

The Prophecy of Daniel**Introduction****A brief history of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.****626 – 606 BC (20 years) Nabupolassar**

Nabupolassar, a Chaldean, occupied the throne in Babylon on 22 November 626. Nabupolassar, entrusted the Babylonian army to his crown prince Nebuchadnezzar.

605 – 562 BC (43 years) Nebuchadnezzar

Nebuchadnezzar was an amazing militarist, great statesman, able administrator, and far-sighted project leader to top it all, after his humiliation became a follower of God the Most High. Daniel 4 is a wonderful personal confession of his life before and after he met the living God. In Daniel 4 we read how the Most High God had humbled him and brought him low. From his own testimony, we learn that he repented and that the Most High God had restored him. Sadly, in 562 BC, after a reign of 43 years, King Nebuchadnezzar died. Then a serious decline started in the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

562 – 560 BC (2 years) Amēl-Marduk / Evil-Merodach

After King Nebuchadnezzar's death, his son Amēl-Marduk succeeded him as king (2 Kings 25:27). He only reigned for 2 years before he was assassinated. His own brother-in-law Nergal Sharezar killed him.

560 – 556 BC (4 years) Neriglissar / Nergal Sharezer

His brother Nergal Sharezer took over as King. He only lasted 4 years before he died. Some conspirators, including Nabonidus, clubbed his 9-month-old son Labashi Marduk to death.

556 – 539 BC (17 years) Nabonidus

Nabonidus married one of King Nebuchadnezzar's widows or daughters and she had a son named Belshazzar. As Nabonidus was not from the royal line, so he probably always felt a bit inferior. For 14 years of his 17-year rule, he lived away from Babylon in Tema in Arabia.

He was a very religious pagan and relatively peaceful man. He took great care to bury the so-called **Nabonidus cylinders** in the foundations of the major pagan temples that he restored.

542 – 539 BC (3 years) Belshazzar

In the last 3 years of the Babylonian Empire Belshazzar reigned in the capital Babylon. His name was Belshazzar, which meant “Bel protect the king.” Bel is the Chaldean version of Baal. He was 33 years old when he received the co-regency from his stepfather. He was a wicked and depraved man.

The Deportations to Babylon and Destruction of Jerusalem.

(i) 605 BC 1st Deportation

First year of King Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar annihilated the Egyptian army at Hamath. Jehoiakim, a vassal of Neco II, submitted to Nebuchadnezzar, who carried off hostages, including Daniel, to Babylon.

(ii) 597 BC 2nd deportation

Jehoiakim, contrary to the word of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 27:9–11), transferred his allegiance to Neco II after submitting to Babylon for 3 years (2 Kings 24:1, 12-14). Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile all the officers and fighting men, as well as all the craftsmen and artisans--a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left. **Ezekiel** was also taken hostage at this time.

(iii) 586 BC Destruction of Jerusalem.

Then 11 years later after a two-year siege in 586 BC, the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar, the walls of Jerusalem were breached and the Temple destroyed. This is described in 2 Kings 25:1-10.

Why is this history so important?

First, to tell us that Daniel’s prophecy involves real historical figures and events, and not just-so stories. That our Bible is rooted in real history, in real-time, with real people and real places. The Nabonidus cylinders refer to cuneiform inscriptions on clay tablets, which have been found in the foundations of ancient temples. These include the Nabonidus Cylinder from Sippar, and the four Nabonidus Cylinders from Ur.

The Nabonidus cylinders from Ur are noteworthy because they mention a son named Belshazzar, as mentioned in the book of Daniel.

Second, we will learn that the Most High God is in charge of individuals, kings, and empires. That he can place on the throne of any Empire, any ruler whom he wishes, and that he can remove them in an instant as well. That the Kingdom the Most High God will be set up according to a certain timeline as prophesied in **Daniel 2, 7, 9** and will be an eternal Kingdom that will never pass away.

Third, we learn that Daniel remained in Babylon for almost 70 years, until at least the third year of King Cyrus of Medo-Persia (1:21). What this means is that Daniel outlived the Neo-Babylonian Empire and five successive Babylonian Kings! God would use the Neo-Babylonian rulers to keep his people safe, to refine them, and to prepare their future leaders until it was time to return after the 70-year exile as prophesied, had been completed.

Cyrus the Mede.

Cyrus was the Medo-Persian who took over the city of Babylon and the Babylonian Empire. He was a far-sighted and influential ruler. He was instrumental in allowing the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. This was proven by the discovery of the Cyrus Cylinder buried under the walls of Babylon. It was discovered in 1879 in the foundation of an ancient Babylonian building.

Cyrus returned the articles of gold and silver from the temple of the Babylonian gods to the new Temple in Jerusalem. The articles of God that were guarded in Babylon for safekeeping! In fact, the Neo-Babylonian Empire only lasted for as long as the 70-year Jewish exile. Cyrus also allowed the Jewish people to return to Israel.

It seems that Daniel also exerted a great spiritual influence on the faith of Cyrus, who allowed the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple (Ezra 1:1-4).

Daniel and the Name of God.

In Daniel, the names used for God are significant.

These names differ in the Hebrew sections (Daniel 1:1-2:3; Daniel 8-12), which were written to the Jews, and the Aramaic section (Daniel 2:4-7:28), written so that the Gentiles too could understand.

1. Daniel 1:1-2:3 is in Hebrew and the names used for God are: 'adonay (אֲדֹנָי) or 'elohiym (אֱלֹהִים), meaning Lord or God.
2. In the Aramaic section of Daniel, i.e. 2:4-7:28 different names for describing God are used:
God of heaven (2:19); God of my fathers (2:23);
God in heaven (2:28); the great God (2:45);
The God of gods (2:47); the Most High God (3:26);
The spirit of the holy gods (4:8).
One could say this was God's international Name.
3. In Daniel 8:1-12:13, which is written in Hebrew, a different way of addressing God is used:
The Lord God (9:3); the LORD my God (9:4);
The LORD our God (9:10); the God of gods (11:36).
This was the way the LORD was known in Israel.

A Life without Compromise

Introduction

Daniel is about the tale of two cities. Babylon did not only represent the people of ancient Iraq and Jerusalem the people of ancient Israel or Judah. There is also a spiritual connotation for these two cities and our citizenship. There are just two spiritual cities of which every human being can be part.

- The spiritual city of Zion, the city of God or Jerusalem. As a believer, you are meant to be a citizen of Zion, the city of God.
- On the other hand, there is Babylon the city of rebellion. Babylon has been the city of false religion since the days of Genesis 11 and the Tower of Babel.

The physical cities of Jerusalem and Babylon in the Old Testament are symbolic of these two spiritual realities.

Judah was repeatedly warned by the prophets, for example, Jeremiah and Habakkuk, that the LORD would use the wicked Babylonians to discipline the Jews.

In 605 BC, during the 1st year of King Nebuchadnezzar, he annihilated the Egyptian army at Hamath. Because of the false religion, rebellion, and wickedness of the Jews, God eventually removed them from the Promised Land and handed them over to King Nebuchadnezzar. They went into exile in Babylon, symbolic of their spiritual state. King Jehoiakim of Judah, a weak and evil king, who was a vassal of King Neco II of Egypt, was handed over by the LORD into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 1:1-8

1. Why did the LORD hand Jehoiakim over into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar? 2 Kings 23:36-37 – 2 Kings 24:1; 2 Chronicles 36:5-8

2. Why did Nebuchadnezzar put some of the articles of the house of God into the house of his god? 1:1-2

3. Why would the king take some of the young Israelite men, descendants of the king and nobles, and teach them the language, and literature of the Chaldeans and have them serve in the administration? 1:3-4

4. How long were they trained for before they were presented to Nebuchadnezzar? 1:5

5. What could possibly have happened to these four young men? 2 Kings 20:18; Isaiah 39:7; Daniel 1:3 (ESV)

Note: According to the Apocrypha, Daniel was married to Susanna. However, there is no proof of this in any of the Biblical records.

6. What were the names of four particular young men? What did these names mean and what does it say about their parents?

Daniel

Hananiah

Mishael

Azariah

Named after the God of

7. To what did Nebuchadnezzar's chief official change the names? What did this mean? 1:6-7

Belteshazzar

Shadrach

Meshach

Abed-Nego

8. What were some of the names of the gods of Babylon?
9. 'But Daniel resolved...' What was Daniel resolved not to do? What was the reason? 1:8

Reflection and Application _____

1. What was the aim of this re-education, renaming and privileges and why did they have to be good-looking and without blemish?

Note: Deculturalisation is the process by which an ethnic group is forced to abandon its own language, culture, and customs, and is assimilated into the language and customs of its overlords.

2. In what manner do re-education, deculturalisation, and assimilation still happen today and what is the result?
3. Who are the four young men in the heart of Babylon?
4. Which way are our tertiary institutions like Babylonian institutions?

Note: Are you compromising with the world? Are you being reprogrammed and assimilated by the world? In for example what you think about:

- Sexuality: sexual practice, family, marriage, sex and gender.
- Ethics: immorality, abortion, euthanasia etc.
- Philosophies of this world: Pluralism, interfaith, syncretism.
- Economic principles: Capitalism, socialism.

The Consequences of Non-Compromise**Introduction**

What if, like Daniel, you choose to stand on the Word of God against the current thinking and practices of society? It may be against the government. Or you may find yourself at odds with the ethics of your place of employment. You may even be standing against your own family as Jesus had warned. Or perhaps some institutional church that in thinking and practice has moved away from the Word of God. Nevertheless, you know you have to stand on what God's word demands and teaches. But what if this kind of standing upon the Word of God or the truth of God's Word does not pay off? Your stance gets you fired, blacklisted, suspended, canceled or financially ruined. Should we not keep some balance and try and cover all our bases? What if your stance costs you a lot and God does not reward you in the end? What if God will not come through for you? Let us notice once again the example of Daniel.

The Situation: In 605 BC Babylon attacked Judea and Jerusalem and carried some of the articles in the temple of YAHWEH, off to the temple of their god, probably Nebu after the name Nebuchadnezzar. The gods of Babylon were Marduk, Bel, Nebu, and Akku. The Babylonians also took some hostages.

The Selection: The King of Babylon wanted to assimilate the cream of future Jewish leadership and intelligence into his empire
His criteria were:

- Young boys as they were far more susceptible to brainwashing and indoctrination.
- From the nobility, the house of David, as he needed to undermine the future leadership of the Jews.
- Highly intelligent and capable.
- Handsome and in perfect health.

The Strategy: Nebuchadnezzar would remove them from their home environment and take them to Babylon.

- They had to be trained for 3 years in the language, learning, and culture of the Babylonians to be able to serve in his administration.
- They were given new pagan names.

- They were fed from the king's table with the best Babylon had to offer.

The Stand: But Daniel resolved...

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 1:8-21

1. Why would Daniel not eat the king's delicacies and drink the king's wine? 1:8
2. Was this a simple thing to do, or was it dangerous? 1:9-10
3. Did Daniel show wisdom, skill, and diplomacy? 1:12-13
4. Did the Lord grant Daniel and his friends their desire? 1:14-16
5. What else did the Lord provide them with? 1:17 Compare with Joseph's ability in Genesis.
6. Where were they placed at the end of three years? Why are their Hebrew names used? 1:18-19
7. How great was their influence?

8. What is the significance of v.21? How many kings did Daniel serve? Why is this a remarkable feat? 1:21; 2, 5, 6, etc.

Reflection and Application _____

1. How long did Daniel serve in Babylon? How many Kings reigned during this time? 1:21
2. What was the reason for this verse?
3. Who else would not eat the food of the ruler of the Babylonian kingdom?

Nebuchadnezzar's Disturbing Dream**Introduction**

In only the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign and also the second year of Daniel's exile, Nebuchadnezzar had disturbing dreams. It was not a once-off dream, or else the King would have forgotten it and moved on. These dreams were different. They were recurring dreams, and they always formed the same vision in his mind. When he experienced the same dream for a while, he knew that it was not a natural occurrence. Something was going on and he had to find out.

As a superstitious man, he believed that the gods had power and influence over human affairs and that the gods were trying to tell him something. Ancient Babylonians strongly believed in supernatural forces and looked for omens in the stars, dreams, and even the shapes of animal livers. Nebuchadnezzar saw his dream as a message from on high. He instinctively knew that it had something to do with his kingdom, but he could not fathom the message. Nebuchadnezzar needed to get an explanation for this recurring dream. Where would be a better place to start but with the spiritual people in Babylon? Therefore, the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers.

Note: This is the beginning of the Aramaic section of Daniel (2:4-7:28). One could say that this section was written especially for the Gentiles! However, the Jews living in Babylon would have no problem understanding as well.

Note: In Daniel 2:4-7:28 a different way of describing God is used.

- The God of heaven (2:19); The God of my fathers (2:23);
- God in heaven (2:28); The Great God (2:45)
- The God of gods (2:47); the Most High God (3:26)
- The spirit of the holy gods (4:8)

This was the way God was described in other cultures who did not know the name of YAHWEH, which is used in the Hebrew section of Daniel 9-12.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 2:1-23

1. King Nebuchadnezzar had a recurring dream that troubled his spirit. Whom did he ask for help? What is significant about their description? 2:1-3
2. What did he expect the magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers to be able to do? 2:3
3. What did the 'wise men' need from the king to interpret the dream? Were they actually able to do so? 2:4
4. What seemingly outrageous expectation did the king require of the so-called 'wise men' and what did he promise for a successful interpretation? 2:5-7
5. Why did the king make the outrageous demand for them to tell him his dream and then interpret it, threatening them with death if they were not able to do so? 2:8 -9
6. What did the 'wise men' realise was impossible and where only could the answer be found? What did this imply with regard to their descriptions? 2:10-11

7. How did the King's decree affect Daniel and his friends? 2:12-14

8. In what manner did Daniel speak with Arioch the captain of the king's guard and what did he demonstrate by this? 2:14-15

Note: Arioch (אַרְיוֹךְ), meaning "lion-like".

9. Was Arioch a man to be trifled with? Why did Daniel intercede for the wise men and carry this considerable risk? 2:16-17

Note: Arioch was probably the chief of the executioners for Nebuchadnezzar.

10. How did Daniel and his friends approach the problem? 2:17-18

Note: The whole aim of God was not to have Daniel and his friends killed. The whole reason they were in Babylon was by God's doing. He needed Daniel there for six successive Kings and administrations to influence their decisions and the future of the Jewish people as well.

- 605–562 BC Nebuchadnezzar
- 562–560 BC Amēl-Marduk / Evil-Merodach
- 560–556 BC Neriglissar / Nergal Sharezer
- 556–539 BC Nabonidus
- 542–539 BC Belshazzar
- 539–530 BC Cyrus the Great

11. Did the God of Heaven reveal the dream to Daniel and what did he do in reaction to the revelation? 2:19-23

Reflection and Application _____

1. Who was the God of Heaven compared with the Babylonian gods, Nabu, Bel, and Aku?

1.	2.
2.	4.
5.	6.
7.	
2. Who decides the fate of rulers and kingdoms? 2:21a
3. What aspects of this prayer and Daniel's reaction are worthwhile noting? Note Daniel's prayer moving from praise ('he' third person) to thanksgiving ('you' second person) 2:19-23

Praise:

Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever;

Wisdom and power are *his*.

He changes times and seasons.

He sets up kings and deposes them.

He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

He reveals deep and hidden things.

He knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.

Thanks:

I thank and praise *you*, **O God of my fathers**.

You have given me wisdom and power.

You have made known to me what we asked of you.

You have made known to us the dream of the king.

The Meaning of the Dream

Introduction

Empires and kingdoms all last only for a certain time. World history from beginning to end is marked by the rise and fall of Kingdoms. Initially, there is growth, thriving, flourishing, strength and influence. Then there is decay, disintegration, demise, destruction, and death. This is the history of civilisation. An empire begins, reaches a peak and fades and dies, another one rises out of its ashes.

Reasons. There are various reasons for the failure of Kingdoms. Overspending, humanism, atheism, secularism, immorality, decadence. It is a downward spiral as described in Romans 1:18-32.

God's sovereign plan!

However, human history is not just a random series of events. From creation to consummation, God is working out his sovereign plan in history. God is in control of the rise and fall of every kingdom and ruler throughout history. How do we know this?

By revelation!

There is a God in heaven who reveals the mystery of his divine plan!

Just like the book of Revelation. We are given a glimpse being the stage of world history into the control room of the universe and we are told what it all means! Just as in the time of Daniel the God of Heaven revealed his plan for the future to the Babylonian King, showing him what would happen in days to come.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 2:24-49

1. What did Daniel do when he knew the interpretation of the dream?
Did he only protect himself and his friends? 2:24-25

2. In what manner did Daniel answer the king and what is significant about this? 2:26-28. Compare this with Joseph's speech to Pharaoh in Genesis 41:16, 25, 28, 32
3. What was Daniel's approach to reveal the dream and give the interpretation of the dream?
4. What did Nebuchadnezzar see? 2:31-35

Note: Nebuchadnezzar had seen a great statue in human form. The different parts were made up of different metals from the head down to the feet of diminishing value.

- **The head** - gold (Au) - molar mass 196.97 g
- **The arms and chest** - silver (Ag) - molar mass 107.87 g
- **The waist and thighs** - bronze (Cu) - molar mass 63.54 g
- **The legs and feet** - iron and iron mixed with clay (Fe) - molar mass 55.84 g

From the construction of this vast statue, you can understand that it was top-heavy. The gold weighed the most and the clay and iron and the bottom the least. Therefore, this was a very unstable structure.

5. What was remarkable about what happened next?
6. What did the dream mean? What was the interpretation? What did Daniel stress again? 2:37-40
7. Which four kingdoms were these? 2:37-40
 - Head of gold
 - Chest and arms of silver
 - Belly and thighs of bronze

Legs of iron; feet partly iron and clay

8. What can be said in particular of the 4th Kingdom and why is this important? 2:41-43

9. What will happen in the days of the 4th kingdom? 2:44-45

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10. What remarkable thing did King Nebuchadnezzar realise and affirm? 2:46-47

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11. What happened to Daniel and his friends? 2:48-49

Reflection and Application _____

1. How many times did Daniel refer to the God of Heaven? What is he doing and why is this significant?

28

29

37

44

45

2. Which Kingdom is this interpretation referring to and when did it arise? 2:44-45; Isaiah 9:6-7.

Note: The New- Babylonian Empire.

The head of gold represented Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, right at the top. Nebuchadnezzar was a unique and remarkable king. However, in the end, his kingdom approximately lasted only about 70 years.

The number of years **(67)** that God kept the Jews in their Babylonian captivity. One could perhaps add the years from 626–606 BC under Nabopolassar, twenty years before Nebuchadnezzar came to power, and that would give about 90 years. However, during those early years, it was not really an empire at all. Nebuchadnezzar was a brilliant soldier, strategist and political leader and he was the one who established the **New Babylonian Empire** from 605 BC onwards. This Empire would cease to exist in 539 BC when Cyrus the Great captured Babylon without a battle.

The point here was that God of heaven had raised up Nebuchadnezzar and his empire to fulfil his specific purpose in dealing with the idolatry of the Jews, by taking them into exile for 70 years. This had been prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah. **Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 BC)** reigned for 43 years. He was a powerful and supreme king, however, he was only there because of God's sovereign ordination. The subsequent kings made up the rest of the Neo-Babylonian Empire for a total of about 66-67 years. And when their punishment of the Jews was complete, they passed out of existence.

Idolatry or Death**Introduction**

Blessing. God sometimes grants people extraordinary privileges and positions in life. It could be superior intelligence, outstanding beauty, uncanny business insight, extraordinary sporting abilities, a large social network, or great blessing and privileges in marriage and family life. God may have sovereignly given you blessings to enable you to live for his glory. You may realise that there is a God in heaven, or you may use this gift, this ability, this privilege and you make yourself the centre of everything. Instead of worshipping, praising and serving the God of heaven, who has endowed you with blessings and privileges, you may have become the centre of your own little universe.

Taking a Stand. On the other hand, you could be placed in a situation where a lot is at stake. By taking your stand on a specific issue you may be shunned, you may be cancelled, ostracised, lose your friends, lose your job, sometimes even family or face legal consequences. We may differ on issues such as capital punishment, whether you would use certain pronouns, whether you will take a vaccine or not. This may vary, but there are certain positions a true Christian can never hold. There are things upon which every Christian believer must make a stand.

Theological: God exists eternally as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In human history, God the Son became man. Jesus was born of a virgin, Jesus rose bodily from the dead, and his death was as a penal substitution for our sins. Jesus is God's only way of Salvation.

Moral: Can any true Christian support abortion for example?

Obeying the State or Government. Some Christians believe whatever the state commands, the citizen must obey. However, in the Word of God, the power of the state is clearly defined. The state bears the power of the sword, i.e. to protect its citizens against crime, corruption and external threats. However, there are other spheres of authority, such as the family and the church where the state does not have any authority unless harm is done to someone else. Nebuchadnezzar had clearly misunderstood the interpretation of his dream. He heard that he was the head of gold! That God had given him 'dominion and power and might and glory' (2:37).

Therefore, Nebuchadnezzar took Daniel's interpretation very seriously, but heard something very different to what Daniel had intended. He reacted in an insanely self-centred manner to Daniel's interpretation.

Notice the words, 'set up!' which are used seven times to inform the reader that Nebuchadnezzar had erected this statue of his own accord (v. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 12, 14). Then, in the final analysis, the three friends referred to 'the image, which the King had set up' (v. 18), eight times in total! Nebuchadnezzar wanted to make sure that his kingdom would not be crushed! He would make a proper statue out of gold, from head to foot! (*30 metres high and 3 metres wide*).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 3:1-18

1. Was Nebuchadnezzar perhaps confused about the interpretation of the dream about the great statue, considering Nebuchadnezzar made a huge golden statue of himself? 2:37-38; 3:1-2
2. What remarkable thing did he do next? What is a satrap? 3:2-3

Note: Satrap, 'achashdarpan (אַחַשְׁדַּרְפָּן) in Aramaic, meaning a governor of a Persian province.

3. What did all these people do? Who were all these people? 3:2-3
4. What did he expect from all the gathered peoples? Considering his recently acquired knowledge that there was God in Heaven who decides the future and fate of kingdoms and rulers? 3:4-5

5. What if they refused? 3:6
6. What did the people do? 3:7
7. Which people refused to obey the decree and why? 3:12
8. What was Nebuchadnezzar's response? 3:13-15
9. What was the response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego? 3:16-18

Reflection and Application _____

1. Where did he set it up? Where was that? Where was Daniel?

NB: Now the plain of Dura, is about 100 km away from Babylon. Where the present-day city of Baghdad is found, on the banks of the Tigris. The city of Babylon was on the banks of the Euphrates. As Daniel was in the capital, he was not where the statue was. He must have heard of it, but he was quite a distance away. However, his three friends who were in charge of the province of Babylon were right there.

2. What was ironic about Nebuchadnezzar's rhetorical question in 3:15?

Firm before the Flames**Introduction**

How strong is your conscience and your conviction? Which line are you not willing to cross? Which hill are you willing to die on? A number of years ago, in 2015, twenty-one young men in orange overalls had their lives ended on a Libyan beach. The Islamic State fighters slit the throats of these twenty-one men. A video was made of this horrific event and posted online for the world to see. Twenty of these young men were Coptic Christians from Egypt who went to Libya to find work to provide for their families. The other man was a Libyan friend who worked with them. What was their crime? They were Christians and they refused to deny Christ!

Martin Mosebach released a book in 2019 on the story of the 21 martyrs and wrote these shocking words.

"I understood that martyrdom is far from being a scandal. It is something essential for the Church. Martyrdom is the secret of the success of the Church. Church nowadays is in a crisis, [it] seems to be. For me, it was clear that as long as people are ready to die for the faith, [the] Church will be safe. And these men bore witness to Jesus Christ. Their throats slit by the brutality of Isis, they died saying, 'Lord Jesus!', confessing the name of Jesus".

These were men of courage and conviction, which we seldom see and find in the West today. These young men would rather die than live with a tainted conscience after denying Christ! They counted the honour of God, greater than their own honour, even their lives! Who of us still have this kind of conviction today? What are we not willing to deny? Will you deny Christ when your job, your reputation, your friendships, and your life is at stake? Hopefully, no one of us will face this kind of trial, but it serves as a reminder of what certain men and women are made of.

Around 600 years BC, Daniel's three friends' lives were on the line. Hananiah (Yah or Yahweh has been gracious), Mishael (Who is what God is?) and Azariah (Yah or Yahweh has helped). They faced the flames of torture and death! Their crime? They could not worship the statue of the King and they could not deny the God who gave them life!

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 3:19-30

1. What happened when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego defied the king? 3:18-19
2. How were the three friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego dressed? What did it mean? 3:19
3. What happened to the mighty men who hurled Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego into the furnace? 3:22-23

Note: This furnace seems to have been an often-used instrument probably for cremation, but also for the macabre public spectacle of execution as well. It had an upper platform and a lower viewing deck or platform. The unfortunate ones were cast from the top into the furnace and the spectators could view from below.

4. What happened with the three friends in the fire? 2:24-25
5. Who was the 4th person? 2:25
6. What did Nebuchadnezzar do when he saw the four men in the fire? 2:26-27

Note: This was now his second encounter with the Most High God, the God of Heaven.

7. Which God did Nebuchadnezzar confess once again? 2:28
8. Who were the people of Babylon to worship? 2:28
9. What was the King's new decree? 2:29-30

Reflection and Application _____

1. Who is the Angel sent by God? One who looks like the Son or Angel of God? Hebrew: Son of God (לְבֶרֶךְ-אֱלֹהִים)
2. What does Hebrews 11:34a refer to?
3. What 'legitimate ways' could you think of to back out of bowing down to the King's statue?
4. Is God able to deliver his people? Matthew 10:28

Note: C. H. Spurgeon's view of the fourth person in the fire.

"There was a fourth, and he was so bright and glorious, that even the heathen eyes of Nebuchadnezzar could discern a supernatural lustre about him. "The fourth," he said, "is like the Son of God." What appearance Christ had put on I cannot tell, which was recognizable by that heathen monarch; but I suppose that he appeared in a degree of that glory in which he showed himself to his servant John in the Apocalypse, and such was the excessive splendour and brightness, the God-like air that was about him, the flash of his eye and the splendour of his gait as he walked the fire with the other three, that even Nebuchadnezzar could not help saying he was like the Son of God."

"Beloved, you must go into the furnace if you would have the nearest and dearest dealings with Christ Jesus. Whenever the Lord appears, it is to his people when they are in a militant posture. Moses saw God at Horeb, but it was in a burning bush; Joshua saw him, but it was with a drawn sword in his hand, to show that his people are still a militant people; and here where the saints saw their Saviour, it was as himself being in the furnace. The richest thought that a Christian perhaps can live upon is this, that Christ is in the furnace with him".

Warning of Imminent Judgement**Introduction**

This story starts with the end result of God's dealing with Nebuchadnezzar. This is really the King Nebuchadnezzar's own personal testimony. When the LORD saved Nebuchadnezzar, he did not want to remain quiet. He decided to write down his testimony, recorded in a letter (Daniel 4:1-3).

He was the most powerful king of his day, ruling over many tribes, tongues, and nations. God the Most High took hold of his life and he wanted all the peoples of the world to know. Everyone on earth needed to know that there was only one true God and what he had done to Nebuchadnezzar. The Kingdom of the Most High God was the only kingdom that would stand forever. His kingdom is eternal; his dominion endures from generation to generation. However, before we get to the good news, we first need to hear how Nebuchadnezzar was heading the wrong way and how God sent him an early warning.

Nebuchadnezzar ruled for 43 years from 605 to 562 BC. This recorded episode must have been towards the end of his reign, as this is his last recorded story. So if it was probably 35 to 40 years after the fiery furnace episode involving his three friends. Daniel and his friends must have been in their fifties.

It was going very well with King Nebuchadnezzar and his empire (Daniel 1:1). Nebuchadnezzar was a capable, far-sighted, and able ruler. Babylon was the dominant world power and the economy was going well. There was no unrest within and it was a well-run country. The King was prosperous and comfortable and he was happy and content with himself. The defence force was highly efficient and the strongest in the world. He was under no threat from enemies on the borders, as they had all been conquered. But then Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing recurring dream.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 4:1-27

1. Who is speaking here in the 1st person? What is Daniel 4:1-3?
2. To whom is he speaking?
3. What is he speaking about?
.....
.....
4. Why did he speak like this? What had happened to him? Do you think he was a believer or an unbeliever when he wrote this? 4:2-3
5. What had happened to Nebuchadnezzar? 4:5
6. Could the wise men of Babylon interpret his dream?
7. Who could interpret the King's dream? Was Daniel with him? 4:8

Note: It is clear that at this stage Nebuchadnezzar was still a pagan through and through. As he wrote Daniel was called Belteshazzar, "keeper of the treasures of Bel", the Chaldean of Baal, after the name of Nebuchadnezzar's god.

8. What was significant about Daniel? 4:9, 18

9. What was the substance of the dream? 4:10-16

Note: There appeared a messenger, a watcher or *`iyar* (עִיר) in Aramaic, meaning a waking, watchful, or wakeful one; a watcher or an angel. This messenger was a holy one, *qaddiysh* (קַדִּישׁ), meaning holy, separate, or an angel. This holy one or watcher came down from heaven.

10. What was the purpose of the dream? 4:17

11. What is a watcher? 4:13, 17, 23

12. Was Daniel happy to give the King the interpretation of the dream?
Why did this dream bother Daniel so? 4:19

Note: Daniel was disturbed. Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan king and a cruel man.

- He burnt two men alive according to Jeremiah 29:22.
- He attempted to burn Daniel's three friends in the fire.
- He killed Zedekiah, the last king's sons before him, and then put out his eyes. Jeremiah 52:10
- He kept King Jehoiachin in exile for 37 years.

However, Nebuchadnezzar was also a very successful and accomplished ruler. The Neo-Babylonian Empire prospered under him. If he would fall away, the whole empire would deteriorate. Daniel knew these things. He also knew that the whole of the Neo-Babylonian empire would only last for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12).

13. What was the Interpretation of the dream? Who did the dream apply to? 4:20-23

14. What was the meaning of the watcher's cry? 4:14-16; 22-23

15. What had to happen for the sentence to end? 4:25

Note: This kind of condition is rare but has been scientifically noted and observed.

- Zoanthropy – an *anthropos* (man) living like an animal.
- Lycanthropy – from *lukos* (wolf) and (*anthropos*) man, a werewolf
- Boanthropy – a bull or a cow (*bous*), eating grass.

16. What did Daniel warn the King to do to avert disaster? 4:27

Reflection and Application _____

1. Take note of the structure of the King's testimony and for each section describe whether Nebuchadnezzar is a believer or an unbeliever.

4:1-3

4:4-27

4:28-33

4:34-37

2. What is the recurring refrain in this section? 4:17, 25, 32

Humiliation and Restoration**Introduction**

King Nebuchadnezzar had been given an ultimatum through the dream. The message was clear: the King had to repent and acknowledge God Most High, as the only true God, as he then may relent from his determination to judge the King. In the OT there are a number of examples of Kings repenting and God relenting. For example at the preaching of Jonah, the King of Nineveh repented of his evil ways and God spared the city.

What does repentance by a ruler look like? Repentance would be demonstrated by turning from his evil ways and wickedness. Practically by being kind to the oppressed and ceasing to be cruel. This is true for almost all world leaders, despite God's warning.

However, King Nebuchadnezzar did not repent. He did not give glory to God. He thought very highly of himself and his heart was full of pride. He did not attempt to break from his sins and live a righteous life. He did not break from iniquity and did not have a heart for the poor.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 4:28-37

1. What happened after twelve months after Nebuchadnezzar's dream? Did Nebuchadnezzar heed the warning? 4:28-30
2. What does 'the words were still on his lips' mean? 4:31

3. What was the judgement? What did God want Nebuchadnezzar to recognize? 4:31-22
4. What happened seven years later? 4:34
5. What did Nebuchadnezzar confess? 4:34-35
6. What did the Most High do for Nebuchadnezzar? 4:36
7. Was Nebuchadnezzar a changed man? 4:37

Reflection and Application _____

1. What was the aim of Nebuchadnezzar's humbling?
2. A man becoming like an animal? Does it make any connection with the rest of the prophecy? 7:4
3. Note the structure of the King's testimony.

4:1-3

4:4-27

4:28-33

4:34-37

The Writing on the Wall**Introduction****Why are the names of these kings so important?**

First to tell us that these are real historical figures and not just so stories. That our Bible is rooted in real history, in real-time, with real people and real places. Nabonidus cylinders refer to cuneiform inscriptions on clay cylinders of king Nabonidus, which include the Nabonidus Cylinder from Sippar, and the four Nabonidus Cylinders from Ur. The Nabonidus cylinders from Ur are noteworthy because they mention a son named Belshazzar, who is mentioned in the Book of Daniel.

Second, we will learn that the Most High God is in charge of individuals, kings, and empires. That he can place anyone on the throne in any Empire whom he wishes and he can remove them in an instant. The Kingdom the Most High God will be set up according to a certain timeline found in **Daniel 2, 7, 9** will be an eternal Kingdom that will never pass away.

Nabonidus was not from the royal line, so he probably always felt a bit inferior. Nabonidus married one of King Nebuchadnezzar's widows or daughters and she had a son named Belshazzar. For 14 years of his 17-year rule, he lived away from Babylon in Tema in Arabia.

In **542 BC** Nabonidus installed Belshazzar as his co-regent in Babylon.

542 – 539 BC

In the last three years of the Babylonian Empire, Belshazzar reigned in the capital of Babylon. His name was Belshazzar, which meant, "may Bel protect the king." Bel is the Chaldean version of Baal. He was thirty-three years old when he received the co-regency from his stepfather. He was a wicked and depraved man.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 5:1-17

1. What kind of feast was held? 5:1
2. What did the king and nobles do when the wine started flowing? 5:2-3
3. What was the vision that appeared and what was the effect on all present? 5:4-6
4. To whom did Belshazzar turn to for help? 5:7 cf. Daniel 2 and 4
5. Could the wise men help and what was the result? 5:8-9
6. Who remembered Daniel? How many years was this since we had last heard of Daniel? Roughly how old was Daniel? 5:10-11
Hint: Use the information on page 1.
7. What did the queen mother have to say about him? 5:11-12
8. What did Belshazzar think of Daniel? How did he address him? What was ironic about this? 5:13
9. What did Belshazzar require of Daniel? 5:14-16

10. Did Daniel think much of this king? 5:17

Reflection and Application _____

1. What was Belshazzar's sin? What made it so serious? Compare 5:1-4 with 4:34-37. Why does Daniel put these accounts back to back, although historically they were more than twenty-three years apart?
2. Did Daniel mix with the wise men?
3. Who was in Daniel? 5:11

Note: Daniel had all but been forgotten by the rulers of Babylon. It was twenty-three years after the end of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The only one who remembered Daniel was the Queen Mother, definitely not Belshazzar's wife. She was probably either Belshazzar's biological mother, one of Nebuchadnezzar's daughters, or perhaps more likely, one of Nebuchadnezzar's widows. She had not taken part in the wild drinking and perversion. When she heard that the noise from the party had suddenly given way to dead silence, she came in, assessed the situation, and saw the fingers writing on the wall. She reminded Belshazzar about a man named Daniel who could interpret his dream.

The End of an Empire**Introduction**

At this very moment, the Medo-Persian forces were surrounding Babylon. Nabonidus and his army had been defeated 80 km from Babylon at Borsippa. It could be that Belshazzar thought that Nabonidus was still in control, not knowing that he had been captured. That very same night the life of Belshazzar would end.

The Medo-Persians under Darius the Mede, diverted the flow of the Euphrates River into a marsh and the soldiers simply walked into the city in the dry river bed. They took over the city without firing a single arrow or casting a spear. **Darius the Mede**, at the age of 62, took over the Babylonian kingdom on 12 October 539 BC. Nabonidus, Belshazzar's stepfather, was captured near Babylon and taken into exile.

Within 70 years as prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah, the Babylonian kingdom ceased to exist, just as the Most High had predicted. It unceremoniously and shamefully passed from existence. This weak King and his weak stepfather had let the once mighty Empire come to ruin, like so many successful Kingdoms and thriving Empires in history.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 5:18-30

1. Which opening lines did Daniel use to address Belshazzar and his nobles? 5:18-19?
2. What had happened to his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, when he rebelled against the God of Heaven? 5:20

3. How long did the humbling of Nebuchadnezzar last? 5:21
4. What was Belshazzar's first sin? 5:22
5. Which worse sin did Belshazzar commit? 5:23
6. What was praising the gods all about? 5:23
7. What was the verdict? 5:24-28
8. What happened that very night? 5:30

Reflection and Application _____

1. Why was Belshazzar's judgement worse than Nebuchadnezzar's?
2. Which message must we take to the nations?
3. Can you think of other Biblical warnings of Judgement that came in writing? cf. Ezekiel 2:9-3:3, Zechariah 5:1-4; and Revelation 10:2, 8-11

4. How long did the Neo-Babylonian Empire last?
5. Who outlived the Neo-Babylonian Empire?
6. What must the believer always be ready for?

Note: Daniel started with a lesson about the Most High God! The believer must always be ready for evangelism! There were more than a thousand officials plus all the wives and concubines listening! God sovereignly gave your Father King Nebuchadnezzar the Kingdom! He could have just explained the dream, but the King needed to hear about the ultimate reality.

Obeying God rather than Men

Introduction

As we know, Cyrus the Great took over the New Babylonian Empire and reigned from 539 to 530 BC. Who then was “Darius the Mede who took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two” (5:31)?

1. Some say it is a mistake. They regard the name of *Darius the Mede* either as deliberate fiction or as a historical error, in which Darius I (King of Persia 522-486 BC) has been confused with Cyrus the Great.
2. Some say it was a general of Cyrus the Great, by the name of Gobryas, who captured the city of Babylon and deposed co-regents Belshazzar and Nabonidus, killing the former and exiling the latter. When Babylon became a part of the Medo-Persian Empire, Cyrus the Great installed Gobryas to govern Babylon and its territory (v.31). Darius then would likely be the ruling name of the Persian general Gobryas or Gubaru.
3. Others, such as John Calvin, are of the opinion, that it was Cyrus' father-in-law, who was known by the name 'Astyages', the last king of the Medes (538 BC).
4. Some commentators hold to the position that *Darius the Mede* was simply the Babylonian royal name for *Cyrus the Persian*. As Darius is derived from the Aramaic *dareyavesh* (דָּרְיָוֶשׁ), meaning 'lord', they are of the opinion Darius the Mede was just a different name for a different context. From history, it is known that it was Cyrus the Great who conquered the Neo-Babylonian Empire and reigned from 539 to 530 BC. Therefore, *Cyrus the Great* was his name as ruler over the whole Medo-Persian Empire, whereas he was known as *Darius the Mede*, as far as his rule over the Neo-Babylonian Empire was concerned.
5. Lastly, Darius could not just have been a general, as he set one hundred and twenty satraps (provincial governors) over the whole kingdom (6:1). During the time of Xerxes there were 127 provinces from India to Cush (Esther 1:1; 8:9). Therefore, it sounds as if the appointment of satraps covered almost the same area as during the time of Xerxes.

The conclusion is that Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian refer to one and the same person (Daniel 6:28).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 5:31-6:17

1. To what position did Darius promote Daniel? What was the main reason for appointing satraps? 6:1-2
2. Did Daniel live up to the King's expectations? How long did it take for King Darius to recognise Daniel's exceptional ability? 6:3
3. How did the other two governors and one hundred and twenty satraps view Daniel? 6:4
4. Were they able to find fault in Daniel? Which was the only area they realised they could find fault with Daniel? 6:5
5. How did they plan deceive the King and trap Daniel? 6:6-7
6. How was this possible? Was Daniel part of their decision? 6:8
7. Was the King deceived and why? 6:9

8. Did Daniel obey the decree? What was he praying for? 6:10-11
9. What did the conspirators find and report? What did they accuse Daniel of? 6:10-13
10. Was the king upset about the situation? Did he make a rash decision? Did he try to make amends? 6:14-15
11. What did the king's words reveal about his feelings for Daniel and the God of Daniel? 6:16-17

Reflection and Application _____

1. How long had Daniel been living in Babylon? Daniel 1:21 Have a look at pages 1 and 2 and add up the numbers.
2. Are believers not expected to obey the dictates of government?
3. Did the life-threatening situation change anything in Daniel's worship?
4. Did Daniel say anything to defend himself?
5. In what way is Daniel like Christ?

Shielded by God's Power through Faith**Introduction**

The King returned to the palace from the lion pit. These lions were not well-fed or tame. They were kept close to a point of starvation so that when anyone was cast into the pit for execution, they did not live long. The King had a bad night, as he liked Daniel a lot. Within the brief space of a year, he got to know and admire Daniel. He saw that Daniel was a trustworthy, loyal, diligent, and highly capable administrator.

Remember, King Darius appointed one hundred and twenty satraps to rule throughout the Medo-Persian Empire. A satrap is a governor of a Persian province. A satrap is equivalent to a provincial manager.

The hundred and twenty satraps or provincial governors had to report to three administrators, of which Daniel was one. The reason for this was so that the king would not suffer loss. The king was planning to place Daniel as head over the other two administrators, as well as all the satraps. He was aiming to make Daniel the **second highest** in all of his administration. This was remarkable, as the King had only known Daniel for one year. He knew Daniel was not corrupt and did his utmost for the administration. There was no neglect, sins of omission, corruption, or sins of commission.

This plan of the King did not go down well with the other officials. They knew there was no neglect or corruption in Daniel and with him in charge, they would not be able to plunder the King anymore. They realised that if they wanted to get rid of Daniel, they would have to find some fault with regard to his God. Therefore, they hatched a plan that for thirty days only prayers could be made to the King as a god.

So, as the story goes, Daniel was caught praying to God Most High and the penalty was death by man-eating lions!

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 6:18-28

1. What did the King pray when Daniel was cast into the pit? What did this say about the faith, character, and example of Daniel? 6:16
2. What did the King do that night? What happened at the break of day? 6:18-19
3. In which manner did the King refer to Daniel's God? Do you think this is significant? 6:20
4. Was Daniel angry or bitter? 6:21-22 cf. Genesis 50:20-21
5. Does God always save innocent men from death? 6:22-23
6. What happened to the wicked men? What was the outcome for the enemies of God's man? What is often the sad reality of sin, for us and our loved ones? 6:24
7. What was Darius' testimony to the nations? What did Darius recognise about God? 6:25-26 Compare Darius' words with Nebuchadnezzar's in 4:34-35.

8. Did this mean that the king had become a believer?
9. Who are Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian? 6:28 Hint: Look at the different options on page 38.

Note the footnote in your Bible on 6:28:

“...Darius, that is, the reign of Cyrus...”

Reflection and Application _____

1. Compare the words of Darius in 6:25-26 with the words of Cyrus in Ezra 1:1-4. If they are the same person, what do think happened in the life of Darius / Cyrus? Why are these words so significant?
2. Must we obey God or government?
3. Did the life-threatening situation change anything in Daniel's worship?
4. Did Daniel say anything to defend himself? cf. Genesis 39:19-20
5. Who was Daniel a type of? Matthew 27:12-14

Four Beasts from the Sea**Introduction**

Daniel 7-12 is what is called apocalyptic literature, as is also found in parts of Ezekiel and Revelation. The Greek word *apokalupsis* (ἀποκάλυψις) means an unveiling. Apocalyptic writing includes great visions, frequently surrealistic, describing that which is really indescribable with visions. It is important to note that the apocalypse or unveiling is connected to history and not apart from history.

Reason. It is important to understand the historical aspect and significance of the events. These are real events taking place in real **time** and **space** and with real **people**.

Experience. The visual form of the vision is for it to appeal to the senses as well as reason.

The impressions created on the reader are as important as the understanding of the details. You could understand the details and fail to experience the impact.

Sinclair Ferguson

Daniel 7:1-8, 17 describes the rise and fall of four consecutive empires or kingdoms. The transforming influence of power and corruption on human rulers, which would turn them into beasts, is described. Then it is taken even further until they no longer resemble even beasts of nature, but some grotesque depraved version of them. Perhaps J.R.R. Tolkien had Daniel 7:1-10 in mind and these visions influenced his work on *The Lord of the Rings*. Here in these opening verses, we find four beastly empires and their kings or rulers. They have lost all semblance of humanity.

Nothing has changed since the beginning of time; it has always been this way. Great and evil rulers and movements have taken control over countries and nations. Great powers, kingdoms, and world leaders have come onto the stage of world history. Throughout human history, empires have come and gone. The Aztec, Inca, Mongol, Assyrian, Greek, Medo-Persian, Babylonian and Roman empires. Their descendants are still around but they are insignificant and weak. There are always new empires and rulers rising from the **sea of humanity** and history. However, the end result for all beastlike empires and rulers is the same.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 7:1-8

1. What did Daniel's dream consist of 7:1
2. What are these four winds or spirits of heaven? 7:2; Revelation 7:1
3. What is the great sea? 7:2; Isaiah 17:12-13; Revelation 17:1
4. Who or what do the different beasts represent? 7:3, 17
5. Which kingdoms do these beasts represent? What is the meaning of the symbolism?
 - 1st: 7:4
 - 2nd: 7:5
 - 3rd: 7:6
 - 4th: 7:7
6. Why is this 4th beast not like an animal? 7:7
7. What do the ten horns represent? Note: 10 is the apocalyptic number representing completeness. 7:7

8. What is the content of the little horn's boastful speaking? Where does this little horn find its inspiration from? 7:8

Reflection and Application _____

1. What is the connection between the little horn and the man of lawlessness? 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12
2. What does John call this final individual of which all the previous ones are a type? 1 John 2:18, 22-23
3. Compare with and take note of Revelation 13:1-7.

The Glorious Son of Man

Introduction

Apocalyptic writing includes great visions, frequently surrealistic, describing that which is indescribable with fantastical supernatural visions. Things that humanly speaking, the prophet could not have known. These things are unveiled to him, which does not mean that the meaning of every vision or dream is clear to him.

Apocalypse or unveiling is connected to history and not apart from history. **Reason.** It is important to understand the historical aspect and significance of the events. These are real events taking place in real time and space and involving real people.

Experience. The visual form of the vision is so that it will appeal to the senses as well as reason.

The apocalyptic visions of Daniel thus far were:

- The four winds of heaven churning up the great sea.
- Four beastly kingdoms
- Ten rulers that will arise in the time of the 4th kingdom
- The little horn (man of lawlessness)

The next visions of Daniel introduce a stark contrast to the preceding beasts and the little horn. Daniel observes two magnificent figures, the Ancient of Days and one like a Son of Man.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 7:9-14

1. Who is the Ancient of Days? 7:9

2. Explain the following imagery:

Thrones

Ancient of Days

Seated

Clothes

Hair

Fire

Wheels

Millions

Court

Books

3. What is the contrast between the Ancient of Days and the beasts?

4. What will eventually happen to the little horn? 7:11

5. How long will the kingdoms of the beasts last? 7:12

6. Who comes with the clouds of heaven? Is this figure equal to the Ancient of Days? 7:13-14; Psalm 110:1-3

7. To whom do the kingdoms of the world ultimately belong? 7:13-14; Psalm 2:1-12

8. Why is he called the son of man? Who is he compared to? 7:1-8

9. Over whom and for how long will this kingdom last, compared to the kingdoms of the beasts? 7:14

Reflection and Application _____

1. What was Jesus' favourite title for himself, used 82 times in the 4 gospels? John 1:51; Matthew 26:63-64
2. What do you think happened after the Ascension of Jesus? Luke 4:5-6; Daniel 7:13-14
3. Who comes on the clouds according to the pagans? Hint: look at Baal. How is God described in the Psalms? Psalm 18:9; 68:4; 97:2; 104:3
4. What is the significance of the duel between Eiljah and the prophets of Baal and the absence of rain for three years?

Note: In Canaanite as well as Babylonian religion, Baal is described as **the rider of the clouds**. **Baal** or **Bel** is a fertility god and he is seen in the storm, the clouds, and the rain. The lighting and the thunder announce his presence. Remember also that **Baal** is called **Bel** in the Babylonian religion. During the time of this vision, the king's name was **Belshazzar**, and his name meant, "**Bel protect the king.**" Even **Daniel** is called **Belteshazzar**, meaning "**Keeper of the treasures of Bel.**" So, the question is, who is the real rider of the clouds?

5. Why is it significant that the Son of Man comes on the clouds of heaven?

Note: As the Son of Man comes with the clouds, he comes as a witness against the religion of Babylon. As a testimony to the fact that it is God who is sovereign over creation. In the ancient Jewish writings, the Messiah is described in one of the messianic titles as **the cloudy one**. The only one who can walk into God's presence as his equal.

6. What was the significance of Jesus' prediction about the Son of Man's return as told in Mark 13:26, Matthew 24:27 and Luke 21:27?

Note: John, in exile on the island of Patmos:

Revelation 1:7 Look, he is **coming with the clouds**, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

7. What is the bad news about 'a day of clouds' as described in the prophets? Ezekiel 30:2-3; Zephaniah 1:14-15

Ezekiel 30:2 "Son of man, prophesy and say: `This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "Wail and say, "Alas for that day!"

³ For the day is near, **the day of the LORD is near--a day of clouds, a time of doom for the nations.**

Zephaniah 1:14 "The great **day of the LORD** is near -- near and coming quickly. Listen! The cry on the **day of the LORD** will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior there. ¹⁵ That day will be **a day of wrath**, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, **a day of clouds and blackness...**

The War against the Saints**Introduction**

Notice that Daniel 7:15-28 is a mirror image of Daniel 7:1-14. The visions that Daniel saw follow the same sequence.

Daniel 7:1-14

The 4 Kingdoms
The 4th Beast
The little Horn – Boasting
The Ancient of Days
Judgement
The Son of Man
The Eternal Kingdom

Daniel 7:15-28

The 4 Kingdoms
The 4th Beast
The little Horn – Persecution
The Ancient of Days
Judgement
The Saints
The Eternal Kingdom

A similar pattern can be seen in Revelation 12:1-6 and 12:7-17

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 7:15-28; Revelation 12:1-17

1. Why was Daniel troubled in spirit and did the visions disturb him?
7:15
2. What did he seek from those standing nearby? Did he receive a satisfactory answer? 7:16
3. Who were the four beasts? What do they represent? 7:17

4. Despite the power of the beasts, who will receive the kingdom and possess it forever? 7:18
5. What about the Son of Man? Is he not going to receive the kingdom as well? 7:13-14; Hebrews 12:22-24
6. What is the truth about the 4th beast? In what way was this beast worse than all the others? 7:19
7. What is the meaning of the ten horns? 7:20
8. What is the meaning of the little horn? 7:20
9. What will the little horn do? 7:21-22

Reflection and Application _____

1. Who is the fourth kingdom that will appear on earth, different to all the previous ones? In what way will it be different? 7:23
2. Who are the ten horns coming from this kingdom? 7:24

3. Who is the king that will arise subduing three others, speaking against the Most High, oppressing the saints, and trying to change set times and laws? 7:24-25; 1 John 2:18, 22-23
4. Who are the saints? What are 'set times and laws?' 7:25
5. What is the meaning of 'a time, times and half a time?' 7:25; Revelation 12:6, 14; 13:5
6. What will happen at the end of that time? 7:27
7. Did this upset Daniel? 7:28

The Two-Horned Ram**Introduction**

Daniel 8-12 is written in Hebrew, therefore indicating that this message is not so much for the Babylonians, but for the Jews. Daniel sees himself in Susa at the Ulai canal, i.e. not in Babylon. Why? It was the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, and things were looking bleak. He was a weak and corrupt King and Daniel was seeing the end of the New Babylonian kingdom on the horizon. Susa is in the Province of Elam. The ram has two horns. The longer horn represents Persia and the shorter horn Media, but together the two became the great Medo-Persian Empire.

Notice that the events in Daniel are not always chronological. This vision came to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, which was also the year in which the New Babylonian Empire ended, as well as the year of Belshazzar's death. This vision, in other words, came before the events of Daniel 5.

In contrast to Daniel 7 which dealt with world history until the coming of the Son of Man and the persecution of the saints until the end of time, the vision in Daniel 8 dealt with history specifically between 539 and 163 BC.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 8:1-4; 15-20

1. Which year of Belshazzar's reign was this? What would happen during this year? 8:1; 5:30-31
2. What was Daniel's previous vision? 7:1-14; 8:1

3. Where was Daniel in his vision? 8:2
4. Who would be the Empire ruling from Susa? What does the two-horned ram represent? 8:2-3
5. What did the two-horned ram achieve? 8:4
6. What did Daniel want to know? Who appeared to Daniel? 8:15-16
7. What did Daniel do when Gabriel came near? 8:17
8. What is the meaning of the vision and 'the time of the end?' 8:19
9. What was the effect of the one who looked like a man on Daniel? 8:18; Revelation 1:17
10. What did Gabriel tell Daniel? What is the time of wrath? 8:19-20

Reflection and Application _____

1. Who was the two-horned ram?
2. Who conquered the Medo-Persian Empire?

The One-Horned Goat**Introduction**

The one-horned goat who became great represented Greece, or the Macedonian Empire. The shaggy horn is Alexander of Macedon, who came from the West and attacked the ram who represented the Medo-Persian Empire with great ferocity. The horn was broken off, meaning that Alexander died. Four other horns grew, representing his divided kingdom under his four generals. Two became known as the Ptolemies and ruled over Egypt. The other two were known as the Seleucids and they ruled over Syria and Judea.

^{NJB} **1 Maccabees 1:1** Alexander of Macedon son of Philip had come from the land of Kittim and defeated Darius king of the Persians and Medes, whom he succeeded as ruler, at first of Hellas. ² He undertook many campaigns, gained possession of many fortresses, and put the local kings to death. ³ So he advanced to the ends of the earth, plundering nation after nation; the earth grew silent before him, and his ambitious heart swelled with pride. ⁴ He assembled very powerful forces and subdued provinces, nations, and princes, and they became his tributaries. ⁵ But the time came when Alexander took to his bed, in the knowledge that he was dying. ⁶ He summoned his officers, noblemen who had been brought up with him from his youth, and divided his kingdom among them while he was still alive. ⁷ Alexander had reigned twelve years when he died. ⁸ Each of his officers established himself in his own region. ⁹ All assumed crowns after his death, they and their heirs after them for many years, bringing increasing evils on the world. ¹⁰ From these there grew a wicked offshoot, Antiochus Epiphanes son of King Antiochus; once a hostage in Rome, he became king in the 107th year of the kingdom of the Greeks.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 8:5-8; 21-22; 1 Maccabees 1:1-10

1. Who was the goat and the prominent horn between its eyes? 8:5; 21
2. What did he do to the ram? 8:6
3. What happened to the ram when the goat shattered his horns? 8:7
4. What became of the one-horned goat at the height of its power? 8:8
5. Who were the four prominent horns that grew towards the four winds of heaven? 8:8; 22

Reflection and Application _____

How long did the reign one the one-horned goat last? And the subsequent divided kingdom?

Macedonian Empire

Philip II of Macedon	359-336 BC
Alexander the Great	336-323 BC
Conquest of Persia	335-323 BC
...	
Antiochus IV	167-163 BC
Hasmonean Kingdom	163-63 BC

The Small Horn That Grew

Introduction

The small horn that grew (8:9), a stern-faced king (8:23), was a Seleucid king by the name of Antiochus.

^{NJB} **1 Maccabees 1:7** Alexander had reigned twelve years when he died. ⁸ Each of his officers established himself in his own region. ⁹ All assumed crowns after his death, they and their heirs after them for many years, bringing increasing evils on the world. ¹⁰ From these there grew a wicked offshoot, Antiochus Epiphanes son of King Antiochus; once a hostage in Rome, he became king in the 107th year of the kingdom of the Greeks.

Note: In Daniel 8 we read of a ram with two horns, a goat, and a small horn. Horns signify power. These creatures stand for the following:

- The ram with the two horns - The Medo-Persian King (8:3-4).
- The goat - Alexander the Great (8:5-8).
- The small horn that grew in power - Antiochus IV (8:9-12).

Antiochus IV emerged in 175 BC. He took the title *Theos Antiochus Epiphanes* (Antiochus, the Illustrious God). Others referred to him as Epimanes ('the madman'). He overran Israel, the Beautiful Land, and sacked Jerusalem amid terrible bloodshed. He abolished the daily morning and evening sacrificial offerings and committed the blasphemy of sacrificing a pig on the altar of burnt offering, later placing a statue of Zeus in the temple and making human sacrifices on the altar (acc. to S. Ferguson).

This defilement interrupted sacrifice for 2,300 evenings and mornings, a reference to the evening and morning offerings. The period, then, was just a little over three years, from 167 to 163 B.C., when the temple sacrifices were reinstated by the Maccabeans when the Jews revolted against Antiochus IV in the Maccabean uprising.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 8:9-14; 23-27; 1 Maccabees 1:7-10

1. Who is the little horn? 8:9, 23
2. What is the Beautiful Land? 8:9
3. What did he achieve? What does it mean that 'it grew until it reached the host of the heavens and it threw some of the starry host down and trampled on them? 8:10, 24
4. What does it mean that 'it set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host; it took away the daily sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was brought low? 8:11, 25
5. What did he prevent according to the words 'because of rebellion, the host *of the saints* and the daily sacrifice were given over?' 8:11-12
6. What is 'the rebellion that causes desolation, and 'the surrender of the sanctuary' and of 'the host that will be trampled underfoot?'" 8:13
7. How long would this continue before sacrifice would be restored? 8:13-14
8. What are the 2300 mornings and evenings? 8:14

Note: 2300 evenings and mornings, as the Jewish day is reckoned, is equal to 1150 days, that is: 38 months (1150 / 30), or 3 years, 2 months and 10 days.

9. What would happen at the end of this period? 8:14

Reflection and Application _____

1. What is the little horn a type of? Where does his power originate from? 8:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; 1 John 2:18, 22-23

2. What did he aim to do and what does it mean? Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-17

Set up against the Host of Heaven.

Threw some of the starry host down.....

Set himself up as the Prince of the Host.....

Took daily sacrifice away.....

Aimed to destroy the Holy People.....

Took a stand against the Prince of Princes.....

3. Whose power will it take to destroy him? 8:25

4. When would these things take place? 8:26

5. Why was Daniel appalled and exhausted? 8:27

Daniel Searches the Scriptures**Introduction**

Since the first deportation in 605 BC, which Daniel was part of, sixty-seven years had elapsed. In the first year of Darius the Mede (539 BC), who was made ruler of the Babylonian Kingdom, Daniel was reading and meditating upon the Scriptures.

In the **first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent)**, who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom-- in the first year of his reign... (9:1-2).

As Daniel was reading the prophet Jeremiah, he understood that the Babylonian exile would be coming to an end soon. Jeremiah had prophesied that the desolation of Jerusalem and the exile would last seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 9:1-6

1. What did Daniel understand from the Scriptures? 9:1-2; Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10

2. What was Daniel's response in terms of his words, actions, and attitude? 9:3

Words

Action

Attitude

3. In his confession, what did Daniel recognise about God? 9:4
4. In his confession, what did Daniel recognise about himself and his people, which came out in his confession? 9:5-6
5. From the prophecy of Jeremiah, what did Daniel realise that God would do to people who did not obey? 9:6; Jeremiah 7:2-7, 30-34

Reflection and Application _____

1. Do we as believers realise and accept that the Lord God sometimes have to deal with a nation's rebellion collectively?
2. Does God's judgement of a wicked nation mean that the righteous will not suffer? Lamentations 3:1-20
3. Will the LORD love and support his people amid suffering? Lamentations 3:21-24; Jeremiah 23:4-8
4. Why is it important for the believer to search and have the right attitude towards the Scriptures?
5. Will the LORD act outside of what his prophets had spoken? 9:6; Amos 3:7

Prayer, a Covenant Work**Introduction**

Through reading and meditating upon the Scriptures, Daniel came to a true assessment of the character of his people and the nature of God. The covenant people had been unfaithful, had not obeyed, had sinned against God and were covered with shame.

In contrast, the LORD God was righteous, merciful, forgiving and concerned about the honour of his Name. As believers, we need to have a right assessment of our human condition as individuals, as well as collectively in contrast with the righteous person and character of God.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 9:7-19

1. What does Daniel recognise about God's judgement upon Judah and Jerusalem? 9:7-8
2. What do unfaithfulness and rebellion bring about? 9:7-8; Genesis 3:8-10
3. How did the people of Judah test the LORD God? 9:9-10

4. What was the reason for Israel's destruction? Was it literally all of Israel who were wicked? 9:11
5. Why is what happened to Jerusalem so significant? 9:12; Ezekiel 8; Revelation 2-3
6. Was this to be expected? Why does Daniel refer to the Law of Moses twice? 9:11-13; Deuteronomy 28:15-68; 32:15-35
7. Will the LORD overlook rebellion and wickedness? 9:14
8. What was needed from the covenant people of God? 9:15
9. Was God justified to visit his wrath and anger upon Jerusalem and the Temple? 9:16
10. For whose sake will God once again look with favour upon Jerusalem and the Temple? 9:17, 19
11. What is needed for God to turn his wrath away? 9:18-19

Reflection and Application _____

1. How important is the Law of Moses still today? 9:13

2. Which characteristic or attribute of God is mentioned three times?
9:7, 14, 16

3. For whose sake, mentioned five times, will the LORD forgive? 9:15-19 Cf. Matthew 6:9-10

v.15
v.16
v.17
v.18
v.19

4. Which themes mark Daniel's petition to the LORD? Do you pray in this manner? Which words should be included in a prayer of confession? 9:14-15, 17-19

v.14
v.15
v.17
v.18
v.19

Seventy Sevens**Introduction**

As Daniel was praying, Gabriel came to deliver an answer to Daniel's petitions and prayer. It was at the time of the evening sacrifice, that is 3 o'clock in the afternoon (Ezra 3:3).

This passage is perhaps the most complicated in the whole prophecy of Daniel. In an attempt to work out the meaning of the seventy sevens, many diverse explanations have been offered.

This also must have been one of the key passages the wise men from the East were studying and responded to at the time of the birth of Jesus (Matthew 2:1). This passage, Daniel 9:20-27, together with Daniel 2:31-45, and Daniel 7:7-14 and 7:23-27, would give them a time frame for the coming of the Anointed One or Son of Man.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 9:20-27

1. What was the main focus of Daniel's prayer? What was he praying, confessing and requesting? 9:20
2. What is the evening sacrifice spoken of? 9:21; Ezra 3:3
3. Who was Gabriel, the man Daniel had seen in an earlier vision? 8:15-16; 9:21, 23

4. What was Gabriel's mission? 9:22-23

5. What was the answer Gabriel gave to Daniel? 9:24

Note: Although the Babylonian exile was prophesied by Jeremiah to be 70 years, in reality, it was approximately 67 or perhaps 68 years. This did not mean that although the timing was not literally exact, the time frame prophesied had no meaning.

6. In what manner would the spiritual exile of Judah be brought to an end after seventy sevens? What would God's solution be to man's spiritual condition? Note six things. 9:24

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

7. What was the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem? 9:25

Note: There were two decrees issued by Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem namely:

In 458 BC (Ezra 7:8, 11-13).

In 445 BC (Nehemiah 2:1-5).

8. Which three distinguishable markers or events are mentioned in 9:25-27?

1.
2.
3.

9. What will happen in the time between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and before the city is destroyed once again? That is, after the sixty-two sevens? 9:25-26
10. Is it supposed to be difficult to understand these things? 9:22-23, 25a; cf. Revelation 1:3

Note: Some have literally attempted to work out when the Messiah would be born or crucified, calculating from the time the decree to rebuild Jerusalem was given as a marker. Some notable efforts were made by people such as Robert Anderson (1841-1918), in his book, 'The Coming Prince'. Although a time of 483 years, as calculated by the 69 sevens is significant, this does not mean that it has to be exact.

11. What will the enemy do? When did this happen? Will sacrifice and offering recommence after this event? 9:26
12. What is the meaning of 'the abomination that causes desolation'? 9:27
13. Why does Jesus also refer to the abomination that causes desolation? Was Jesus referring to the same abomination as Daniel? 9:27; Mathew 24:15-16; Luke 21:20
14. Explain the meaning of the last seven according to Daniel 9:27.

Reflection and Application _____

1. What do you think is the connection between the 70-year exile and the seventy sevens or 490 years?
2. What is the solution of man's spiritual predicament? The end of a physical exile or a spiritual exile?

A Possible Timeline of the Events in Daniel 9:24-27.

7 sevens	The Issue of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem	AD 445
62 sevens	The Anointed One comes. The Anointed One is cut off.	AD 30 / 33
1 seven	The Abomination that causes Desolation. The Destruction of Jerusalem.	AD 70

A Glorious Vision**Introduction**

In the third year of King Cyrus king of Persia, that is 536 BC, Daniel had a glorious vision. (Cyrus the King of Persia was probably the same person known as Darius the King of Media). cf. p.38

At that time Daniel was in great mourning. The reason was that the work on the rebuilding of the Temple had come to a halt. This delay would continue from the time of the opposition during the reign of Cyrus, down to the reign of Darius Hystaspes in 520 BC (Ezra 4:24).

Where was Daniel? He was not in Babylon, but on the banks of the great river Tigris, probably in the same area where Nebuchadnezzar set up the statue of himself, many years before. Notice that this encounter was once again written in the first person, for those who claim that much of Daniel was written in the second century before Christ. In this encounter, Daniel saw the glorious vision of a man. Was it perhaps a vision of the pre-incarnate Christ?

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 10:1-9

1. What was the content of Daniel's vision? 10:1
2. Why was Daniel in mourning? Why is the year significant? 10:2-3; Ezra 1:1-3; 4:24

3. Where was Daniel physically? Notice the first person, “I was standing”, “I looked up”, and “before me”. 10:4-5; 1:21; 6:28

4. Whom did Daniel see? Who do you think this was? What does it sound like? 10:5-6 cf. Revelation 1:12-16.

5. What was Daniel’s reaction? 1:7-9

6. Compare Daniel’s reaction for example with that of Paul and John. Acts 9:1-7; Revelation 1:17

Reflection and Application _____

1. What are some other notable experiences of God by the prophets in the Word?
 Isaiah 6:1-5
 Ezekiel 1:26-2:2
 Job 38:1-42:6

2. What is the cost of yielding to God’s Word today? 10:2-3

3. Daniel’s vision is regarding a time to come and a great war (10:1). Is it an earthly war (Zechariah 12:1-9; Revelation 16:16; Revelation 19:17-19; Revelation 20:7-9) or a supernatural war (Daniel 10:10-11:1)?

Forces of Evil in the Heavenly Realms**Introduction**

The Bible teaches that there is more happening in the spiritual realm than meets the eye. Spiritual forces are at work behind that which is visible in the world and in history. Many passages, both in the Old and New Testament give insight into this. cf. Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:13; Hebrews 6:5; 1 Peter 3:21

In Daniel's vision, he saw a remarkable figure. The effect of this sight left him totally drained of strength and he fell into a deep sleep. Then, he was touched by a hand of a messenger and he heard a different voice speaking to him. One who had been given a special commission to provide Daniel with insight. This commission was given, immediately as Daniel began to pray.

However, Michael the messenger had been resisted by *the prince of the Persian kingdom* until Michael had come to his aid. The archangel Michael (cf. Jude 9) is the leading defender of God's people (10:21; 12:1) against the powers of darkness (cf. Revelation 12:7–9).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 10:10-11:1

1. What is an angel and what kind of an angel was this? 10:10-11; Hebrews 1:14
2. Who was the messenger sent to Daniel? 10:11-12

3. Who delayed him to reach Daniel? Who was the Prince of the Persian Kingdom? Why is he called the King of Persia? 10:13
4. What was significant about the twenty-one days mentioned in 10:2-3 and 10:13? cf. Revelation 8:3-5
5. Who is Michael, *one of the chief princes*, and Michael *your prince*? 10:13, 21; Jude 9
6. What was the vision all about? Who is 'your people'? 10:14
7. How did Daniel receive the news? What was Daniel's response? 10:15-17
8. What was the encouraging commission? What did the messenger do for Daniel? 10:18-19
9. Why did the man in the vision come? Who is the Prince of Persia and the Prince of Greece? 10:20-21
10. What is the book of The Book of Truth? 10:21
11. Who is Darius the Mede and how did Daniel protect him? 11:1
What must should we as believers do for our rulers?

Reflection and Application _____

1. Are there 'territorial spirits or rulers'? Entities who are in control of certain nations? Isaiah 24:21
2. What is the meaning of passages such as Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:13; Hebrews 6:5; and 1 Peter 3:21? Complete the table below.

	Angels	Powers	Rulers	Authorities	Thrones
Romans 8:38					
Ephesians 3:10					
Ephesians 6:12					
Colossians 1:16					
Colossians 2:15					
Hebrews 6:5					
1 Peter 3:22					

Note: This is also borne out by the prophecy of Daniel where one reads of certain principalities in the heavenly realms. Daniel mentions the 'prince of Persia' (Daniel 10:13), the 'prince of Greece' (Daniel 10:20) and 'Michael the prince of your people' (Daniel 10:21; 12:1). From Daniel's prophecy, it seems that some of these principalities became hostile to YAHWEH and his plans, definitely under the influence of Satan.

3. Does this alter your understanding of the unseen spiritual world?
4. What lies behind the apparent ebb and flow of empires and rulers?

5. How had Daniel become involved in his intercession, which lay behind the scenes of the historical conflicts of his time?
6. What is the meaning of Deuteronomy 32:8? Who are the 'sons of God'? Cf. Job 1:6

^{ESV} **Deuteronomy 32:8** 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**.

Note: One can safely conclude that the rebellion at Babel was not simply about nations unwilling to move. The same enemy of YAHWEH that was at work in the Garden of Eden, as well as in the minds of the rebellious angelic beings before the flood, was once again at work at the tower of Babel.

The Kings of the North and the South

Introduction

This section would be very complicated and confusing, did we not know from world history what actually took place at this time. It contains much elaborate detail and the form of writing seems to be different from the rest of Daniel. This has led many modern commentators to conclude that much of Daniel, and certainly this section was written after the exile and by someone other than Daniel. This of course also raises problems for Daniel 7:6 as well as Daniel 8:5-14, which covers the same historical events.

This should not necessarily be a problem. Throughout the last part of the prophecy of Daniel, we constantly read the phrase, "I Daniel...." As he was writing in the first person (Daniel 7:15, 28; 8:15, 27; 9:2; 10:2, 7; 12:5). There is no reason to believe that Daniel did not write chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12.

The vision Daniel saw in Daniel 8 was in time fulfilled in detail by the events we see in Daniel 11. This section could well be an editorial addition to the main prophecy of Daniel.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 11:2-20; 1 Maccabees 1:1-10

1. Who were the three more kings in Persia, with a fourth far richer than the other? 11:2

Note: The successive kings of the Achaemenid Empire were:

Cyrus the Great	559-530 BC
Cambyses II	530-522 BC
Darius son of Hystaspes	522-486 BC
Xerxes I	486-465 BC

2. Who is this mighty King who will rule with great power, and who will do as he pleases? 11:3
3. What happened to Alexander's Empire? 11:4; 8:5-8; 21-22; Cf. 1 Maccabees 1:1-7
3. Who are the kings of the North and the Kings of the South? 11:5-8; 1 Maccabees 1:8-9
4. What happened for a time between the kings of the North (the Seleucids) and the Kings of the South (the Ptolemies)? 11:9-15
5. What is the Beautiful Land? 11:16
6. There will be a time when 'the invader will do as he pleases'. What does that mean? 11:17-20

Reflection and Application _____

What is the significance of this section? 11:2-20; Cf. Daniel 8:9-14; 23-25

A Master of Intrigue**Introduction**

A contemptible person will arise, a master of intrigue, one not born of royalty (11:21). He will vent his fury against the holy covenant.

He will show favour to those who forsake the holy covenant, he will desecrate the temple and abolish the daily sacrifice. They will set up 'the abomination that causes desolation' in the temple (11:30-32).

He will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people of God will firmly resist him (11:32).

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 11:21-35; 1 Maccabees 1:7-10

1. Who is the master of Intrigue or contemptible person that will arise? 11:21; 1 Maccabees 1:10-11; cf. p.58
2. Will he have success when he wages war against the kings of the South? 11:22-27
3. What will this contemptible person be set against? 11:28-30
4. What will this contemptible person do? 11:31-32

5. What will the true believers do and how will it turn out for them?
11:32b-34
6. Will some of the believers themselves fail? If we falter and fail, will that be the end of us? What is the good news? 11:35

Reflection and Application _____

1. What can true believers expect in this world?
2. Will things always turn out well for us?
3. Compare Daniel 8:9-14, 8:23-28 and 11:31-32.
4. Is *the abomination that causes desolation* the same as in Daniel 9:27?

A Model of Things to Come**Introduction**

In Scripture, we often find a recurring pattern of events. In this case the model or pattern is provided by Antiochus, who remains unnamed in Daniel's prophecy. This model includes the following: A king that sets himself up above 'the gods', opposes the covenant, desecrates the temple, sets up an abomination that causes desolation and persecutes the true believers. This model or pattern repeats itself in the history of Israel in the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, as well as the events at the end of time as described in Daniel 12; Zechariah 12-14, and the book of Revelation.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 11:36-45

1. This King will exalt himself above all gods. Where have you heard this before? 11:36 cf. Daniel 8:9-11; 24-25
2. Who is the God of gods? In what manner will he be successful? 11:36
3. What is the meaning of 'the gods of his fathers' or 'the one desired by women'? 11:37
4. What kind of god will he worship? 11:38

5. Whom will he honour and reward? 11:39
6. What is the time of the end? 11:35-36, 40
7. What is the Beautiful Land? 11:41-44
8. What will happen to him in the end? 11:45

Reflection and Application _____

1. In which way is Antiochus Epiphanes a model of things to come in future?

1 John 2:18

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
2. Compare and explain how the following presents a model for the days at the end of time?

Description	Daniel 11	Fulfilment
The end of sacrifice.	11:31	
The abomination that causes desolation.	11:31	
A king who exalts himself.	11:36	
A time of wrath.	11:36	
The time of the end.	11:35, 40	

The Last Things**Introduction**

Daniel 12 speaks about events at the end of time. Twice we hear the phrase “the time of the end” (12:4, 9) and also “the end of the days” (12:13). If one reads the passage carefully, it is clear that it is not referring to the end of the exile, but a time far beyond.

Taking note of “multitudes who sleep will awake” (12:2) and “at the end of the days you will rise” (12:13), speaks of the Day of Resurrection and the Day Judgement.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 12:1-4; Revelation 20:11-15

1. What time is in view here when the heavenly messenger speaks of “at that time” (12:1a, c) and “the time of the end?” (12:4) cf. 11:34-35, 40
2. Who is ‘Michael, the great prince...’ and who are ‘your people?’ 12:1; cf. 10:13, 21
3. What will characterise this time in human history? 12:1b; Matthew 24:21-22

4. Despite the distress, what is the good news? 12:1c; Hebrew 12:23; Revelation 2:11, 3:5, 20:15
5. What is this event described here? Which destinies await the dead? 12:2
6. What will the outcome be for the wise? What blessing awaits those who are wise? 12:3; Revelation 2:11
7. What must Daniel do with his revelation? Can this knowledge then not be known? 12:4
8. Where will human beings go and look for knowledge? 12:4

Reflection and Application _____

1. Does the phrase, “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake” indicate that we enter into a state of soul sleep when we die? 12:2 Cf. Exodus 3:6; Matthew 22:31-32; Luke 23:43; John 11:24-26, Philippians 1:23; Revelation 6:9-10
2. If soul sleep is not our state after death until the day of judgement, what happens when we die? Psalm 16:9-10a
3. So how do we understand ‘a better resurrection’? What is the second resurrection? Hebrews 11:35; Revelation 20:5-6

The Time of the End**Introduction**

Here the events introduced in Daniel 12:1-4 are expanded upon by Daniel 12:5-13. This kind of technique is also employed elsewhere in Daniel 7, 8 and 9. This technique is employed by John in Revelation 12. For example:

Daniel 7:1-14	Daniel 7:15-28
Daniel 8:9-14	Daniel 8:23-25
Daniel 9:24-26	Daniel 9:27
Revelation 12:1-6	Revelation 12:7-17

Once again a certain phrase is repeated, namely *a time, times and half a time* (7:25; 12:7). This same phrase is repeated in Revelation 11, 12 and 13 and in different ways. In Daniel and Revelation, we hear of

- 42 months (Revelation 11:2; 13:5).
- 1260 days (Revelation 11:3; 12:6).
- a time, times and half a time (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:14).

All of these, namely 1260 days, 42 months, a time, times and half a time add up to 3½ years. What does this number mean?

Another significant phrase is the difference between your people and the holy people. This distinction is also made in Zechariah 12 and 13.

Study Questions

Note: Answer questions from the text.

Read Daniel 12:5-13; Revelation 20:11-15

1. What would you answer those who claim that Daniel was written around the second century BC? 12:5 See also 7:2, 15, 28; 8:1, 15, 27; 9:2; 10:2, 7

2. What vision did Daniel see? Which astonishing things were Daniel referring to? 12:6
3. What did the man clothed in linen answer? What does “a time, times and half a time” mean? How long will it be before these things are fulfilled? 12:7
4. What has to take place first? Who are the holy people? 12:7b Cf. 12:1-3
5. How does the ‘holy people’ differ from ‘your people’? 12:1, 7
6. Did Daniel fully understand? Did the man in linen give him the full answer? Only when will these things be fully understood? 12:8-9
7. How many outcomes or destinies are there? 12:10
8. Who will understand the words of Daniel’s prophecy revealed to him by the man in linen cloth? 12:10
9. Which events are referred to here? 12:11-12; 9:27
10. What will happen to Daniel at the end of the days? 12:13

Reflection and Application _____

1. What is this period of 3½ years? 12:7
2. What is the meaning of the numbers 1290 days and 1335 days? 12:11-12
3. Why are there two standing on opposite banks? 12:5;
Cf. Revelation 22:2
4. Which of the passages in Daniel and Revelation speak of the following events?

Event	Antiochus	Christ	70 AD	Gospel Age	Last Day
Abomination of Desolation.	11:31		9:27 12:11		
Time of Wrath	8:19 11:35-39				12:1 12:13
Master of Intrigue	8:9-12 8:23-25				
Anointed One		7:13-14 9:24-26			
Little Horn (antichrist)				7:8 7:21 7:24-25	
Interruption of Sacrifice	8:11-14 8:25		9:27 12:11-12		
Gospel Age				7:25 12:7	
Time of the End	8:17 12:12				12:4 12:9

Daniel's Unimaginable Influence

The prophecy of Daniel is to the Old Testament what Revelation is to the New Testament. Jesus often quotes Daniel by using terms such as: 'Son of Man', and 'the abomination that causes desolation.' Daniel is extensively quoted and alluded to by John in Revelation: regarding beasts, kingdoms, three and a half years etc.

Apart from foretelling the coming of future empires such as:

- The Medo-Persian Empire.
- The Greek Empire.
- The Roman Empire.
- He also spoke of the coming of an eternal Kingdom and an eternal Ruler.

Daniel saw the coming of Anointed One, as well as the Son of Man, an eternal ruler over all the nations. Daniel was given the timing until this **Anointed Ruler** of this Kingdom would come! When Jesus was born, wise men came from where? From the East, from Babylon! How did they know? Daniel gave them the timing as found in Daniel 2, 7 and 9. God would also use the **70-year exile** as a pattern for the real **spiritual exile** of the Jews that would last **70 times 7 years!**

Daniel's influence went beyond the incarnation. He informed the ministry and teaching of John and Revelation. He saw the End of the Age, the Resurrection of the Dead and the Day of Judgement. His faithfulness led to unimaginable consequences far beyond our understanding or ability to imagine.

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God's reign and his servants' Faithfulness	Daniel 1:1-21
God's reign in subduing Kingdoms	Daniel 2:1-49
God's reign in fiery Trials	Daniel 3:1-30
God's reign humbles Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel 4:1-37
God's reign in removing Belshazzar	Daniel 5:1-30
God's reign over wild Beasts	Daniel 6:1-28
God's reign over bestial Kingdoms	Daniel 7:1-28
God's reign endures For Ever	Daniel 8:1-27