those days . . . they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory . . . And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.*” - **verses 29-31**). **Daniel 12:2**, corresponds to **Matthew 24:29-31**. How was the timing of the rapture ever controversial?
- The phrase “. . . your people, everyone who is found written in the book . . .” (**v. 1**) refers to those among Israel whom God has ordained to survive this Great Tribulation, and the Judgments that follow it. It is not unreasonable to proposed that these are the “remnant of Israel” (**Is 10:20-22; 11:11, 12**) who are sealed from the calamities of the end-times. If this is true, then this phrase corresponds to **Rev 7:4-8**, which marks select sons of Israel from all tribes for preservation and eventual salvation (see **Rom 11:26**).
- **Verse 2** also outlines eternal judgment, which is an end-times event. Notice that **verse 3** commends the righteous for leading others to righteousness. This is the witness of the saints.
- **Verse 4** characterizes the end times as being marked by abundant travel (“*many will go back and forth*”) and increasing knowledge. This certainly describes a future time, different from the time in

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which Daniel lived. In his day, most people were illiterate and few people traveled beyond the region immediately surrounding their own village.

Dan. 12:5 Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on that bank of the river. ⁶ And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long *will it be* until the end of *these* wonders?” ⁷ I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a *time*; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed. ⁸ As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, “My lord, what *will be* the outcome of these *events*?” ⁹ He said, “Go *your way*, Daniel, for *these* words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. ¹⁰ “Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand. ¹¹ “From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. ¹² “How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days! ¹³ “But as for you, go *your way* to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise *again* for your allotted portion at the end of the age.”

Comments:

- The book of Daniel ends with the testimony of three angelic witnesses and an oath sworn to God that all the amazing things Daniel was told would take place (**v. 5**). In ancient courts, the testimony of three witnesses sealed the veracity of the evidence presented for evaluation. One “man” seemed to be “floating” above the waters of the Tigris River (**v. 6**).
- The Great Tribulation will be a time when the saints are powerless before the persecution of Antichrist because they had been “*given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.*” (**Dan 7:25**). These verses restate the duration of this Great Tribulation, which is interpreted to mean three and one-half years (3.5 years), or 42 months (**Rev 11:2; 13:5**), or 1260 days (**Rev 12:6**). During these 42 months (3.5 years or 1260 days), Antichrist will blaspheme God, defile the Temple, and overcome the saints (**Rev 13:5-7**). The time of this Great Tribulation will result in the deaths of many saints, who will be tribulation martyrs (**Matt 24:9-14; Rev 6:9-11; 7:5-17**), whom Christ resurrects at His second coming. As a result of this Great Tribulation, many people will abandon their faith, resulting in a purging, refinement, and purification of the Church (**v. 10**). The 3.5-year Great Tribulation period is so horrific that it will be unlike any other troublesome time in history. No one would survive it, “*but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short*” (**Matt 24:21, 22**).
- The Great Tribulation begins when the “*abomination of desolation*” is set up (**v. 11**), which Daniel says is established when the Temple is desecrated and the regular sacrifices are halted (**Dan 11:31**). Jesus emphasized the role of the “*abomination of desolation*” as be the critical warning sign that the Great Tribulation was about to begin (**Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14**). Since Daniel wrote earlier that the Temple services would be stopped half-way through the Seventieth Week of Daniel (**Dan 9:24-27**), we know that the Great Tribulation occurs in the second half of last seven years before Christ returns. Thus, only the last 3.5 years is the Great Tribulation and not the entire last seven years.
- The Apostle Paul added additional understanding to these events. In **2 Thessalonians 2**, Paul wrote that Antichrist will be revealed when “he takes his seat in the Temple of God, displaying himself as being God.” (**2 Thes 2:4**) A Satanically-possessed man who occupies God’s holy place and claims to be God is an abomination. Predictably, when faithful Jews and Christians refuse to worship him, they will begin to suffer intense persecution and martyrdom. A great falling away from the faith (“*apostasy*”) will occur because many people will have been unfaithful and will be deceived by Antichrist’s tricks and promises (**2 Thes 2:3,9-12**). Paul makes it clear that this apostasy, the revelation of Antichrist through the Abomination of Desolation, and the Great Tribulation **PRECEDES** the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the resurrection and rapture (**2 Thes 2:1-4**). Thus, Daniel’s prophecies fit Christ’s teachings and Paul’s instructions exactly.

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- Verses 11 & 12 appear to define a time period beyond the 70 Weeks of Daniel, which are only 1260 days or 42 months or 3.5 years long. Verse 11 adds another 30 days, bringing the total to 1290 days, while verse 12 adds another 45 days, bringing the total to 1335 days. What is happening during these additional 75 days? Daniel 12 doesn't provide enough detail to know this for sure. Few of the commentators that I consulted were willing to tackle these passages. I provide more information here, but a detailed proof of this is beyond the scope of this study.
 - From the language used in the verses, appears as though some form of trouble, possibly divine judgment, continues 30 days past the 70th Week of Daniel, while blessings are only fully realized 45 days later? Using dozens of other Bible passages, Robert van Kampen proposed the following explanation in his book, *The Sign* (Crossway Books, Wheaton, Illinois, 1992) — shown in **Figure 1**, below.
 - If van Kampen is correct, the last 3.5 years of the 70th Week would be marked by the Great Tribulation, which ends with resurrection & rapture, followed by the Trumpet Judgements, which end as the close of the 70th Week.
 - At this point, according to Revelation 11, Christ is declared King of the Nations and the remnant of Israel has been saved.
 - The nations rebel against this proclamation, resulting in war during the 30 days following the 70th week. The Lord fights back during this time using the Bowl Judgments. The 1290 day period ends at the Battle of Armageddon, followed by the judgment of Antichrist and the imprisonment of Satan.
 - What follows is a 45 day period of restoration (the world will need it!), followed by the Millennium.

Figure 1: Van Kampen's Model of Daniel's 75 Days

