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a *Grace Notes* Bible Study

## Daniel

by Dr. Grant Richison



## Daniel

### Table of Contents

<b>Introduction to Daniel .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Daniel 1 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Daniel 1:1 .....	9
Daniel 1:2 .....	12
Daniel 1:3-4.....	12
Daniel 1:5-7.....	13
Daniel 1:8.....	14
Daniel 1:9.....	15
Daniel 1:10.....	16
Daniel 1:11-16.....	16
Daniel 1:17-21.....	17
<b>Daniel 2.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Daniel 2:1-3.....	18
Daniel 2:4-13.....	19
Daniel 2:14-16.....	21
Daniel 2:17.....	21
Daniel 2:18.....	21
Daniel 2:19-20.....	22
Daniel 2:21-23.....	22
Daniel 2:24-30.....	23
Daniel 2:31-35.....	24
Daniel 2:36-40.....	25
Daniel 2:41-42.....	27
Daniel 2:43-45.....	27
Daniel 2:46-49.....	28
<b>Daniel 3.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Daniel 3:1-7.....	29
Daniel 3:8-17.....	31
Daniel 3:18.....	32
Daniel 3:19-23.....	33
Daniel 3:24-25.....	33
Daniel 3:26-30.....	34
<b>Daniel 4.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Daniel 4:1-5.....	35
Daniel 4:6-7.....	36
Daniel 4:8-18.....	37
Daniel 4:19.....	39
Daniel 4:20-23.....	39

---

---

Daniel 4:24-27 .....	40
Daniel 4:28-37 .....	40
<b>Daniel 5 .....</b>	<b>42</b>
Daniel 5:1 .....	42
Daniel 5:2-8 .....	43
Daniel 5:9-12 .....	44
Daniel 5:13-17 .....	45
Daniel 5:18-19 .....	46
Daniel 5:20-21 .....	47
Daniel 5:22-31 .....	48
<b>Daniel 6 .....</b>	<b>50</b>
Daniel 6:1-3 .....	50
Daniel 6:4 .....	51
Daniel 6:5 .....	51
Daniel 6:6-9 .....	52
Daniel 6:10 .....	53
Daniel 6:11 .....	53
Daniel 6:12-18 .....	54
Daniel 6:19-20 .....	55
Daniel 6:21-22 .....	55
Daniel 6:23 .....	56
<b>Daniel 7 .....</b>	<b>56</b>
Daniel 7:1-2 .....	56
Daniel 7:3-6 .....	57
Daniel 7:7 .....	58
Daniel 7:8-13 .....	59
Daniel 7:14 .....	60
Daniel 7:15-18 .....	61
Daniel 7:19-23 .....	61
Daniel 7:24 .....	62
Daniel 7:25 .....	62
Daniel 7:26-28 .....	63
<b>Daniel 8 .....</b>	<b>64</b>
Daniel 8:1-4 .....	64
Daniel 8:5-8 .....	65
Daniel 8:9-14 .....	66
Daniel 8:15-26 .....	67
Daniel 8:27 .....	69
<b>Daniel 9 .....</b>	<b>69</b>
Daniel 9:1-2 .....	69
Daniel 9:3 .....	71
Daniel 9:4 .....	72
Daniel 9:5 .....	73
Daniel 9:6-7 .....	73
Daniel 9:8 .....	74
Daniel 9:9-11 .....	75

---

---

Daniel 9:12-13.....	75
Daniel 9:14.....	76
Daniel 9:15.....	77
Daniel 9:16.....	77
Daniel 9:17-19.....	78
Daniel 9:20.....	79
Daniel 9:21-23.....	79
Daniel 9:24.....	80
Daniel 9:25.....	82
Daniel 9:26.....	83
Daniel 9:27.....	84
<b>Daniel 10.....</b>	<b>86</b>
Daniel 10:1-3.....	86
Daniel 10:4-7.....	87
Daniel 10:8-10.....	88
Daniel 10:11-12.....	89
Daniel 10:13.....	90
Daniel 10:14-21.....	92
<b>Daniel 11.....</b>	<b>93</b>
Daniel 11:1.....	93
Daniel 11:2-4.....	93
Daniel 11:5-20.....	95
Daniel 11:21.....	96
Daniel 11:22-31.....	97
Daniel 11:32-35.....	98
Daniel 11:36.....	99
Daniel 11:37-45.....	100
<b>Daniel 12.....</b>	<b>101</b>
Daniel 12:1.....	101
Daniel 12:2.....	102
Daniel 12:3.....	104
Daniel 12:4.....	104
Daniel 12:5-6.....	105
Daniel 12:7-13.....	106

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## Introduction to Daniel

Dr. Grant C. Richison

### I. VALUE OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

- A. Daniel is a book of prophecy that gives assurance to God's people about the future.
- B. Daniel the man is an example to all those who study him.
- C. Daniel was a leader who went against public opinion.
- D. Suffering did not daunt Daniel's purpose to live for God.
- E. Daniel, as all prophetic books, gives hope to the believer.
- F. The mills of God grind slowly yet they grind exceedingly small. God will eventually judge Gentile nations.

### II. AUTHOR

- A. Daniel is the self-proclaimed author (7:1)
  - B. Daniel means God is my judge. Daniel is the story of God's justice even in the face of Gentile persecution (2 Kings 14; Isaiah 39)
    - Dan= judge
    - ie= my
    - el= God
  - C. Three Daniels in the Old Testament:
    - 1 Chronicles 3:1
    - Son of Ithamar , with Ezra after the captivity (Ezra 8:2; Nehemiah 10:16)
    - Author of the book of Daniel
  - D. He then received a new name, by which it was usual to mark a change in one's condition (2 Kings 23:34 24:17; Ezra 5:14; Esther 2:7):Beltshazzar, that is, a prince favored by Bel (Da 1:7).
  - E. Daniel lived during the sixth century B.C.
  - F. External evidence:
    - 1. Jesus says Daniel is the author (Matthew 24:15-16; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20)
    - 2. Talmud attributes the writing to Daniel
    - 3. The writer of Daniel demonstrates knowledge of the sixth century:
      - City of Shushan described as in the province of Elam (8:2)
  - G. Internal evidence:7:1
  - H. If Daniel is a false writing [pseudepigraphical], and not written until the late Maccabean era (165 B.C.), how famous can he be?
    - 1. If Daniel is not mentioned until 165 B.C., how famous could he be? Liberals claim that the author of Daniel faked some famous person's name to pawn off his own views.
    - 2. Ezekiel mentions Daniel before this date (14:14,20; 28:3). The date of Ezekiel is not disputed.
    - 3. Daniel 1:6 says Daniel is the author.
    - 4. Those who argue for the late date do so because they cannot accept that he wrote about prophecy that later came true.
-

5. The old proverb, then, comes true: It is very difficult to prophesy, especially about the future!
- I. Conversion – under Jeremiah (Jeremiah 35: Daniel 9:2)
- J. Contemporaries: Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel, Obadiah
- K. Personality: Daniel 6:23; Ezekiel 14:20; Mark 24:15
- L. Character:
- Man of principle (1:8)
  - Man of understanding (1:17)
  - Man of prayer (6:10; chapter 9)
  - Man of faith (6:4,23)
  - Man of excellent spirit (5:12; 6:3)
  - Man of humility (10:12)
- M. Great in his own day yet without compromise
- N. Born about 625 B.C., which was also the birth date of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This was also the year Ashurballit died – the last mighty king of Assyria.
- O. Daniel lived until the fall of the neo-Babylonian Empire under the conquest of Cyrus, King of Persia.
- P. Nineveh fell (612 B.C.) during Daniel's lifetime. Babylon (Nabopolassar, with his son, Nebuchadnezzar) became the power center for western Asia.
- Q. Daniel lived during the reign of Josiah, king for 15 years when Daniel was born.
- R. There was a great revival in Israel during Daniel's boyhood: (2 Kings 22:80-11; 23:2,21-23; 2 Chronicles 34:14-19; 35:1-19. This revival formed Daniel's character.
- S. Significance of Daniel:
- Spoke and wrote in exile
  - Deported from Judah 605 B.C.
  - Ministered to four world rulers (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, Cyrus)
  - He 11:33

### III. DATE

- A. Liberal dating: late second century – Daniel in the critics' den.
1. Liberals hold that the book of Daniel was written in the late second century (after 168 B.C., probably 165 B.C.)
  2. Liberals claim that Daniel is fiction written to challenge Israelites to rise up against Antiochus Epiphanes.
  3. The place of Daniel in the writings indicates that it was written late; however, other books such as Job, the Davidic psalms and Solomon's writings were included in the writings.
  4. Liberals also claim that Daniel wrote prophecies after the event and in the names of pseudo writers.
- B. Conservative dating: early sixth century
1. The book claims to have been written by Daniel (7:1).
  2. Qumran literature refers to Daniel, yet Qumran literature itself is dated from the Maccabean period; this makes it unlikely that Daniel was written during that period.
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3. Language evidence: Daniel's Aramaic [Daniel wrote primarily in Aramaic, not Hebrew] is closer to the sixth century than the second.
4. Book of Daniel placed in the Septuagint (LXX) by 285 B.C.
5. Josephus (Jewish historian of the first century) = ...Daniel which was given 408 years before... narrating incidents of the struggle with Antiochus Epiphanes (died 165 B.C.).
6. Josephus asserts that Alexander the Great was shown the prophecies in Daniel by the high priest Juddua, and was so delighted that he offered to confer favor on the Jews. Alexander preceded Antiochus Epiphanes by 150 years.
7. 1 Macc 2:49-60 refers to Daniel and his three companions in such a way as to infer that Daniel was an extant book when 1 Maccabees was written.
8. Ezekiel mentions Daniel three times (Ezekiel 14:14,20; 28:3). Ezekiel and Daniel were contemporaries.
9. Christ mentions Daniel (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14)
10. Clay tablet with Belshazzar's name
11. Clay tablet with both Belshazzar and Nabonidus
12. Clay tablet – Belshazzar as king's son
13. Clay tablet – oath by Nabonidus and Belshazzar
14. Dozens of details known about his life
15. Jesus sets His seal on the credibility of Daniel's predictions (Mt 24:15). Jesus lived in His humanity 150 years after Antiochus.

#### IV. PLACE IN THE CANON

- A. The original canon had two divisions: the law and the prophets
- B. Around the second century B.C., three divisions of the same books appeared: the law, the prophets and the writings.
  - In the Hebrew canon, Daniel was not included among the prophets but in the writings with the historical books.
  - Daniel's role was not primarily to call the nation to repentance as a prophet but to serve God as an administration in a Gentile kingdom.
  - The Massorettes who made the three-fold division did not view Daniel as a prophet because he was not ordained as a prophet. He was in government employment.
  - Much of Daniel is history.

#### V. PURPOSE

- A. To give hope for the restoration of Israel
  - B. To sustain believers during crisis
  - C. To challenge believers to expect God's purpose of history to be fulfilled
  - D. Not a history of the person Daniel
  - E. To reveal the comprehensive program of God culminating in the Second Advent especially as it relates to the Gentiles.
  - F. As the most important prophetic book of the Old Testament, Daniel constitutes an indispensable introduction to New Testament prophecy.
  - G. Daniel traces the Times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24) from the captivity of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar until the Second Advent of Christ.
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H. Daniel is a prophetic philosophy of history.

## **VI. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL**

A. Daniel provides history from the first invasion of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C. and goes to the third year of Cyrus (536 B.C.).

B. Daniel is the most wide-ranging prophetic book in the Old Testament.

C. Daniel is written in both Hebrew [Jew's language] and Aramaic [language of the Babylonians].

· 1:1 - 2:4a-Hebrew

· 2:4b - 7:28-Aramaic

· 8:1 - 12:13-Hebrew

D. The New Testament refers to every chapter of Daniel.

E. Every New Testament writer uses Daniel's prophecies.

F. Daniel is the foundation to the book of Revelation.

G. The book of Daniel bridges the period between the Old Testament and the New Testament [400 years of silence otherwise].

H. Daniel is prophecy

I. In the K'thubhim (one of 5 later writings)

J. Daniel is a philosophy of history.

K. Daniel is the greatest book in the Bible on the subject of Gentile kingdoms.

L. Apocalyptic in character

M. Daniel's prophecies speak almost entirely to the future of the Gentile nations.

## **VII. KEY WORD:dominion**

## **VIII. FOCUS:The time of the end (2:28,29,45; 8:17,19,23,etc.)**

## **IX. THEME:God is sovereign over the Gentile nations (2:44).**

## **X. SETTING OF THE BOOK [1:1-2]**

A. The Babylonians carried Daniel into exile to teach him the custom and language of the Chaldeans.

B. Daniel continued in Babylon throughout the seventy-year period of exile.

C. Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh-Necho, King of Egypt, in 605 B.C. at Carchemish on the Euphrates River (Jeremiah 46:2; 2 Chronicles 35:20). This made Babylon the world power.

D. Nebuchadnezzar plundered the Temple in Jerusalem and took away its golden vessels. With these, he took noble youth from Jerusalem back to Babylon.

## **XI. DANIEL THE MAN**

A. Daniel was a Hebrew of noble birth.

B. Daniel was a statesman for Babylon.

C. He was taken captive as a youth by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C. (1:1).

D. Daniel became an official in the court of Nebuchadnezzar and continued to serve other monarchs until the first year of Cyrus (536 B.C., Daniel 1:1-2, 21).

E. Jesus referred to him as a prophet in Matthew 24:15.

F. Ezekiel considered Daniel as an outstanding believer (Ezekiel 14:12-20; 28:1-3).



G. Daniel's piety and wisdom were proverbial. Note how Ezekiel refers to him (Ezekiel 14:14,20 28:3), not as a writer, but as exhibiting a character righteous and wise in discerning secrets.

H. Daniel was a prophet to the Gentiles for Gentiles.

I. Daniel served under four dynasties of the world's greatest powers.

J. We can see Daniel's spirituality, humility and dependence upon God in almost every chapter.

K. Daniel's steadfastness to truth had no latitude and His faithfulness to God no longitude.

L. Daniel was a great man of prayer.

M. The book of Daniel covers Daniel's age from 19 to 92.

## XII. OUTLINE

[chapters 1-6 are historical and chronological whereas chapters 7-12 are prophetic but not chronological.]

Introduction, 1:1-2:3

- They gave Daniel a pagan name but he did not accept their pagan customs.

I. Prophecies connected to the Times of the Gentiles, 2:4-7:28

- The four world empires, 2:4-49

- God's deliverance of the Hebrew children, 3:1-30

- God's judgment on Gentile ruler number one, 4:1-37

- God's judgment on Gentile ruler number two, 5:1-31

- God's deliverance, 6:1-28

- Prophecy of four world empires, 7:1-28

II. Prophecies related to Gentile powers and the Jews, 8:1-12:13

- Prophecies about the antichrist and Gentiles, 8:1-27

- The end time and the Jews, 9:1-27

- Prophecies about the antichrist and the Gentiles, 10:1-11:45

- The end time and the Jews, 12:1-13

## Daniel 1

### Daniel 1:1

**Daniel 1:1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.**

Pharaoh Necho put Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah to succeed his brother, Jehoahaz. Jehoiakim and Jehoahaz were the sons of the godly king Josiah (2 Kings 23:31-37). This began the seventy-year captivity because of Israel's idolatry (1 Kings 11:5; 12:28; 16:31; 18:19; 2 Kings 21:3-5; 2 Chronicles 28:2-8). This is the beginning of the important prophetic time period -- the times of the Gentiles. This period began in 605 B.C. and will extend until Jesus returns as the Messiah.

Luke 21:24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Critics point to a seeming conflict between this statement by Daniel regarding the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, and the statement by Jeremiah in which he says that the event occurred in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 25:1; 46:2). They use this kind of argument to show that the book of Daniel is spurious in its historicity. However, Daniel used Babylonian calculation rather than

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Hebrew. It was customary in the Babylonian system to reckon the second year as the first year of a king's reign and the first year as the year of his accession. Daniel spent most of his life in Babylon and was indoctrinated into Babylonian culture as a captive. It was natural that Daniel used a Babylonian form of calculation.

Daniel himself studied the prophecies of Jeremiah (Daniel 9:2). He would not have contradicted Jeremiah, because he studied it firsthand. He also writes independently from personal knowledge. Jeremiah uses the Hebrew form of reckoning but Daniel the Babylonian.

Another possible view is that, in Judah, Daniel used the old Jewish calendar year that began in the month Tishri (September/October) and Jeremiah used the Babylonian calendar that began in the spring in the month Nisan (March/April). This would mean that Nebuchadnezzar conquered all of Syria and the territory south to the borders of Egypt in late spring or early summer of 605 B.C. Jeremiah 46:2 mentions that the Carchemish battle preceded Daniel's captivity and occurred in Jehoiakim's fourth year. The only period that resolves Daniel's third year and Jeremiah's fourth year was the six months between Nisan and Tishri, 605 B.C. The Hebrews maintained two calendars: 1) the religious calendar that began with Nisan in the spring and 2) a civil calendar that began with Tishri in the fall. An event occurring between Nisan and Tishri would date one year differently. Any event in this period could be attributed to either year.

A third view is that Daniel 1:1 was an earlier raid on Jerusalem not recorded elsewhere in Scripture. In the battle at Carchemish in May-June 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar met Pharaoh Necho and destroyed the Egyptian army in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 46:2). Daniel 1:1 occurred before this battle. Nebuchadnezzar could not have avoided Carchemish to conquer Jerusalem first. In this case, the capture of Daniel would be about 606 B.C.

Pharaoh invaded Babylon but Nebuchadnezzar defeated him at Carchemish. After Nebuchadnezzar's defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish, he moved south on his way to the Sinai to take Syria and eventually Jerusalem (an ally of Pharaoh). The Babylonian Chronicle gives the result of the Carchemish battle: Nebuchadnezzar conquered the whole area of the Hatti-country.

God made a covenant with Israel just before she crossed Jordan to enter the land (Deuteronomy 28-30). The conditions of this covenant included how God would deal with the obedience and disobedience of the nation Israel. Disobedience would bring discipline upon Israel (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). This included invasion of Gentile nations and dispersion of Israel to Gentile countries (Deuteronomy 28:49-68). This discipline would not be lifted until Israel turned back to God and obeyed His commandments (Deuteronomy 30:1-10).

The Northern Kingdom of Israel had gone into the captivity of Assyria in 722 B.C. Now Judah went into captivity almost 100 years later. The reason for this delay was the leadership of godly kings during that period. Eventually Jehoiakim, king of Judah, rebelled against the warning of Jeremiah. Judah went into idolatry (Jeremiah 7:30-31) and neglected the Sabbath Day and the sabbatical year (Jeremiah 34:12-22), so God sent Nebuchadnezzar as His instrument of discipline upon Judah.

**PRINCIPLE:** The Bible is the veritable Word of God.

**APPLICATION:** Clearly, Daniel's account is genuine. Daniel's account can be reconciled with accounts both outside the Bible and in other books of the Bible. Clearly, critics want to discredit the book of Daniel because of its many prophecies of absolute accuracy. Many of Daniel's prophecies have already come true – prophecies of the kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar, Persia, Greece and Rome. That is why critics want to date Daniel after these historical events.

An attack on Daniel is an attack on the Word of God itself. Ezekiel classifies Daniel with Noah and Job (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3). Jesus places his stamp of approval on Daniel. He calls Daniel a prophet. If we reject Daniel as authentic, we reject the authenticity of the Lord Jesus.

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Matthew 24:15 Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place...

If the book of Daniel was written in 175-165 B.C. as the critics claim, why did it get into the Septuagint which was completed in 285 B.C.? Why did Josephus, the Jewish historian, say that the struggle with Antiochus Epiphanies (175-165 B.C.) was prophesied by Daniel 408 years before? Josephus said that these things came to pass according to the prophecy of Daniel which was given 408 years before. When Alexander the Great was told of Daniel's prophecies, and that he himself was prophesied in Scripture (Daniel 8:5-8), he spared the city of Jerusalem. Therefore, Daniel must have been written before 332 B.C.

Do you believe the Bible to be the veritable Word of God? Either you do or you don't. There is no middle ground on that question. Whoever denies the integrity of Daniel impeaches the credibility of Christ.

During Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar assaulted Jerusalem in about 605 B.C. He took the city and carried captives to Babylon. Daniel and his three friends were among this first group of captives.

Jehoiachin became king of Judah after Jehoiakim died. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar again besieged Jerusalem. Jehoiachin and all the vessels of the house of the Lord were taken to Babylon along with a larger group of captives. Ezekiel was among this latter group (2 Kings 24:6-16).

Jehoiachin's uncle Zedekiah became king and also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who then destroyed the temple and burned Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar killed Zedekiah's sons in his presence and then put out Zedekiah's eyes. Nebuchadnezzar carried him to Babylon with yet another group of captives in 588 or 587 B.C. This fulfilled a prophecy of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:8-13).

Nebuchadnezzar ruled forty-three years (605-562 B.C.) during the Neo-Babylonian period. He was an outstanding statesman, military strategist and builder. The book of Daniel calls him king in a proleptic (anticipatory) sense because he was shortly to become king (as does Jeremiah in 27:6). He was co-sovereign with his father until he returned to Babylon. They summoned him to Babylon on the death of his father Nabopolassar this same summer and crowned him on September 6th.

**PRINCIPLE:** The wheels of God's justice grind exceedingly slow but also exceedingly sure.

**APPLICATION:** Ignoring God's Word and God's principles ultimately brings judgment on the believer. God always warns before judgment. His discipline never comes unexpectedly. No one can escape His judgments.

God takes no pleasure in executing judgment. He pleads for erring Israel to turn back to Him (Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11). It is never too late to turn to God. God will extend grace toward those who come to Him.

Jonah 3:5-10 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.

6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water.

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.

9 Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

When the world captures the hearts of Christians, they do not capture the world for Christ.

### **Daniel 1:2**

**Daniel 1:2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.**

The Lord was responsible for Nebuchadnezzar's defeat of Judah. Daniel understood that God was in charge of Gentile nations. He viewed God as absolutely sovereign. The word Lord here is Adonai. Adonai refers to God as supreme master. God was master of Jehoiakim's situation.

The word gave indicates God's absolute control. Nebuchadnezzar was simply God's tool or instrument for accomplishing His purposes for Judah.

The carrying off of the articles of the Temple was a gesture of victory over and subjection of a nation. Some of the articles were taken at this time, and others when Jehoiachin surrendered (2 Kings 24:13; 2 Chronicles 36:18). Later in Daniel, Belshazzar brought these vessels out for a banquet (Daniel 5).

Almost one hundred years prior, in 701 B.C., Isaiah had predicted this act of carrying off the articles of the Temple because Hezekiah displayed them to an envoy of Babylon (2 Kings 20:13).

which he carried into the land of Shinar [Babylon] to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god

Shinar is Babylonia, a place regularly viewed as hostile to God (Genesis 10:10; 11:2; 14:1, 9; Isaiah 11:11; Zechariah 5:11). Nebuchadnezzar carried the vessels of the house of God to the house of his god, who was Bel or Marduk. The main temple in Babylon was the Marduk temple near the Ishtar gate and a great ziggurat.

**PRINCIPLE:** God always squares the account.

**APPLICATION:** God always keeps His Word. God prophesied previously that if Hezekiah exhibited the vessels of the Temple to a Gentile king, God would judge him (2 Kings 20:17-18; Isaiah 39). God never fails to do what He says He is going to do. God will ultimately square the account.

It is very easy to forget that God will do what He claims He will do. In a day when we claim our rights, we can never be indifferent to God's rights.

### **Daniel 1:3-4**

**3 Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles,**

**4 young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.**

Critics of the Bible claim that the name Ashpenaz was pure fiction because it never appeared in the records of Babylon. However, an Assyriologist found the name on a brick retrieved from the ruins and presently preserved in the British Museum.

Ashpenaz was the chief of the court officers (Daniel 1:7-11, 18).

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Nebuchadnezzar wanted to establish sound leadership in his new kingdom so he instructed the master of his eunuchs to find outstanding executives from the captives of his campaign.

Nebuchadnezzar brought from Jerusalem some of the royal family and the nobility of Israel.

The reference to no blemish is physical blemish.

Again, this is a physical good look. Appearance was important to serve in the Neo-Babylonian kingdom's palace.

These nobles from Judah were gifted in wisdom. It is important to note that the reference is to wisdom rather than knowledge. Knowledge is the accumulation of facts, whereas wisdom is the correct use of facts.

It was not enough to possess wisdom; these young men had to have knowledge and a quickness to understand.

The aristocratic young men of Judah would be assets to the administration of the Chaldean kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar therefore attempted to assimilate them into his government. These men would preside over the affairs of Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar wanted to teach the young men from Judah the language and literature of the Chaldeans. This was a three-year period of training in architecture, astrology, astronomy, agriculture, law, mathematics and the very difficult Akkadian language, an East Semitic cuneiform language.

Literally, the word Chaldeans means clod-breakers. The Chaldeans lived in the area known as lower Mesopotamia, which bordered on the Persian Gulf. More specifically, this area was on the lower Euphrates and Tigris rivers. These were the original Aramaic-speaking people. These people invaded Babylonia and it was this group to whom the Neo-Babylonian kings belonged.

**PRINCIPLE:** Living in God's Word keeps us from yielding to the values of the world system.

**APPLICATION:** The four young men from Judah fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that the sons of Judah will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

Isaiah 39:7 And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

God's Word never fails. If we apply the principles of God's unfailing Word to our lives, it is possible not to yield to the philosophy around us. Just a few verses after the previous quote in Isaiah 39, Isaiah gives a promise about the unfailing Word of God.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades,

But the word of our God stands forever.

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

#### **Daniel 1:5-7**

**And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.**

**Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.**

**To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.**

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Nebuchadnezzar provided for the aristocratic young men from Judah the highest form of generosity. He gave consideration to their noble birth and training in Judah. There was no choice in what food they ate.

The king allocated to these young men three years of education.

The rapid expansion of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom needed more and better leadership. The king needed people of great capacity to fill administrative positions and governmental posts throughout his empire.

Daniel does not reveal how many young men were inducted into the service of Nebuchadnezzar, but he does point out four.

The meanings of the Hebrew names are clear but the meanings of the Babylonian names are more conjectural.

Daniel means God is my judge. The name Belshazzar included the name of the Babylonian god Bel. This was the name for the god Marduk or Nabu. Belshazzar means Bel, protect the king.

Hananiah means Jehovah has been gracious. Shadrach is an Akkadian term meaning I am fearful, command of Aku. Aku is another Babylonian god.

Mishael means Who is what God is? The captors gave him the name Meshach, which means Who is what Aku is? I am despised, contemptible (from the Akkadian).

Azariah means Jehovah has helped. He was given the name Abed-Nego which means the servant of Nebo (the god Nebo, who was the son of Bel). Nebo was the god of vegetation.

By giving these four young men these names, Ashpenaz hoped to eradicate Hebrew culture and inculcate Chaldean culture into their thinking. The names indicate that they were subject to the Chaldean gods. This was simply a brainwashing technique.

**PRINCIPLE:** Inculcation of the Word of God will give the believer stability against false philosophy.

**APPLICATION:** Studies in Chaldean culture did not daunt the convictions of the four Judean believers. The content of Chaldean culture contradicted those convictions but they were able to stand on their beliefs.

These young men were able to study the Chaldean culture with academic excellence. Other godly men did the same: Moses learned the wisdom of Egypt (Acts 7:22) and Paul spoke before the Supreme Court of Athens (the Areopagus), even quoting from their own poets.

There is a great difference between God's viewpoint on life and the viewpoint of the world. The viewpoint of God transcends the viewpoint of the world because the source is from eternity rather than time, from all-knowledge rather than special knowledge.

### Daniel 1:8

**But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.**

King Nebuchadnezzar gave the young captives from Judah food and wine from his own table. They had the very best that the king could offer. However, these provisions did not meet the precepts of the Mosaic Law, so Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not eat this food.

The word purposed carries the idea of decided resolution. Daniel's character was already formed for following God before the test came to him. The phrase purposed in his heart could be translated laid

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upon his heart. Daniel put himself under the full commitment to follow his heart. Ashpenaz must have been impressed with the devotion of Daniel.

**PRINCIPLE:** An all-consuming purpose to live for the glory of God will enable us to meet spiritual tests of life.

**APPLICATION:** The will of God was the all-consuming purpose of Daniel's life. Whether Daniel would eat the food from the king was the supreme test of his fidelity to the Lord and His Word. All of the inducements or promises could not deter Daniel from his purpose. A life of luxury landed in his lap, yet he refused it forthwith. He would be faithful to God no matter the cost. He set aside the luxury of Nebuchadnezzar for vegetables.

All of us face forks in the road of our lives whereby we decide either to follow the Lord or go our own way. Where we are in our Christian walk today is the result of choices of the past. The friends that we have selected, the choice of life partner, moral decisions, and the vocation that we chose have all taken us to where we are today.

We live in a day of latitudinarianism and syncretism. Few ask the questions, What is God's will? What does God's Word have to say about this? Everything is valid. Everyone has his viewpoint. No wonder such false living and false doctrine pervade the Christian church in our day. Precious few have deep spiritual moorings today. Evangelical Christians are swept away like a flood after the world system.

An ongoing spiritual axiom is that we cannot advance in maturity without a clear conscience. If we live contrary to the will of God, God cannot bless us and work in our heart. Rather, we will steadily deteriorate in our spirituality if we do not deal with our sin.

This request to not eat the king's food was courageous on Daniel's part. It is one thing to purpose, but it is another thing to use that purpose with wisdom. Daniel did not court opposition in his resolve.

The four young men did not eat of the king's food because 1) it was not kosher and 2) it was sacrificed to idols.

Daniel's request was not peevish; it was not made from a spirit of sullenness but from biblical conviction. These foods were probably sacrificed to idols. He did not want to defile himself with this food. The word defile connotes the ideas of stain or pollute. Daniel did not want to disrupt his fellowship with God.

**PRINCIPLE:** Believers must operate on the higher sphere of a predetermined predisposition in order to make difficult choices.

**APPLICATION:** Refusal to eat the food of the king might have been interpreted as peevish rebellion. However, Daniel used wisdom in his approach to his leader by asking for a 10-day test. The food of the king was appealing because it was the best Babylon could offer. It would have been easy to compromise since he was so far from home and the temple. But Daniel operated on a higher sphere. He functioned on a predetermined predisposition to follow God no matter what the consequence.

### **Daniel 1:9**

**Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. 10 And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king.**

Note that it was God who brought Daniel into favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. God intervened upon Daniel's superiors to view him with goodwill. God did this for Joseph as well

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(Genesis 39:21). God processes everything that every believer goes through. He never deserts us. God is faithful.

The word goodwill is often used in the Old Testament for God's favor and unfailing love. God effected this attitude in Ashpenaz.

#### **Daniel 1:10**

**And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, 'I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king.'**

Ashpenaz did not want the four young men to look less healthy, for he could lose his head through decapitation by the whim of Nebuchadnezzar. The king had specifically ordered the menu.

**PRINCIPLE:** We trust God to deliver in His faithfulness.

**APPLICATION:** Daniel willingly put his faith to the test because of his confidence in God's sovereign provision for any need. Would he follow God or Nebuchadnezzar? He was on the horns of a dilemma. After having his name exchanged for a pagan Babylonian name, attending Babylonian University, working for a pagan government, and being challenged to eat non-kosher food, he drew a line in the sand.

The mark of a great man or woman is the willingness to go contrary to the herd. When great pressure comes upon you, can you make the right decision in the face of great odds?

#### **Daniel 1:11-16**

**So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,**

**'Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink.**

**Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.'**

**So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.**

**And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies.**

**Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.**

Daniel acts on his convictions by offering a ten-day test to his immediate supervisor.

Apparently Daniel's request not to eat of the food of the king's table was denied so he offered a test to determine whether eating kosher food of vegetables and water would work. Vegetables may include grain because the original carries the idea of grain as well as vegetables.

Daniel offered an experiment to see if his proposal would work.

The steward agreed to the test and examined the four young men in ten days.

At the end of the ten-day trial, the four young men were in better health than before.

Since the trial proved successful, the steward allowed them to continue on the diet of vegetables and water.

**PRINCIPLE:** Personal revival can make a person strong in adversity.

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**APPLICATION:** Daniel was born about 625 B.C. This was the year that the Neo-Babylonian Empire began. He lived through the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors until the Babylonian Empire fell by the conquest of Cyrus, king of Persia. Many of the great events of history occurred during Daniel's time, including the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C. that made Babylon the new power of Western Asia.

Daniel was of the royal house of Judah; he was an aristocrat. The good king Josiah had ruled fifteen years when Daniel was born. King Josiah led his nation into a great revival by the reading of God's Word (2 Kings 23:2). This revival impacted Daniel greatly. Daniel saw the outpouring of God's grace during Josiah's reign.

The impact of this revival gave Daniel spiritual strength that carried him through the tragedy of his deportation to Babylon. Daniel refused to compromise. As he was in Jerusalem, so he was in Babylon. The impact of that revival carried him through adversity throughout his life.

Has there been a time in your life when you gave yourself to God and His Word unreservedly?

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit [yield] their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

#### **Daniel 1:17-21**

**As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.**

**Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.**

**Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king.**

**And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.**

**Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.**

God was in the business of preparing these four young men for His purposes. God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom. Knowledge has to do with mental agility and logic. He gave them skill in literature and wisdom. These young men were well-read and they acquired the ability to use what they knew. God also gave them understanding in visions and dreams. That is, they had a supernatural knowledge of prophecy and eschatology. Today, God speaks through the closed canon of Scripture.

The book of Daniel was read and studied by the Lord Jesus.

- Matthew 24:15 alludes to Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11
- Matthew 24:21 alludes to Daniel 12:1
- Matthew 24:30 alludes to Daniel 7:13
- John 5:28,29 allude to Daniel 12:2

The apostle John especially alludes to the book of Daniel. The study of Daniel is a prerequisite to the study of the book of Revelation because of the many allusions to Daniel in the book of Revelation. Both books are books of prophecy. Both books speak of the tribulation, the final Anti-Christ, the coming of the Messiah and the final triumphal kingdom.

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The phrase end of days refers to the end of the three years of training and testing. The chief of the eunuchs brought the four young men before Nebuchadnezzar for a personal interview.

Nebuchadnezzar depended on Daniel and his three friends throughout his reign as king for knowledge about the future.

None equaled the four young men in wisdom and understanding. They were ten times better than the magicians and astrologers. Evidently, they were given positions of significant responsibility in the government of Nebuchadnezzar. The four young men had the capacity to distinguish between a genuine dream and one that had no revelatory meaning.

Daniel continued in the service of the court until the overthrow of the Babylonian Empire by Cyrus in 539 B.C. God honored his resolve to serve Him without compromise. Daniel served as God's spokesman to the Gentiles. He would have been approximately 90 years of age if he began his career about 605 B.C. Daniel was probably released from his responsibilities when Cyrus issued his decree in favor of the Jews (Ezra 1:1-4).

This verse does not say that Daniel died in the first year of King Cyrus (539 B.C.) Critics claim that the statement that Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus is an inaccuracy because Daniel 10:1 says that Daniel was given a revelation in the third year of Cyrus. This is so much flimflam because this verse does not say or imply that Daniel did not continue after the first year of Cyrus. The purpose of Daniel's statement about King Cyrus is to show that Daniel's career spanned the entire period of Persian domination of Babylon.

Daniel does not reveal much about his relationship with Cyrus; however, Cyrus proclaimed an emancipation of the Jews recorded in Ezra 1:1-4 and 2 Chronicles 36:22-23. Daniel may have given Cyrus the prophecy of Jeremiah that was fulfilled in 536 B.C., the first year of Cyrus.

**PRINCIPLE:** God blesses faithfulness.

**APPLICATION:** God blesses faithfulness. Like Daniel, we have every reason to follow the philosophy of the world system. Again, like Daniel, we have the choice to follow God no matter what the cost might be. We are either conformed to this world or transformed by God. A transformed life is a powerful and fruitful life. A conformed life is barren and powerless.

Romans 12:1-2, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

## Daniel 2

### Daniel 2:1-3

**Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.**

**Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.**

**And the king said to them, 'I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream.'**

Chapters two through seven deal with the times of the Gentiles referenced by Christ (Luke 21:24). Chapters two and seven give the most comprehensive picture of prophecy dealing with the Gentile

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nations anywhere in Scripture. The time frame stretches from 600 BC to the time when Christ returns Second Coming (not the Rapture).

Nebuchadnezzar was the head of the first great world empire. He conquered the Assyrian empire and then the Syrian. He defeated the Egyptians. He was co-monarch with Nabopolassar, his father, for about two years. The second year of his reign would be about four years after he carried Daniel into captivity.

In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he struggled with a recurring, troubling dream about his empire. Where was it going and where would it end?

Nebuchadnezzar summoned the philosophers and religious leaders of his realm. Magicians professed to divine the future using many means; they were the sacred writers. The astrologers were the priestly caste that studied the heavens to determine the future. Sorcerers cast spells by witchcraft or incantations. The Chaldeans (also a priestly caste) here are soothsayers who teach Chaldean culture, and not native Chaldeans.

Nebuchadnezzar was in a state of anxiety because he did not know the meaning of the dream about his empire. This shook him immensely. He was the most powerful man of his day. This shows that no matter how high the station or how great the unbeliever, he has no ultimate security in life. With all his power, conquests, successes and greatness, none of it gave him peace. He is worried, insecure and frightened.

**PRINCIPLE:** Success will never replace inner peace.

**APPLICATION:** No matter how successful we are or how much money we make, we will never have inner peace until we come to grips with the Prince of Peace. Success is not the ultimate reality of life. However, having a fellowship with God and rest in His provisions gives us that inner peace. We get that peace through fellowship with the Lord from the Word of God.

### **Daniel 2:4-13**

**Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, 'O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation.'**

**The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, 'My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap.'**

**However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.'**

**They answered again and said, 'Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation.'**

**The king answered and said, 'I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm:**

**if you do not make known the dream to me, there is only one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.'**

**The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, 'There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.'**

**It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.'**

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**For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave a command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.**

**So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.**

Daniel switches in 2:4b to the Aramaic from the Hebrew. He continues in Aramaic until 7:28. Daniel 1:1-2:4a and 8:1-12:13 are written in Hebrew. Aramaic was the language of Babylon, Assyria and Persia. It was the language of trade and government. Daniel switched to Aramaic because 2:4b to 7:28 deal with Gentile matters.

The Chaldeans took the initiative in replying to the king. These religious leaders insisted on knowing the content of the dream.

King Nebuchadnezzar astutely withheld the content of the dream because he did not want any fake interpretation by a bunch of deceivers; he issued an ultimatum.

The king's hypothesis was that if they could tell him the content of the dream without him revealing it, their interpretation of the dream would likely be true. Nebuchadnezzar promised them reward and honor for doing this.

Again, the wise men of Babylonia requested that the king tell them the content of the dream.

Nebuchadnezzar charged them with stalling for time. He saw through their delaying tactics. They might have hoped that the king would forget about the dream.

The only way for the king to have confidence in the wise men's interpretation was for them to tell the content of the dream.

The wise men declared that the king's request was unfair and unreasonable. They stated that it was patently impossible to do what the king requested.

The wise men declared that the sphere of knowing content beforehand belonged exclusively to the gods. This admission set up Daniel's God as the authentic God.

Nebuchadnezzar reacted violently and declared that all the wise men of Babylon be executed. It was patently obvious that the wise men of pantheism could not reveal the dream or its meaning. They were demonstrated to be inept at meeting the king's request.

Daniel and his three friends fell into the category of wise men to be killed.

**PRINCIPLE:** Christians know the future outcome of the world.

**APPLICATION:** Where is this world going? The Bible says that the times of the Gentiles (the time of Gentile domination) will come to an end. Secular governments and all governments other than Israel will cease to exist. They do not do a good job of dealing with the major issues of mankind.

The church will be raptured before the end of Gentile domination. The end of Gentile rule will come in the Tribulation after Jesus Christ comes for His church.

Psalm 89:34-37 'My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips.

35 Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David:

36 His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me;

37 It shall be established forever like the moon, Even like the faithful witness in the sky.' Selah

God will govern the world by His Messiah and the nation Israel.

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**Daniel 2:14-16**

**Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon;**

**he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, 'Why is the decree from the king so urgent?' Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.**

So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.

After learning of Nebuchadnezzar's decree to kill the wise men, with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard. Daniel, even at a young age, was a man of wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to appropriate truth to experience. He was in the crisis of his life, yet he knew how to apply the Word of God to his situation.

Daniel's request centered on the reason for the urgency to kill the wise men.

Daniel requests more time to interpret the dream. He was able to operate by faith in a crisis because he was a man of the Word.

**PRINCIPLE:** Application of truth to experience is the foundation for Christian maturity.

**APPLICATION:** It is impossible to face a crisis without prior maturity. The immature go into hysteria and frantic mode because they do not have a frame of reference for their problems. That is why Daniel could counsel Arioch. Maturity always counsels immaturity.

The only way we can reach a level of maturity is to consistently apply the principles of Scripture to our life situations. Daniel studied the Bible every day. He also applied the Word every day. He could face his crisis perfectly relaxed because he faced it with the principles of God's Word.

**Daniel 2:17**

**Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions...**

Daniel informed his three friends of the decree to kill the wise men. He faced his crisis with people upon whom he could depend.

**PRINCIPLE:** We all need mature Christian friends in a crisis.

**APPLICATION:** Do you have friends upon whom you can call in a crisis? Can you depend on them for spiritual help and rapport? Most of our friends will want to move on when we get into a jam: This is a pressure situation so goodbye John, goodbye Mary.

It is not enough to have Christian friends; we must have mature Christian friends to meet difficult needs.

**Daniel 2:18**

**that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.**

The purpose of Daniel informing his three friends was that they might pray about the situation. He believed in united prayer. He and his friends prayed for mercies from the God of heaven. Mercies are God's desire to meet needs in His people.

The phrase the God of heaven occurs five times in this chapter (vv. 18, 19, 28, 37, 44). They worshiped a sovereign God. Daniel uses it one more time, in 5:23.

**PRINCIPLE:** God blesses team prayer.

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**APPLICATION:** Daniel knew how to pray. Do we know how to pray?

James 5:16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

The principle parts of prayer are five:

- 1) Confession
- 2) Thanksgiving
- 3) Praise
- 4) Intercession (praying for others)
- 5) Petition (praying for self)

Also, praying companions are crucial to our Christian walk. Jesus had his disciples. Paul had Timothy, Titus and many other companions. There is power in united prayer.

#### **Daniel 2:19-20**

**Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.**

**20 Daniel answered and said: 'Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His.'**

God revealed the whole panorama of Gentile dominion to Daniel. This period is otherwise known as the time of the Gentiles referred to by Jesus Christ. This period covers the time from Nebuchadnezzar to Christ's Second Coming.

Daniel received direct revelation both as to the content and the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. This is the only record of a dream being revealed to someone other than the person who originally received the dream. God revealed this secret to Daniel in direct answer to prayer.

Daniel now lifts a hymn of praise to God.

God's name stands for His revealed character. This is more than a label or title. Daniel draws attention to two characteristics of God: His wisdom and His might.

**PRINCIPLE:** God should get the credit for what God does.

**APPLICATION:** Daniel did not relish the fact that God revealed the dream to him; rather, he rejoiced in the glory of God's power to reveal it to him. He did not take the credit for what God did. It is God who controls the destiny of nations and course of history. Sometimes we get carried away with our own importance. We should have no illusions about ourselves. If God chooses to use us, we must recognize that it is God doing the doing. That is why we give God the credit.

People who understand grace are relaxed people because they understand where the glory belongs. Grace orientation produces a well-rounded person.

#### **Daniel 2:21-23**

**And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.**

**He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.**

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**I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king's demand.**

God is in control of human history. He makes and unmakes kings. God sovereignly controls human events. God will lead human history to its climax. God has a plan for creation.

Daniel identifies two evidences of God's wisdom: 1) He gives wisdom to the wise, and 2) He gives knowledge to those who have understanding.

We see God's wisdom in revelation. Light dwells with Him because He sees all things clearly. There are no shades of meaning or possibilities in Him. Man is in the dark because he is limited in his understanding. God is omniscient.

Now Daniel specifies that it was God who gave him wisdom. The revelation he received came from God, not from his own wisdom. He fully recognized that it was God who gave him everything he knew.

**PRINCIPLE:** We cannot truly worship God without understanding His character.

**APPLICATION:** We must understand the character of God in order to worship Him. All worship is based on comprehension of God. Understanding God is impossible without a maximum understanding of the principles of the Word, for it is the Word that reveals who God is.

Our prayer should honor God or glorify Him. We do this because of what God is in Himself. Wisdom is His. Might is His. God's infinite wisdom chooses the best course for our lives. God's power will execute His desires. Nothing happens by unadulterated chance. God raises up governmental leaders and He puts them down. That is why we honor Him.

#### **Daniel 2:24-30**

**Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: 'Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.'**

**Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, 'I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.'**

**The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, 'Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?'**

**Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, 'The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king.**

**But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:**

**As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.**

**But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.'**

Daniel went to the executioner, Arioch of the State Department, and told him that he was ready to reveal the dream to Nebuchadnezzar.

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The words I have found are emphatic. Arioch clearly takes credit for finding Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar wanted to know two things from Daniel: 1) the content of the dream and 2) the interpretation of the dream.

Daniel wanted to make it abundantly clear that other wise men could not make known both the content and interpretation of the dream. Their gods could not reveal it to them. There is a radical difference between supernatural revelation and human wisdom. Daniel is saying in effect, I am not here representing the academia of the Chaldean Empire. God brings to nothing the wisdom of the wise.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29, For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.

God, in contrast to the philosophers of the age, can know the future. Superstition cannot give what God can give.

God made known to Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the latter days. The book of Daniel is about prophecy. The latter days of the Gentiles and Jews both come to a conclusion in the Tribulation.

Daniel's vision is about the future, both near and far.

Again Daniel made it clear to Nebuchadnezzar that it was not his sagacity but the wisdom of God that made this dream known. Daniel divested any credit to himself: It isn't because I am better than anyone else that God gave me this revelation.

**PRINCIPLE:** Believers should give credit where credit is due.

**APPLICATION:** Note the striking contrast between Arioch and Daniel. Arioch quickly took the credit for Daniel's revelation. Daniel gave glory to God; he did not try to grab glory for himself.

Some of us feed on approbation lust. The more praise we receive the more we desire it. It is like dope. We become addicted to praise very quickly. If people do not continually make noises about what we do, we go into approbation deficit. If others do not tell us how wonderful we are, we sulk. This is immaturity.

#### **Daniel 2:31-35**

**'You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.**

**This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,**

**its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.**

**You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.**

**Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no**



**trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.'**

Daniel now gives the most difficult aspect of Nebuchadnezzar's dream – the content of the dream.

Now Daniel delineates precisely what Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. It was a giant statue of a human-looking figure. It could be that the figure of man here alludes to man's day on earth. It refers to the panoramic sweep of history between Nebuchadnezzar's day and the Second Coming of Christ.

This great colossus represents man's dominion over man in the Devil's world. All of man's glory is transient. All these empires rise to great glory and decline into defeat. The glory of nations is a transient thing.

The important aspect of this statue was the material that composed it. There is decreasing value in the metals from the head to the feet. The head was fine gold, the chest and arms of silver, and its belly and thighs of bronze.

An important distinction is made between the legs and feet. The legs were pure iron but the feet had iron and clay. The statue was top-heavy because the heavier metals were at the top. The significance of this will be seen in the interpretation (2:36-45).

As Nebuchadnezzar looked at this statue, a stone cut without hands struck the statue on its weakest part – the feet of iron and clay. Iron mixed with clay is weaker than iron alone. This stone is very significant, as will be seen in the interpretation.

The stone broke the statue into pieces. The statue was crushed like powder and a wind blew the statue away. The stone that struck the statue became a great mountain [kingdom] and filled the whole earth.

**PRINCIPLE:** The Bible has the integrity of genuine prophecy.

**APPLICATION:** Critics of the book of Daniel claim that there is nothing of genuine prophecy in the book. They maintain that Daniel was written in 165 B.C. In order to uphold that theory, they have to treat all dreams in Daniel as history. They claim that Daniel could not have prophesied of Rome in 165 B.C. because Rome was only an emerging power at that date. They assert that the last world power was Greece and that the immediately preceding empires were Babylon, Media and Persia.

Daniel, to the contrary, expressly asserts the opposite. The critics divide the Median-Persian kingdom into two empires in order to make their point. However, Daniel 8 looks at the Median-Persian kingdom as a unit (8:3, 5 speak of the ram with two horns; 8:20 says the ram with two horns is the Media-Persian kingdom). This corresponds with the beast and two arms of silver of Daniel 2. The Persians subsumed the Medes in 550 B.C.

The four kingdoms of Daniel 2 are Babylonian, Median-Persian, Greek and Roman.

#### **Daniel 2:36-40**

**This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.**

**You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;**

**and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold.**

**But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.**

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**And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.**

Verses 36 to 45 give the interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The metals represent different kingdoms and also the outline of the history of the Gentiles from Daniel to the coming of Christ.

Daniel prudently differentiated the dream from the interpretation. This verse begins the interpretation of the dream.

Nebuchadnezzar was the world ruler of his day (Jeremiah 27:6-7,14). None of the rulers that followed him had as much absolute power as Nebuchadnezzar. He was the king of kings (Ezek 26:7). God sovereignly gave him this power. That concept may have crushed his pride.

Nebuchadnezzar ruled because God gave him the privilege to rule. Herodotus visited Babylon about ninety years after Nebuchadnezzar. He said that much of the temples and accouterments were made of solid gold. This was the Chaldean Empire at its zenith.

The next kingdom to rise after the Babylonian was the Medo-Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great. This empire covered a greater geographical territory and lasted longer than the Babylonian (539-331 B.C.). The two arms represent the two nations of Media and Persia.

Daniel 11:2 concerns a prophecy concerning Xerxes who inherited the silver hoarding of his father Darius and other Persian kings. He could have never launched an offensive across the Hellespont against Greece without this treasure of silver.

The kingdom after the Medo-Persian Empire was Greece under Alexander the Great (cf. 8:20-21). The territory of this kingdom was yet greater than the Medo-Persian Empire. This kingdom stretched in time from 331 to 31 B.C. and in geography to India. The kingdom lasted longer than the previous two.

After Alexander died in 323 B.C., his generals split the empire into four parts. General Antipater ruled Macedon-Greece. Lysimachus governed Thrace-Asia Minor. Seleucus ruled Asia and Ptolemy reigned over Egypt, Cyrenaica and Palestine. Thus, its government was more republican and less power was given to its rulers.

The fourth kingdom was the Roman Empire. Rome defeated Greece in 31 B.C. and ruled until 476 A.D. in the West and until 1453 A.D. in the East. Rome's empire extended geographically farther than the previous three. The two legs represent the East and West portions of the empire (Rome and Constantinople). Rome's empire extended from the British Isles to India.

Daniel gives more space to this fourth kingdom than the other three. This is the kingdom we live in today. No human world power follows Rome except the kingdom of the Messiah. Rome stamped its image on western civilization. The western dimension of the Roman Empire reached into France, Germany, Spain, Portugal and Great Britain. From there its influence moved into the United States, Canada and the Americas.

Note passages in Daniel dealing with the four Gentile kingdoms and the Millennial Kingdom:

Babylon, 2:32, 37, 38; 7:4, 17

Medo-Persia, 2:32, 39; 7:5, 17; 8:3-8, 20, 21; 10:20, 21, 11:2-35

Greece, 2:32, 39; 7:6, 17

Rome 2:33, 40; 7:7, 17, 23

Revived Rome, 2:33, 41-43; 7:7, 8, 11, 24, 25,

Millennium, 2:34, 35, 44, 45; 7:13, 14, 26, 27

**PRINCIPLE:** God always gives us prophecy for purity reasons.

**APPLICATION:** God already fulfilled the first four kingdoms in history. They happened exactly as Daniel predicted. The head of gold was Babylon and existed within Daniel's lifetime. The Medo-Persian Empire conquered Babylon. Alexander the Great of Greece in rapid-fire succession defeated the Medo-Persian Empire. Rome finally gained victory over Greece in the first century B.C. Prophetically, we are still in this kingdom.

God gives prophecy to make us more cautious, not more curious. It should lead us to invest in eternal values, not temporal values exclusively. It gives us perspective on measuring our lives at their end: Did I waste my life on earth? Did I live for eternal things? There is a great difference between the passing and the permanent.

#### **Daniel 2:41-42**

**Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.**

**And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.**

Daniel gives an extensive explanation of the fourth kingdom. He relates the later phase of this empire as an outgrowth of the fourth kingdom. The Roman Empire regressed from iron to iron mixed with clay.

To this point in our reading, Daniel's prophecy has been historically fulfilled. We now move into unfulfilled prophecy. The events that happen to the feet of iron and clay will occur at the Second Coming of Christ after the Tribulation period.

There is a great gap of time between verses 41 and 42. Verse 44 speaks of the Millennial Kingdom.

The most important feature of the fourth kingdom was its feet with two kinds of materials: kiln-fired clay mixed with iron. Iron may represent regal government whereas clay may represent democratic government by being pliable and easy to mold.

**PRINCIPLE:** The ultimate form of government is righteous and benevolent monarchy.

**APPLICATION:** Democracy grows the seeds of its own destruction and for that reason an absolutely righteous and pure monarchy is superior to democracy. Jesus will fulfill this requirement.

The opinion of the public is always fickle. Dissonant events or insidious leaders can mold it into their own fashion. It is not democracy itself that makes a democratic nation great, but principles of righteousness upon which that nation was built and its willingness to persist with those principles.

#### **Daniel 2:43-45**

**As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.**

**And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.**

**Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has**

**made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.**

Ceramic clay and iron do not adhere well together. Weakness is introduced into this kingdom, so this empire does not last as a world order.

This prophecy passes over the present age and goes to the Revived Roman Empire found in the Tribulation period. The ten toes of the statue relate to the ten-nation confederacy of the Roman Empire in the Tribulation. This is the final formation of the Roman Empire. The United States, Canada and all other western powers will be subservient to this ten-nation confederacy.

The phrase seed of men implies a grassroots issue; it permeates the masses. Throughout the stream of the Roman Empire, the two issues of monarchy and democracy struggle at the grassroots level. Domestic strife weakens government so that it cannot reach its objectives. This sets the stage for the final Kingdom.

These kings are the rulers of the ten-nation confederacy of Europe in the last days.

the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

This verse introduces God's kingdom. God will send His Messiah to judge the world in the days of the Revived Roman Empire (the ten-toed confederacy) to overthrow the vestige of that empire.

From God's viewpoint, the highest form of government is monarchy, not democracy. This premise requires a perfectly righteous monarch.

1 Timothy 6:14-16, ...that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

15 which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

The stone cut out of the mountain without hands crushes the iron and clay. This is the Second Coming of Christ to judge the world. This final and fifth kingdom God will establish during the Millennium and will continue into the eternal state. He will destroy the Gentile kingdoms of the world.

1 Peter 2:6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, 'Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.'

Daniel's prophecy is sure. This is a term of certainty. People of God trust the Word of God.

2 Peter 1:19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts...

**PRINCIPLE:** God gives the believer hope and assurance about the future.

**APPLICATION:** What is the attitude that God would have for us in all this prophecy? First, we have hope in the coming victory of our Lord Jesus Christ over all the Gentile kingdoms of the world. There will be a day when righteousness will reign; justice will prevail. Oh, what a day that will be!

#### **Daniel 2:46-49**

**Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. The king answered Daniel, and said,**

**Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.**

**Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.**

**Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.**

Nebuchadnezzar worshiped Daniel and regarded him as a god.

Nebuchadnezzar turned positive to Daniel's God but did not embrace Him as God. Nebuchadnezzar eventually turned out to be fatheaded and came to believe all his success was due to himself. He made an image of gold to portray that fact. However, at this time, he acknowledged that the God of Daniel was supreme over the gods of his polytheistic system. This was especially true in the revealing of this secret of the human colossus of world governments.

The king promoted Daniel to the position of chief of the wise men. He also made him satrap of Babylon. Normally this title would have been given to a Chaldean. Daniel received both presents and power, making him an important person in the Chaldean Empire.

Sitting at the gate of the king meant that Daniel sat as Chief of the Supreme Court of the Chaldean Empire. Instead of gloating in his success, he immediately thought of others. He remembered his friends. Success did not destroy his friendship with them.

**PRINCIPLE:** Man's wisdom is temporal while God's wisdom is eternal.

**APPLICATION:** Daniel did not allow his success to go to his head. Nebuchadnezzar was filled with ego and power lust. Daniel gave glory to God. When the world does homage to what we do, do we give glory to God?

Man's extremity is God's opportunity. God uses crisis to move believers into the picture. Daniel put his trust in God through it all. Catastrophe of a nation is a great opportunity for sharing our faith.

Here are some lessons from chapter two:

- God is sovereign over the governments of the world.
- God moves the world toward His own end.
- Daniel did not seek prominence but God gave it to him because of his faithfulness.
- Truth always exposes error.
- God's kingdom is eternal; man's kingdoms are temporal.
- There is futility in man's wisdom. Man's wisdom is for time but God's wisdom is eternal.

## **Daniel 3**

### **Daniel 3:1-7**

**Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.**

**And King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

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**So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

**Then a herald cried aloud: To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up;**

**and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.**

**So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, and lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

Daniel chapter three opens with a great drama. Nebuchadnezzar made an awesome image of himself. It was awesome because of its height and being made of gold. The image was 90' high and 9' wide. The gold of Daniel's dream motivated this image made of gold.

Nebuchadnezzar convened eight categories of officials to dedicate his image. Satraps were the highest political officials of the king. Prefects (princes) were military commanders. Governors were civil administrators. Advisors were high ranking judges. Treasurers administered the treasury of the kingdom. Judges administered the law established by the advisors. Magistrates issued judgments of the law.

This was a massive demonstration of loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar.

The command of Nebuchadnezzar covered all the national entities, people groups and languages under his rule. This was a summit representing many nations.

Nebuchadnezzar commanded public demonstration of loyalty to his rule. He made elaborate arrangements for this event. The orchestra incorporated wind instruments (horn, pipes), a reed instrument (flute) and stringed instruments (zither, lyre, harp).

The purpose of the erection of this image was to consolidate Nebuchadnezzar's authority. The image was to be the central symbol of his reign. The addition of worship indicates that this event had religious as well as political implications. Nebuchadnezzar's subjects were to recognize both his political and religious authority. Failure to comply meant death – turn or burn.

This may be another attempt at forming a one world government and religion. Worship here is forced worship. We can find no individual volition here.

**PRINCIPLE:** God wants loyalty to truth rather than internationalism or religion.

**APPLICATION:** The three friends of Daniel face a life or death situation. They either bow before the idol or die. Their faith shone brighter than the flames of the furnace. They would rather burn than turn. People of character can take a stand in the face of adversity.

Hebrews 11:33,34 ...who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

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Both internationalism and religion are enemies of the truth. Religion comes from Satan himself (2 Corinthians 11:3,4; 13-15; 2 Timothy 4:1). Internationalism is also from Satan (Genesis 11:1-9; Revelation 17:1-14).

### **Daniel 3:8-17**

**Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews.**

**They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live forever!**

**You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image;**

**and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.**

**There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up.**

**Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king.**

**Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up?**

**Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?**

**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.**

**If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king.**

Some Chaldeans accused the Jews of not bowing to the Image of Nebuchadnezzar. They may have been astrologers. They may have been the religious watchdogs for Nebuchadnezzar.

The accusers of the Jews sought to curry favor with the king.

The Chaldeans remind the king of his declared consequences of not bowing before the image.

This reminder came from the motivation of jealousy.

The Jews set over the affairs of the province of Babylon were clearly those whom Nebuchadnezzar placed there. They made accusation against Daniel's three friends but oddly not against Daniel.

The king became enraged because of this insufferable insolence.

The high status of the Jews in the kingdom made their refusal to bow before the image even more intolerable.

Nebuchadnezzar gave the three friends of Daniel another opportunity to bow before the image. The king warned of the consequences for not obeying his command. He figured that no one would be able to stay this execution because of his absolute power in the kingdom.

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The king asked the three Jews (v.15) who will deliver you from my hands? and they felt that there was no need to answer the king because their resolve did not equivocate under duress. They counted the cost and were willing to accept the consequences.

Notice that the three do not say, O king, live forever as did the Chaldeans.

The three Jews expressed confidence that God was able to deliver them from the fiery furnace. They also asserted that they served God first and foremost.

**PRINCIPLE:** God expects unequivocal allegiance to Him and His plan.

**APPLICATION:** God expects His children to operate with undaunted courage and constancy. We cannot parley with sin for, if we do, it will be fatal to our walk with God. The only way to truly walk with the Lord is to fully resign ourselves to do the will of God.

Job 13:15 Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.

Mathew 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

God does not want us to operate in sullenness when things do not go our way. Resolve to do the will of God does not grant us the privilege of resenting that will. There is no equivocation here. We must have the idea of Get you behind me, Satan. There is no contrivance here. There is no wiggle room.

### Daniel 3:18

**But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.**

Should their God not deliver them, they would still refuse to bow before the image. They did not presume on God's will for their case – if not. They recognized the sovereignty of God in their situation. God has a purpose for what He does. They did not have a quid pro quo relationship with God.

The trio was not in the business of trying to coerce God's sovereignty. They did not try to make a trade with God. They simply accepted God's sovereign prerogative to do with them as He pleases.

**PRINCIPLE:** Mature believers have a good grasp of God's sovereignty.

**APPLICATION:** God expects us to respect the sovereignty of God as to whether he will deliver us or not deliver us from a given situation. They did not seek to coerce or bribe God to deliver them. They did not attempt to dictate to God what He should do.

Exodus 14:13, 14, And Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever.

14 'The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.'

1 Samuel 17:47 Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands.

Psalms 37:5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

Psalms 55:22 Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

If God can, why doesn't He? The Bible declares that God limits His power by a number of things. He is unable to contradict Himself. His character limits what He does. Unbelief limits Him (Mt 13:58). God also limits Himself by His purposes. As the trio submitted themselves to God's will



whatever the cost, so should we. Not my will, but yours be done. We leave certain things in God's hands. This is an act of faith.

**Daniel 3:19-23**

**Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.**

**And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace.**

**Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.**

**Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.**

**And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.**

Nebuchadnezzar enraged by what he deemed insolence, heated the fiery furnace to seven times more than usual. He was going to make an example out of the trio of renegades. Everyone would see the price of rebellion against the authority of the king. They could see it in his face. He was incredulous.

Nebuchadnezzar called some of his best troops to bring the three Hebrew young men to justice.

The point of mentioning clothing is to show that the trio was well dressed and thus part of the aristocracy.

The flames killed some of Nebuchadnezzar's best men.

What stark terror these young men faced!

Isaiah 43:2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.

**PRINCIPLE:** All believers inexorably and inevitably enter trial by fire.

**APPLICATION:** God allows trial to enter our lives because he wants to separate the genuine from the phony. It separates chaff from wheat. Trial always breaks those ties that bind us to our sufficiency. When this happens, we live in the power and strength of God.

**Daniel 3:24-25**

**Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said to the king, True, O king.**

**Look! he answered, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.**

Nebuchadnezzar sees something astonishing. He wanted to check with others in case he saw an illusion. Did we not cast three men...?

The king sees an additional person in the furnace. That fourth person was like the Son of God. We should translate this like a son of the gods. To Nebuchadnezzar it looked like something in the pantheon but it was the preincarnate Christ. Nebuchadnezzar did not understand this fourth figure as the Son of God. This is a theophany (a pre-incarnate appearance of the Son of God).

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**PRINCIPLE:** Christians with courage can take a stand against opposition.

**APPLICATION:** Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, opposed the heretical teaching of Arius who denied the deity of Christ. He was exiled five times for his opposition to Arius. They brought him before Emperor Theodosius who mandated that he cease his opposition to Arius. The Emperor sharply reproved him and said, Do you not realize that all the world is against you? Athanasius answered, Then I am against all the world!

**Daniel 3:26-30**

**Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire.**

**And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.**

**Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!**

**Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this.**

**Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.**

Nebuchadnezzar approached near to the opening of the furnace. He commanded the three to come out of the furnace. In doing so, he called them servants of the Most High God. In a distinct change of mood, he acknowledge that they were God's servants, not his.

The name the Most High occurs 13 times in Daniel (3:26; 4:2, 17, 24-25, 32, 34; 5:18, 21; 7:18, 22, 25, 27). Clearly, Daniel puts God above any other god and shows that others acknowledge Him as well.

After examining the trio, Nebuchadnezzar's officials confirmed that what they saw was real.

Nebuchadnezzar declared what he saw as a work of the God on behalf of the trio. The words blessed be the God manifests an awe and approval of the God of these Hebrews.

The phrase send His Angel is a reference to the fourth person in the fiery furnace.

Nebuchadnezzar made a public decree to uphold the God of the three Hebrew young men and their God. The penalty would be to be cut in pieces and their houses burned to rubble.

The king promoted the trio to position of greater power in the kingdom.

**PRINCIPLE:** A mature believer accepts the fact of tribulation and orients to it under the plan of God.

**APPLICATION:** God will thrust all of us into our own trial by fire. In the biblical Hall of Fame, we see a roll call of heroes of living by faith through trial.

Hebrews 11:36-40, Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—

38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Acts 14:21,22, And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,

22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'

2 Timothy 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Jesus said that all true believers will enter into tribulation:

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

## Daniel 4

### Daniel 4:1-5

**Nebuchadnezzar the king, To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:Peace be multiplied to you.**

**I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.**

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

**I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.**

**I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.**

Chapter four is the climax to Nebuchadnezzar's spiritual journey. This is the third miracle Nebuchadnezzar witnessed. Daniel presents the chapter by Nebuchadnezzar's personal account.

Nebuchadnezzar moved from the bankruptcy of Babylonian wisdom to the wisdom of God. The main thrust of chapter four is God's sovereignty (vv. 17-18, 22, 24-26, 30-32, 34, 36-37).

Daniel 4:25 They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

The timing of the events of chapter four is much later than chapter three. It may have been toward the close of his forty-three-year rule.

Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed a doxology in the first three verses.

Peace is the customary salutation in the east (6:25).

Nebuchadnezzar came to increasingly respect the God of Daniel in the first three chapters. He now states the purpose of his tract to Daniel – to declare the glory of Daniel's God.

Signs and wonders describe miracles. Signs are natural phenomena that evidence supernatural intervention. The word means something which points out. These signs pointed out God's wisdom and power. Wonders are supernatural manifestations of divine intervention in the course of nature. The word wonder means that which produces astonishment, surprise, awe.

The name Most High God is clearly Yahweh (3:36). However, the king's use of this name does not mean that he is a monotheist at this time.

The two words great and mighty stress the magnitude of God's miracles.

Nebuchadnezzar declares that God's kingdom is everlasting in contrast to his own temporal kingdom. God's rule is eternal, stable and unchanging.

The kingdoms of men change from generation to generation but God's kingdom is eternally perpetual and without change or loss of stability. No one will undermine this kingdom by a coup d'état. No one can assassinate Him or usurp His authority.

During 582-575 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar did not engage in military undertakings. This may be the time referred to here because he presents himself at rest in my house. At rest means to be free from fear.

Flourishing means growing green. The picture is a flourishing tree. His kingdom was prosperous. Nebuchadnezzar possessed all affluence a human could desire in his day.

Nebuchadnezzar receives a second vision that terrified him, as did his first vision. This mighty world conqueror sitting behind his fortifications is afraid. Although Nebuchadnezzar was the wealthiest man of his day, he was unhappy and full of fear. The man who has everything has nothing.

**PRINCIPLE:** Success cannot displace higher ends.

**APPLICATION:** It is possible to be successful in every way humans can be successful and still be a failure. A man by modern status symbols can have the appearance of success. Success does not protect us from fear. True prosperity of soul is not possible without Jesus Christ. We can have everything and yet have nothing. Insecurity in the midst of success is vacuous.

Mark 8:36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? 37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

#### **Daniel 4:6-7**

**Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.**

**Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation.**

Again, Nebuchadnezzar exhausts his human means before turning to Daniel and his God.

Once again, human viewpoint proves itself ineffective.

**PRINCIPLE:** Human viewpoint without divine viewpoint is ultimately ineffective.

**APPLICATION:** Human wisdom can only operate in the sphere of the finite. It cannot enter into the infinite dimension because that is the space reserved solely for God and His capacity. Philosophers of our age boast in their wisdom but it is an empty boast.

1 Corinthians 2:14-16, But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.

16 For 'who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?' But we have the mind of Christ.

Man by finite means cannot enter into infinite truth. The pride of man thinks that man's wisdom is the end of man. From God's viewpoint, man is not the measure of man. Humanism proclaims that man is the end of man. This is arrogance. God condemns pride throughout the Word of God:

Proverbs 8:13,14 The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.

14 Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, I have strength.

Proverbs 11:2 When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 16:5 Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.

Proverbs 16:18, 19 Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.

19 Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.'

#### **Daniel 4:8-18**

**But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, saying:**

**Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.**

**These were the visions of my head while on my bed: I was looking, and behold, A tree in the midst of the earth, And its height was great.**

**The tree grew and became strong; Its height reached to the heavens, And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.**

**Its leaves were lovely, Its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, And all flesh was fed from it.**

**I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven.**

**He cried aloud and said thus: 'Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, And the birds from its branches.**

**Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth, Bound with a band of iron and bronze, In the tender grass of the field. Let it be wet with the dew of heaven, And let him graze with the beasts On the grass of the earth.**

**Let his heart be changed from that of a man, Let him be given the heart of a beast, And let seven times pass over him.**

**'This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.'**

**This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you.**

Nebuchadnezzar described Daniel by both his Hebrew and Babylonian names – Daniel and Belteshazzar (1:7). Holy can mean divine as over against morally pure. Spirit does not refer to the Holy Spirit but to Daniel's human spirit that made possible divine revelation.

Nebuchadnezzar viewed Daniel as the chief of the magicians because of his ability to reveal and interpret dreams. Daniel could interpret any secret.

Now Nebuchadnezzar begins to recount his dream in poetic style. The tree was the centerpiece of his dream. The tree represents Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom that grew to great glory.

Ancients often described nations as trees (Is 2:12-13; 10:34; Ezek 31:3-17). The Babylonian kingdom expanded to an enormous size.

This poetic tree represents Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. Many different kinds of people were under the umbrella of his reign.

A watcher descended from heaven. This angel administered the affairs of nations and was diligent in doing so. Nebuchadnezzar could see his tangible appearance.

The angel cried with a loud voice. The angel ordered the cutting down of the tree. This aspect of the king's dream frightened him the most.

This stump bound with a band of iron and bronze indicates restoration of the tree after it was cut down. Nebuchadnezzar was not completely destroyed in his insanity but dramatically cut down from his former glory.

Nebuchadnezzar roamed like an animal eating grass in the field in his insanity.

Nebuchadnezzar was cut down as a tree. He would be insane for a period of seven times. The grammar does not indicate the length of this period. It could be days, months or years. Days or months would probably be too short so this refers to years.

Nebuchadnezzar reasoned like an animal. He ate with animals for seven years.

The purpose of the judgment of this tree is to teach that the Most High God is sovereign over the affairs of man. God sets up nations as He wills. He can do this to even the lowliest of men, so why should any king assume pride to himself?

1 Samuel 2:7,8 The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up.

8 He raises the poor from the dust And lifts the beggar from the ash heap, To set them among princes And make them inherit the throne of glory. 'For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, And He has set the world upon them.'

Nebuchadnezzar appeals to Daniel to interpret the dream for him. Again, the Spirit here is not the Holy Spirit but the spirit of Daniel.

**PRINCIPLE:** God is sovereign over all the Gentile kingdoms of the world.

**APPLICATION:** God has not abdicated his sovereignty. He is not a god that creates and then moves off to do his own thing, forgetting about His creation. God is both transcendent and immanent. He is both above and in His creation.

Note three things that God does with the kingdoms of this world:

1) Nations rise and fall to show that God is still in control. He overrules the kingdoms of this world. God rules in the kingdom of men (v.17).

2) God also gives kingdoms to whosoever He will (v.17). God puts people in power. Every political leader is there by the will of God.

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3) God sets over it the lowest of men (v.17). That should humble some of our proud leaders!

#### Daniel 4:19

**Then Daniel, whose name was Belshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, 'Belshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.' Belshazzar answered and said, 'My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!'**

Daniel begins to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's second dream starting at verse 19.

Daniel was reticent to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's second dream because of the negative implications on the king. The dream dumbfounded Daniel. He did not want to bear bad news; nevertheless, Daniel faithfully interpreted the dream to him.

**PRINCIPLE:** Communicators of God's truth should tell the unvarnished truth about God.

**APPLICATION:** As Daniel was not afraid to say, You are the man, neither should we be afraid. No communicator of God's truth should pull any punches. God's viewpoint is not easy to take sometimes. Neither should a teller of truth be audacious but true to truth.

No honest preachers or teachers tell people just what they want to hear. They do not take a poll to find out the prevailing opinion on things. They tell the truth. They will do it with discretion but they will do it. Tellers of truth represent light in darkness. If they do not tell the truth, few will trust their word.

#### Daniel 4:20-23

**The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth,**

**whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—**

**it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.**

**And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him'...**

Daniel confirms the greatness and extent of the tree of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. His kingdom was the greatest of his time. Nebuchadnezzar was brilliant in the fields of war, architecture and statesmanship.

Nebuchadnezzar was a world ruler who governed most of the civilized world. He brought great nations under his auspices. Great prosperity grew out of his leadership.

Daniel clearly asserts that the tree represents Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom.

Now the bad news: God will remove Nebuchadnezzar from his authority in the Babylonian kingdom. The king would lose his power and glory but God would preserve his life. However, God provided for Nebuchadnezzar in grace – He left a stump.

**PRINCIPLE:** God has a purpose for our lives as long as we live.

**APPLICATION:** The principle of the stump is that God has a purpose for us as long as we are alive. As long as we live, God always puts a band of His grace provision around our lives. This opens greater opportunities to serve him even after a serious fall.

**Daniel 4:24-27**

...this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:

**They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.**

**And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.**

**Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.**

Jeremiah shows the subsequent downfall of Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 4:16,17). He abused his authority by usurping glory to himself.

God will drive Nebuchadnezzar from his people. He will live like an animal for seven years. In 7:25, Daniel uses times for years. This is the mental condition known as zoanthropy – where a person thinks himself an animal.

Nebuchadnezzar would continue in a state of insanity until he understood that God is sovereign over all the kingdoms of the earth. God will not uproot his kingdom but leave a stump, a vestige of his kingdom.

Daniel boldly exhorts the king toward certain ends. God's discipline upon Nebuchadnezzar was because of his pride. This is a sin that God hates.

Jeremiah 9:23,24, Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches;

24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,' says the Lord.

Tranquility is a result of peace with God. We can learn this lesson by the hard route or the easy way. Our colossal pride gets in the way of God's work in our lives. God may have to break that ego.

**PRINCIPLE:** Tranquility is a result of humility.

**APPLICATION:** After God neutralized Nebuchadnezzar's pride, his volition was open to God. God, at times, tears down our pride so that He can deal with us on a true level.

**Daniel 4:28-37**

**All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.**

**At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon.**

**The king spoke, saying, 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?'**

**While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!**

**And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you**



**know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.'**

**That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.**

**And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.**

**All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'**

**At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me.**

**Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.**

God now executes discipline upon Nebuchadnezzar.

The palace at Babylon had large courts, a throne room and the famous hanging gardens (the gardens of Semiramis), one of the Seven Wonders of the World. These gardens were a terraced structure with extensive water supply. This palace stood just inside the double wall of the inner city with eight gates. The outer wall encircled the city by twenty-seven kilometers. As Nebuchadnezzar walked in this pomp and circumstance--as he viewed the great temples, the Ishtar Gate, the towering ziggurats--his heart filled with pride.

Nebuchadnezzar did not heed Daniel's warning for an entire year. God gave him a period of grace. Now he is about to receive judgment from God.

Archaeologists recently discovered documents in which Nebuchadnezzar boasted of the glory of Babylon. The phrase I have built shows his focus on building programs. This verse speaks of unadulterated pride. Pride prowls in each one of us. We are proud of face, place, race and even grace.

As soon as the king uttered his arrogant pride, he heard a voice of divine discipline.

God drove Nebuchadnezzar from the acme of power and reduced him to an animal.

Immediately Nebuchadnezzar began to function as an animal. This was supernaturally imposed.

The end of time refers to the end of the seven years predicted earlier. His sanity returned to him at this time.

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,

And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

Nebuchadnezzar continued his tract in the first person. He lifted his eyes to heaven indicating that he came to his senses about his pride and about who God truly is. He recognized and accepted that God's kingdom is eternal and his was temporal. The qualities of sovereignty and eternity go far beyond the local deities of Babylon.

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This may indicate that Nebuchadnezzar came to saving faith in Jehovah. Because God has dominion, He has authority to do whatever He pleases. Whatever God does is right because He has the authority to do it.

Nebuchadnezzar's sanity returned to him when he acknowledged the sovereignty of God. God also restored the glory of his kingdom.

Nebuchadnezzar learned his lesson. He acknowledged that God is true and just in His works. Note the piling up of praise:praise and extol and honor. This is pure worship from the greatest king in the world at that time. God operates according to a standard of righteousness and truth. His method of doing things is just. It appears that Nebuchadnezzar is clearly converted.

**PRINCIPLE:** Grace always precedes judgment.

**APPLICATION:** Some of God's decrees are conditional. God's threat of judgment is often conditional. God sovereignly controls the universe as a person, a Being of relationship. Some of us will not respond to God other than from His judgment.

Towards the end of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity, he said, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven. That acknowledges God's authority in his life. He repented and came to Jehovah as his Savior. God always responds to repentance. God will extend His mercy to you, if you are willing to receive it.

## Daniel 5

### Daniel 5:1

**Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand.**

A number of years transpire between chapters 4 and 5. Nebuchadnezzar is now gone. A number of kings ruled between chapters 4 and 5. Nabonidus and Belshazzar rule as co-regents 23 years after Nebuchadnezzar. Nabonidus was a son-in-law to Nebuchadnezzar and married a widow of a previous king.

About 70 years have elapsed since the capture of Jerusalem. The Persians captured Nabonidus by the writing of Daniel five.

This chapter describes the downfall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

Critics aggressively attack the idea that Belshazzar ever lived. They say he most certainly was not a king in Babylon. However, recent discoveries of Babylonian cuneiform BEL-SHARRA-UTSUR, Bel protect the king, show that Belshazzar was a real person. He was the eldest son of Nabonidus (born 575 B.C.). He was fourteen years old when Nebuchadnezzar died. He was twenty years old when his father Nabonidus ascended the throne. At twenty-seven years of age, he was the commander-in-chief of the army. We know much more about his worship and other activities.

Archeology discovered the Annalistic Tablet of Cyrus showing the death of Belshazzar. This tablet describes the fall of Babylon. The capture of Nabonidus by the Persians made Belshazzar the king. Later, the Persians took Babylon very easily (cf. 5:30,31). Cyrus says that when Babylon fell the king's son died. Daniel says, that night Belshazzar was slain.

The name Belshazzar fell out of known recorded history. Herodotus visited Babylon around 460 B.C. and did not mention Belshazzar. No other historian heard of him. The critics were clearly wrong by following ancient historians. No historian today denies the authenticity of Belshazzar. Far from error, the name Belshazzar stands as witness to the authenticity of Scripture. The critics are also wrong about many other things. Archeology will eventually manifest the truth of Scripture.

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King Belshazzar gathered a thousand people to a huge feast in Babylon. Outside of Babylon, the Persian armies of King Darius laid siege to the city for four months. Belshazzar did not believe that the Persians could conquer Babylon.

Belshazzar was decadent and dissolute. Although he was co-regent with his father Nabonidus, he sat in the seat of regency the night Babylon fell. Nabonidus married into the royal family and his wife had a son by the name of Belshazzar.

**PRINCIPLE:** Archeology established the truth of Scripture.

**APPLICATION:** Critics constantly meet their comeuppance. They claimed that there was no such person as Belshazzar in extra biblical literature. Since there was no mention of Belshazzar in ancient historians such as Xenophon, Herodotus, Berosus and Abydenus, they assumed that he was a mythical figure. All critics agreed that Nabonidus was the last king of Babylon. They discredited Daniel.

When archaeologists discovered The Nabonidus Cylinder, they found the first record of Belshazzar. This Cylinder is now in the British museum. There is no adequate basis for questioning the existence of Belshazzar since the publication of Raymond Dougherty's research on Nabonidus and Belshazzar based on the Nabonidus Cylinder and other sources. Again, the critics meet their comeuppance.

#### **Daniel 5:2-8**

**While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them.**

**Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them.**

**They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.**

**In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.**

**Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other.**

**The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise men of Babylon, Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.**

**Now all the king's wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation.**

The ancients often used father for grandfather. Nebuchadnezzar was Belshazzar's grandfather.

The vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem were trophies of war and stored away in one of the heathen temples of Babylon. This was an act of sacrilege.

During this debauchery, the Persian army of Cyrus under General Gobryas was encamped outside Babylon. This is no time for the king of Babylon to be inebriated. Belshazzar showed little regard for his own empire. He lived in a world of escapism, self-indulgence and sublimation. He breached every decent norm for a king.

Belshazzar praised the gods of Babylon over the God of Israel. These gods may have been:

- 1) Marduk, the chief god of the Babylonian pantheon and the patron god of the city of Babylon, he was also known as Bel, the sun god.
- 2) Nebo, Nabu, the god of literature and wisdom.
- 3) Nergal, the god of war.
- 4) Ishtar, the goddess of fertility of the phallic cult. She was equivalent to Aphrodite or Venus.

God directly intervened into Belshazzar's party. He received a sign from God in the middle of the celebration of his gods – the fingers of a man's handwriting on the plaster wall.

Revelry turned to panic. The king's face grew pale and his joints knocked together. Terror obsessed his mind.

The king called for his scholars. He offered the reward of royalty to anyone who could interpret the writing on the wall. The third ruler would follow Nabonidus and Belshazzar in authority.

The king's wise men could not read the writing nor interpret the writing. This amplified the concern of Belshazzar. His dependence on human faculty failed.

**PRINCIPLE:** Dependence on human viewpoint exclusively does not give assurance in time of trial.

**APPLICATION:** Dependence on human faculty does not give assurance in time of crisis. They cannot attain assurance in time of adversity. This is the recourse of all those who reject revelation. We find the prerogative of confidence in crisis in those who believe the Bible. God is the only source of refuge.

Psalm 50:15 Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

Psalm 118:8,9 It is better to trust in the Lord Than to put confidence in man.

9 It is better to trust in the Lord Than to put confidence in princes.

Jeremiah 17:5-7 Thus says the Lord: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man – And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the Lord.

6 For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited.

7 Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord.

#### **Daniel 5:9-12**

**Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.**

**The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change.**

**There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.**

**Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Beltshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.**

Not only did this shake the theologians but it also shook the political leaders. Their wild party turned into a very troubled scene. The clever and learned men of the Royal State Department could not offer an answer to the writing on the wall. Divine intervention stumped them. Belshazzar's brawling party turned to terror. Fear immobilized them.

The queen here may be the queen mother and may have been a wife of Nebuchadnezzar.

The queen mother suggests that they bring Daniel to interpret the event. Nebuchadnezzar used the phrase in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God years prior (4:8-9,18). This is Daniel's spirit, not the Holy Spirit.

Three terms describe Daniel: excellent spirit, knowledge and understanding. Excellent spirit refers to his attitude. The other terms describe his mental facility and discernment.

Daniel dives directly into the interpretation of the writing on the wall and gives details about the fall of the Babylonian Empire. The interpretation has to do with the fall of the Empire.

**PRINCIPLE:** Our conscience governs our norms and standards.

**APPLICATION:** God gave each of us a conscience. The word conscience means to know with. Each of us has standards of life, some valid and some not valid. We measure ourselves by these standards. Sometimes our conscience condemns us.

Conscience does make cowards of us all. The person living in sin is afraid of things unknown. As Belshazzar's knees knocked together, so many knees knock today.

#### **Daniel 5:13-17**

**Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?**

**I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.**

**Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing.**

**And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.**

**Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation.**

Belshazzar heard of Daniel by reputation. He had not given Daniel the honor that Nebuchadnezzar had.

Belshazzar declares that Daniel is a man of wisdom.

The wise of this world do not have answers dealing with revelation. The leaders of the world will not seek answers from God until their bankruptcy becomes evident.

Belshazzar asked Daniel to do what his wise men could not do. If he fulfilled the king's request, the king would reward him.

Daniel declined the king's gifts. He would not allow himself to be bought off by material means. He was a man of great spiritual stability. Daniel was under no obligation to the king so that he could speak freely.

**PRINCIPLE:** Only divine revelation can ultimately declare the meaning of the sovereignty of God in history.

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**APPLICATION:** God is the God of history and He is sovereign over history and the future. He has authority over every nation of the world. All nations that do not align themselves with God's righteousness will inevitably fall. The handwriting is on the wall for any nation that does not heed who and what God is.

God will destroy the final Babylon as recorded in Revelation 17 and 18. That Babylon will be revived. This is a religious and political Babylon of the future located in Europe.

Matthew 11:21-24, Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

23 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.

### **Daniel 5:18-19**

**O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor.**

**And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down.**

Daniel now reminds Belshazzar of God's sovereign working in the life of Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel reminded Belshazzar of the sovereignty of Jehovah in dealing with Nebuchadnezzar. It is this sovereign God who put the writing on the wall. God taught Nebuchadnezzar this lesson in chapter four.

The Bible says more about Nebuchadnezzar than any other gentile ruler. The family of Nabopolassar and his son Nebuchadnezzar made a meteoric rise to power. This family of four generations left behind more material evidence than any family mentioned in the Bible.

Nebuchadnezzar's conquests were far-flung. Jeremiah foretold these conquests (Jeremiah 25:1ff.; 27:1ff.; 43:10). Ezekiel did as well (Ezek 26:7; 29:19; 30:10).

**PRINCIPLE:** God works sovereignly in history.

**APPLICATION:** The story of Babylon throughout the Bible is a major theme. This story begins in Genesis 10:10 where Nimrod built the city of Babel (Babylon). Hammurabi, the Amorite lawgiver was one of its great kings. The empire of Babylon reached its zenith in the eighteenth century B.C. known as one of the great metropolises of the world. The city went into eclipse after Hammurabi. It was not until the rise of the Neo-Babylonian Empire a thousand years later that Babylon rose to world dominion under Nebuchadnezzar. Throughout history, it is a type of the final city of the world in Revelation 17 and 18.

The Assyrians dominated the Mesopotamian Valley and most of the civilized world after old Babylon declined. Their capital later was Nineveh and the Tigris River. Her people were ruthless and war oriented. The last great ruler Ashur-banipal died in 625 B.C. His son was unable to keep the empire together. The king of the Chaldeans, Nabopolassar, was Ashur-banipal's viceroy in Babylon.

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Nabopolassar rebelled against Assyria and took Babylon. Nabopolassar and Cyaxares joined forces and took Nineveh from Assyria. Nineveh fell in 612 B.C., according to the prophecy of Nahum 2:1-3:19.

The Assyrians retreated to Carchemish on the banks of the Euphrates River with the Egyptians. The future of the world was decided on by one of the great battles of history, the Battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.). Egypt never rose again and Babylon ruled the world.

While Nabopolassar mopped up the cities along the Tigris-Euphrates Rivers, he sent his son Nebuchadnezzar to stop Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt at Carchemish. Necho had killed the good king Josiah at Armageddon on his way to Carchemish in Palestine. Nebuchadnezzar crushed Necho and the Egyptians. This was the final defeat of the Assyrians. The Egyptians never again rose to a world power. Judah became a vassal of Babylon (Is 39:5-8). Daniel as a member of the royal family came to Babylon as a captive and as a person of great influence to the world power.

### **Daniel 5:20-21**

**But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.**

**Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.**

God called Nebuchadnezzar my servant. God used him to work out His purposes. He uses Nebuchadnezzar to rule and reign for His own purposes.

Jeremiah 25:8, 9 Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, 9 'behold, I will send and take all the families of the north (Israel),' says the Lord, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations.

Jeremiah 27:6, And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him.

Jeremiah 43:10, ...and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will send and bring Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will set his throne above these stones that I have hidden. And he will spread his royal pavilion over them.'

Nebuchadnezzar's downfall was due to pride. He learned his lesson through divine discipline.

**PRINCIPLE:** Nothing can interdict God's purposes.

**APPLICATION:** God knows and rules the kingdoms of men. He also knows the future. God is never surprised about any event in history because He knows all events simultaneously. He is not a sequential being. Neither is He a time or space being. God transcends time and space.

Isaiah 39:5-8, Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, 'Hear the word of the Lord of hosts:

6 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the Lord.

7 'And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'

8 So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, 'The word of the Lord which you have spoken is good!' For he said, 'At least there will be peace and truth in my days.'

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Romans 11:25-28, For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

27 For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.

28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

When God purposes a thing, nothing can interdict it. To rebel against Nebuchadnezzar was to rebel against God's will for it was God's will to send nations into captivity (Jeremiah 2:2-11; Isaiah 20:2; Ezekiel 12:5-7; Ac 21:11).

### **Daniel 5:22-31**

**But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this.**

**And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.**

**Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.**

**And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.**

**This is the interpretation of each word. Mene: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it;**

**Tekel: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting;**

**Peres: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.**

**Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.**

**That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain.**

**And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.'**

Belshazzar knew of God's sovereign moves on Nebuchadnezzar so he was culpable. He would not humble his heart before God's sovereignty. His sin was the same as Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 18-21).

Now Daniel sets forth four charges against Belshazzar:

- 1) Belshazzar did not humble himself although he knew about Nebuchadnezzar (v.22).
- 2) He defiled the sovereign God by sacrilegiously abusing the vessels of the Temple (v.23).
- 3) He was guilty of idolatry (v.23).
- 4) He did not glorify the true God (v.23) who gave him his very life.

Some men do not learn the lessons of God's judgment. Belshazzar and his crew violated the vessels of the temple; therefore, God will remove the Neo-Babylon Empire from its power.

God sent Belshazzar a warning by direct revelation.



Daniel now begins to interpret the writing on the wall. He interprets each word. The three words refer to measures of weight.

MENE is an Aramaic word and means numbered, set the limit. The number of years for the Neo-Babylonian Empire has come to an end. Daniel repeats MENE for emphasis –number, number. God numbers each day and hour of the Neo-Babylonian kingdom. This is the last day of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. It lost its world power in one day.

Psalm 90:12 So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

TEKEL means weighed. God weighed Belshazzar and his kingdom and found him flagrantly wanting in conceding the sovereignty of God. UPHARSIN means half. God puts Neo-Babylon on divine scales and finds them wanting. Babylon did not meet God's standard.

PERES means to divide, break. This word explains UPHARSIN. The U is the Aramaic word and PHARSIN is the plural for PERES. Belshazzar's kingdom will divide into two parts: Medes and Persians. This kingdom immediately followed the Neo-Babylonian Empire. They were right outside the city ready to fulfill God's prophecy.

Belshazzar kept his promise to honor Daniel. However, this honor only lasted a few hours until the fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire to the Medes and Persians. The Persians diverted the Euphrates River that flowed through Babylon into a lake to the north of Babylon. They entered through the riverbed through thigh deep water.

Belshazzar did not make it through the night for the Persians invaded Babylon that night and executed him. He met his reckoning. Isaiah and Jeremiah predicted this fall (Isaiah 13:17-22; 21:1-10; 45:1; 47:1-5; Jeremiah 50:1-3, 9-10, 21, 24, 30-31 35-37; 51:1-2, 11-13; 30-64). As described in the Nabonidus Chronicle, Babylon fell on Tishri 16 (October 11, 12 or 13) 539 B.C. Herodotus and Xenophon both confirm that the end of the Babylonian empire was sudden. Relevant extra-biblical records describing the fall of Babylon include portions of Berossus (cited in Josephus), the Cyrus Cylinder, and the Babylonian Chronicle.

Many critics deem that the reference to Darius the Mede is one of the most serious historical problems in the book of Daniel. History does not mention Darius. They claim that there was no such person. However, Darius may have been a title like Caesar or Pharaoh. However, Darius was probably Cyrus.

Critics claim that Daniel erred in setting forth a separate Median kingdom that ruled over Babylon when the Persians gained victory over Babylon. However, Daniel does not say that the kingdom was the Median kingdom but only that the king was a Mede.

**PRINCIPLE:** God sits in sovereign judgment over all the nations of the world.

**APPLICATION:** The purpose of chapter five of Daniel is to record the historic fulfillment of prophecy. It also demonstrates God's dealings with pagan empires. Contemporary pride in great achievements of man will produce the same results – the fall of national entities.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

3 For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

God sits as Judge over all the nations of the world. He works in human government through His sovereign decision. There is meaning and purpose to history, even in secular governments.

1 Chronicles 29:11, 12, Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, And You are exalted as head over all.

12 Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all.

## Daniel 6

### Daniel 6:1-3

**It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom;**

**and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss.**

**Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.**

Chapter 6 advances the historical time significantly ahead of chapter five.

Jeremiah 50:9 predicts that the Medes and Persians will defeat the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This included the army of Cyrus and the armies of the Median king Astyages and Croesus of Lydia.

Jeremiah 50 and 51 describe the actual fall of Babylon.

Jeremiah 51:11 Make the arrows bright! Gather the shields! The Lord has raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes. For His plan is against Babylon to destroy it, Because it is the vengeance of the Lord, The vengeance for His temple.

Cyrus was the Lord's anointed (Jeremiah 45:1; 2 Chronicles 36:22,23; Ezra 1:1-4; Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-5). Cyrus' general, Gobryas, captured Babylon. Darius assumed the role of King of Babylon. He was the son of Ahasuerus (title for king, 9:1) of the seed of the Medes. The Jewish historian Josephus verified this fact (Jewish Antiquities, Book X).

Now Darius, who with his relative Cyrus put an end to the Babylonian sovereignty, was in his sixty-second year when he took Babylon; he was a son of Astyages but was called by another name among the Greeks.

The kingdoms of Media and Persia were related by marriage. The Median King Astyages arranged the marriage of his daughter Mandane to Cambyses, King of Anshan, who later became King of Persia. This union produced Cyrus the Great, King of Anshan, who later became King of Persia. Astyages' son was Darius Cyaxares II who was Darius the Mede of Daniel 5:31 and 6:1. He was the uncle of Cyrus the Great. Cyrus left the throne of Babylon to Darius. Cyrus married the daughter of his uncle Darius two years later uniting the two kingdoms and made himself King of Persia.

Daniel 6 occurred during the two-year reign of Darius the Mede. The two arms of Nebuchadnezzar's image were the two kingdoms of Media and Anshan that merged into the Persian Empire.

Daniel, now in his eighties, appointed 120 satraps to administer the kingdom. A satrap is a guardian, watcher. These people watched over Babylon administratively.

Daniel put three governors over the 120 satraps of whom he was one.

Darius placed Daniel over his entire kingdom because of his outstanding administrative abilities. God promotes prepared people. He was a man of the Word. He looked at the world through the eyes of God. That is why God revealed to him divine truth. Daniel's excellent spirit was due to his knowledge of the Word of God (5:12). We see this in his study of Jeremiah.

**PRINCIPLE:** God moves the believer beyond his natural capacity if he or she builds a body of truth in the soul and applies it to experience.

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**APPLICATION:** When a believer builds up a soul full of God's viewpoint on life, he goes beyond his natural capacity. God always rewards the believer who operates on His economy and is faithful to that economy.

#### Daniel 6:4

**So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him.**

The governors and satraps tried to dig up a charge against Daniel's leadership out of jealousy. They wanted to find a way to discredit him.

**PRINCIPLE:** Success of some always leads to jealousy in others.

**APPLICATION:** Whenever we find ourselves in leadership whether in politics, business or Christian work, there are those who are jealous of our accomplishments. Their envy will attempt to diminish us. They will look for any weakness, any flaw to detract from the leader. They will use it against the leader.

Christian leaders are always targets of Satan to undermine the trust of God's work. Jealousy and envy always destroy what they touch. It is a destructive power. It is petty.

Proverbs 27:4 Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, But who is able to stand before jealousy?

Matthew 27:18 For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

Acts 7:And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him...

For the sake of Jesus Christ and the testimony of the church, leaders should be blameless (not sinless).

Acts 24:16 This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

Philippians 2:15 ...that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world...

Not all leaders are blameless so there is a need for objective criticism of leadership that is free from envy. Love always believes the best until it knows otherwise.

1 Corinthians 13:7 ...bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

#### Daniel 6:5

**Then these men said, We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.**

After an extensive search on Daniel's background, his adversaries could not find any fault or corruption in his leadership so they tried to find some inconsistency in his beliefs. They could not find any skeletons in his political or character closet. They must have been amazed to find a person of such sterling character. They chose a device that used Daniel's belief against him.

**PRINCIPLE:** All those who live dynamically before God will come under attack.

**APPLICATION:** All faithful believers will at some time or other find themselves under attack for their belief. This is part of the satanic system of undermining our testimony. Satan uses his fallen angels to attack believers who take a stand for God.

God gives those who know the Word a sense of personal peace. They walk unperturbed and foreboding no matter what trial they might face.

Polycarp was a disciple of the apostle John. Enemies of Christianity put him on a stake to be burned in Smyrna (A.D. 155). They gave him a chance to recant his faith before they lit the fire. He said,

Eight and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no harm. Why should I forsake Him now? That is poise.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

God asks us to be open and public with our faith. He asks us to pray in private and in public. He expects us to live our life before Him in private and in public.

Matthew 10:33, But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Romans 10:9, 10, ...that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

### Daniel 6:6-9

**6 So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: King Darius, live forever!**

**7 All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.**

**8 Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.**

**9 Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.**

Having not found any flaw in Daniel's leadership, the 122 administrators tried to set up Darius to undermine Daniel. They seized on the very thing Daniel was noted for – consistency in his belief.

The plot against Daniel centered on his worship and Darius' ego. All of Darius' subjects were to address their prayer to the king. The penalty for not obeying this statute was to be cast into a den of lions.

People of vengeance have attitudinal problems. These attitudinal problems manifest themselves in overt action. Daniel's enemies actively conspired against him. They used machination to undermine him.

Since this played to the pride of the king, he acquiesced to the suggestion that all prayer be addressed to him.

The plan appealed to the Darius' vainglory so he signed a decree. All laws of the Medo-Persian Empire were irrevocable.

**PRINCIPLE:** Legislation can never provide equality.

**APPLICATION:** Attitudinal sins contaminate people within its sphere of operation. Under God's economy, He designs civil law to protect and give freedom to the individual. Some people use law as a weapon. This legalism distorts wholesome life in a national entity. When governments begin to make law to control its citizens rather than provide protection and afford freedom, we end up with organizations like the ACLU who try to control citizens by lawsuits. Legislation can never make man equal. A federal government cannot rectify all social and moral ills. Only regeneration can do that.

**Daniel 6:10**

**Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.**

Having knowledge of Darius' decree, Daniel did not hesitate to worship his God. He followed his customary practice from the beginning of his walk with God – as was his custom since early days. This event did not perturb him. He was sedate and stately, a man of quiet assurance. He did not enter into a state of anxiety and apprehension.

Daniel had a habit and place of prayer. He allowed nothing to interfere with this practice. He was a man who utterly depended on God for his needs. Guidance and thanksgiving were part of his prayer life.

Daniel did not leave his window open out of a sense of phony religious pride but because of a need for air conditioning!

**PRINCIPLE:** God gives stability of soul in crisis.

**APPLICATION:** As Daniel, we need to commit every crisis to God's sovereignty. Under God's economy, we present our problems to Him in prayer. This gives a stability of soul that no psychological mechanism can provide.

Psalm 55:22 Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

Philippians 4:6, Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

As Daniel, we should give thanks for everything. We put everything in God's hands.

1 Samuel 3:18, Then Samuel told him everything, and hid nothing from him. And he said, 'It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him.'

**Daniel 6:11**

**Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.**

Daniel did not hide his worship. Daniel followed Jeremiah in this. Although Daniel was busy as an administrator of a kingdom, he kept short accounts with God.

Jeremiah 29:1, 10-12, Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remainder of the elders who were carried away captive—to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon.

10 For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

12 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

**PRINCIPLE:** The claim that we do not have time for prayer is a rationalization.

**APPLICATION:** Many busy executives claim that they do not have time for God. This is always a rationalization. It is a matter of putting priority on the things of greatest value.

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**Daniel 6:12-18**

**12** And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king's decree: Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.

**13** So they answered and said before the king, That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.

**14** And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

**15** Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.

**16** So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.

**17** Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

**18** Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.

Daniel's accusers went before the king and reminded him of his decree. Even the king himself could not alter his decree.

The enemies of Daniel remind the king that Daniel was a captive from Judah. They charged Daniel with two violations against the king:

1. Daniel does not show respect to the king himself.
2. Daniel does not respect national law.

Darius was greatly displeased with himself for allowing himself to be ensnared by those who plotted against Daniel. Darius tried to find some way to deliver Daniel but found none. Hindsight is always 20/20.

The plotters manipulated the king into killing Daniel.

Darius expressed a desire that God spare Daniel. He also noted that Daniel served God continually. Daniel had a clear testimony before Darius.

They sealed the mouth of the den of lions with a royal seal so that no one could tamper with the king's decree.

King Darius went into fasting and sleeplessness over the situation with Daniel. He cancelled entertainment from the musicians for the evening. The king could not sleep but Daniel probably used one of the lions for a pillow and slept like cub!

**PRINCIPLE:** Attitudinal sins produce instability.

**APPLICATION:** If we yield to approbatory lust, we distort our soul. At one moment, we relish in personal attention and at the next, we enter despair. We make a royal mess of our lives when we live by highs and lows like this.

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**Daniel 6:19-20**

**Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions.**

**And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?**

King Darius had insomnia that night so he rose early in the morning to see what had happened to Daniel in the den of lions.

The king spoke with a lamenting (sad) voice. His mind was full of anguish. He feared that there would be dead silence when he called to Daniel.

The king's question revolved around whether Daniel's God delivered him. Wealth and position did not address the anxiety of the king. Neither wealth nor position guarantee satisfaction. His luxury and splendid palace did not comfort him. Had Darius believed his own statement that your God will deliver you, his personal life would not be in such disorder. He was totally despondent and discouraged.

Darius recognized that Daniel served God continually. He did not stop serving God when things got rough. Some people serve God for success. Daniel served God in success and disappointment. Fellowship with the Lord was more real to him than any scenario of success. No honor or status symbol deflected him from his highest priority.

**PRINCIPLE:** Circumstances do not determine the bearing of the mature believer but orientation to God's Word does.

**APPLICATION:** Divine power is never the issue in our deliverance. The issue is always one of divine sovereignty and will. If deliverance is in God's plan, God will rescue us from our situation. God always has a plan for the believer whether by life or by death. Release from suffering on earth is as much deliverance as freedom from our problem. This is why the believer can stay calm and collected under great duress.

We cannot say without qualification, God, heal me of cancer. That is an issue of God's will. God's purpose for each believer is different.

Circumstances did not dictate his orientation. That was the difference between the trauma in the king's palace and calmness of Daniel in the lions' den.

**Daniel 6:21-22**

**Then Daniel said to the king, O king, live forever!**

**My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.**

The sound of Daniel's voice must have been a shock to Darius. He probably expected the awful hush of death. Daniel did not admonish the king for throwing him in the den or insist that he punish those who undermined him. He did none of that. He was not the malicious type. Instead, he used normal court protocol, O king, live forever!

The use of the personal pronoun my God shows Daniel's consciousness of his personal relationship to God. Daniel explains to Darius that an angel delivered him from the lions. He gave glory to God for the deliverance.

The words sent His angel are a reference to a theophany (a manifestation of Christ in the Old Testament). This is the Angel of Jehovah. The presence of God was with Daniel in the den. Daniel's concern to tell Darius how it happened is an issue of the glory of God. God did not shield him from trial but in trial.

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Deuteronomy 31:6, Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.

Daniel was innocent before God. Actually, the word means purity. He was found in purity. The idea is that Daniel lived a consistent way of life before God. He committed no crime or violation against the king or his kingdom.

**PRINCIPLE:** God does not shield us from trial but gives us grace in trial.

**APPLICATION:** Every believer should live his or her life unto the Lord and leave the results in His hands. God does not shield us from trial but gives us grace to live in the trial. He promises His presence in whatever we face.

Isaiah 41:10, Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

Hebrews 13:5, Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'

### Daniel 6:23

**Then the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.**

King Darius was on an emotional high. Just an hour before this, he was on an emotional low. He did not have stability because he did not trust in a sovereign God. Daniel had stability because of his faith.

Hebrews 11:33, ...who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions...

**PRINCIPLE:** Lasting stability comes through faith.

**APPLICATION:** The person with strong faith has great stability of soul. He understands something of God's sovereignty in his life.

God's deliverance is perfect because He is perfect. When we put our trust in Him, we acquire a sense of stability and security. By appropriating God's grace and provision for our souls, we give glory to what God provides and does for us.

Jeremiah 17:5-7, Thus says the Lord: Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the Lord.

6 For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited.

7 Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord.

## Daniel 7

### Daniel 7:1-2

**In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.**

**Daniel spoke, saying, 'I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.'**

Daniel now turns to a vision of the future of world governments in chapter seven. This chapter is the most comprehensive and detailed prophecy found anywhere in the Old Testament. It gives more

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detail of world governments than chapter two – Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek and Roman. This vision reveals four consecutive world empires. The fifth empire is that of Jesus Christ.

The vision of chapter seven is the first of four visions to Daniel in chapters seven through twelve (also 8, 9; 10-12). This chapter occurs chronologically between chapters four and five. Whereas the first six chapters of Daniel mainly set forth historical ideas, chapter seven introduces the prophetic division of the book (7-12).

Chapter seven is apocalyptic literature and must be interpreted apocalyptically. There are three apocalyptic books in the Bible: Daniel, Zechariah and Revelation. Apocalyptic literature expresses its ideas in symbols. There are three pictures in chapter seven:

- 1) four beasts rising out of a raging sea,
- 2) the Ancient of Days sitting in judgment on Gentile nations
- 3) the Second Coming of the Son of man.

Daniel received direct revelation by dream and visions while he slept, fifty years after Nebuchadnezzar's dream. This came to him in the first year of the reign of Belshazzar king of Babylon (553 B.C.). After waking, Daniel recorded the dream.

The Great Sea here is the Mediterranean Sea. The sea in Near Eastern symbolism represents the mass of humanity. God used the four winds of heaven to put humanity into turmoil. There was great instability among mankind when these blasts of wind came along.

**PRINCIPLE:** God uses nationalism for evangelism.

**APPLICATION:** God uses national entities to protect citizens who live in those entities.

Nationalism tends to balance the powers of the world. Nationalism allows for those who herald the gospel to carry it to the maximum.

There is no countervailing balance in internationalism. That is why internationalism is always satanic. We will see this as we study Daniel.

God concurs with the rise and fall of nations. He is sovereign over all. The nations of the world are unstable. Satan is the prince of the power of the air but he does not have absolute control over the world. God uses dissonance among the nations of the world to accomplish His purposes in the world. He brings instability to the nations of the world as He chooses. God uses international insecurity so that people will take note of the person and work of His Son. It reminds people of their need of trust in the work of Jesus Christ.

#### **Daniel 7:3-6**

**And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.**

**The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.**

**And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'**

**After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.**

The four beasts represent four kings (v.17). Kings personify their kingdoms. This vision is about a panorama of the rise and fall of four kingdoms. With each kingdom comes turbulence, disorder uncertainty and insecurity.

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The first beast appeared like a lion but it had the wings of an eagle. Something plucked its wings, made it stand on two feet like a man, and gave it a human nature. This figure represents Neo-Babylonia. The cropping of its wings may refer to the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar.

The second beast was similar to a bear. This bear was raised up on one side. This may allude to the superior power of Persia over Media. The three ribs in its mouth may refer to the three nations that the Medo-Persian Empire conquered: Babylon, Lydia and Egypt. It could refer to Media, Persia and Babylon.

The phrase Arise, devour much flesh may refer to future subjection of nations. Medo-Persia ruled for two hundred years. Alexander the Great conquered it in 331 B.C.

The third kingdom was like a leopard. This is Greece because Greece overthrew Medo-Persia. A leopard is cunning, swift and strong. The four wings emphasize speed. Alexander conquered Persia in twelve years. Therefore, Alexander the Great conquered the world with great swiftness. He moved with lightening speed from Macedonia to Africa and eastward to India (334-331 B.C.).

This leopard also had four heads. The empire of Greece divided into four parts. After Alexander's defeat at Ipsus in Phrygia in 301 B.C., his four generals divided the empire among themselves. Casander took the home territory of Greece and Macedonia. Lysimachus governed Thrace and a large part of Asia Minor. Seleucus ruled over Syria and much of the Middle East. Ptolemy ruled Egypt.

Daniel wrote this prophecy at the zenith of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. There was no possibility for this empire to fall at the time. This was long before Persia, Greece or Rome. Clearly, this is prophecy in its pure form.

**PRINCIPLE:** God will ultimately destroy bestial power of national entities.

**APPLICATION:** Man looks upon the great kingdoms of the world with awe and pride but God looks on them as wild beasts that play by brute power. God will ultimately destroy these brute beasts because they live by might and blood. They are bestial but God will tame them.

#### Daniel 7:7

**After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.**

The fourth beast represents the Roman Empire. Daniel did not compare this fourth beast to a known animal. This beast was very unique, strong and terrorizing.

The rise of Rome was slow. It began in 241 B.C. with the conquest of Sicily. It expanded over time into Western Europe to Spain and Gaul. It reached as far as Britain. It spread to the east as far as the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Rome fell when the Visigoths sacked Rome in A.D. 410.

The ten horns are very important prophetically. They compare to the ten toes of chapter two. The ten horns are rulers who will come to the fore during the Tribulation period. They are the same as the ten horns of Revelation 13 and 17.

**PRINCIPLE:** God will fulfill prophecy concerning the future of the Roman Empire by a Revived Roman Empire.

**APPLICATION:** God will allow for a revival of the Roman Empire in the future. The emergence of the European Union may be a precursor to that Empire. There will be a future form and that will be the Revived Roman Empire.

Revelation 13 speaks of this revival of the Roman Empire during the Tribulation. This will be a ten-nation confederacy. Out of this ten-nation confederacy will come a dictator who will operate under

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the power of Satan. There will also be a worldwide ecumenical religion in that day (Re 17:3 ff.). Revelation 13 emphasizes the political and Revelation 17 emphasizes the religious aspect of the Revived Roman Empire.

READ Revelation 13

### Daniel 7:8-13

**I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.**

**I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire;**

**A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.**

**I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.**

**As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.**

**I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.**

An eleventh horn came from the ten horns. This horn ousted three of the ten horns. This figure is the Antichrist (Mt 24:5,15; 2 Th 2:3-4; 1 Jn 2:18; 4:3; Re 13; 17; 19). The eyes suggest personal magnetism and genius. This little horn is the dictator of Revelation 13, 17 and 2 Thessalonians 2.

This little horn is not a nation in himself but a representative of the three nations. He and his party become so powerful that they take over three of the ten nations of the Revived Roman Empire. By plucking them up from the roots, his conquest is total defeat of the three horns.

This verse begins a poetic style (vv. 9-10; 13-14). Poetry situates these verses separately as distinct. Daniel saw thrones established (cf. Re 1:4; 20:4).

The Ancient of Days is God the Father ruling on His throne eternally. God the Father judges in absolute purity and in flaming judgment.

A fiery stream flowed from before the throne like lava. This represents judgment from God's court.

Daniel returns to prose in this verse to show his personal observation of the destruction of the little horn. The destruction of this little horn is the end of Gentile world power, or the times of the Gentiles (Lu 21:24, 27).

The previous three empires were protracted beyond the conquering of their empires. Aspects of their kingdoms continued beyond their defeat. The fourth empire will not continue beyond its defeat. There will be a completely new kingdom after the fourth empire (cf. Re 19:19-20).

Returning to poetry, Daniel introduces the kingdom of the Son of Man (7:13-14). A person like the Son of Man came in clouds of heaven before the Ancient of Days. The angelic attendants ushered him into the presence of the Ancient of Days.

The title Son of Man implies identity with humanity. The idea may be that this is the God-man. The gospels use the title son of man for Jesus (Mark 8:31; Jn 1:51). Jesus used this title of Himself

(Matthew uses this title 31 times alone). This is why this verse is the most frequently quoted verse from Daniel in the New Testament.

The New Testament portrays Jesus as coming in the clouds (Mt 24:30; Mark 13:26; Ac 1:9; 1 Th 4:17; Re 1:7, 9).

**PRINCIPLE:** The Second Coming of Christ will resolve all the problems with national entities in the world.

**APPLICATION:** Jesus will come in the consummation of the ages. He will destroy the carnivorous nation beasts and the final Antichrist. This will be a cataclysmic catastrophe. He will come to judge the nations of the world.

John 5:22 For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, 23 that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

The United Nation's headquarters in New York City has a portion from Isaiah adorned on a marble wall which reads, They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore (2:4). However, they conveniently left off the first part of the verse that reads, And He [God] shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people. They left off the only means whereby the latter part of the verse can be achieved. World peace will not come by the human efforts of the United Nations but by the supernatural intervention of God.

#### Daniel 7:14

**Daniel 7:14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.**

The Son of Man is the important person in the vision. The Ancient of Days gives Him dominion, glory and a kingdom. This is not referring to His inherent dominion, glory and kingdom as God, but to His victory as the God-man through His death and resurrection. God gives Him global rule over everything. His kingdom is to be everlasting in contrast to the termination of the previous four kingdoms.

Jesus' first coming did not destroy the Roman Empire, so this does not refer to His first coming but to His Second Coming. When He comes, His kingdom will end all other kingdoms. He will rule as a benevolent Dictator. Dominion refers to rulership of the entire earth and glory carries the idea of glamour.

There will be peoples, nations and languages in the millennial kingdom of Christ. Peoples refers to races, nations references geographical boundaries and languages carries the idea of linguistic divisions. All will serve the Lord Jesus Christ in His kingdom that will not be destroyed. There will be universal prosperity, a chicken in every pot. There will be universal knowledge of God (Is 11:9). Perfect world government will rule the day (Zach 14:9). Animals will lose their ferocity; the lion and the lamb will lie down together. A child will play on a cobra's den.

**PRINCIPLE:** Jesus will be King Jesus, absolute benevolent Dictator of the world in the millennial kingdom.

**APPLICATION:** Jesus reign is one of universal dominion. The Bible never presents His kingdom before His coming. He comes, and then follows His kingdom.

Man his helpless on his own. The world is not getting better and better. The ultimate triumph will come at the Second Coming after the Tribulation. That event will be cataclysmic where Jesus will interpose into the affairs of the Gentile nations of the world. Then Jesus' kingdom will have universal dominion.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

#### **Daniel 7:15-18**

**I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.**

**I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things:**

**‘Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth.**

**But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.’**

Daniel now turns to interpreting the meaning of the four beasts (7:15-18). The vision bewildered him.

There was a mystery to what Daniel saw. He sees himself in the vision interacting with someone who interpreted the dream for him.

The interpreter clearly says that the beasts are four kings. The kings represent four kingdoms.

The interpreter continues by explaining the fifth kingdom of the Son of Man, a kingdom that lasts forever, even forever and ever. This is a promise to Israel of an earthly, literal kingdom that displaces the previous earthly Gentile kingdoms. The saints are believing Jews.

**PRINCIPLE:** Ultimate hope for man lies not in the nations of this world but in the kingdom of Christ.

**APPLICATION:** Although man has accomplished great achievements, he has not dealt with the sin capacity in man. Human reform cannot change man but regeneration can transform him from within. We will continue to see brutality and depravity in man until that happens.

God permits the nations of the world to act beastly toward one another only for a time. Their coercive, wanton and cruel acts toward each other will end by God’s power. God is preparing a kingdom that will have no cruelty. In the final consummation, the kingdoms of the earth will become the kingdom of King Jesus. He will reign forever and ever, world without end. World empires exist only as long as God permits them to exist.

The believer should not look for ultimate hope of world peace via nations of the world. If he or she looks to national entities to resolve the problems of man, then that will end in despair. We look for a different King and kingdom.

#### **Daniel 7:19-23**

**Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet;**

**and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows.**

**I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them,**

**until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.**

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**Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces.’**

Daniel understood the meaning of the first three beasts but he specifically requests an interpretation of the fourth beast or the fourth kingdom (vv. 19-22).

The ten horns are of particular importance in prophecy. From this point to the end of the prophecy, Daniel concerns himself with the person represented by the little horn.

The little horn comes after the ten horns and is contemporaneous with them. He defeats three of the ten horns. This pompously speaking horn will wage war with Jewish believers during the Tribulation period and triumph over them (Revelation 12:13-17; 13:7; 17:7).

This pompous horn prevails over the saints until the Ancient of Days comes, when he is defeated (cf. Revelation 19:19-20).

The interpreter now gives the meaning of the fourth beast and especially of the little horn (vv. 23-25). The idea of kings with their kingdoms becomes obvious in this verse.

The fourth kingdom began with the Roman Empire but it would be different from the previous three kingdoms. This fourth kingdom is more than a single nation; it is a collection of nations (Revelation 17). It will dominate the world by a unity of ideals and principles.

**PRINCIPLE:** The Roman Empire will be revived and defeated by the Lord Jesus Christ at His Second Coming.

**APPLICATION:** Western languages and culture have dominated the world since the Roman Empire. Greek, Latin, Spanish and English became the languages of commerce, trade and diplomacy. The Roman Empire has made its impact on the world and will continue to make an impact until the Tribulation period, when its empire will be revived. When Jesus appears in His Second Coming, He will defeat the last vestiges of the Roman Empire.

#### **Daniel 7:24**

**‘The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings.’**

The interpreting angel continues with the meaning of the ten horns. The ten horns are ten kingdoms. One horn (v. 8) will subdue three kings and kingdoms. The horn is a king, not a kingdom. He differs from the ten kings (Revelation 13:1; 17:12).

**PRINCIPLE:** A final world dictator will arise during the Tribulation who will deceive the world into believing that his programs will be the answer to the world’s problems.

**APPLICATION:** The final form of the fourth kingdom is the Revived Roman Empire. Two great political changes must occur before the return of Jesus Christ in glory:

- 1) The restoration of the Jews to Palestine.
- 2) The establishment of the Revived Roman Empire by a world dictator.

An ultimate Caesar will rise during the Tribulation period. He will be a vibrant personality. The world will fall for his solutions to world problems.

#### **Daniel 7:25**

**Daniel 7:25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.**

The horn is pompous and boastful against the Most High (Revelation 13:6). He will persecute the saints (2 Thessalonians 2:8-9; Re 12:13-17; 13:1-10, 16-17).

God will permit him to have his way for a time and times and half a time. This is three and a half years (4:16; Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5). This period is equivalent to the 1,260 days (12:6) and the forty-two months of Revelation (11:2; 13:5). This is the last three and a half years of the Tribulation, or in other words, the Great Tribulation. Jesus' Second Coming takes place at the end of this three and a half years.

The Antichrist wants to eradicate the past. He desires to change the times. He wishes to reorganize civilization in a way that suits his values. In doing so, he will change law (singular). This is not Bible law but the foundational law fundamental to the state of society.

**PRINCIPLE:** God always puts limits on man.

**APPLICATION:** The last world dictator will attempt to remake societal laws after his own fashion. This will revolve around humanistic thinking. He will change the constitutions of national entities in an attempt to resolve man's problems by means of man. He will disregard natural law and ignore laws of economics, government and morality. He will dare to think of himself as the solution to the problems of man. This delusion will last for three and a half years in the Tribulation. His power will be limited to a very definite period, and then God will pull the plug on him.

Revelation 13:5-8, And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

#### Daniel 7:26-28

**'But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever.**

**Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'**

**This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and my countenance changed; but I kept the matter in my heart.**

When the fourth beast's kingdom ends, then God launches His kingdom (7:26-28). God will destroy the fourth beast's kingdom forever (2 Th 2:7,8; Re 19:20). Gentile world rule will collapse when Jesus Christ comes in His Second Coming (not the Rapture).

This verse records a promise to believing Jews that they will have a future kingdom. After God defeats the Antichrist, He will launch the fifth kingdom, the kingdom of the Son of Man. Saints will be the center of God's blessing during this kingdom. Jesus will be King Jesus, King of the World. His personal reign is the solution to all of mankind's problems.

Daniel notes the end and his personal response to the vision.

**PRINCIPLE:** Jesus' kingdom will triumph over all problems and foes.

**APPLICATION:** Jesus' kingdom is triumphal. It is the final and eternal kingdom. There will be a redeemed, reformed and glorified people of God there. Nations will be there, bringing the glory of

their history. People of all cultures and colors will be there. No animal will be carnivorous. There will be no more war, for swords will be turned into plowshares. All things will be new. There will be universal knowledge of God.

Isaiah 11:9, They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,  
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
As the waters cover the sea.

Revelation 21:24-26, And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.

25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.

## Daniel 8

### Daniel 8:1-4

**In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time.**

**I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai.**

**Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.**

**I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.**

Chapter seven presented the history of the times of the Gentiles from the Neo-Babylonian Empire until the Second Coming of Christ to establish His kingdom on earth. The eighth chapter introduces God's program for Israel in relation to Gentiles (8-12). This chapter returns to the Hebrew from the Aramaic language (2:4-7:28). Daniel writes in the Hebrew from this point because the subject matter relates to Israel.

Chapter eight is Daniel's vision of the ram and the goat. This is a more detailed revelation about the Persian and Greek empires and how they relate to Israel. This is the last of the symbolic visions in Daniel.

The third year of the reign of King Belshazzar was 551 B.C., two years after the events of chapter seven. This vision occurred toward the end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

The ram vision covers verses two to four. While in Babylon, Daniel had a vision of himself in Shushan. Shushan or Susa (Greek) was two hundred miles east of Babylon and approximately 150 miles due north of the Persian Gulf. Few knew much about Susa in Daniel's day but Susa became the capital of the Persian Empire when Medo-Persia conquered Neo-Babylonia.

Esther lived there eighty years later (Esther 1:2). Nehemiah left Susa to return to Palestine 107 years later (Nehemiah 1:1). Archeologists discovered the code of Hammurabi there in 1901.

The citadel was the royal residence or palace, a place of strong fortification. Ulai may have been an artificial canal nine hundred feet wide.



The ram represents Medo-Persia (v.20). Chapter seven presented Medo-Persia as a lopsided bear (7:5). The two horns stand for the power of the two nations Medo and Persia. The longer horn symbolizes Persia, the more powerful kingdom. Persia presented itself as a ram. The Persian king carried the head of a ram to war.

The Medo-Persian Empire pushed its borders westward to Lydia, Ionia, Thrace and Macedonia. It went northward to the Caspian Mountains, the Oxus Valley and Scythia and southward toward Babylonia, Palestine and Egypt. Cyrus and Cambyses were the primary leaders of this conquest.

**PRINCIPLE:** Greatness depends on the ethics behind the desire for greatness.

**APPLICATION:** God does not assail doing great things. God does great things (1 Sa 12:24; Psalm 126:2, 3). Man can take something great and turn it into arrogance (Jeremiah 48:26; Joel 2:20; Ze 2:10; Psalm 35:26; Psalm 55:13).

### Daniel 8:5-8

**And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.**

**Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power.**

**And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.**

**Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.**

The goat vision runs from verse five to verse eight. This vision symbolizes Greece (v.21). Alexander the Great is the obvious horn. Alexander advanced with lightening speed against Persia. His feat of conquering the Near and Middle East within three years is acknowledged as a great military achievement. Alexander's strategic brilliance and use of the phalanx proved decisive in the face of massive numerical superiority of the Persian army.

The goat (Alexander) ran at the ram (Persia) with particular ferocity. This description corresponds to the third beast of 7:6. Alexander crossed the Hellespont with about 35,000 troops. After crossing the Granicus River, he encountered the Persian army. His hatred for the Persians expressed itself in this ferocious battle in 334 B.C. Alexander subsequently fought the Persians on two other occasions.

Alexander was victorious in Asia Minor in 334 B.C. at the Granicus River and at Issus in Phrygia in 333 B.C. He finally conquered Persia at Gaugamela near Nineveh in 331 B.C. At this point Alexander possessed all the land of the Persians.

After Alexander conquered Persia, he extended his borders into Afghanistan and the Indus Valley. Alexander regarded himself as divine.

This verse indicates the premature death of Alexander and the division of his empire among his four generals. Alexander died of dipsomania (drunkenness) in June 323 B.C. He could conquer the world but he could not conquer himself. He died of debauchery in Babylon at age thirty-three. He died at the zenith of his triumphs.

His four generals Lysimachus, Cassander, Seleucus and Ptolemy (11:4) divided the kingdom of Greece. Lysimachus took Thrace, Bithynia and most of Asia Minor; Cassander ruled over Macedonia and Greece; Ptolemy ruled over Egypt and maybe Palestine and Arabia Petraea; Seleucus took Syria and lands to the east including Babylonia.

**PRINCIPLE:** The Word of God can have an effect on unbelievers.

**APPLICATION:** History gives us an interesting story about Alexander and Jerusalem. The Jewish historian Josephus says that when Alexander approached Jerusalem to take the city, the high priests showed him this prophecy in Daniel eight. Alexander was so impressed with this prophecy that he spared Jerusalem.

**Daniel 8:9-14**

**And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.**

**And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.**

**He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down.**

**Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.**

**Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, 'How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled under foot?'**

**And he said to me, 'For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.'**

Verses nine through fourteen cover the little horn of the goat. This little horn grew out of the four horns (v.22) that displaced the single horn on the goat (Greece, v.21). This horn is not the same as the little horn that came out of the ten horns of the fourth beast (Rome, 7:8, 11, 24-26). This is Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) from the Seleucid dynasty. Antiochus Epiphanes ruled Syria from 175 to 164 B.C. (1 Macc 1:10; 6:16). His capital city, Antioch, was named after him. This was also the city where Christians were first called Christians (Ac 11:26).

While there are similarities between the little horn of chapter seven and that of chapter eight, the dissimilarities are significant. The fourth kingdom in chapter seven is Rome while the goat in chapter eight is not Rome. The Messianic kingdom in chapter seven will be erected after the final world empire, while this is not true of the goat in chapter eight. These two men (little horns) are alike in many respects but they are not the same.

Antiochus went south to Egypt, east to Mesopotamia (especially northeast to Armenia), and to the glorious land (Palestine). He dominated the land of the Jews. The Jews called Antiochus Epimanes (madman). He conquered Jerusalem because of this insult. He defiled the high priests and entered the temple. He erected a pagan altar and offered unclean swine as sacrifice upon it. He sprinkled the blood of the swine throughout the sanctuary defiling the entire sanctuary.

The Glorious Land is Palestine. Antiochus especially hated the Jews. He killed 40,000 Jews on one assault on Jerusalem and carried 10,000 into captivity. In 168 B.C., Antiochus sent Apollonius with 20,000 troops to take control of Jerusalem. As a final insult, he erected an idol of Zeus in the temple and offered a swine on the altar. The Jews called this idol the abomination of desolation.

A Jewish nationalist by the name of Judas Maccabaeus led a rededication of the temple on December 25, 164 B.C. This is the event that caused the Jews to celebrate the Hanukkah ever since.

The little horn, Antiochus Epiphanes, caused some of the children of Israel to fall. Verse twelve indicates that the little horn controlled the host, the Jews in Palestine. The stars may be the leaders of the Jews.

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Antiochus desecrated the temple attempting to make himself superior to Yahweh. Attack on the temple is equivalent to an attack on God Himself. He suspended sacrifices in the temple. This Antiochus anticipates the final Antichrist. Antiochus commanded the Jews to reject the law of Moses.

God gave the Jews over to Antiochus (the little horn) because of their transgression. God used Antiochus as an instrument of divine discipline on the Jews. God allowed Antiochus to prosper even with his shocking behavior because He has a greater plan for the Jews.

The holy ones here are angels (4:17) who speak of the violation of Antiochus' transgression of the temple sanctuary.

Daniel predicted that the sacrifices of morning and evening would be taken away for a definite period. An angel replied to Daniel in answer to the question regarding the length of time the sanctuary would be trampled under foot. The answer was that the sanctuary would be trampled for 2300 days. These days are the time that Antiochus persecuted the Jews in round numbers from 171 B.C. to his death in 164 B.C.

**PRINCIPLE:** Antiochus' desecration of the temple anticipates the desecration of the temple in the last days.

**APPLICATION:** Jesus used the desecration of the temple symbol as a picture of Jerusalem in the last days.

Matthew 24:15, 16, Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

#### **Daniel 8:15-26**

**Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man.**

**And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, 'Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.'**

**So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, 'Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.'**

**Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright.**

**And he said, 'Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be.**

**The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia.**

**And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king.**

**As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.**

**And in the latter time of their kingdom, When the transgressors have reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes.**

**His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people.**

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**Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means.**

**And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore seal up the vision, For it refers to many days in the future.'**

Verses fifteen through twenty-six give the interpretation of the vision. Gabriel, appearing as a man, stood before Daniel.

The person speaking in a man's voice was probably an angel. Gabriel is also an angel. Gabriel conveyed important communication from God to man (Lu 1:19,26).

When Gabriel came near Daniel, Daniel fell on his face before the angel. The phrase son of man here refers to human weakness. Gabriel explains to this frail human being that the vision has to do with the time of the end. It refers to the end times (v.19), a future time from Daniel's viewpoint.

The vision so shocked Daniel that he fainted dead away. Gabriel revived him.

Gabriel communicated to Daniel that the vision has to do with the latter time of the indignation and the appointed time the end shall be. This refers to both the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and the end times before the Second Coming.

The indignation is a time of judgment against Israel. God used Antiochus for corrective purposes. This also anticipates the Tribulation period after the Rapture. This is another dual fulfillment, one historical and one prophetic. The near fulfillment is Antiochus and the far fulfillment is the Antichrist in the Tribulation.

1 Maccabees 1:11-15, In those days went there out of Israel wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the heathen that are round about us: for since we departed from them we have had much sorrow.

12 So this device pleased them well.

13 Then certain of the people were so forward herein, that they went to the king, who gave them licence to do after the ordinances of the heathen:

14 Whereupon they built a place of exercise at Jerusalem according to the customs of the heathen:

15 And made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and were sold to do mischief.

Oppression under Antiochus did not end with the death of Antiochus. The reference here is to the one Antiochus foreshadows – the Antichrist. Antiochus provided partial fulfillment of this prophecy. The Antichrist gives complete fulfillment. The actions of the coming Antichrist exceed the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes.

Gabriel clearly declares that the ram with two horns symbolized the kings of Media and Persia.

The male goat is Greece. The large horn is the first king of Greece, Alexander the Great.

The four kingdoms are Macedonia and Greece, Thrace and Asia Minor, Egypt and Palestine, and Syria and Persia (v.8).

Antiochus Epiphanes rose toward the end of the period after Greece divided into four kingdoms. He was full of sinister schemes. The transgressors are Jews who continued to sin after the captivity.

Antiochus was powerful because God used him as an instrument of divine discipline on the Jews. The future Antichrist will form alliances with other nations and achieve world influence and will attack the Jews.

Antiochus exalted himself and opposed the Prince of princes. Antiochus falls under the principle of dual fulfillment. He is a type of the coming Antichrist (7:8, 11, 21-22, 24-26; 9:27; 11:36-45; 12:11; Matthew 24:5, 23-24, 26; Mark 13:6, 21-22; Luke 21:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12; 1 Jn 2:18, 22; 4:3; Revelation 13:1-10; 19:20; 20:10, 15). The coming Antichrist will do much greater violation than Antiochus did. The future Antichrist will gain power by a peace program. Direct judgment from God terminates his rule.

The phrase the vision of evenings and mornings describes the period when this vision would be fulfilled – four centuries later in 167-164 B.C. and in a future Antichrist. Daniel must seal the vision because of its impact on prophecy. Daniel sealed up the vision by recording it.

**PRINCIPLE:** Jesus will defeat the Antichrist in the last days.

**APPLICATION:** The prophecy of Daniel carries the principle of dual fulfillment. Both Antiochus and the future Antichrist are in view. Antiochus only foreshadows the Antichrist.

The details of this prophecy go beyond that fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes. This future Antichrist will deceive many through remarkable propaganda. He will promise false security. He will stand up against Jesus Christ Himself, the Prince of princes, but Jesus will defeat him in judgment.

### Daniel 8:27

**And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.**

This verse is the epilog of the vision. The impact of this vision on Daniel was dramatic. He fell sick for a number of days. Daniel could not possibly understand all the inferences of the vision because he lived in the Neo-Babylonian period.

**PRINCIPLE:** Believers should seize on the opportunities at hand while they have time.

**APPLICATION:** Daniel went about the king's business after the vision. Jesus said, Occupy till I come (Lu 19:13). The idea is that we carry on with our same responsibilities. Whether we live in the last days or not, we live our lives as unto the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;

15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

## Daniel 9

### Daniel 9:1-2

**In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans**

**in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.**

Daniel nine deals with the vision of the seventy sevens. This is the third vision Daniel received from God (chapters seven and eight were the first two). Of all the prophets, only Daniel obtained God's comprehensive program for both Gentiles and Jews.

We reach the zenith of the book with this vision. We cannot understand the Olivet Discourse of Jesus Christ (Matthew 24-25) without understanding this chapter.

Verses 1-19 are a prayer by Daniel. Verses 20-27 are God's answer to Daniel's prayer. God already fulfilled the first 483 years of this prophecy. He will fulfill the last seven years in the Tribulation period.

The first three verses set forth Jeremiah's prophecy of the restoration of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 15:11-12; 29:10).

Daniel's vision dates from 538 B.C. to the first year of Darius the Mede (Cyrus; Ezra 1:1). This is the same Darius of chapter six. Belshazzar's feast (chapter five) occurred between chapters eight and nine.

As Daniel read the twenty-fifth and twenty-ninth chapters of Jeremiah the prophet, he recognized that the length of Jerusalem's desolation was seventy years (Jeremiah 36:23,28). Jeremiah revealed that Jerusalem would be desolate for seventy years and after that time God would destroy the Neo-Babylonian Empire (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10-14). Daniel interpreted the seventy years as literal years and understood this was about sixty-seven years after deportation to Babylon in 605 B.C.

Jeremiah 25:11-14, 'And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

12 Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the Lord; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation.

13 So I will bring on that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied concerning all the nations.

14 (For many nations and great kings shall be served by them also; and I will repay them according to their deeds and according to the works of their own hands.)'

Jeremiah 29:10-14, For thus says the Lord:After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

12 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

14 I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

Jeremiah's prophecy predicted that the king of Babylon would be destroyed at the end of the seventy years' captivity. The judgment on Babylon and the return to the land took place twenty years before the rebuilding of the temple. This was approximately seventy years after the captivity in 605 B.C. Therefore, the desolations of Daniel covered the period 605 B.C. to 539 B.C. The date for the return to the land of Palestine then would be 538 B.C.

The significance of the word desolations is that the return to Palestine (538 B.C.) took place about seventy years after the capture of Jerusalem in 605 B.C. The restoration of the temple (515 B.C.) happened about seventy years after the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C. The two time periods (605-538 B.C. and 586-515 B.C.) are twenty years apart. The period of absence from Palestine between 605 B.C. and 538 B.C. is about sixty-seven years; the period between the destruction of the temple in August 586 B.C. and its rededication in March 515 B.C. is less than seventy-one years.

The intention of this verse is to show Daniel's realization that the time for Israel to return to the land was approaching. Once Israel was back in the land, God providentially delayed the building of the temple until seventy years after the destruction of the temple had elapsed.

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The words would accomplish mean to fulfill. God assigned seventy years for Judah's captivity and Jerusalem's desolations. The burden of Daniel's prayer is that God would consider 605 B.C. as the beginning of the captivity (*terminus a quo*) rather than dating its beginning from 597 B.C. Note his request in verse 19 – delay not. The period from 605 B.C. (the beginning of Daniel's captivity) to the date of Judah's return (538 B.C.) is less than seventy years. God may have shorted this time by a few months.

Daniel uses the term LORD (Jehovah) for the first time in this verse and repeats it in verses 4, 10, 13, 14 and 20. This is the personal name for God.

**PRINCIPLE:** Prophecy should humble the believer to prayer.

**APPLICATION:** Daniel believed in the literal interpretation of prophecy. He appropriated the prophecy of Jeremiah to his experience. Prophecy should bring us to our knees. Effective prayer requires trust in God's Word and a right heart before God. The Word of God reveals the will of God.

We can fulfill the Word of God by prayer. We need to recognize the certainty of the sovereignty of God in tension with the need for the human agency of faith and prayer. Prayer and Bible reading go together. There is a cyclical relationship between the two. Prayer leads to the Word and the Word leads to prayer. A true Bible learner goes to prayer for understanding of God's Word.

Acts 6:4 ...but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.

The name of God is at stake in what we ask of Him. Our plea in prayer rests on the promises of God. Like Daniel, we look to Scripture for spiritual sustenance. As we claim the promises and confess our sin, God enters into fellowship with us. Our plea rests on God and not on our righteousness or merit.

### Daniel 9:3

**Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.**

Daniel was purposeful in prayer – I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications. He left nothing out of his prayer life. He used every utility to prayer he could. This is a stamp of effective prayer.

As Daniel saw the end of the seventy years approaching, he prayed for the restoration of the exiled Jews. Jeremiah had challenged his people to pray for that restoration (Jeremiah 29:12-14). Daniel prayed that prayer in verses 3-19. Prayer was a means whereby God accomplished His prophetic Word.

The word prayer carries the idea of intercession, and supplications the idea of entreaty for mercy. The ideas of fasting, sackcloth and ashes also portray Daniel's attitude in prayer. His attitude was more important than his words.

**PRINCIPLE:** Attitude is important in prayer.

**APPLICATION:** Our attitude is important in prayer: God, I can only look to you for an answer to my problem. I depend on your grace for everything. This is not self-effacement or false humility but a reflection of God's provision.

A specific category of prayer--confession--is the means of getting back into fellowship with God. God does not forgive us by our feeling sorry for sin. That is to take the punishment for sin on ourselves. That also shifts the focus off what Christ did on the cross for our sins. We cannot possibly say to the Lord, Move over Jesus, I am going to mentally climb up on that cross with you to do some suffering for my sin. What you did was not quite adequate. I will do some suffering myself. That curses what Christ did on the cross.

Forgiveness comes by naming our sins and recognizing that the suffering that Jesus did on the cross was sufficient to forgive us. God already judged our sins so we do not have to suffer for them.

**Daniel 9:4**

**And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, 'O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments...'**

Verses 4-14 are Daniel's prayer of confession. His prayer began with confession to the transcendent God. He recognized God's faithful commitment to His people by the word covenant and His love to them by the word mercy. God's people were not loyal to God, but God was loyal to them.

Daniel addresses God by His personal name, Yahweh (LORD). Daniel uses this name for God seven times in chapter nine, but nowhere else in the book.

God is great and awesome. Great refers to God's sovereignty and immensity. An awesome person is someone to be feared or deeply respected. He is also a God of covenant and mercy. God is faithful. God is both transcendent (great) and immanent (covenant and mercy). God is faithful to His contracts and He always extends His love to His people. The word mercy carries the idea of steadfast love. Daniel had a clear understanding of the essence of God.

Those who love God and are true to His Word will benefit from God's promises. God is reliable so we can trust Him.

**PRINCIPLE:** We can measure the discipline in our lives by our response to the principles of the Word.

**APPLICATION:** We can measure the disaster in our lives by our attitude toward the Word of God. Non-compliance with the Word of God or rebellion against the principles of the Bible will put us on a deep slide.

It is impossible for God to be unfair. He is absolute and perfect veracity. God cannot change Himself but believers must adjust to the perfect character of God to fellowship with Him.

Deuteronomy 28:45-48, Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

46 And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

47 Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,

48 therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.

As the Jews were custodians of God's Word, so it is our responsibility to carry the principles of the Word in our lives to shine as stars before those without Christ.

Philippians 2:15-18, ...that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

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**Daniel 9:5**

**'we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.'**

Daniel's confession for himself and the nation runs from this verse to the fourteenth verse. He serves as a spokesman for the nation's confession. In the face of God's faithfulness to His people, His people were not faithful to Him.

Four parallel words for sin give the core of Daniel's confession. Sinned is to miss the mark of God's righteousness. Iniquity is a distortion of God's character. Done wickedly and rebelled is doing what we know is wrong and then transgressing that clear standard of God.

All these sins come by departing from God's Word. The reason Israel committed the preceding sins is that they departed from God's precepts and judgments. Precepts are God's authoritative standards or principles, and judgments are His wise ways of dealing with life.

**PRINCIPLE:** Grace is to rest in God's finished work.

**APPLICATION:** God gave the Jews a reminder of His grace in His system of sabbaths. Sabbath means rest. They were to work for six days and rest on the seventh day. God rested on the seventh day. The point is not that He was tired but that He accomplished and finished His work. The believer is to rest in God's finished work, not in his own work. This is the principle of grace.

We rest in the work of God by belief or trust in what He did and does. We can do nothing for salvation or spirituality. God makes all the provision for that. He accomplished our salvation before the foundation of the world.

Every seventh year, Israel was to rest the land for fertilization purposes. They were to trust the Lord to provide for that year. During Daniel's day and for many years before, the temptation to work the land on the seventh year became too great. For seventy sabbatical years (spanning 490 years), Israel failed to rest the land, so God said, You will rest the land all at once – for seventy years.

Exodus 23:10, 11, Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce,  
11 but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove.

2 Chronicles 36:20, 21, And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia,  
21 to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

God wants every believer to operate on the principle of grace. The life of the believer is one of resting on the provisions of God. If we do not learn this lesson, then God will send us into discipline.

**Daniel 9:6-7**

**'Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land.**

**O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.'**

Daniel details the sins of Israel in both overt transgression and subtle omission. Israel disregarded God's words through the prophets (2 Chronicles 30:10). Rejection of God's authority is the beginning of spiritual failure. Genuine repentance always comes with honesty and integrity. Daniel

did not rationalize, minimize or justify the sin of his people, but honestly faced the Word of God with courage.

Daniel contrasts the righteousness of God with the failure of His people. Daniel reveals the culprits responsible for rebellion against God's Word, and it is not God.

We normally see a person's shame in his face. This was true in Daniel's people driven into captivity because of their treachery and unfaithfulness.

Psalm 44:15 My dishonor is continually before me, And the shame of my face has covered me...

**PRINCIPLE:** Confession preempts chastening.

**APPLICATION:** God is in the business of disciplining those He loves. When the nation Israel got out of fellowship with God, He sent them into captivity.

Leviticus 26:14-17, 'But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, 15 and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant,

16 I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

17 I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.'

When the believer steps out of fellowship with God in a protracted way, God sends discipline into his life for the purpose of correction, not punishment. God does this because He loves His children. God is fair but we are unfair to Him (God is righteous in all His works). He wants to deliver and bless us. We are the only ones standing in the way. Freedom from slavery is useless unless we have an attitude of freedom. Our attitude of freedom comes from appropriation of God's truth to experience.

Hebrews 12:5-11, And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;

6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.'

7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Confession avoids disaster. It turns cursing into blessing.

### Daniel 9:8

**'O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.'**

Daniel details the extent of the sin of Israel. It went even to the leadership.

**PRINCIPLE:** Taking personal responsibility for our sin is the first step toward spiritual maturity.

**APPLICATION:** We should not blame God or others for our failure. Making someone else a patsy for our problems is a fast way to put us off-track spiritually and keep us off-track. Each one of us must take responsibility for our own actions. Taking full responsibility for our failure is the first step toward spiritual maturity.

**Daniel 9:9-11**

**‘To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.**

**We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets.**

**Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.’**

Daniel contrasts God’s mercy and forgiveness to Israel’s rebellion against Him. He acquits God of any wrong in sending Israel into captivity.

The word laws is literally instructions. The next two verses focus on Israel’s neglect of God’s Word. God blesses those who take Him at His Word.

Israel’s discount of God’s Word brought the curse of Gentile captivity upon her (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). Israel was obstinate in her rebellion in the face of God’s judgment, so God brought a curse on her.

Deuteronomy 28:63 And it shall be, that just as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.

**PRINCIPLE:** We get back into God’s blessings and fellowship by confession of personal sins.

**APPLICATION:** How do we get back into fellowship with God once we sin? Confession. We find the principle of confession in Romans.

Romans 6:13 And do not present (yield) your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present (yield) your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

The word yield refers to allowing God to control our lives. We will not control our lives with sin. This has nothing to do with a one time yielding to God in service but to a yielding to God in principle.

**Daniel 9:12-13**

**‘And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.**

**As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.’**

Now Daniel details the divine discipline God brought upon Israel for her sin and rebellion against God’s Word.

Moses warned Israel about departing from God but Israel disregarded the warning in Moses, so God brought discipline upon them. The remedy lies in the repentance of Israel.

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**PRINCIPLE:** Non-confession of sin sends us pell-mell toward spiritual degeneration.

**APPLICATION:** The more we neglect fellowship with the Lord, the worse our discipline becomes. There is a degenerating process if we do not confess our sins. Knowledge and application of the principles of the Word will save us from protracted discipline. All effective Christian living rests on the principles of the Word.

Effective prayer rests on the principles of the Word. Prayer should not be hit or miss: Lord, bless the lilies and the little bunnies of the field! That is a shotgun approach to prayer or confession. True confession lies in specifying our sin.

Genuine confession involves acknowledging specific sins. It is not enough to pray, I confess my sins. We must tell God precisely how we violate Him. If we order a computer, we order a specific computer within certain specifications and price limits.

When we recognize that we are utterly unworthy in the presence of an absolute, Almighty God, we have the right attitude for confession and prayer. The more holy we are, the more conscious we are of our sin. We have a sense of our unworthiness. Justification of self will not help us to grow in the Lord. Evading and minimizing our sins will lead us further astray. Our hope lies in admitting our unworthiness and casting ourselves on the mercy of God. Humility is the foundation for confession.

Genesis 18:27 Then Abraham answered and said, 'Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord...'

Isaiah 6:5 So I said: 'Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts.'

Confidence in the character of God is at the root of all trust in God. If God's favor falls on His people, everything else will follow in its place. A characteristic of God's glory is that He is good to His people.

#### **Daniel 9:14**

**'Therefore the Lord has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.'**

The disaster of this verse is the seventy-year captivity of Israel. God had no other alternative but to bring judgment on the Jews even though He is a God of mercy. If we spurn God's mercy, discipline is inevitable. God was faithful to keep His Word in both blessing and cursing.

**PRINCIPLE:** If we spurn God's mercy, discipline is inevitable.

**APPLICATION:** God is in the business of disciplining those He loves. When the nation Israel got out of fellowship with God, He sent them into captivity.

Leviticus 26:14-17, But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, 15 and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant,

16 I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

17 I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.

When the believer steps out of fellowship with God in a protracted way, God sends discipline into his life for the purpose of correction but not punishment. God does this because He loves His children.

Hebrews 12:5-7, And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;

6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.'

7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

God is fair but we are unfair to Him (God is righteous in all His works). He waits to deliver and bless us. We are the only ones standing in the way. Freedom from slavery is useless unless we have an attitude of freedom. Our attitude of freedom comes from appropriation of God's truth to experience.

Confession avoids disaster. It turns cursing into blessing.

### Daniel 9:15

**'And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!'**

Beginning with this verse, Daniel prays for the restoration of Israel to her land (9:15-19). He reminds God of when, in great power, He restored Israel from captivity in Egypt. Daniel recites precedence. He appeals to God's reputation in doing this.

Daniel delineates acts of God's past grace to Israel. God made a name for Himself by His great acts of power in Moses' day. Israel did not deserve to be liberated from Egypt but God delivered them in grace.

This is no self-serving request, for Daniel appeals to the reputation of God's name for these things to be accomplished.

**PRINCIPLE:** Humility is the foundation for confession.

**APPLICATION:** We do not deserve to be liberated from our sin and discipline from God, but He will extend His grace to us if we confess our sins. We do not deserve this but God gives it because of the sacrifice of His Son. God is faithful to us even though we do not deserve it.

We appeal to the essence of God for grace to get back into fellowship with God. All forgiveness must line up with God's grace provision of sacrifice for our sin. God always operates according to His character. He never responds to us according to our character. God's love and God's righteousness are satisfied in the cross of Christ.

As God delivered the Egyptians with a mighty hand, He will deliver us with a mighty hand. God does the work so God gets the glory.

### Daniel 9:16

**'O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.'**

Again, Daniel appeals to the righteousness of God. The restoration of Israel will come according to all Your righteousness. There is no tension between God's righteousness and His mercy. Daniel confessed his sin, so he has the right to appeal to the righteousness of God. He appeals to the righteousness of God and to the plan of God for the Jews so that Israel will be restored to the land.

The prophet makes an appeal based on God's people, city and holy mountain. Daniel's appeal goes beyond mercy to that which brings glory to God. God will be glorified when Israel loses its reproach and returns to the land.

Daniel turns to the import of his prayer. After presenting a clear picture of who God is, Daniel makes two requests:

1. Let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem (v.16) – This is a request for mercy.
2. Cause your face to shine on Your sanctuary (v.17) – This is a request for the grace to worship in the temple again.

Daniel uses the name Adonai for God in this verse. This shift from Jehovah to Adonai focuses on God's sovereignty. God controls all the events in the life of Israel.

**PRINCIPLE:** We have a right to fellowship with God because Jesus paid for all our sins.

**APPLICATION:** We have the right to appeal to the righteousness of God when we confess our personal sin. Christ judged our sins upon the cross, so all sin is already judged. That satisfied the Father's judgment of sin.

Confession of sin is referral back to what Christ did. God's righteousness demands that He forgive us when we confess that what Christ did on the cross forgives us completely. This is the principle of double jeopardy – we do not pay for the same sin twice. Since God judged Christ for our sins, He does not judge us for them.

How we feel about our sins is inconsequential. We may feel sorry for them, but what Christ did for them is the main issue. All sins – past, present or future – have already been poured out on Christ. God will not judge you, because He already judged Christ for your sins. Since God is righteous, He cannot do otherwise.

#### **Daniel 9:17-19**

**'Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.**

**O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies.**

**O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.'**

This verse has yet another name for God – Elohim, the strong One. God is able to bring restoration to Israel.

If God were to allow Israel to return and rebuild the temple and city of Jerusalem, it would be for His sake. That is why Daniel asks Him to cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary. Daniel wanted God's favor and good will to shine on him and his people. God answers prayer not because of who or what we are, but because of who and what God is.

Numbers 6:25 The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you...

Psalm 80:3 Restore us, O God; Cause Your face to shine, And we shall be saved!

The sanctuary fell into disuse because of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Daniel requests that God would restore the sanctuary. The sanctuary is where God met man, the place of sacrifices. Daniel wanted to return to the system of worship.

God answers prayer based on His great mercies and not because Israel deserves it. This prayer pleased the heart of God. Daniel's bold confidence rests in God's grace. God does not bless us because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. Mercy is grace in action. The door of mercy is wide open to those who accept the principle of grace.

Coming to the climax of his prayer, Daniel humbly asks God to hear, forgive, listen and act and not delay. He does not demand that God do so. Daniel appeals to the motivation of God's reputation for answering prayer. This deliverance will carry God's name and so glorify God.

**PRINCIPLE:** God always blesses us because of grace rather than works.

**APPLICATION:** God does not bless us because of who or what we are. He blesses us because of who and what Jesus is and does. We do not earn or deserve anything from God; Jesus does all the earning and deserving.

Although we are unworthy in God's eyes, we find comfort in knowing that God keeps His covenant and promises. We allow our failure and sins to get us down at times. In these situations, we must remember that God's mercy is everlasting. He will forgive if we confess. There are no strings tied to confession of sin.

1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The more we grasp the true holiness of God, the more we will humble ourselves before Him. We will be more eager to cast ourselves upon God's mercy and accept His forgiveness.

### **Daniel 9:20**

**Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God...**

God replied to Daniel's prayer in verses 20-23, while he was still in the act of prayer. God's answer came in the form of the vision of the seventy sevens – a 490-year program for Israel. After sixty-nine heptads (units of seven) equalling 483 years, the death of Messiah would occur. After an indefinite period following the death of the Messiah, the final seven years would culminate in the Second Coming of Christ. There is, then, an interval between the sixty-ninth and seventieth heptads. The Antichrist will head the Revived Roman Empire during the seventieth heptad of seven years.

Prayer for the holy mountain is prayer for the restoration of Israel back to the land from captivity. Notice that Daniel not only confessed the sin of the nation, but he confessed his personal sins.

**PRINCIPLE:** Frank confession places us into fellowship with the Lord.

**APPLICATION:** It is very difficult to admit that we are wrong. It is hard to say to another, I am to blame. This is true with our fellowship with God as well. David was a man after God's own heart because he confessed his adultery. He wrote two Psalms of confession after his sin (Pss 32, 51). God restored him to fellowship after his confession. David learned to say, I violated you, God. It was my fault.

If we breach our fellowship with God, we will lose our joy. The only way back to joy is to make frank diagnosis and confession of our sin.

### **Daniel 9:21-23**

**Yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.**

**And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, 'O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.**

**At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision...'**

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The angel Gabriel again came to Daniel (8:16) in order to give the answer to Daniel's prayer. Gabriel came in human appearance about the time of the evening offering (3:00 P.M.) There had been no evening offering since the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C. Daniel's customary time of prayer brought memories to him of the smoke rising from the temple in the evening sacrifice. The sacrifice typified the One who would die for the sins of the world. Gabriel found Daniel in his God-centered approach to life.

Hebrews 9:13-14, For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,

14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Gabriel's immediate concern was to give Daniel an understanding of this prophecy. The prophecy involved more than Israel's return to the land in Daniel's day; it referred also to the return of Israel at the Second Coming of Christ.

God revealed to Daniel the stewardship of the revelation of the seventy units because God loved him greatly. The purpose of Gabriel's coming to Daniel was to help him understand the vision of the seventy heptads (vv. 24-27).

Daniel was the object of God's love because he was a man of the Word and prayer. He based his prayer on the Word. He understood the principle of fellowship with God and how to get into fellowship by confession.

**PRINCIPLE:** Believers need a stated time of prayer to develop consistency in their walk with God.

**APPLICATION:** We all need a stated time of prayer and Bible study. We need discipline to walk with God. A regular habit of prayer will strengthen our spiritual life.

Business should not blunt our prayer life. Daniel held a high position in Babylon, yet he found time for prayer and Bible reading.

As Daniel's prayer focused on the character of God, so should our prayers do the same. God's righteousness is His absolute integrity. He always conforms to His own attributes and character. He is faithful to His covenants (contracts) with His people. We should never ask God in prayer to renounce His righteousness, for the goal of intercessory prayer is God's glory. All prayer should redound to God's glory and His name.

#### **Daniel 9:24**

**Daniel 9:24 'Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.'**

Daniel earlier read in Jeremiah about the seventy-year exile of Israel (9:2). Gabriel now reveals to Daniel Israel's future by the vision of the seventy sevens (9:24-27). Seventy weeks is literally seventy units of seven (seventy heptads, units of measure).

Verse 24 gives a comprehensive picture of the entire prophecy.

Verse 25 presents the first 69 sevens (483 years).

Verse 26 gives the events between the 69th and 70th sevens.

Verse 27 concludes with a description of the 70th seven (7 years).

The word weeks is misleading, for the Hebrew for weeks means literally sevens (heptads). These sevens represent years in this passage because Israel was aware of weeks as years (Leviticus 25:3, 4). They celebrated a Sabbath rest year after each six years of farming (Leviticus 25:1-7). Seven sevens



of years (that is, 49 years) led to the Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:8-12). Those in the west think in terms of ten in measurement, whereas Jews thought in terms of seven.

This vision is one of the most important prophesies of the Bible. Seventy seven-years add up to 490 years. Jerusalem suffered under Gentile rulers for seventy years (v.2) during the years of Daniel. Jews (your people) and Jerusalem (your holy city) were to suffer under Gentiles for 490 years from the point of this prophecy. There is an intercalation in these 490 years; God interrupts these years. This prophecy has to do with Israel, not the church.

The word determined means to cut off. God will certainly cut off the seventy heptads at a predetermined time. God fixed this time so that it cannot be changed. The seventy sevens will end for Israel and Gentiles simultaneously at the Second Coming of Christ.

The seventy heptads (490 years) concern your people (Israel) and your holy city (Jerusalem), so this prophecy relates primarily to Jews. The prophecies of Daniel two, seven and eight relate to the Gentiles but this prophecy of Daniel nine relates principally to the Jews. This prophecy does not concern itself with world history or church history, but with the history of the Jews and Jerusalem – for your people and for your holy city.

Since Israel and Judah failed to follow the principle of letting farmland lie fallow once every seven years for 490 years, God forced them to make up for seventy sabbaths (Leviticus 25:1-7; 26:34-35) by sending them into captivity. It would take 490 years to make up for seventy sabbatical years. That is why God established that the captivity to Neo-Babylonia last seventy years.

God gives six purposes for these 490 years. The first three have to do with the sin of Israel and the last three with the kingdom:

1. To finish the transgression – this will bring to end the rebellion and apostasy that sent Israel into captivity.
2. To make an end of sins – Israel as a nation will go back into fellowship with God after the divine discipline of captivity.
3. To make reconciliation for iniquity – restoration will bring expiation or covering of past sins through the Messiah.
4. To bring in everlasting righteousness – God will cause the restoration of Israel in the Millennium and will launch new norms where righteousness reigns.
5. To seal up vision and prophecy – God will seal this prophecy until the restoration at the Second Coming will fulfill God's covenant for Israel.
6. To anoint the Most Holy – God will restore the Messiah in the restored temple.

God will accomplish these six things in anticipation of the Millennial kingdom. These things summarize God's program to be true to His unconditional covenants such as the Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant and the New Covenant.

God already fulfilled some of these purposes. God will complete His program for these six purposes when the 490 years run their course. This program involves:

- 1) delivering Jews from the Babylonian captivity,
- 2) delivering them from sin at the Messiah's advent, and
- 3) complete deliverance from oppression at the Second Coming of Christ.

**PRINCIPLE:** God has a fixed prophetic plan for His people and this world.

**APPLICATION:** The prophecy of the seventy heptads indicates that Israel's kingdom did not come immediately in Daniel's day. The seventy heptads of the Times of the Gentiles must run their course. When this happens, God will establish Israel as His nation once again in the Millennial Kingdom. God is always true to His Word.

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**Daniel 9:25**

**Daniel 9:25 ‘Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.’**

The seventy sevens will begin with the command (decree) to restore and build Jerusalem. The Scripture records four decrees to rebuild Jerusalem by the Persians:

1. Cyrus’ decree (to rebuild the temple) in 538 B.C. (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 5:13; 6:1-5).
2. Decree of Darius I (confirming Cyrus’ decree) in 520 B.C. (Ezra 6:6-12).
3. Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26).
4. Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree (authorizing Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem) in 445 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

The first two decrees authorize the rebuilding of the temple whereas the last two authorize the Jews to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. None of the prophecies in 2nd Chronicles or Ezra mentions the rebuilding of the city per se but only the rebuilding of the temple. The fourth decree by 445 B.C. is the decree of our verse. The beginning of the 490 years begins in 445 B.C. The Jews gained permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem with this decree about ninety years after the first captives returned to rebuild the temple.

Gabriel introduces Daniel to two immediately consecutive time periods. First, seven sevens (49 years) and then sixty-two sevens (434 years) – There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. The street and wall will be built in troublesome times. This occurred in the days of Nehemiah when the streets were covered with debris and the wall broken down. This time was a troublesome period.

The seven weeks and sixty-two weeks is 483 years. There will be 483 years until the Messiah the Prince is cut off. Jesus died on the cross 483 years later. 483 years brings us to the death of Christ.

This prophecy of seventy sevens does not end with the First Advent of Christ, but with the Second Advent and the establishing of the Millennial kingdom. Thus, Daniel divides the 490 years into three sections:

Seven (7) sevens (49 years) = this was the rebuilding of Jerusalem allowed by Artaxerxes (445-395 B.C.)

Sixty-two (62) sevens (434 years) = this is the period from the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem to the first coming of Christ

One (1) seven (7 years) = this is the seven years of tribulation

**PRINCIPLE:** God predetermined the payment for sin through Jesus’ death on the cross before any human contingency.

**APPLICATION:** The Father delivered Jesus to death according to His foreknowledge and counsel.

Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death...

Jesus’ death was voluntary. That made His death unique. He voluntarily laid down His life as a sacrifice for the sheep. Death did not overtake Him; He died willingly.

Jn 10:15-18, As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

7 Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

8 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.

God cut the Messiah off to die for the sins of the world.

John 1:29, The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'

### Daniel 9:26

**Daniel 9:26 'And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.'**

After the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off (434 years). This period extends to the presentation of the Messiah to Israel and concludes on the day of the Triumphal Entry. This is just before the Messiah was cut off in the crucifixion.

Zech 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

The Messiah shall be cut off but not for Himself. Jesus was cut off by the crucifixion. Jesus came to pay for all personal sins on the cross.

The Messiah did not receive anything due Him at His first coming. He did not reign as King because He came unto His own [own things -- neuter] but His own [own people (Jews)– masculine] did not receive Him (John 1:11).

The first two sections of this prophecy run without interruption in time (7 sevens and 62 sevens). They total 483 years extending from 445 B.C. until the time of Christ.

The Messiah was not cut off in the 70th seven. He was cut off after the 7 and 62 sevens had finished, not after the 70th week. The implication is that there was an interlude or intercalation between the 69th and 70th sevens. The idea of cut off in the Hebrew is that of executing a death penalty on a criminal, implying the crucifixion. The crucifixion of Christ after the Triumphal Entry concluded the 69th seven dealing with Israel. Jesus then launched a new institution – the church (Matthew 16:18). During God's dealing with the church, He set aside Israel as His institution of dealing in the world between the 69th and 70th sevens (heptads).

The Jewish calendar calculates a month as 30 days and a year as 360 days. The lunar month has 30 days for every month including February (calculated by the time between two full moons). It is the time that elapses between successive new moons averaging 29 days, 12 hours and 44 minutes. The Jewish lunar year has 354 days (a solar year contains 365 days, 5 hours and 48 minutes, 45.5 seconds – the rotation of the earth around the sun). The Jewish calendar adjusts to the solar year by periodic introduction of leap years that contain an intercalary month ensuring that the major religious festivals fall in proper season. Today, we use the Gregorian calendar.

**PRINCIPLE:** Prophecy with integrity gives people, places, times and dates.

**APPLICATION:** The Bible is clearly prophetic in very specific ways. In contrast to false prophecy, biblical prophecy gives specifics of people, places, times and dates. This particular prophecy of the seventy sevens pinpoints the exact time when the Messiah came and died.

The prince who is to come is not the Messiah. The destruction of the city and the sanctuary occurred in A.D. 70 when the Roman general Titus destroyed Jerusalem. The people are Romans.

Titus carried out the initial destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Gabriel said, however, that war would continue until the end. Israel will suffer until the completion of the seventieth seven, that is, the Tribulation.

This verse in Daniel depicts the judgment that will come on the generation that rejects the Messiah, and anticipates the prince or the Antichrist to come who will destroy the city and the sanctuary, that is, Jerusalem and the Temple.

**PRINCIPLE:** The prophecy of the dominance of Rome, first fulfilled under Titus, will be dually fulfilled in the coming Revived Roman Empire with her dictator, the Antichrist.

**APPLICATION:** The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 anticipates the Revived Roman Empire, and the prince is the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire. Titus anticipates the Antichrist. Titus did not make a covenant with the Jews (v.27). Titus did what the Antichrist will do. Jerusalem did not end with a flood in Titus' time. Jesus speaks of this in Matthew:

Matthew 24:15-22, Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand),

16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

The Antichrist is the little horn of Daniel 7:8. This is the destruction of Jerusalem, to which Jesus referred in His ministry. When Israel's leaders attributed to Jesus' ministry the work of the devil (Mt 12:24), Jesus warned that this attribution was the unpardonable sin. He also warned that because of that sin, the Gentiles would destroy Jerusalem.

Matthew 12:31, 32, Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.

32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Matthew 23:37-39, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

38 See! Your house is left to you desolate;

39 for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'

Luke 21:24, And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

#### Daniel 9:27

**'Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.'**

This verse describes what will happen in the seventieth seven, the Tribulation period of seven years. God sets this seventieth seven off by itself because there is a gap or parenthesis between the sixty-

ninth seven and the seventieth seven. That time is the period of the church, the time between the first coming of Christ and the Rapture (Ephesians 3:1-6).

When God finishes His dealings with the church, He brings the church to Himself in the first phase of Christ's coming, the Rapture. Then He returns to dealing with Israel as a nation. The purpose of the Tribulation is to get the attention of Israel to accept Jesus in His Second Coming. At the end of the seventieth seven God will establish Israel again as His chosen people on earth.

The antecedent of he is the prince who is to come in verse 26. It is not Titus because he did not make a contract with Israel. The Antichrist of the Revived Roman Empire will make that covenant with Israel. Therefore, the seventieth week (seventieth seven) does not follow upon the sixty-ninth week immediately. We see this kind of break in time between the Messiah's first and Second Coming (Isaiah 61:1-2).

The Antichrist will make a peace covenant with Israel for one week (seven years) guaranteeing Israel's safety in the land. Israel will sign this contract with the head of the Revived Roman Empire, the Antichrist. These seven years will begin immediately after the Rapture. The many refers to Israel (v. 24). The Antichrist will break this covenant in the middle of the week (at 3 ½ years). Daniel calls this period a time, times and half a time (7:25; 12:7; cf. Re 12:14). John calls it 1,260 days and 42 months in Revelation (11:3; 12:6 and 11:2; 13:5).

The words sacrifice and offerings refer to the Levitical system of worship. The wing of abominations refers to a wing of the temple particularly corrupted because of idolatry. Jewish sacrifices stop forty-two months before Messiah returns (12:11).

Summary of the vision of the seventy sevens: The city and the streets are rebuilt in the first period of seven sevens. The Messiah comes and is cut off in the second period of sixty-two sevens. An intercalation (parenthesis) occurs between the sixty-ninth and seventieth seven to allow for the church age. The seventieth seven is the Tribulation period. The world ruler makes a covenant with Israel at the beginning of the Tribulation but then breaks that covenant in the middle of the Tribulation (42 months) taking away Israel's sacrificial system and thus desecrating the temple.

The seventieth seven is a period of seven years (the Tribulation of seven years after the Rapture of the church). Unbelieving Jews will enter into alliance with the prince that shall come (v. 26, a political ruler who makes a covenant with Israel in the middle of the Tribulation of seven years). This will be an unholy alliance to the damage of Israel as a nation. The person who confirms the covenant will bring an end to sacrifice and offering. All bloody and non-bloody sacrifices will cease.

This end of sacrifices during the Tribulation is the abomination of desolation of which Jesus spoke (11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15-16, 21; Mark 13:14). Daniel 12:11 makes this a clear reference to future cessation of daily sacrifices, forty-two months before the Second Coming of Christ. What Antiochus Epiphanes did in a small way will become worldwide in the Tribulation under the world ruler (Re 13:4-7). He will be defeated at the Second Coming (Re 19 – cast into the Lake of Fire). This will be the terminus ad quem of the seventy sevens of Daniel. Daniel's prophecy of the seventy sevens extends from Nehemiah (445 B.C.) until the Second Coming.

Mt 24:15-28 Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand),

16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

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21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.

24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

25 See, I have told you beforehand.

26 Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.

27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

**PRINCIPLE:** There is a major difference between Israel and the church in God's economy.

**APPLICATION:** No prophet in the Old Testament knew anything of the church. The Old Testament did not foretell the church. The promises to Israel do not apply to the church. The church is a new entity in the New Testament. God revealed the doctrine of the church to the apostle Paul.

Ephesians 3:1-7, For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,

7 of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

1 Corinthians 10:32, 33, Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks (Gentile) or to the church of God, 3 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

## Daniel 10

### Daniel 10:1-3

**In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.**

**In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.**

**I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.**

The last of the four visions to Daniel personally runs from chapters 10 to 12. Daniel prepares to receive the vision in chapter ten. He gives the immediate future from Darius through Antiochus in

11:2-35 and the distant future of the 70th seven in 11:36-12:4. The remainder of chapter 12 gives the conclusion to the book of Daniel.

This final vision is a unit that extends from chapter 10 to chapter 12. Chapter 10 introduces the vision with an interlude of context before the vision; chapter 11 gives the prophecy itself and chapter 12 adds an epilogue to the vision.

Daniel received a vision in the third year of Cyrus' reign over the Medo-Persian Empire (536 B.C.). God's communication to Daniel was a revelation that incorporated a vision. This is two years after the revelation of Daniel 9. Cyrus issued a decree for the Jews to return to the holy land two years earlier in 538 B.C. Some returned that same year with Zerubbabel. They reintroduced the sacrifices in 537 B.C. (Ezra 3:6) and began to rebuild the temple in 536 B.C. (Ezra 3:8).

Daniel did not return to the holy land with his people. The Bible does not state the reason. He served Babylon until the first year of Cyrus (538 B.C., 1:21). Daniel was probably in his mid eighties at this time and in retirement.

Daniel prayed, fasted and mourned (9:3) for three weeks. His serious distress was over the safety of the Jews who returned to the holy land (Ezra 4:1-5,24).

Daniel did not partake in the privileges of Babylon while he was in mourning. He did not eat normal or fancy foods. He was on a fast. Nor Daniel did not use skin oil to protect himself from the sun during the three-week period.

**PRINCIPLE:** Concentration in prayer provides a suitable environment for effective prayer.

**APPLICATION:** Sacrificial acts in themselves do not solicit God's favor. They do form a suitable environment for heart orientation to God.

God loved Daniel because of his importunity in prayer. His prayers were not flippant but serious. God looked at that serious prayer life and loved him. Dedication to prayer does not gain approbation with God but a burden of prayer does.

Prayer requires significant concentration and dedication. As Daniel gave his all in prayer, we should purpose in our heart that should not defile ourselves with anything outside the will of God (1:8). We seek the will of God, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

#### **Daniel 10:4-7**

**Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris,**

**I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz!**

**His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.**

**And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.**

As Daniel was beside the Tigris River, he received a vision of a man clothed in linen. Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread fell on the 24th day of the first month (Nisan, April 24). Perhaps he was at the river for a Jewish feast.

Only Daniel saw this vision of a man clothed in linen and girded with gold. This man was probably an angel. The priests of Israel wore expensive linen dresses setting them aside as special representatives of God. This may be the intent for this angel.

Uphaz may be Ophir, which may have been in Arabia off the northeast African coast.

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This angel was decked in the splendor of expensive jewels. Some believe this angel to be a theophany of the Son of God but there is not enough evidence for this.

The other Jews with Daniel did not see the vision but they sensed something mighty took place.

The difference between a vision and a dream is that dreams occur during sleep whereas a vision can happen while a person is awake. Ezekiel and Daniel are the most noteworthy in this regard in the Old Testament.

**PRINCIPLE:** Significant understanding of God always produces humility.

**APPLICATION:** Great men of the Bible humbled themselves when they saw implications of truth. Note Job and Isaiah in this regard:

Job 42:5, 6, I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.

6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes.

Isaiah 6:3-5, And one cried to another and said: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!

4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 So I said: 'Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts.'

Have you meditated on the greatness and glory of God? Do you have a good grasp of His person and work?

#### **Daniel 10:8-10**

**Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength.**

Daniel's strength drained from him as he received this vision. He was in solitude when God revealed Himself to Daniel.

**Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.**

Daniel fainted but while in the faint he heard words from this angel.

**Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands.**

The angel's touch caused Daniel further consternation.

**PRINCIPLE:** Solitude is a place where we meet God.

**APPLICATION:** It is a wonderful condition to be alone with God. Solitude with the Savior is something few cherish. The tendency is to hide ourselves from the presence of the Lord (Genesis 3:8). God shows Himself to those who take time for Him.

Galatians 1:11-17, But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.



15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,

16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,

17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia (a desert), and returned again to Damascus.

#### **Daniel 10:11-12**

**And he said to me, O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you. While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.**

**Then he said to me, Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.**

The angel depicted Daniel as a man greatly beloved and understanding in God's eyes. Daniel was a man engaged in knowing God and God's will.

This angel came to Daniel in answer to His prayer and humility. There was a slight delay of the answer to Daniel's prayer.

Daniel set his heart to understand and to humble himself before God in prayer. He gave himself to the goal of knowing God's purpose in the vision. The blandishments of this world had no effect on Daniel's pride. He gave his entire heart to the Lord. His purpose was not to be famous, wealthy or successful. These things did not move his heart.

**PRINCIPLE:** We come to God in prayer by the authority of grace and not personal merit.

**APPLICATION:** We do not need to persuade God in prayer or harass Him for answered prayer. Those who do not know God pray this way. They try to gain His approbation. Jesus simply said to ask. God does what He promises to do. Ask, simply ask.

Matthew 7:7,8, Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

James 4:2, You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

Ask is a simply request. Seek involves investigation into the will of God. Knock is repetition; we come to God again and again in prayer. All three have the a guarantee:

Ask – and it shall be given

Seek – and you shall find

Knock – and it will be opened to you.

Answers are sure when we base our prayer on what God says He will do.

However, God delays answer to prayer according to His will. Daniel's answer to prayer did not come for three weeks. There was a battle in the heavens of which he was very unaware. Why do people fly planes loaded with people into the World Trade Center? This is demon activity. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against fallen angels.

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**Daniel 10:13**

**But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.**

The delay to Daniel's prayer had to do with the prince of the kingdom of Persia. This was probably a fallen angel assigned to the geographical area known as Persia by Satan (Ephesians 2:3). Both Michael and this angel were princes (cf. v21). This fallen angel opposed God's program.

**PRINCIPLE:** There is a spiritual war.

**APPLICATION:** The Bible sets forth a war between good and evil angels (demons). This war involves national entities as well as individuals.

Some in the spiritual warfare movement believe that territorial spirits must be bound for the gospel to be effective in a national entity. They call this Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare. They believe in three levels of demonic control. First, ground level demons control individuals. Second, occult demons give power to magicians, shamans and witches. Lastly, strategic level demons, whose main purpose is to hinder the advance of the gospel, rule geographical regions.

The growing movement of exorcism of territorial spirits does not have biblical foundation. These people pray over neighborhoods, cities and nations to exorcise demons controlling these geographical areas. Some church growth techniques recommend this approach to evangelism. This movement grew out of citywide evangelistic campaigns in Latin America movement and might have its roots in animism.

The argument for waging war on territorial demons rests primarily on Daniel 10:13. There is such a thing as territorial demons but there is no biblical basis for claiming victory over demons by name. Daniel did not know about this conflict before the angel told him about it so he did not pray to overcome these demons.

The Bible never suggests that believers are to command demons to give up national territory. In Daniel 10, God sent the Archangel Michael to deal with the fallen angels responsible for Persia and Greece. The content of the gospel itself has power unto salvation so there is no need for power encounters to validate God's message.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Satan is indeed the ruler (prince) of this world (Jn 12:31), the prince of the power of the air (Ep 2:2), the god of this age (2 Co 4:4), and the deceiver of the whole world (Re 12:9). His territory is this fallen world and he is active in national affairs.

Matthew 4:7-9, Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'

8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

9 And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.'

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities (fallen angels), against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Satan's purposes are primarily religious so religion is the Devil's ace trump. He deceives more people by religion than anything else. This was especially true for those who flew those planes into the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

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People who argue for territorial demons cite Revelation 2:12-13 as a proof text where John asserts that Satan resides in Pergamum. God assigns angels to individual churches of Revelation 2 and 3 but angel in these chapters probably means messenger referring to the pastors of those churches.

Arguments against territorial spirits in Daniel 10:

1. The battle of Daniel 10 was fought in heaven, not earth.
2. The battle did not involve humans but two angels and a demon; God directed the battle through Michael.
3. God did not ask Daniel to bind demons or cast them from their geographical sphere.
4. God did not even ask Daniel to pray about the angelic conflict.

Michael was a chief good angel (10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7). Both good angels and fallen angels have a hierarchy of authority and power (Ephesians 1:21). This passage lifts the veil of angelic warfare.

Jude 9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'

Revelation 12:7-9, And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon (Satan); and the dragon and his angels (demons) fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.

9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The prince of Israel is Michael, a good and faithful angel. The princes of Persian (v.13) and Greece (v.20) are fallen angels.

**PRINCIPLE:** It is wrong for the believer to presume the right to rebuke demons.

**APPLICATION:** It is true that Satan's demons are highly organized (Ep 6:12) but the Bible never asserts that believers are to rebuke territorial demons. Jesus already defeated Satan through His work on the cross.

Colossians 2:15, Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

The Bible does rebuke those who presume the ability to deal with spirits personally. That is an activity reserved for God Himself.

Jude 8, 9, Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'

2 Peter 2:10, 11 ...and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,

11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

Believers do encounter spiritual warfare (John 8:44; 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 John 3:12). Demons will tempt us to sin. We become slaves to sin by repeated yielding to sin. The believer's only ability to deal with the spirit world is by putting on his spiritual armor.

Ephesians 6:10-12, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

#### **Daniel 10:14-21**

**Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.**

**When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.**

**And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength.**

**For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.**

**Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me.**

**And he said, O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong! So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.**

**Then he said, Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.**

**But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. 1 Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)**

The clear purpose of the angel's coming to Daniel was to reveal to him what would happen to Israel in the latter days. Daniel's reputation for understanding brought him further understanding. He would receive eschatological (prophetic) understanding in this case. The passage 11:2-12:4 details this prophecy relating to the fate of Israel in relation to Antiochus Epiphanes in the nearer future and of the Antichrist in the distant future.

Further revelation brought further weakness to Daniel. This revelation was a complete surprise to him. He had served as a key administrator in the Neo-Babylonian Empire for decades and did not know about angelic conflict about national entities.

An angel touched Daniel's lips allowing him to speak. Daniel continues to express his sorrows over the content of the vision.

Daniel felt that he could not continue to communicate with the angel because of the draining of his strength over the shock of the vision. We need God's grace in prayer.

An angel strengthens Daniel for the third time to continue the communication of the vision.

The angel repeats God's high view of Daniel. The words of the angel strengthened Daniel to listen to the rest of the vision.

The angel explains his activity to Daniel from verse 20 to 11:1. Michael came to fight with the prince (demon) affecting Persia and the prince (demon) influencing Greece.

The Scripture of Truth is all of God's revealed truth. Daniel does not deal with speculation. Only God knows the future. God reveals this prophecy with unerring accuracy. The word noted means recorded or registered. God dispatched this angel with a transcript about the near and remote future revealed in chapters 11 and 12.

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The angel made clear that Michael would uphold him when he contended with the emissaries of Satan. He did this during the preceding twenty-one days. God reminds Daniel of special angelic protection for Israel.

## Daniel 11

### Daniel 11:1

**Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)**

This verse concludes chapter ten. Without this clue, we might conclude that this refers to yet another king different from 10:1. The angel Michael adds that he was responsible for protecting Darius the Mede from the first year of his reign in Babylon in 539 B.C. The prince of Persia attempted to hinder that return (10:13). Almost immediately after Darius (Cyrus) assumed the throne, he issued a decree permitting the Jews to return to Palestine. The success of the Israelites under Darius was the result of angelic warfare.

**PRINCIPLE:** God's sovereignty upholds us in time of difficulty

**APPLICATION:** God does not always overrule Satan's plan immediately but He sets limits to Satan's plans.

Job 1:12 And the Lord said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.' So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

Job 2:6 And the Lord said to Satan, 'Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life.'

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

All things ultimately work together for good. God delivers us from anxiety when we put our situation in God's hands.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Philippians 4:6, 7, Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 5:6, 7 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

7 casting all your care (anxiety) upon Him, for He cares for you.

### Daniel 11:2-4

**'And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece.**

**Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.**

**And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.'**

Chapter 11 continues the prophecy running from chapter 10 to chapter 12:4. Chapter 11 presents two phases of prophecy:

The near phase, 11:2-35 = prophecy about future events forward from Daniel's day.

The far phase, 11:36-12:4 = prophecy preceding the Second Coming of Christ.

The interpreting angel now begins to give the prophecy of Israel's near and far future. Cyrus is the reigning king of Babylon as this prophecy begins.

The prophecy of this verse begins with the second kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's image (chapter 2) and with the second of the four beasts of chapter 7 – Medo-Persia.

The three more kings that will arise in addition to Cyrus in Persia are Cambyses, son of Cyrus (530-522 B.C.), Pseudo-Smerdis (522 B.C.) and Darius I Hystaspes (522-486 B.C.). Darius tried to conquer Greece with 100,000 troops, but Miltiades defeated him with a small Greek army of 10,000 at the battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.

The fourth king is Xerxes I (486-465 B.C. – Ahasuerus in the book of Esther). Xerxes attacked Greece in 480 B.C. but suffered defeat 150 years before Alexander the Great came to power. Xerxes was stupendously wealthy. He sought to avenge the defeat at Marathon (490 B.C.) by gathering a great army and a great fleet to again attack Greece. The Greek historian Herodotus gives the combined strength of Xerxes' land and naval forces an incredible 2,641,610 fighters, although the actual number may have been more like 300,000. The Greeks defeated Xerxes at Thermopylae and Salamis. He never crossed the Hellespont to fight again.

The third and fourth verses set forth the rise and fall of the powerful Greek general, Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.). There are a number of other references to Alexander in Daniel (2:32, 39; 7:6; 8:5-8, 21). His attack on the Persian Empire under Darius III was in retaliation to Xerxes' attack on Greece. He fought the Persians first at the Granicus River near Constantinople in 334 B.C. and finally conquered the Persians at Gaugamela, northeast of Nineveh (Iraq), in 331 B.C. He defeated the Persians army of 250,000 with 40,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry. This battle opened the East to the Greeks. Alexander's reign marked the beginning of the Hellenistic Age.

Alexander lived 356-323 B.C. and reigned as King of Macedonia from 336-323 B.C. He conquered Asia Minor (western Turkey), Syria, Egypt, Babylonia and Persia. In twelve brief years, he went as far as the Punjab and conquered eastern Asia. Alexander's army would go no further.

Aristotle, the great philosopher, was Alexander's personal tutor. He instructed Alexander in rhetoric and literature, and stimulated his interest in science, medicine and philosophy.

After conquering most of the civilized world, Alexander died prematurely in the city of Babylon in 323 B.C. Alexander's uncle murdered Alexander's two sons, Hercules and Alexander, and his Greek generals divided his kingdom between them (7:6; 8:8,22). Lysimachus ruled Thrace-Asia Minor and Seleucus took the rest of Asia except for lower Syria and Palestine. Cassander governed Macedonia-Greece. Ptolemy ruled over Palestine and Egypt.

**PRINCIPLE:** Biblical prophecy has incredible specificity and accuracy.

**APPLICATION:** The first four verses give us the immediate future from Daniel's day covering about ninety-five years. Daniel predicts four kings following Cyrus, the king of Medo-Persia (who was known to Daniel). These kings were unknown to him at the writing of the book of Daniel: Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, Pseudo-Smerdis (fake Smerdis), Darius Hystaspes and Xerxes the Great. Xerxes raided Greece, which ultimately brought on the rise of Alexander the Great who conquered the Persians.

Daniel anticipates this struggle between nations 215 years before it began. The prophecy covered a period of about 375 years after prediction. The incredible accuracy of the prophecy of this entire chapter staggers the mind.

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**Daniel 11:5-20**

READ Daniel 11:5-20

The angel now gives prophecies in 11:5-20 of the conflicts between the Greek Seleucid (Syria) and Ptolemy (Egypt) empires.

The expressions king of the North and king of the South repeatedly occur throughout the remainder of chapter 11. The king of the North (Syria, Asia Minor and lands extending to India) refers to the Seleucid king, and the king of the South (Egypt) refers to the Ptolemaic king. These references are not to two specific kings, but to the kings who are in power in these kingdoms at any given time.

We can identify the specific king at a given time by comparing intertestamental, extra-biblical records. Second-century B.C. Greek historian Polybius, the apocryphal books of 1 and 2 Maccabees, Diodorus Siculus (first century B.C. writer), the Roman historian Livy (59 B.C.- A.D. 17), Josephus (second century A.D.), Appian (second century writer) and historian Porphyry are primary sources.

The first king of the South (south of Palestine) is Ptolemy I Soter, who served as a general under Alexander (323-285 B.C.). He had authority over Egypt. One of his princes is a reference to Seleucus I Nicator, also a general under Alexander (311-280 B.C.). He ruled Babylon, Media and Syria. The phrase and he shall gain power refers to Seleucus I Nicator.

Ptolemy I died in 285 B.C. His son, Ptolemy II, ruled Egypt after him. Seleucus was murdered and his son, Antiochus I Soter, ruled until 262 B.C. Seleucus' grandson, Antiochus II Theos, ruled Syria from 262-246 B.C.

Ptolemy II and Antiochus II were nasty enemies but joined forces about 250 B.C. The phrase they shall join forces refers to Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.) and Antiochus II Theos (262-246 B.C.). The daughter is Berenice who married Antiochus II Theos to seal the alliance between Syria and Egypt.

Antiochus II divorced Berenice (queen of the North) and remarried his former wife, Laodice. Laodice poisoned him and put Berenice to death. Laodice installed her son, Seleucus II Callinicus (246-227 B.C.), as the Seleucid king.

The phrase branch of her roots refers to Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 B.C.). Ptolemy avenged the death of his sister Berenice and attacked Seleucus II at Antioch in Syria killing Laodice. He also conquered adjacent territory extending his kingdom.

Ptolemy III returned to Egypt from Antioch with idols, princes and precious articles of silver and gold. He later signed a peace treaty with Seleucus II in 240 B.C., which brought temporary reconciliation between them.

Seleucus II Callinicus, king of the North, later unsuccessfully invaded Egypt. He died by a fall from a horse.

The sons here are the sons of Seleucus II Callinicus, Seleucus III Ceraunus (227-223 B.C.) and Antiochus III the Great (223-187 B.C.). Seleucus III succeeded his father in 227 B.C. He died shortly after in 223 B.C. and his brother, Antiochus III, became king of the North.

Both sons sought to restore the glory of Syria by military conquest. Seleucus III invaded Asia Minor. Antiochus III attacked Egypt. He failed in conquering Egypt but gained domination over Israel (219-217 B.C.). This changed the border of Egypt from Syria to the southern borders of Israel. All this prediction anticipates history by hundreds of years.

The king of the South in this verse refers to Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-204 B.C.). He attempted to recapture lost territory to the north by attacking the southern borders of Israel in 217 B.C. at Raphia and crushed the Seleucid army. Ptolemy raised an army of 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry and 73 elephants. The king of the South (Ptolemy) defeated the king of the North (given into the hand of his enemy).

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The he of this verse is the king of the South, Ptolemy IV. Ptolemy did not pursue the victory of verse 11, so he did not obtain all of Palestine. Ptolemy did not prevail because Antiochus in the end prevailed over him.

Antiochus III proceeded to other conquests to the east and north. He returned to Egypt about 203 B.C. with a much larger army and put down the Egyptians under Ptolemy V. He also took Palestine to Gaza.

The king of the South in this verse is Ptolemy V Epiphanes (203-181 B.C.). Philip V of Macedonia and the Jews of Israel joined Antiochus III in attacking the Egyptians under Ptolemy V.

The fortified city is Sidon on the coast of Palestine on the Mediterranean Sea. Antiochus (III) the Great captured it from the Ptolemies around 200 B.C. He defeated the Egyptian General Scopas at Paneas (Dan) at the headwaters of the Jordan. This was a strategic conquest for the Seleucid kingdom.

Antiochus III enhanced his control over Israel by defeating the Egyptians under Scopas.

In the phrase he shall give him, the him is the king of the South. The daughter is Cleopatra, the daughter of Antiochus. Cleopatra married Ptolemy V.

Antiochus III initiated peace with Egypt by offering his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V in marriage. Cleopatra did not remain loyal to Syria, however, so her father did not gain dominance over Egypt. Cleopatra sided with her husband against her father although Ptolemy V was only a young man of seventeen.

The ruler here is the Roman commander Lucius Cornelius Scipio. Antiochus III directed his attention toward Asia Minor (197 B.C.) and Greece (192 B.C.) where the Romans had authority. He did not succeed because Scipio defeated him in 190 B.C. in the Battle of Magnesia near Smyrna. Scipio crossed the Hellespont to pursue Antiochus and forced the Syrian to surrender all his European and Asiatic possessions as far as the Taurus Mountains, to pay 15,000 talents over a period of twelve years, and to surrender Hannibal (who escaped).

Antiochus III returned from Greece to Antioch and died in 187 B.C. He wanted to reunite Alexander's Empire but failed because he did not assess the power of the Roman Empire correctly.

The one who imposes taxes was Seleucus IV Philopator (187-176 B.C.). Antiochus' elder son Seleucus IV succeeded the throne. He taxed his people heavily to pay for the 15,000 talents. This put a heavy burden on the Jews under his reign. His Jewish tax collector, Heliodorus (2 Macc 3:7), poisoned him because of this burden as this verse predicted. He did not die in battle. This caused great persecution on the Jews in years to come.

**PRINCIPLE:** History is His story.

**APPLICATION:** True prophecy is replete with detail. It is one of the tests for genuine prophecy. God's sovereignty in history is patently clear. History is His story.

The landmass of Palestine was between the two kingdoms of Ptolemy and Seleucid. They fought over Israel many times, ravaging and sacking the nation. The importance of these two kingdoms revolves around Israel.

### Daniel 11:21

**‘And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue.’**

Verses 11-35 set forth persecution of the Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes. The vile person of verse 21 is Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Syria (175-164 B.C.) He gave himself the name Epiphanes (illustrious one). Many called him Epimanes (madman) because of his ruthless behavior. God gives



more content about this man than all the other kings combined because of his impact on the Jews. During his reign, Rome gained ascendancy.

The skeptic has great problems with Daniel 11:21-39 because this passage violates all his humanistic prejudice. This passage portrays in significant detail the Ptolemaic kings of Egypt, Seleucid kings of Syria and the career of Antiochus Epiphanes. This is difficult to swallow for exclusively rationalistic people. They cannot get their minds around the fact that God can reveal such substantial detail in prophecy. They have the same problem with specific prophecies about the person of Christ, prophecies of His birth, life and death.

Antiochus Epiphanes corresponds to the little horn of 8:9-12, 23-25 and foreshadows the little horn of 7:8.

**PRINCIPLE:** Most prophecy revolves around God's chosen people.

**APPLICATION:** Antiochus Epiphanes touched Israel, God's chosen people, as almost no other figure in history. He brought on the Maccabean revolt. The Feast of Lights celebration (Hanukkah or Feast of Dedication) by the Jews is a memorial of the cleansing of the temple under Judas Maccabaeus. Most of God's prophetic clock revolves around His chosen people Israel.

### **Daniel 11:22-31**

READ Daniel 11:12-31

Antiochus IV overwhelmed the Egyptian king Ptolemy VI militarily. Antiochus Epiphanes first befriended Ptolemy by deceit and then later defeated him in war.

Antiochus swept away the Jewish high priest Onias III, the prince of the covenant, around 172 B.C.

Antiochus made an alliance with Ptolemy VI in 170 B.C. in a plot to advance his power in Egypt by aligning with Ptolemy VI against his rival for the Egyptian throne.

Antiochus Epiphanes pillaged the provinces to bribe others to cooperate with his plans. He extended his influence by plundering wealth and giving it to his followers (1 Macc 3:30).

The king of the South in this verse is Ptolemy Philometer (181-145 B.C.). After Antiochus gained power, he marched against Ptolemy VI in 170 B.C. He went as far as the Nile Delta before the Egyptians discovered his presence. He defeated the Egyptian army at Pelusium. Antiochus took Ptolemy VI prisoner. After Antiochus withdrew from Egypt, Ptolemy VI and his brother VIII ruled as co-regents.

Antiochus pretended to be an ally to gain influence in Egypt. He used deceit as a basic mode of operation and he was clearly a precursor of the Antichrist of the latter day, as this text asserts.

Those who ate Ptolemy's delicacies destroyed him. They were those whom he trusted.

Antiochus claimed to fight for Ptolemy against a usurper in Egypt. Antiochus and Ptolemy sat down at a banquet after the battle, pretending peace.

The king in this verse is the king of the North, Antiochus Epiphanes. After the peace conference Antiochus returned to Syria with much plunder. He then turned his hatred toward Israel.

A Jew by the name of Jason offered Antiochus a bribe to depose the high priest Onias III. Antiochus agreed. Another pretender, Menelaus, tried the same tactic against Jason. Antiochus again agreed. After Jason attempted a coup, Antiochus accompanied by Menelaus entered Jerusalem and killed 80,000 men and desecrated the temple in 168 B.C.

Antiochus tried to attack Egypt in the same year. The Roman consul Popilius Laenas met him at Alexandria, preventing him from attacking Egypt in 168 B.C.

The ships from Cyprus refers to Roman armed forces led by Gaius Popilius Laenas. He challenged Antiochus in Egypt and demanded that Antiochus withdraw from Egypt. When Antiochus asked for

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time to consider the issue, Laenas drew a circle in the sand around Antiochus and demanded that he give an answer before he stepped out of the circle. Antiochus returned home rather than declaring war on Rome. He again vented his frustration on the Jews in rage against the holy covenant.

Antiochus came to Jerusalem on an apparent peace mission but ordered General Apollonius to attack the Jews on the Sabbath with 22,000 soldiers. They killed many Jews and took women and children captive. They pillaged the temple and burned the city.

Antiochus wanted to Hellenize the Jews so he prevented them from following the Mosaic Law. He burned copies of the law. He did away with the sacrifices, festivals and circumcision (1 Macc. 1:44-54). As the greatest insult, he mounted an image of the Greek god Zeus on the altar of burnt offerings (2 Macc 6:2). He sacrificed a pig, an unclean animal, on the altar on December 16, 167 B.C.

Antiochus compelled the Jews to offer a pig on the 25th of each month to celebrate his birthday. This act was the abomination of desolation (12:11) because it violated the sanctuary.

**PRINCIPLE:** Antiochus Epiphanes anticipates the Antichrist.

**APPLICATION:** Jesus predicted that another similar sadism would befall the Jews in a day future from His day. The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Roman general Titus does not fulfill this prediction.

Mark 13:14 'So when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not' (let the reader understand), 'then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.'

The book of Revelation, dating from decades after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, predicts an Antichrist that will do things similar to Antiochus, but on a larger scale (Re 13).

#### **Daniel 11:32-35**

**'Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.**

**And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.**

**Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue.**

**And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.'**

Antiochus deceived Jews by flattery (1 Macc 1:11-15). He divided their loyalties. Many progressive Jewish leaders believed in the expediency of acquiescing to Hellenism.

The people here are Israelites who led the Maccabean revolt in the second century B.C. The Maccabeans sought to bring independence to Israel. In this national movement, thousands led by Mattathias and his three sons revolted against Antiochus (1 Macc 2:23-28). They ultimately defeated the Seleucids in Palestine. Judas Maccabaeus killed General Apollonius in battle.

Antiochus persecuted the Jews faithful to the Mosaic Law. The persecution of the Jews by Antiochus gave impetus to Jews loyal to the Mosaic Law and the traditions of Judaism. This movement was the Chassidim (loyal ones). The Maccabean revolt also energized this movement. Some of the Chassidim became the sect of the Pharisees of Jesus' day. Others became Essenes who isolated themselves in a Qumran community near the Dead Sea.

Antiochus killed many thousands of Jews in the years following the desecration of the temple. He died insane in Persia (163 B.C.).

The pro-Hellenists Jews did not aid Jews faithful to the Mosaic Law. More Jews joined the movement as the effectiveness of the Maccabees became apparent. Many pro-Hellenists deceptively joined the nationalists. The Maccabees eventually executed many of these phonies.

The resistance against the Greek Syrians purified the Jews. The persecution against the Jews ran its course. A son of Simon Maccabaeus, John Hyrcanus, established a strong Jewish kingdom (134 –104 B.C.). He freed Judea from Syria but never proclaimed himself king, although he did designate himself high priest. His departure formed the ideals of the Hasmonaeans (Maccabees), which many years later became, in part, the Pharisees.

The angel gave assurance to Daniel that the persecution would come to an end; because it is still for the appointed time. There would be further purification in the latter days. Mention of the end sets the context for a transition in chapter 11 to far prophetic events (events not yet fulfilled in our day).

**PRINCIPLE:** Prophecy shows the supernatural nature of the Word of God.

**APPLICATION:** The first thirty-five verses are a remarkable example of pre-written history. This prophecy is so utterly detailed and accurate that it staggers those who study it. There are approximately one hundred and thirty-five fulfilled prophecies in the first thirty-five verses.

The one hundred and thirty-five prophecies in Daniel 11:1-35 are already fulfilled to us in the twenty-first century. The intricate detail of the conflicts between the Seleucids and Ptolemies show the specificity of these prophecies.

The specificity of these prophecies is so extensive that skeptics had to change the date of Daniel so that it would not be so blatantly supernatural. They claim that Daniel was written during the time of the Maccabees (168-134 B.C.) after many of the events took place.

We find the career of a single king of the North – Antiochus Epiphanes – in verses 21-35. He is also the little horn of Daniel 8 who persecuted Israel and set up the abomination of desolation in the temple at Jerusalem. Daniel also predicts in verses 32-35 the rise of the Maccabees who revolted against Antiochus.

### Daniel 11:36

**‘Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.’**

All events of this chapter to this point are history to the twenty-first century. Now beginning with this verse, the prophecy moves to a future date – to the twenty-first century. Antiochus Epiphanes could not have fulfilled the prophecies of this section of chapter 11 because he did not do many of the details of this section. However, he did foreshadow the kind of person who would come in the last days.

This verse shifts to the prophetic figure of the Antichrist (vv. 36-45) and the distant future of Israel (11:36-12:4). Daniel 11:1-35 is history to present time. Daniel 11:36-12:4 is future to present time. These passages fulfill the last of the seventy heptads, the seventh seven (9:27). This is the last seven-year period, the period of Tribulation, before the second Coming of Christ.

Matthew 24:21, For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Verses 36-39 set forth the coming Antichrist, a ruler in the Tribulation. This ruler will have power to do according to his own will. His power is supernatural and he has the capacity to exalt himself above every god demanding worship. He will renounce the true God.

Revelation 13:11, 12, Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

This Antichrist ruler will prosper for a period in the seven-year Tribulation. All this happens under the sovereignty of God – what has been determined shall be done. God will set a limit to the duration of his rule. God will mete out judgment to him in the end (Daniel 7:11, 26; 9:27; Revelation 19:19-20).

**PRINCIPLE:** The future Antichrist will deceive the religious world.

**APPLICATION:** The coming Antichrist will be autonomous of any authority apart from himself. He shall do according to his own will. This ruler will exercise the authority given him by the ten kings of the Revived Roman Empire in the middle of the Tribulation (Re 17:12-13).

This person will make himself the highest religious authority in the world. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god. The world will worship him because of his ability to perform miracles.

2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

### Daniel 11:37-45

READ Daniel 11:37-45

This Antichrist ruler does not regard or respect any religious conviction or tradition other than his own.

The phrase the God of his fathers brings some to conclude that this Antichrist will be a Jew. However, the term God is Elohim, the generic name for God. Elohim can have a singular or a plural translation (gods). He had no respect for his religious heritage. It appears that this man is Roman by other passages (Da 7:8, 24; Re 13:1-10).

The phrase the desire of women is difficult to interpret. This may refer to the desire of every godly Jewish woman to bear the Messiah. Some interpret this as a reference to Tammuz (Adonis), a pagan fertility goddess that women found appealing in Daniel's day. Ishtar, the goddess of love brought destruction to many of her lovers, of whom the most notable was her consort Tammuz. Yet, others believe that this Antichrist will have no sexual desire for women. This third view is most likely the correct view.

This Antichrist wants to believe in a god that will give him military victory. He idolizes power. His forefathers did not recognize his new god. This future ruler will honor his god with massive expenditure for a military armory.

This future Antichrist will move against his foes with religious power, with the god of verse 38. He will reward with kingdoms those who follow him.

Skeptics point out that the conflict between the end of Antiochus Epiphanes in Daniel 11:40-45 differs from stories of his death in 1 and 2 Maccabees. However, these skeptics lose sight of the law of dual fulfillment and the shift from the near to far fulfillment in this passage. This passage deals with the final Antichrist.

The king of the South and the king of the North will simultaneously attack this ruler of the west, the little horn, at the end time. The king of the North may be a ruler from the area of ancient Assyria. Yet, he will overwhelm them and pass through to conquer the two kings (Da 7:8, 24).

The angel describes to Daniel ancient equivalents of modern warfare.

The events of verses 40-45 transpire in the second half of the Tribulation (second half of the seventieth seven). The kings of the South and North will attack the Antichrist.

The Antichrist will enter the promised land (8:9) and defeat many there in the last half of the Tribulation.

The Antichrist will attack Egypt and succeed in conquering her.

The Antichrist will plunder the treasures of Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia. The Hebrew for Libyans is Cushites. Libya was to the west of Egypt and Ethiopia to the south.

Rumors of armies from the east and north will trouble him and cause the Antichrist to return to his headquarters in Jerusalem.

The seas here are the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. The holy mountain is Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. It is here that the Antichrist meets his defeat (Zechariah 14:1-4; Revelation 19:19-20).

**PRINCIPLE:** Knowledge of God's sovereignty is a source of comfort.

**APPLICATION:** God is sovereign over all history from beginning to end. Nothing escapes Him and nothing gains dominance over His will. The Gentile world powers have their designs but God has His design. There will come a time when all Israel shall be saved (Romans 11:26). God will tolerate the atrocities of the Antichrist for a period but He will determine the end of the Antichrist.

God's sovereignty is a source of great comfort to His people because He has everything in control. While man may assert his will, the message of Daniel 11 is that God's sovereign will prevails over the nations of the earth albeit that they may unite their forces into a one-world government.

The prophecy of Daniel 11 is the most detailed prophecy in all the Old Testament. This makes manifest that the book of Daniel is a supernatural book fulfilling objective standards for prophecy.

God does not give prophecy to frighten us but to help us understand the international deception and delusion of the last days. The ultimate delusion is the worship of man – humanism. Humanism is the belief that man is the end of man. He does not need God for he is finally and ultimately autonomous.

The Bible presents a true picture of man. Man has great capacity but his powers are no panacea. No form of government will meet all the needs of humanity. All forms of government have a fatal flaw – the sinfulness and selfishness of man himself.

## Daniel 12

### Daniel 12:1

**'At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.'**

The first three verses of chapter twelve set forth the future deliverance of Israel and the climax to the book of Daniel. The immediately preceding context indicated that Israel would go through a period of great tribulation by the Antichrist (11:36-45).

Chapter 12:1-4 is the climax to the prophecy running from chapter 10:1.

Michael the archangel is responsible for the defense of Israel (10:13, 21). He is the head of all holy angels, an archangel.

Jude 9, Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'

The time in this verse is the second half of the Tribulation mentioned in the last chapter (11:40). The second half of the Tribulation will be a time of unusual duress for the nation Israel (Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:21). Jesus Christ indicated that the beginning of the Great Tribulation is the abomination

of desolations spoken of by Daniel the prophet (Matthew 24:15; Daniel 9:27). Both Daniel and Jesus warned that this time would be a period of unprecedented trouble.

Chapter 11 dealt with the political and religious features of the end times, but this chapter deals with its impact on the nation Israel. God will nationally deliver all Jews whose names are in the book (Zechariah 12:10; 13:8-9; Romans 11:26; Revelation 12:13-17).

**PRINCIPLE:** Prophecy looks toward the consummation and purpose of history.

**APPLICATION:** The whole course of prophetic history moves toward the end times. The Tribulation will be a period begging description of duress, conflict and suffering. The nations of the world will continue to be belligerent until the end.

Prophecy looks toward the consummation of the age, an age of conflict and bloodshed. This will be especially true for Israel. There is trouble before triumph for the nation Israel. Israel will invariably posit a problem for the nations of the world. There is no international solution to the problems of the Middle East. No diplomacy or human intelligence will resolve the problem.

Jeremiah 30:7 Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it.

Zech 12:2, 3, Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.

3 And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

Mt 24:21, 22, For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

There is a time coming, when the time of the Gentiles is over, in which God will deliver Israel. The Second Coming of Christ at the end of the Tribulation will resolve the problem of the Middle East. At that time, all Israel shall be saved.

Romans 11:26-29, And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: 'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

27 For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.'

28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

### Daniel 12:2

**'And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.'**

Notice that the angel says many and not all. The alternatives are mutually exclusive. The Jews who die in the Tribulation go to either everlasting life or everlasting contempt. Those are the only two options (Re 20:4-6).

This resurrection is both a spiritual and a physical resurrection for they will rise from the dust of the earth. This passage does not say that the resurrection of the lost will occur at the end of the Tribulation. This is the first mention in the Old Testament of a dual resurrection for the saved and the lost.

John 5:28, 29, Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

The normative way the Old Testament depicts resurrection is by sleep and waking (2 Kings 4:31; 13:21; Isaiah 26:19; Jeremiah 51:39, 57; Job 14:12). The Bible never presents the idea of the soul sleeping but always of the body sleeping.

The word everlasting conveys the idea of endlessness. This is the first occurrence of the term everlasting in the Old Testament. The Old Testament uses this term of God Himself, that He is everlasting. If hell is not eternal, then neither is God eternal (Revelation 4:10; 20:10; 21:8).

The word shame means reproaches. The ones awakened to shame are those who do not believe. God will bring reproach on them after the Tribulation. However, this passage does not indicate the specific time frame. The word many indicates that not all will rise to shame. There is no general resurrection here.

God will raise both righteous Jewish and Gentile Tribulation saints (Revelation 7:9-17; 20:4-6) plus Old Testament saints.

**PRINCIPLE:** God has a plan for our resurrection.

**APPLICATION:** There are two resurrections and two phases of the first resurrection. There is a resurrection of the just and the unjust. There are two resurrections of the just: the Rapture and the Second Coming. God does not raise Old Testament saints at the Rapture. The Rapture occurs seven years before the Second Coming. The Tribulation is between the two resurrections. God will raise Old Testament saints to place them into the Millennium.

Job 14:14 If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, Till my change comes.

Job 19:25-27, For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth;

26 And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God,

27 Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Psalms 16:9, 10, Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.

10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Psalms 49:15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, For He shall receive me. Selah

Isaiah 25:8 He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken.

Isaiah 26:19 Your dead shall live; Together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew is like the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead.

Hosea 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes.

Sequence of resurrections:

Resurrection of Christ, and a token resurrection of saints, Mt 27:52-53

Resurrection of New Testament believers at the Rapture (1 Th 4:13-18) and Israel at the beginning of the Millennium, Re 20:12-14 and Da 12

Resurrection of unbelievers at the end of the Millennium, Re 20:12-14

Note the order of resurrection:

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

The word order signifies that arranged in order. It was especially a military term, denoting a company. 1 Corinthians 15:23 uses it metaphorically of the various classes of those who have part in the first resurrection. God stands in review as various companies pass before Him.

- First, Jesus is the first to rise from the dead.
- Next, the church raptured before the Tribulation.
- Third, Israel, Old Testament saints and tribulation saints. This resurrection occurs after the Tribulation.

### Daniel 12:3

**Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.'**

This verse continues to carry the idea of hope for Israel. Rewards follow resurrection. Those receiving reward will shine like the glory of the firmament above and the stars. They will reign with Christ in the Millennium (Mt 25:14-30).

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Those who turn many to righteousness are those who win others to Christ. The grammar is causative (hiphil) – cause many to turn to justification. They have the wisdom to do this. They will shine like stars forever and ever. Their reward is everlasting.

Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.

**PRINCIPLE:** Those who are wise will receive reward for winning people to Christ.

**APPLICATION:** God's great are those who win others to Christ. They are those that point many to Jesus. Have you examined your life to determine whether you will shine like a star in heaven?

Philippians 2:14-17, Do all things without complaining and disputing,

15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

### Daniel 12:4

**'But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.'**

The words shut up indicate that Daniel was to keep a copy of the book of Daniel in a safe place. Daniel must keep a record of his book for posterity because of its divine inspiration. The angel challenged him to keep a record for the time of the end--that is, the Tribulation period.

Future attempts to understand the book of Daniel will look like scholars running back and forth in an intense search of increased knowledge about the prophecies of this book. As time passes, Bible scholars will understand the interpretation of Daniel better than Daniel did.



**PRINCIPLE:** Maximum application of the principles of God's Word to experience gives stability to the soul.

**APPLICATION:** Some will painstakingly examine the visions of Daniel but they will not understand until the last days. All of us want to know what it will be like in the final days. We want to understand the future. What does the future hold?

Some people are unstable in their Christian lives because they do not have a core of biblical principles in their souls. They constantly vacillate from one experience to another. These people compensate for guilt complexes by sublimation. They refuse to take the time to learn biblical principles for life, so they go from one thing today to another thing tomorrow. They do not have much capacity for faithful and loyal love. These are the worst sort of believers.

When we carefully scrutinize the Word of God to find His principles for life, then we find stability in our souls. When principles of the Word of God become our way of life, we stabilize our souls. The glory of Christ becomes the most important orientation to our souls. Everything else is a detail. Money is a detail. Pleasure and sex are details. Without the perspective of God's Word, these things become far too important to us. When these things become details, it does not matter whether we have them or not. Operation under the principles of the Word gives us capacity to enjoy the details of life.

Matthew 4:4 But He answered and said, 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'

#### **Daniel 12:5-6**

**Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank.**

**And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, 'How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?'**

Daniel again becomes a personal participant in the scene. Two figures stood on each side of the Tigris River and an angel above the river (v.6).

**The book of Daniel ends with a couple of questions and answers.**

Question # 1: Daniel 12:5-6

Answer: Daniel 12:7

Question: Daniel 12:8

Answer: Daniel 12:9-13

Daniel saw two other people standing on either side of the Tigris River (10:4). These people may have been angels. One of these people asked the man dressed in linen above the river a question about the length of the persecution and deliverance of Israel (11:36-12:4).

**PRINCIPLE:** Hope gives definition to our present life.

**APPLICATION:** Hope is an essential dynamic in the Christian life. Hope gives meaning to life. We exist in despair without hope. Hope at the end of the tunnel gives encouragement to the soul. Hope stands with faith and love as a primary quality of life in God's economy.

Hope helps those who suffer endure their pain. They have a better future ahead.

Romans 5:1, 2, Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

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1 Peter 1:3-9, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

### **Daniel 12:7-13**

READ Daniel 12:7-13

The angel above the river authenticates his message as true by lifting both hands to heaven.

The length of time of Israel's persecution and deliverance is a time, times, and a half a time or three and one-half years. The enemies of Israel will control seven years in the prophetic calendar. The last half of those seven years will be the Great Tribulation but at the end of the last half of the Tribulation, the Messiah will come.

Zechariah 14:2, 3, For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 Then the Lord will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.

Daniel wanted to know how all this would end, as seen by his second question. The word end means latter end. Daniel's question has to do with eschatology.

The angel told Daniel that the full interpretation of this vision would remain ambiguous until the time of the end.

Many people will turn to the Messiah for salvation in the Tribulation. The godless will not understand the reason for the events around them. The wise (believers) will grasp the prophetic meaning of those events.

The angel provides some specificity about a major event in the Tribulation – the abomination of desolation. The abomination by the Antichrist terminating Jewish sacrifices and desecrating the temple occurs in the middle of the Tribulation (Matthew 24:15). 1,290 days from the middle of the Tribulation is 30 days longer than 3 ½ years. This would be one month after the Great Tribulation (the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation).

God will bless those that wait and come to the 1,335 days. They are those who wait for God to deliver them. This period is 45 days longer than the 1290-day period (v.11). This ends after the conclusion of the Tribulation when the Messiah establishes His millennial kingdom 45 days after the Tribulation.

The angel told Daniel to move on with his life. Eventually Daniel would die and then receive his inheritance in the resurrection.

**PRINCIPLE:** All suffering is for the purpose of blessing.

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**APPLICATION:** All suffering in the Bible is for blessing. No matter how difficult the situation we face, God has a purpose in it all.

As God gave Daniel dying grace, so He gives us grace for any situation. Do not think like a dead man or woman. Some believers live their Christian lives like zombies. They are morbid, upset, bitter, frightened, worried, envious and jealous. They are miserable people. All this denies God's provision for our lives. We are to quit living like dead people until we go to meet the Lord.

Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

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