

Daniel

A. Introduction

1. Title: "Daniel"
2. Date of Events: From 605 B.C. (1:1) to 536 B.C. (10:1)

Jeremiah 25:8-12 "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words, ⁹ behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the LORD, 'and *I will send* to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. ¹⁰ 'Moreover, I will

¹ Notes prepared with help of The Master's Seminary BI 501 Bible Survey syllabus.

take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹ 'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon 70 years. ¹² 'Then it will be when 70 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.'

- Daniel served under several pagan kings, in pagan kingdoms:
 - **Nebuchadnezzar** (605-562 BC): Daniel was brought to Babylon as a youth and rose to prominence under this king.
 - **Various Babylonian kings** (562-550 BC)
 - **Belshazzar** (550-539 BC): probably the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.
 - **Darius the Mede** (539-536 BC): Daniel held a high government position in the court of Darius.
 - **Cyrus the Great** (died 530 BC): Daniel served in the Persian Empire under Cyrus.

The Historical Background of Daniel

Chapter in Daniel	Date of Events/Visions	Approximate Age of Daniel
1	605 B.C.	15
2	603/2 B.C.	17/18
3	602 B.C.	18
4	570-63 B.C.	50-57
5	539 B.C.	81
6	537 B.C.	83
7	553 B.C.	67
8	551 B.C.	69
9	539 B.C.	81
10-12	536 B.C.	84

3. Outline

1. God's grace in Daniel's faithfulness as a sojourner in a hostile land (1-6)
2. God's grace in Daniel's prophecies as a sojourner in a hostile land (7-12)
4. Canonical Connection: between Esther and Ezra / Nehemiah

B. Major Themes

1. God's faithfulness to his people in difficult situations

➤ Dan 1 –

➤ Dan 2 –

➤ Dan 3 –

➤ Dan 4 –

➤ Dan 5 –

➤ Dan 6 –

➤ Dwight L. Moody: “God can take care of us when we pass through the waters; God can take care of us when we pass through the fires. God is able to take care of us, if only we will stand up for Him. God will take care of us, if only we will stand up for Him.”

2. Sovereignty of God over the Kingdoms of Man (2-11)

- Daniel 2 Prophecies:

2:36–38. Daniel’s interpretation makes it clear that the image revealed the course of Gentile kingdoms which in turn would rule over the land of Palestine and the people of Israel.

Nebuchadnezzar, head of the Babylonian Empire, was represented by the **head of gold** (v. 38). His father had come to power in Babylon by military conquest, but Nebuchadnezzar received his **dominion and power and might and glory** from God (who sets up kings and deposes them, v. 21).

2:39. The second portion of the statue, the chest and arms of silver, represented the rise of the Medes and Persians (cf. 5:28; 6:8; also cf. 5:31). The Medo-Persians conquered the Babylonians in 539 B.C. The arms of silver evidently represent the two nations of Media and Persia that together defeated Babylon. Though that **kingdom** lasted over 200 years (539–330 B.C.), longer than the Neo-Babylonian Empire of 87 years (626–539), the Medo-Persian Empire was **inferior to it**, as silver compared with gold.

The belly and thighs **of bronze** represented the third kingdom to arise. This was the Greek Empire (cf. 8:20–21). Alexander the Great conquered the Medo-Persians between 334 and 330 B.C. and assumed authority over its peoples and territory. By Alexander’s conquests he extended the Greek Empire as far east as the northwestern portion of India – an extensive empire that seemingly was **over the whole earth**.

2:40. The legs of **iron** represent the Roman Empire. This fourth kingdom conquered the Greek Empire in 63 B.C. Though the Roman Empire was divided into two legs and culminated in a mixture of iron and clay, it was one empire. This empire was characterized by its strength, as **iron** is stronger than bronze, silver, and gold. The Roman Empire was stronger than any of the previous empires. It crushed **all the** empires that had preceded it. Rome in its cruel conquest swallowed up the lands and peoples that had been parts of the three previous empires and assimilated those lands and peoples into itself.

2:41–43. The empire that began as **iron** regressed to a state of **clay** mixed with **iron**. This mixture speaks of progressive weakness and deterioration. Two metals together form an alloy which may be stronger than either of the metals individually. But **iron** and **clay** cannot be mixed. If iron and clay are put into a crucible, heated to the melting point, and poured into a

mold, when the pour has cooled the iron and clay remain separate. The clay can be broken out which leaves a weak casting.

The Roman Empire was characterized by division (it was **a divided kingdom**) and deterioration (it was **partly strong and partly brittle**).

Though Rome succeeded in conquering the territories that came under its influence, it never could unite the peoples to form a united empire. In that sense **the people** were **a mixture** and were not **united**. (Other views of this mixture of strength and weakness are suggested: [a] the empire was strong organizationally but weak morally; [b] imperialism and democracy were united unsuccessfully; [c] government was intruded by the masses, i.e., mob rule; [d] the empire was a mixture of numerous races and cultures.)

2:44–45a. Daniel then focused on the overthrow of those kingdoms. **The time of those kings** may refer to the four empires or, more likely, it refers to the time of the 10 toes (v. 42) since the first four kingdoms were not in existence at the same time as apparently the toes will be (cf. comments on the 10 horns of the fourth beast, 7:24). Nebuchadnezzar had seen a **rock** hit and smash the image (2:34). The statue was destroyed by the rock, **not by human hands**. In Scripture a rock often refers to Christ, Israel's Messiah (e.g., Ps. 118:22; Isa. 8:14; 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6–8). God, who had enthroned Nebuchadnezzar and would transfer authority from Babylon to Medo-Persia, then to Greece, and ultimately to Rome, will one day invest political power in a King who will rule over the earth, subduing it to His authority, thus culminating God's original destiny for man (Gen. 1:27).

➤ Daniel 9 prophecies

- 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.

- 9:25 “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.

When was the “issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem”? We studied this in Nehemiah 2:1-8, March 5, 444 B.C. by Artaxerxes of Persia.

From then, the verse says we are to count “7 weeks” and “62 weeks.” This is a total of 69 periods of 7 years. $69 \times 7 = 483$ years, keeping in mind that the Jewish calendar year contained 360 days.

483 years added to March 5, 444 B.C. lands on March 30, 33 A.D.

The Triumphal Entry recorded in Matt 21:1-11.

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

9:26 “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.

9:27 “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.”

“You [will] see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation” (Matt. 24:15). John wrote that the false prophet will set up an image to this ruler and that the world will be compelled to worship it (Rev. 13:14–15). But then his end will come **(the end that is decreed is poured out on him)**. With his false prophet he will be cast into the lake of fire when Christ returns to the earth (Rev. 19:20; cf. Dan. 7:11, 26).²

The Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel at the beginning of the second half of the 70th “seven,” that is, it will be broken for 3 ½ years. This is called “a time, times, and half a time” (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14).

The fact that this is the same as the three and one-half years, which in turn are equated with 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3; 12:6) and with 42 months (Rev. 11:2; 13:5), means that in Jewish reckoning each month has 30 days and each year 360 days. This confirms the 360-day Jewish year. (BKC)

² This covenant could not have been made or confirmed by Christ at His First Advent, as amillenarians teach, because: (a) His ministry did not last seven years, (b) His death did not stop sacrifices and offerings, (c) He did not set up “the abomination that causes desolation” (Matt. 24:15). Amillenarians suggest that Christ confirmed (in the sense of fulfilling) the Abrahamic Covenant but the Gospels give no indication He did that in His First Advent.

- Daniel 11 Prophecies

11:2 “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.”

The first was Cambyses, Cyrus’ son, 530 B.C. The 2nd, Pseudo-Smerdis, who reigned a short period in 522 B.C. The 3rd, Darius I Hystaspes who ruled from 521 to 486 B.C. The 4th, Xerxes, known in the Book of Esther as Ahasuerus, 485 to 465 B.C (BKC, 1:1367).

- 11:3–4 “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.”
This “mighty king” was Alexander whose rise had been foreshadowed by (a) the bronze belly and thighs of Nebuchadnezzar’s image (2:32, 39b), (b) the winged leopard (7:6), and (c) the prominent horn of the goat (8:5–8). Between 334 and 330 B.C. Alexander conquered Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and the land of the Medo-Persian Empire, and to India. Alexander died at the age of 32 in 323 B.C. from malaria with complications from alcoholism (BKC, 1:1367).

A few years after Alexander’s death, his kingdom was divided among his four generals (cf. 8:22): Seleucus (over Syria and Mesopotamia), Ptolemy (over Egypt), Lysimachus (over Thrace and portions of Asia Minor), and Cassander (over Macedonia and Greece). This division was anticipated through the four heads of the leopard (7:6) and the four prominent horns on the goat (8:8). Alexander founded no dynasty of rulers; since he had no heirs, his kingdom was divided and the empire was marked by division and weakness (BKC, 1:1368).

- 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.”

The king of the South was Ptolemy was the general who served under Alexander. He was given authority over Egypt in 323 B.C. and proclaimed king of Egypt in 304. The prince referred to in v. 5 was Seleucus I Nicator, also a general under Alexander, who was given authority to rule. He ruled over Babylonia, Media, and Syria, and assumed the title of king in 305. Thus Seleucus I Nicator’s rule was over far more territory than Ptolemy I Soter’s (BKC, 1:1368).

- 11:6 “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.”

Ptolemy I Soter died in 285 B.C. and Ptolemy II Philadelphus, Ptolemy’s son, ruled in Egypt (285–246). Meanwhile Seleucus was murdered in 281 and his son Antiochus I Soter ruled till 262. Then Seleucus’ grandson Antiochus II Theos ruled in Syria (262–246). Ptolemy II and Antiochus II were bitter enemies but finally (after some years) they entered into an alliance in about 250. This alliance was sealed by the marriage of Ptolemy II’s daughter Berenice to Antiochus II. This marriage, however, did not last, for Laodice, whom Antiochus had divorced in order to marry Berenice, had Berenice killed (she was handed over). Laodice then poisoned Antiochus II and made her son, Seleucus II Callinicus, king (246–227) (BKC, 1:1368).

Ps 93:1 The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The LORD has clothed and girded Himself with strength; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved.

Psalm 33:8-12 Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. ⁹ For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. ¹⁰ The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. ¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

- John Walvoord: “[The] revelation of the sovereignty and power of God has brought assurance to Jew and Gentile alike that God will fulfill his sovereign purposes in time and eternity” (27).

- God’s sovereignty is the idea of miracles.

3. Israel as a Remnant Subject to the Gentiles (1, 9) – at 9:25

4. The Progression of Gentile Kingdoms (2, 7)

5. The Pride of Gentile Kings (2-5, 7-8, 11)

6. The Ultimate Establishment of God's Kingdom (2, 7, 12)

- Daniel 7:13-14 "I kept looking in the night visions, 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."

- Daniel 12:2 “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.
- Daniel 12:7-8 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*?”
- Daniel 12:13 “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.”

Purpose: though Gentile kingdoms dominate now and for a time, God is sovereignly orchestrating history to bring the Messiah to establish is global millennial kingdom in which Israel will be exalted.

C. Bibliography

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3. James Montgomery Boice, *Daniel*. (amill)
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