

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

- I. The Historical Portion of Daniel. **Prophetic Plan for the Gentiles** 1:1–6:28.
 - A. Daniel Serves Under Nebuchadnezzar. 1:1–4:37.
 1. Daniel's removal to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. 1:1–21.
 - a. The subjugation of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. 1:1–2.
 - b. The test of Daniel's character. 1:3–7.
 - c. The determination of Daniel to be true to his God. 1:8–13.
 - d. The faithfulness of God to His obedient children. 1:14–21.
 2. Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's image dream. 2:1–49.
 - a. The astrologers' failure to tell the dream. 2:1–13.
 - b. Daniel's prayer for wisdom answered. 2:14–23.
 - c. Daniel brought before Nebuchadnezzar. 2:24–30.
 - d. Daniel discloses the contents of the dream. 2:31–35.
 - e. Daniel interprets the dream. 2:36–45.
 - f. Daniel's promotion. 2:46–49.
 3. Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace. 3:1–30.
 - a. The command to bow to the golden image. 3:1–7.
 - b. The refusal of the three Hebrews to bow. 3:8–12.
 - c. The three Hebrews fear only God. 3:13–18.
 - d. The three Hebrews cast into the furnace, but delivered by God. 3:19–25.
 - e. Nebuchadnezzar's astonishment and proclamation. 3:26–30.
 4. Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's tree dream. 4:1–37.
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation of God's majesty. 4:1–3.
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar recounts his tree dream. 4:4–18.
 - c. Daniel interprets the dream and warns the king. 4:19–27.
 - d. The fulfillment of the dream. 4:28–33.
 - e. Nebuchadnezzar returns to sanity and praises God. 4:34–37.
 - B. Daniel Serves Under Belshazzar. 5:1–31.
 1. Belshazzar's drunken feast. 5:1–4.
 2. The handwriting on the wall. 5:5–9.
 3. Daniel called in to help. 5:10–16.
 4. Daniel's sermon to Belshazzar. 5:17–24.
 5. Daniel's interpretation of the writing. 5:25–28.
 6. Medo-Persia conquers decadent Babylon. 5:29–31.

- C. Daniel Serves Under Darius the Mede. 6:1–28.
 - 1. Daniel’s continued government service. 6:1–3.
 - 2. The conspiracy against Daniel. 6:4–9.
 - 3. Daniel’s continued devotion to God. 6:10.
 - 4. Daniel accused before Darius. 6:11–15.
 - 5. Daniel preserved in the den of lions. 6:16–23.
 - 6. Daniel’s accusers punished and his God praised. 6:24–28.

II. **Prophetic Plan for Israel** 7:1–12:13.

- A. Daniel’s Vision of the Four Beasts. 7:1–28.
 - 1. The vision received by Daniel. 7:1–14.
 - 2. The vision interpreted for Daniel. 7:15–28.
- B. Daniel’s Vision of the Ram and the He Goat. 8:1–27.
 - 1. The vision received by Daniel. 8:1–14.
 - 2. The vision interpreted to Daniel by Gabriel. 8:15–27.
- C. Daniel’s Supplication and the Seventy Weeks Prophecy. 9:1–27.
 - 1. Daniel repents for himself and his people. 9:1–19.
 - 2. God’s sending of Gabriel to answer Daniel’s prayer. 9:20–23.
 - 3. The disclosure of the Seventy Weeks prophecy. 9:24–27.
- D. Daniel’s Vision of the Heavenly Messenger. 10:1–21.
- E. The Prophecy of Israel’s Future to the Maccabees and Beyond. 11:1–45.
 - 1. Syrian and Egyptian relations foretold down to 165 B.C. 11:1–20.
 - 2. The career of Antiochus Epiphanes foretold. 11:21–35.
 - 3. The career of Antichrist foretold. 11:36–45.
- F. Daniel’s Final Revelation. 12:1–13.
 - 1. The Great Tribulation and the resurrections. 12:1–3.
 - 2. Daniel told to close up the book and wait. 12:4–13.1

Chapter One of Daniel

Why is Daniel an important prophetic book?

Daniel is one of the most significant books of prophecy in the entire Bible. Next to Revelation and Ezekiel, it is one of the books people avoid because it is so difficult to understand. I am going to change that perception. Daniel is also one of the reasons those against the Word say that the Bible is not the inspired Word of God. Critics say that Daniel was not written as stated, during the lifetime of Daniel from 605 B.C. to 536 B.C., but was written about 165 B.C. They state that because the Gentile governments are so clearly predicted, that Daniel could not have been written during his life time. So therefore it must have been written after the events took place. They leave no room for a God of miracles to work through His people. The findings of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 put all of their arguments out the door. Before the discovery of these scrolls, the oldest complete copy of the Old Testament in Hebrew was from about A.D. 1008, more than 1,400 years after it was completed. The fragments discovered in 1947 are complete copies or parts of every Old Testament book except Esther and 4 copies of Daniel! The Dead Sea Scrolls are dated back to being placed there about 150 B.C. to 100 A.D. And are believed to have been rewritten as far back as 250 B.C. The other significant finding is that there have been minimal variations after years of copying. This takes the argument away from the critics, who still refuse to believe that God is real and that through the Word; we can know what the future will hold. Time after time, archeology has proved the Bible to be accurate. That is why Daniel is so significant for understanding Bible prophecy. We have the proof, God has given us the insights to what the future will hold. With the coming of Christ completing Old Testament prophecy and the history of the Jewish people, we can look to what is yet to be fulfilled and know that because God has already done so much of what He said He would, He will also complete His Word as told by Daniel's 70 weeks and the book of Revelation.

Over view of Daniel

The Book of Daniel divides into two sections. Chapters 1–6 give a biographical and historical narrative of highlights in the lives of Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. Chapters 1-6 cover the **Prophetic Plan for the Gentiles**. Chapters 7–12 record visions of future events that were given to Daniel by the Lord. They cover the **Prophetic Plan for Israel**. Daniel is the only known Hebrew prophet to have lived almost his entire life in a pagan society. Probably born in Jerusalem, he was deported to Babylon in 605 B.C., where he was immediately placed in a

reeducation program to prepare him for service in the very government that would destroy Jerusalem. Eventually he became probably the most powerful Jew of the exile and its aftermath. He served at least three kings and two governments in a career that lasted nearly 70 years. Daniel is the stated author. The meaning of his name is, “*God is my judge.*” As Daniel is carted off to Babylon, Jeremiah will soon end his ministry. He has been prophesying that God would use Bablyon to punish Judah. But no one would listen. Daniel was taken in the first of 3 raids into Judah over 19 years. The Northern kingdom had fallen to Assyria in 722 B.C. and Judah is all that is left of the Jewish people under their own rule. The Jewish nation will not be under sovereign rule again until 1948 A.D. Almost 2500 years later! Jeremiah continued to stay in Jerruselm after the final fall in 586 A.D. He died shortly after. Ezekiel was taken in the 2nd raid and began his ministry shortly after. Both Daniel and Ezekiel knew of Jeremiah’s work and it is recorded in Daniel that he studied Jeremiah’s writings to find out how long the exile would be. Daniel worked for God in the palace and for the kings while Ezekiel was a street prophet and lived and prophesied among the Jewish settlements in Babylon.

A. Daniel Serves Under Nebuchadnezzar.

1. Daniel’s removal to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. 1:1–21.

Chapter 1:1-21

During the third year of King Jehoiakim’s reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it with his armies.² The Lord gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah. When Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, he took with him some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God and placed them in the treasure-house of his god in the land of Babylonia.³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, who was in charge of the palace officials, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah’s royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives.⁴ “Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men,” he said. “Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good sense, and have the poise needed to serve in the royal palace. Teach these young men the language and literature of the Babylonians.”⁵ The king assigned them a daily ration of the best food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for a three-year period, and then some of them would be made his advisers in the royal court.⁶ Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah.⁷ The chief official renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Belteshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego.⁸ But Daniel made up his mind not to defile himself

by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief official for permission to eat other things instead.⁹ Now God had given the chief official great respect for Daniel.¹⁰ But he was alarmed by Daniel's suggestion. "My lord the king has ordered that you eat this food and wine," he said. "If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded for neglecting my duties."¹¹ Daniel talked it over with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief official to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.¹² "Test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said.¹³ "At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's rich food. Then you can decide whether or not to let us continue eating our diet."¹⁴ So the attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days.¹⁵ At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king.¹⁶ So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the rich foods and wines.¹⁷ God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for learning the literature and science of the time. And God gave Daniel special ability in understanding the meanings of visions and dreams.¹⁸ When the three-year training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief official brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar.¹⁹ The king talked with each of them, and none of them impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they were appointed to his regular staff of advisers.²⁰ In all matters requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, the king found the advice of these young men to be ten times better than that of all the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom.²¹ Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus's reign.

2. The subjugation of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. 1:1–2.

Jehoiakim was placed on the throne of Judah by Pharaoh Nechoh to succeed his brother, Jehoahaz. Both of these evil men were sons of Josiah, the godly king who led in the last revival in Judah (see 2 Kings 23:31–37). During Jehoiakim's reign Nebuchadnezzar first came against Jerusalem. The year was about 605 B.C.; he took the city and destroyed the Temple in about 586 B.C. The city was not destroyed, but the first group of captives was taken to Babylon. Among these were Daniel, his three friends, and literally thousands of others. When Jehoiakim died, his son Jehoiachin came to the throne. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar who, in 597 B.C., again besieged Jerusalem. Once more Jerusalem was not destroyed, but the king, his mother, and all the vessels of the house of the Lord were taken away to Babylon, along with an even larger group of captives. Evidently among this latter group was Ezekiel (see 2 Kings 24:6–16). Zedekiah, the uncle of Jehoiachin, was subsequently made king and he also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. This time Nebuchadnezzar came against the city, destroyed the

temple, and burned Jerusalem. The sons of Zedekiah were slain in his presence, and then his own eyes were put out. He, along with the final deportation, went into captivity about 586 B.C. All this, by the way, was in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy in Jeremiah 25:8–13.

3. The test of Daniel's character. 1:3–7.

Most conservative scholars agree that Daniel was taken captive when he was about seventeen years old. He was made a eunuch, and so you can understand why Daniel never married or had any children. He was selected to be trained for 3 years, so he must have been very educated. Daniel and his companions were given pagan names to indoctrinate them to their new environment. Daniel was given the name of *Beltshazzar* which means "*worshiper of Baal*," a heathen god. Quite a change from "*God is my Judge!*" They refused to eat the meat of the king which may have been a sacrifice to their idols. Daniel takes an immediate stand for his faith in God by separating himself from the others to remain true to his faith. And we see from the start God's miraculous provision for Daniel.

4. The determination of Daniel to be true to his God. 1:8–13.

Daniel is determined to continue serving His God even in Babylon and asks for a favor from the head eunuch. They want to eat what they are allowed under Jewish law and not the meat of the king and he is sure that God will bless them. Daniel is sure God will provide for them if they remain true to their faith. Now it is the job of the head eunuch to make these slaves into Babylonians. This included their dress, names, diet and beliefs. Daniel made up his mind to remain committed to serving God even in exile. Anything short of complete obedience meant instant death, so this was no small matter for Daniel to ask or for the head eunuch to agree to.

5. The faithfulness of God to His obedient children. 1:14–21.

And God give Daniel special understanding and they became strong young men, as strong as the others that ate and drank the king's food. After the end of the 3 years of training, Daniel and his friends are chosen by Nebuchadnezzar to be a part of his advisors. God continued to bless them with greater wisdom than all of the other advisors.

Chapter Two of Daniel

I. Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's image dream. 2:1–49.

A. The astrologers' failure to tell the dream. 2:1–13

1. Daniel 2 1-13

One night during the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that disturbed him so much that he couldn't sleep.² He called in his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers, and he demanded that they tell him what he had dreamed. As they stood before the king,³ he said, "I have had a dream that troubles me. Tell me what I dreamed, for I must know what it means."⁴ Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, "Long live the king! Tell us the dream, and we will tell you what it means."⁵ But the king said to the astrologers, "I am serious about this. If you don't tell me what my dream was and what it means, you will be torn limb from limb, and your houses will be demolished into heaps of rubble!"⁶ But if you tell me what I dreamed and what the dream means, I will give you many wonderful gifts and honors. Just tell me the dream and what it means!"⁷ They said again, "Please, Your Majesty. Tell us the dream, and we will tell you what it means."⁸ The king replied, "I can see through your trick! You are trying to stall for time because you know I am serious about what I said.⁹ If you don't tell me the dream, you will be condemned. You have conspired to tell me lies in hopes that something will change. But tell me the dream, and then I will know that you can tell me what it means."¹⁰ The astrologers replied to the king, "There isn't a man alive who can tell Your Majesty his dream! And no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician, enchanter, or astrologer!"¹¹ This is an impossible thing the king requires. No one except the gods can tell you your dream, and they do not live among people."¹² The king was furious when he heard this, and he sent out orders to execute all the wise men of Babylon.¹³ And because of the king's decree, men were sent to find and kill Daniel and his friends.

2. The timing is a little confusing because Daniel clearly states that this happened in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Nebuchadnezzar first came to power and then went to Jerusalem in 605 B.C., so this was in 603 B.C. Daniel was still in training and had only been in captivity for two years.

3. In Babylonian society at this time, dreams were considered messages from gods. So when Nebuchadnezzar awoke from his disturbing dream and could not remember it himself, he knew it had some significant meaning. God engineered the dream and though Daniel was a young man at the time, he would be used of God to show that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was the one true and living God. Many cultures in the ancient world had occult practices, but the Babylonians distinguished themselves by institutionalizing the magical arts as part of their government (Dan. 2:2). They were particularly known for their extensive use of astrology. This is among the reasons why God severely condemned Babylon. The city of Babylon had many golden images and Nebuchadnezzar had built many temples to many different gods. One temple alone had 2 golden lions, a golden table and 18 foot human figure made of solid gold. Isaiah calls Babylon the golden city in Isaiah 14:4.
4. Nebuchadnezzar demonstrated his unreasonableness by demanding that the wise men produce the content of the dream as well as its interpretation, or else face execution as the fraudulent characters that he probably suspected them to be. He had no idea that he was working God's plan. Just as God would use this evil man to complete His purpose of judgment on the Jewish nation, now God is using him to reveal to us today His plan for the Gentile nations.

B. Daniel's prayer for wisdom answered. 2:14–23

1. Daniel 2:14-23
¹⁴ When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, came to kill them, Daniel handled the situation with wisdom and discretion. ¹⁵ He asked Arioch, "Why has the king issued such a harsh decree?" So Arioch told him all that had happened. ¹⁶ Daniel went at once to see the king and requested more time so he could tell the king what the dream meant. ¹⁷ Then Daniel went home and told his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah what had happened. ¹⁸ He urged them to ask the God of heaven to show them his mercy by telling them the secret, so they would not be executed along with the other wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹ That night the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven, ²⁰ saying, "Praise the name of God forever and ever, for he alone has all wisdom and power. ²¹ He determines the course of world events; he removes kings and sets others on the throne. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars.

²² *He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness, though he himself is surrounded by light.*

²³ *I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors, for you have given me wisdom and strength. You have told me what we asked of you and revealed to us what the king demanded.”*

2. Arioch is looking for Daniel to kill him, he finds him and Daniel again asks for favor. Daniel must have established himself among all the kings’ people as a good man. Because Arioch listens to him and grants him the favor of allowing Daniel to go to the king, this shows that he was well respected. Arioch was taking his life into his hands by allowing Daniel to do so as he was not following Nebuchadnezzar’s orders and Daniel was risking his life just to request to see the king. If the king was not in a good mood, he could have had them all killed. But God is control of the whole situation and Daniel asks for time. He immediately gathers his friends and they go into prayer and fasting.
- 3 Together this group of prayer partners fought a spiritual battle against despair and defeat. Death is certain, if they do not come up with the answer. They enlisted divine help to know what the king had dreamed and the understanding of the king’s dream.
- 4 The first thing Daniel does after receiving his answers is to thank God. He did not run to the king, or run and tell the other wise men, he continued to pray and worship God. Daniel displays over and over again that he is devoted to serving God and only God. He is one of the few prophets who didn’t stumble, or at least we have no recording of it.

C. Daniel brought before Nebuchadnezzar. 2:24–30

1. Daniel 2:24-30

²⁴ *Then Daniel went in to see Arioch, who had been ordered to execute the wise men of Babylon. Daniel said to him, “Don’t kill the wise men. Take me to the king, and I will tell him the meaning of his dream.”*

²⁵ *Then Arioch quickly took Daniel to the king and said, “I have found one of the captives from Judah who will tell Your Majesty the meaning of your dream!”*

²⁶ *The king said to Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar), “Is this true? Can you tell me what my dream was and what it means?”*

²⁷ Daniel replied, “There are no wise men, enchanters, magicians, or fortune-tellers who can tell the king such things. ²⁸ But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the future. Now I will tell you your dream and the visions you saw as you lay on your bed.

²⁹ “While Your Majesty was sleeping, you dreamed about coming events. The revealer of mysteries has shown you what is going to happen. ³⁰ And it is not because I am wiser than any living person that I know the secret of your dream, but because God wanted you to understand what you were thinking about.

2. After Daniel thanks God for the answer, he then goes to Arioch and is bought before Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel takes great care in explaining that the answer does not come from him because no man or magician or astrologer can do such a thing. But that the answer came from God. He explains that God revealed the answer to Daniel because God wanted Nebuchadnezzar to understand.

D. Daniel discloses the contents of the dream. 2:31–35

1. Daniel 2:31-35

³¹ “Your Majesty, in your vision you saw in front of you a huge and powerful statue of a man, shining brilliantly, frightening and awesome. ³² The head of the statue was made of fine gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs were of bronze, ³³ its legs were of iron, and its feet were a combination of iron and clay. ³⁴ But as you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain by supernatural means. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. ³⁵ The whole statue collapsed into a heap of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. The pieces were crushed as small as chaff on a threshing floor, and the wind blew them all away without a trace. But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth.

2. This is the easy part, explaining what the dream was. Daniel disclaimed any unique wisdom in the matter, explaining that the matter was revealed to the king by means of a faithful and sovereign God

E. Daniel interprets the dream. 2:36–45

1. Daniel 2:36-45

³⁶ *“That was the dream; now I will tell Your Majesty what it means. ³⁷ Your Majesty, you are a king over many kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor. ³⁸ He has made you the ruler over all the inhabited world and has put even the animals and birds under your control. You are the head of gold.*

³⁹ *“But after your kingdom comes to an end, another great kingdom, inferior to yours, will rise to take your place. After that kingdom has fallen, yet a third great kingdom, represented by the bronze belly and thighs, will rise to rule the world. ⁴⁰ Following that kingdom, there will be a fourth great kingdom, as strong as iron. That kingdom will smash and crush all previous empires, just as iron smashes and crushes everything it strikes. ⁴¹ The feet and toes you saw that were a combination of iron and clay show that this kingdom will be divided. ⁴² Some parts of it will be as strong as iron, and others as weak as clay. ⁴³ This mixture of iron and clay also shows that these kingdoms will try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each other through intermarriage. But this will not succeed, just as iron and clay do not mix.*

⁴⁴ *“During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed; no one will ever conquer it. It will shatter all these kingdoms into nothingness, but it will stand forever. ⁴⁵ That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain by supernatural means, crushing to dust the statue of iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold.*

“The great God has shown Your Majesty what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its meaning is certain.”

2. The dream of Nebuchadnezzar reveals the course of Gentile world history until the end times. The golden head of the image (v. 32) represents the Babylonian Empire under the wealthy and powerful Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was the head of gold. Total Babylonian rule was from 605–539 B.C. Belshazzar replaced Nebuchadnezzar. He may have been king for about 20 years or so, but it gets a little confusing because we know that for 7 years Nebuchadnezzar was insane (*Daniel 4:32*) and that he got his kingdom back after that period of time. But we do know that Belshazzar was king when the Babylonian Empire fell.
3. The kingdom that follows Babylon is represented by the breast and arms of silver (v. 32). Although stronger than Babylon, as silver is superior to gold in strength, the Medo-Persian Empire (note the two arms as the joining of the

Medes and the Persians) would be inferior to Babylon, as silver is worth less than gold. The Medes and Persians were Indo-European peoples known as Aryans. This occurred in about 539 B.C. and happened under the rule of Belshazzar. Darius defeated Belshazzar on the night he drank from the sacred vessels and God wrote of his destruction on the wall. Daniel interrupted the handwriting on the wall (*Daniel 5*) and that very night the city was taken by Darius and Belshazzar was killed. Belshazzar was the last king of the Babylonian Empire. Darius the Mede was successor of Belshazzar. Darius the Mede has not been identified with certainty; he is not mentioned by Greek historians or in any Persian literature. It was Darius the Mede whom had Daniel thrown into the den of lions (*Dan. 6:6–9*), but who ultimately issued a decree that all in his kingdom “*must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel*” (*Dan. 6:26*). Much confusion and mystery have clouded the identity of Darius the Mede. Some scholars have denied the existence of such a ruler, concluding that the writer of the Book of Daniel was historically inaccurate in saying that Darius the Mede was the person who “*received the kingdom*” (*Dan. 5:31*) when Belshazzar was slain. Persian cuneiform inscriptions show that Cyrus II (“the Great”) was the successor of Belshazzar. One possible answer to this problem is that “Darius the Mede” was the army general sent by Cyrus to conquer Babylon. It is also possible that “Darius the Mede” was an alternative name or title used by the writer of the Book of Daniel for Cyrus the Persian himself. In Daniel 11:1, in the SEPTUAGINT, which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament, has Cyrus instead of Darius. Thus, a legitimate translation of *Daniel 6:28* might read: “*Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, that is, the reign of Cyrus the Persian*” (NIV). Such a logical and reasonable interpretation silences the skepticism about this passage in the Book of Daniel. The Medo-Persian rule was from 539 BC to 331 B.C. Cyrus the Great is the Medo-Persian king, who allowed the Jewish captives to return to their homeland in Jerusalem (538 B.C.). Daniel served under 4 Kings, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus.

4. The image’s belly and thighs are of bronze, the metal associated with the conquering legions of Alexander the Great. Bronze is stronger than either gold or silver, but the statue’s value continues to decline. Alexander III (the Great) was the son of Philip II (King of Macedon) and founder of the Hellenistic (Greek) Empire. He was born in 356 BC and ascended the Macedonian throne in 336 BC. He died in Babylon in 323 BC. Because he did not leave an heir who could continue his reign, Alexander’s four generals divided his kingdom. Although Alexander the Great is not mentioned directly in the Old or New

Testament. History tells us that Alexander encouraged Jews to settle in Alexandria, a city named after him. Some of the Jewish captives had returned to Jerusalem by this time but many remained in Babylon. Alexandria was founded after conquering Egypt. It was at Alexandria that a Greek translation of the Old Testament, known as the SEPTUAGINT, was developed. This is getting close to the time, when they think the Dead Sea scrolls were rewritten. Alexander's empire eventually fell to the Romans

5. Finally, the legs of the image are of iron, and the feet and toes are of iron mixed with clay (v. 33). The iron refers to the Roman Empire, at one point in time the strongest of all. Yet it, too, divided into the two empires—the East and the West, and in the last days ultimately will become a confederation of many kingdoms (the toes) containing iron and clay, a mixture of strength and weakness. This last kingdom is the Roman Empire that has never really ended. There was not a conqueror to defeat Rome, it just kind of fell apart and to some extent still exist today. This “*partly strong and partly broken*” kingdom of Rome did weaken as it aged, until it finally divides into ten toes, or ten kingdoms. These ten toes, or empires, will be some sort of European federation arising from the old iron, or Roman empire. Of these ten nations, monarchs will rule some, and democratic governments will rule some. This is the last kingdom set up by man and will be headed by the Antichrist. It will be this kingdom that Jesus Christ will crush, he is the rock. Nebuchadnezzar's image, representing all the glorious and powerful kingdoms of the world, will be ground to powder and totally obliterated by this Stone never to return again. But God's Kingdom will last forever.
6. This prophecy of Daniel's was fulfilled exactly as he predicted. Babylon fell to the Medes and the Persians, the Persian Empire to Alexander and the Macedonians, and the four divisions of Alexander's empire to Rome. The West continues today in the heritage of the Roman Empire.
7. The only kingdom yet to come from Daniel's prophecy is that of the Antichrist. His kingdom will be an extension of the Roman Empire but will be weaker. This will happen when the 1st seal judgment is broken by Christ in heaven. (Rev. 6:1) This will release the forces that are holding Antichrist back today and he will come into power with a federation of ten kingdoms (ten toes) as described in Revelation 13:2. This will not happen until the Church has been removed at the Rapture and the Jewish nation has signed a peace treaty with Antichrist for 7 years. The signing of this treaty will be the start of the Tribulation or Daniel's seventieth week.

8. One final feature of the vision records the ultimate reason for the dream. The vulnerable toes of the great image become the target of a Stone which comes from nowhere. The Stone has been “*cut out*” without hands, an indication that the Stone, unlike the great image, is not of human origin. Striking the toes of the image, the Stone renders a crushing blow to the iron and clay composition. The entire image falls, being utterly destroyed in that fall. This Stone, which “*became a great mountain and filled the whole earth*” (v. 35), is identified as the kingdom of God (Christ). This is a representation of Christ destroying the human government systems of this world to set up his rule on earth. Following the destruction of the image, the kingdom of God continues forever in full strength.
9. Apparently, the dream had several results:
- (1) the dream and its interpretation brought Daniel to prominence in Babylon with Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 46–49);
 - (2) the dream further served as an initial warning to Nebuchadnezzar that he, though great, was not invincible, and must prepare for the ultimate dissolution of his kingdom unless he humbled himself to the true God;
 - (3) the dream must have provided immense consolation to Daniel and the Hebrew captives, assuring them that ultimately God’s kingdom would be triumphant, overcoming all of the ruthless reigns of earthly sovereigns; and
 - (4) Nebuchadnezzar was thereby introduced to the true and living God (v. 47).
10.

Head	Gold	Babylonian	606 B.C. to 539 B.C.
Chest & arms	Silver	Medo-Persain	539 B.C. to 331 B.C.
Belly & thighs	Bronze	Grecian	331 B.C. to 146 B.C.
Legs & feet	Iron & Clay	Roman	146 B.C. to A.D. 476

F. Daniel’s promotion. 2:46–49

1. Daniel 2: 46-49

⁴⁶ *Then King Nebuchadnezzar bowed to the ground before Daniel and worshiped him, and he commanded his people to offer sacrifices and burn sweet incense before him.* ⁴⁷ *The king said to Daniel, “Truly, your God is the God of gods, the Lord over kings, a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this secret.”*

⁴⁸ *Then the king appointed Daniel to a high position and gave him many valuable gifts. He made Daniel ruler over the whole province of Babylon, as well as chief over all his wise men.* ⁴⁹ *At Daniel’s request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be in charge of all the affairs of the province of Babylon, while Daniel remained in the king’s court.*

2. Daniel was given the second highest position in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom because he was obedient to God. He was still at a very young age as this happened in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's rule. So Daniel was probably around 20 years old. Again Daniel is very clear that it is God who has given him the answer. Nebuchadnezzar has given the credit to Daniel's God but he has not become a believer himself yet, he just recognizes that Daniel's God is powerful. To him there are still many gods and Daniel's God is just one of them. He will live to regret this at a later time.

Chapter Three of Daniel

I. Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace. 3:1–30

A. The command to bow to the golden image. 3:1–7

1. *King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.* ² *Then he sent messages to the princes, prefects, governors, advisers, counselors, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to come to the dedication of the statue he had set up.* ³ *When all these officials had arrived and were standing before the image King Nebuchadnezzar had set up,* ⁴ *a herald shouted out, “People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king’s command!* ⁵ *When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar’s gold statue.* ⁶ *Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.”*
⁷ *So at the sound of the musical instruments, all the people, whatever their race or nation or language, bowed to the ground and worshiped the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.*

2. This is an effort of Nebuchadnezzar to bring greater unity in Babylon through the making of this statue, and could have been an immense image of him. Worship of the image was not an option. This took place on the plain of Dura, and near the capital Babylon. The enormous image was 60 cubits in height. A cubit is just less than 18 inches, thus bringing the image to a height of nearly 90 feet. The program for the dedication included a musical salute which became the signal for universal worship of the image. The fact that some of these instruments listed have Greek names is no argument for a late date for Daniel, since Greek products and trading cities existed through much of western Asia as early as the sixth century B. C.

B. The refusal of the three Hebrews to bow. 3:8–12

1. ⁸ *But some of the astrologers went to the king and informed on the Jews.* ⁹ *They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “Long live the king!”* ¹⁰ *You issued a decree requiring all the people to bow down and worship the gold statue when they hear the sound of the musical instruments.* ¹¹ *That decree also states that those who refuse to obey must be thrown into a blazing furnace.* ¹² *But there are some Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—whom you have put in charge of the province of Babylon. They have defied Your Majesty by refusing to serve your gods or to worship the gold statue you have set up.”*

2. The fact that Daniel is not mentioned may be explained in a couple of ways: he may have been busy elsewhere with administrative affairs or as a higher official, may not have been required to attend the meeting.
3. There were certain Chaldeans, who were envious of the position of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Babylon names), and they came before Nebuchadnezzar after the musical invitation to bow had been sounded. They had eagerly observed that these Jews had refused to worship the image. It is obvious that they were jealous of the position these Hebrew slaves held before the king and were eagerly looking for a time to defeat them. It must have taken courage for these boys to once again defy the king. They must have known that it would mean death but they also knew what God had said about worshiping idols. Instead of rationalizing their way into compromise and sin, they literally stood fast for the Lord. They disobeyed a civil law because God had clearly instructed them to do otherwise in His written Word. Serving the Lord meant more to them than living.

C. The three Hebrews fear only God. 3:13–18

1. ¹³ *Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought before him. When they were brought in,* ¹⁴ *Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up? ¹⁵ I will give you one more chance. If you bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments, all will be well. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. What god will be able to rescue you from my power then?”* ¹⁶ *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. ¹⁸ But even if he doesn’t, Your Majesty can be sure that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”*
2. When they were brought in before him, Nebuchadnezzar personally asked, half in unbelief, whether they had disobeyed his clear command. He had just recently promoted these men and given them power and prestige and could not envision the young Hebrews casting away their lives in behalf of a religious principle. Nebuchadnezzar then offered them a second chance to obey, and he repeated the warning of the fiery furnace for any deviation from his orders. But in so doing he taunted God by exclaiming, “*What god will be able to rescue you from my power then?*” He thought that he, not God, was omnipotent.

3. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had carefully weighed the consequences of refusing to obey the king. They had counted the cost and they are not concerned for their own well-being in the answer they give to the king. They had decided many months earlier what they would do. I am sure that they were aware of the building of the statue many months earlier and had decided that they would not worship it.
4. As a final tribute to God and testimony to Nebuchadnezzar, the Hebrews affirmed our “*God whom we serve is able to save us.*” Whether God did deliver them was up to Him. They would faithfully serve Him in all events, and they would shortly be delivered, either by life or by death.

D. The three Hebrews cast into the furnace, but delivered by God. 3:19–25

1. ¹⁹ *Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual.* ²⁰ *Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace.* ²¹ *So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully clothed.* ²² *And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in!* ²³ *So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell down into the roaring flames.*
²⁴ *But suddenly, as he was watching, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, “Didn’t we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?”*
“Yes,” they said, “we did indeed, Your Majesty.”
²⁵ *“Look!” Nebuchadnezzar shouted. “I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire. They aren’t even hurt by the flames! And the fourth looks like a divine being!”*
2. Nebuchadnezzar had an uncontrollable temper. In an extreme outrage of emotionalism, Nebuchadnezzar vented his anger against these men whom he had previously favored. The fire in the furnace was to be built up “*seven times*” larger and hotter than usual! This was not necessary, but it reveals what was in this man’s heart.
3. The furnace was some type of kiln, and had an opening at the bottom for fueling and through which the flames could be observed. The overheated furnace had the effect of slaying the king’s soldiers as they cast in the three Hebrews.

4. Nebuchadnezzar, who expected these men to expire at once, was amazed to see them alive and walking about in the fire. The appearance of a fourth man was definitely distinct. Even Nebuchadnezzar could recognize that this was a divine being. Was it Christ who was with His servants during this trial? It certainly could have been, even though the Scriptures themselves give no confirming statement to that effect. The only other possibility would have been one of God's angels sent to minister to them. Either way a heavenly being was in the furnace with them.
5. The events recorded here in this chapter are a historical incident, but we should also note that it is a prophetic picture, of the Great Tribulation period. The fiery furnace represents the suffering that will occur during the Great Tribulation. This man Nebuchadnezzar represents the beast out of the sea, the Antichrist, the last great world ruler. This image of gold represents the image of the Beast that will be built during the Tribulation, and all will be required to worship it or die. These three Hebrew boys represent the remnant which will be miraculously preserved during the Great Tribulation period.

E. Nebuchadnezzar's astonishment and proclamation. 3:26–30

1. ²⁶ *Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire.* ²⁷ *Then the princes, prefects, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke!*
²⁸ *Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.* ²⁹ *Therefore, I make this decree: If any people, whatever their race or nation or language, speak a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they will be torn limb from limb, and their houses will be crushed into heaps of rubble. There is no other god who can rescue like this!"* ³⁰ *Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in the province of Babylon.*
2. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges that these three are "servants of the most high God." I think he is getting a little closer to knowledge of God. These men came forth with not a hair singed, nor the smell of smoke on their garments! This is a clear-cut miracle.

3. Nebuchadnezzar recognizes the omnipotence of the living God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and His power in delivering them. He grants that their God is superior to his. But he does not believe yet, only that God is more powerful than his gods. A decree is given that if anyone speaks out against the god of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they would be destroyed. This was powerful for all the exiled Jews living in Babylon. The three are now back in favor of the king and are given higher positions of authority.

Chapter Four of Daniel

I. Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's tree dream. 4:1–37

A. Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation of God's majesty. 4:1–3

1. *King Nebuchadnezzar sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world: "Peace and prosperity to you!"² "I want you all to know about the miraculous signs and wonders the Most High God has performed for me."³ How great are his signs, how powerful his wonders! His kingdom will last forever, his rule through all generations.*
2. This chapter records events of Nebuchadnezzar after they had occurred. Chronologically, this testimony should come at the end of this chapter because it came out of his experience recorded here. The occasion was that the king had been warned regarding pride, had failed to deal with it, and was consequently judged by God, and then was restored to his throne. He wanted to give the glory to God by making his strange story known to all people, nations, and languages of his vast kingdom.

B. Nebuchadnezzar recounts his tree dream. 4:4–18

1. ⁴ *"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living in my palace in comfort and prosperity."⁵ But one night I had a dream that greatly frightened me; I saw visions that terrified me as I lay in my bed.⁶ So I issued an order calling in all the wise men of Babylon, so they could tell me what my dream meant.⁷ When all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers came in, I told them the dream, but they could not tell me what it meant.⁸ At last Daniel came in before me, and I told him the dream. (He was named Belteshazzar after my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.)⁹ "I said to him, 'O Belteshazzar, master magician, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too great for you to solve. Now tell me what my dream means."¹⁰ "While I was lying in my bed, this is what I dreamed. I saw a large tree in the middle of the earth.¹¹ The tree grew very tall and strong, reaching high into the heavens for all the world to see.¹² It had fresh green leaves, and it was loaded with fruit for all to eat. Wild animals lived in its shade, and birds nested in its branches. All the world was fed from this tree.¹³ "Then as I lay there dreaming, I saw a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven.¹⁴ The messenger shouted, "Cut down the tree; lop off its branches! Shake off its leaves, and scatter its fruit! Chase the animals from its shade and the birds*

from its branches. ¹⁵ But leave the stump and the roots in the ground, bound with a band of iron and bronze and surrounded by tender grass. Now let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live like an animal among the plants of the fields. ¹⁶ For seven periods of time, let him have the mind of an animal instead of a human. ¹⁷ For this has been decreed by the messengers; it is commanded by the holy ones. The purpose of this decree is that the whole world may understand that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses—even to the lowliest of humans.”

¹⁸ “ ‘O Belteshazzar, that was the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now tell me what it means, for no one else can help me. All the wisest men of my kingdom have failed me. But you can tell me because the spirit of the holy gods is in you.’ ”

2. Again the wise men were called in and were unable to give an interpretation of the dream. It was God who gave both of his dreams, and only God could give the interpretation. Finally, Daniel was called in. Nebuchadnezzar had learned that Daniel was a Spirit-filled man and that interpretations were given to him by God.
3. The description of his dream involved a tall tree that seemed to provide food and shelter for all. A tree is often a symbol of towering strength, providing shade, food, fuel, beauty, and the raw materials for some buildings.
4. But suddenly a messenger, that is an angel, came from heaven with the command to cut down the tree. The band of iron and brass around the stump was to preserve the life of the cut-off portion of the tree that remained in the ground. It then would retain the possibility of recovering and growing back again. “*Let him have the mind of an animal instead of a human*”, these were the words of the angel in the dream and signified the human personality of the tree. It actually stood for Nebuchadnezzar.
5. Let “*seven periods of time*” pass over him had to do with the period during which the heart of a beast would pervade Nebuchadnezzar—commonly thought of as seven years. The sole purpose of this experience was declared to be that men might understand “*that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses—even to the lowliest of humans*”. There hasn’t been a world ruler put in place that was not put there by God for His purposes. God is in control of all human governments. Daniel was again asked to interpret this puzzling dream that had completely baffled the other wise men.

C. Daniel interprets the dream and warns the king. 4:19–27

- ¹⁹ *“Upon hearing this, Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) was overcome for a time, aghast at the meaning of the dream. Finally, the king said to him, ‘Belteshazzar, don’t be alarmed by the dream and what it means.’*
*“Belteshazzar replied, “Oh, how I wish the events foreshadowed in this dream would happen to your enemies, my lord, and not to you!”*²⁰ *You saw a tree growing very tall and strong, reaching high into the heavens for all the world to see.*²¹ *It had fresh green leaves, and it was loaded with fruit for all to eat. Wild animals lived in its shade, and birds nested in its branches.*²² *That tree, Your Majesty, is you. For you have grown strong and great; your greatness reaches up to heaven, and your rule to the ends of the earth.*²³ *“Then you saw a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it. But leave the stump and the roots in the ground, bound with a band of iron and bronze and surrounded by tender grass. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven. Let him eat grass with the animals of the field for seven periods of time.’*²⁴ *“This is what the dream means, Your Majesty, and what the Most High has declared will happen to you.*²⁵ *You will be driven from human society, and you will live in the fields with the wild animals. You will eat grass like a cow, and you will be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses.*²⁶ *But the stump and the roots were left in the ground. This means that you will receive your kingdom back again when you have learned that heaven rules.*²⁷ *“O King Nebuchadnezzar, please listen to me. Stop sinning and do what is right. Break from your wicked past by being merciful to the poor. Perhaps then you will continue to prosper.”*
- Daniel at once understood the meaning of the dream and was saddened because of what it meant for King Nebuchadnezzar. Regarding the tree, Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar, *“that tree, Your Majesty, is you.”*
- The message was that the king’s throne would be taken from him because of a mental disorder in which he would imagine himself to be an ox. This would continue for seven years until he would learn that God really rules the earth and sets up kings as He pleases. During that interval, Daniel assured him, *“you will receive your kingdom back again.”*

4. Daniel hoped that the events predicted in this God-given dream could be averted by an immediate and true repentance on the part of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel loved the king and begged him to repent. However, Daniel's sincere pleading could not overcome the king's pride.

D. The fulfillment of the dream. 4:28–33

1. ²⁸ *“But all these things did happen to King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹ Twelve months later, he was taking a walk on the flat roof of the royal palace in Babylon. ³⁰ As he looked out across the city, he said, ‘Just look at this great city of Babylon! I, by my own mighty power, have built this beautiful city as my royal residence and as an expression of my royal splendor.’*
³¹ *“While he was still speaking these words, a voice called down from heaven, “O King Nebuchadnezzar, this message is for you! You are no longer ruler of this kingdom. ³² You will be driven from human society. You will live in the fields with the wild animals, and you will eat grass like a cow. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses.”*
³³ *“That very same hour the prophecy was fulfilled, and Nebuchadnezzar was driven from human society. He ate grass like a cow, and he was drenched with the dew of heaven. He lived this way until his hair was as long as eagles’ feathers and his nails were like birds’ claws.*
2. One year later, as Nebuchadnezzar walked through his tremendous palace boastful of his accomplishments, an audible voice from heaven said, *“You are no longer ruler of this kingdom.”* It was probably the voice of an angel but it could have been God speaking. God had already told him that *He* had given to him but Nebuchadnezzar took all the credit from his own prideful heart. That very hour he was driven out into a field, but he was protected. He ate grass and acted like an ox for seven years.
3. God deals with this man personally. As he departs from normality and rationality, his kingdom slips from him. The insane of that day were driven out rather than being placed in an institution for treatment. Under ordinary circumstances Nebuchadnezzar would never have been able to return to the throne; yet God promised that he would do so after he had learned his lesson. History corroborates this event in the life of Nebuchadnezzar. Dr. Philip R. Newell has this note from Albert Barnes, “Josephus attributes to the Babylonian historian, Berosus, a definite reference concerning a strange malady suffered by Nebuchadnezzar before his death”

E. Nebuchadnezzar returns to sanity and praises God. 4:34–37

1. ³⁴ *“After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever. His rule is everlasting, and his kingdom is eternal. ³⁵ All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. He has the power to do as he pleases among the angels of heaven and with those who live on earth. No one can stop him or challenge him, saying, ‘What do you mean by doing these things?’ ³⁶ “When my sanity returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My advisers and officers sought me out, and I was reestablished as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before. ³⁷ “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of heaven. All his acts are just and true, and he is able to humble those who are proud.”*
2. As his understanding comes back to him, Nebuchadnezzar has learned now that God is running things, that He is in control of this universe. Nebuchadnezzar accepted this thing that had come to him as the will of God for him, yielding his proud mind to the will of God.
3. His position as king of Babylon was restored to him, and his officials once again surrounded him. The kingdom was not jeopardized during his long period of absence, and added majesty came to him because he had now come to the knowledge of the living and true God.
4. The confirmation of his conversion is evident in his proclamation at the beginning of the chapter where he declares that Gods *“kingdom will last forever, his rule through all generations.”*

Chapter Five of Daniel

I. Daniel Serves Under Belshazzar. 5:1–31

A. Belshazzar's drunken feast. 5:1–4

1. *A number of years later, King Belshazzar gave a great feast for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them.* ² *While Belshazzar was drinking, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, so that he and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them.* ³ *So they brought these gold cups taken from the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank from them.* ⁴ *They drank toasts from them to honor their idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.*
2. Now who was Belshazzar and how did he get to the throne? In the previous chapter the king was Nebuchadnezzar. Belshazzar has been a controversial figure in history, so we do need to take a moment to look at him. In 1850, critics doubted the existence of Belshazzar, claiming he was a fictitious character made up by Daniel who they claim composed the book around 165 B.C. With the discovery of Belshazzar's name on cuneiform tablets, his existence could no longer be questioned. The recognition of two large black cylinders in a Byzantine church in Haran in the year 1956 ended the skepticism. The Nabonidus Chronicle, as this is called, clearly mentions Belshazzar as a coregent with Nabonidus his father. Not only that, but Belshazzar ruled at Babylon, while Nabonidus was in Tema during the final years of the Babylonian Empire.
3. The name of Bel-shar-usur (Belshazzar) has been found on cylinders in which he is called the son of Nabonidus. It is now generally accepted that Belshazzar acted as a regent under his father, Nabonidus. A resume of the events which succeeded Nebuchadnezzar's reign would be helpful at this point. At the death of Nebuchadnezzar his only son, Evil-merodach, succeeded him, in about 561 B.C. (see 2 Kings 25:27). Evil-merodach was murdered by Nergal-sharezer who had married one of Nebuchadnezzar's daughters and now replaced him on the throne in about 559 B.C. Nergal-sharezer was succeeded by his young son who reigned only a few months before he was murdered by Nabonidus (the husband of another of Nebuchadnezzar's daughters). Nabonidus, the last ruler of the

Babylonian empire, spent much of his time away from the kingdom on foreign expeditions, and Belshazzar his son remained at Babylon as his co-regent. All this reveals the accuracy of what Jeremiah the prophet had said: “*And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him*” (Jer. 27:6–7). In other words, the Babylonian kingdom would last through the reign of a son and a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, and then the reign of the Babylonian kingdom as the head of gold would end.

4. During the time of the events recorded in chapter 5, Nabonidus was on the field of battle while Belshazzar his son remained in Babylon. We will notice that when Belshazzar offers Daniel a position in the kingdom, it is to be the “*third*” ruler in the kingdom. Why not *second* to Belshazzar? Well, Belshazzar himself was number two—his father was really the king.
5. During the feast of Belshazzar introduced here in verse 1, Gobryas, the Median general, was besieging the city of Babylon from the outside. Xenophon, the Greek historian, describes how they took the city by detouring a canal of the Euphrates River back into its main channel and then letting the army flow under the walls of the city. Therefore the events of this chapter, which for many years had been discounted by the critics, have today been confirmed by secular history.
6. “*King Belshazzar gave a great feast for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them.*” Note the arrogance of Belshazzar who puts on this lavish affair while the armies of Gobryas were in full view of the city. He thought the city was impregnable. Nebuchadnezzar had built it to withstand any siege. The city wall was actually fifteen miles square and was constructed of brick. It was three hundred feet high and wide enough for four chariots to travel abreast around the city walls. In other words, they could have put a freeway around the top of the city. He had supplies of grain and water to last for years—in fact, there was a canal channeled off the Euphrates River which went right through the city. Belshazzar’s feast may have been in defiance of the enemy on the outside, or perhaps he wanted to build up the morale of those within. We are told here that it began with a big cocktail party.
7. This man is not only defying the enemy outside, but now under the influence of alcohol he does an audacious thing which his grandfather would never have

done. When Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem he took the vessels from the temple in Jerusalem. But when he came to the knowledge of the living and true God, he had them stored away. To Belshazzar as a boy growing up in the palace, I guess they were a no-no—he had to leave those vessels alone. Now he drags them out and is going to serve his guests with them. The vessels were no longer holy vessels. *Holy* means “that which is set aside for the use of God.” However, Belshazzar *is* defying God by this act.

8. Everyone at the banquet was now drunk. It was a scene of real debauchery. They toasted the gods, and it would have taken more than one night to toast all they had in Babylon. They cloaked their sin as an act of worship and veiled their blasphemy in the name of religion.

B. The handwriting on the wall. 5:5–9

1. ⁵ *At that very moment they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster wall of the king’s palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand as it wrote,* ⁶ *and his face turned pale with fear. Such terror gripped him that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way beneath him.* ⁷ *The king shouted for the enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers to be brought before him. He said to these wise men of Babylon, “Whoever can read this writing and tell me what it means will be dressed in purple robes of royal honor and will wear a gold chain around his neck. He will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom!”* ⁸ *But when all the king’s wise men came in, none of them could read the writing or tell him what it meant.* ⁹ *So the king grew even more alarmed, and his face turned ashen white. His nobles, too, were shaken.*
2. God now directly intervenes. He does not speak by dream or vision because this is a man who will never believe in the Living God. There is a supernatural occurrence of a hand suddenly appearing and writing on the light-colored plaster of the palace wall. For Belshazzar, it is a message of doom. He has ignored the God of heaven, as Daniel will soon make clear to him. Belshazzar can not stand up. A few moments ago he had been too drunk to stand up. Although he’s suddenly sober he still cannot stand up. What he has seen on the wall has scared him nearly to death; he is overwhelmed with fear.
3. Belshazzar promised whoever would decipher the message a promotion to “*be the third ruler in the kingdom.*” That is an accurate statement, in view of the fact that Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar were co-rulers. This confirms the

accuracy of Daniel and his authenticity as a sixth-century B.C. writer, since a forger of the second-century would not have had access to this long-since-buried information (discovered in 1956). The inability of “*all the king’s wise men*” to even read the writing, let alone interpret it, contributed to make the situation even more desperate.

C. Daniel called in to help. 5:10–16

- ¹⁰ *But when the queen mother heard what was happening, she hurried to the banquet hall. She said to Belshazzar, “Long live the king! Don’t be so pale and afraid about this. ¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom who has within him the spirit of the holy gods. During Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, this man was found to have insight, understanding, and wisdom as though he himself were a god. Your predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him chief over all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers of Babylon. ¹² This man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, has a sharp mind and is filled with divine knowledge and understanding. He can interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means.”*

¹³ *So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king asked him, “Are you Daniel, who was exiled from Judah by my predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar? ¹⁴ I have heard that you have the spirit of the gods within you and that you are filled with insight, understanding, and wisdom. ¹⁵ My wise men and enchanters have tried to read this writing on the wall, but they cannot. ¹⁶ I am told that you can give interpretations and solve difficult problems. If you can read these words and tell me their meaning, you will be clothed in purple robes of royal honor, and you will wear a gold chain around your neck. You will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom.”*
2. “*The queen*” probably refers to the queen mother. Belshazzar’s wives were already present, but this woman came in later. Her perfect acquaintance with the earlier affairs of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign (when Daniel was such a leading figure) also points to this being the case.
3. She urged Belshazzar to call in Daniel, referring to him as the **master** of all the wise men in Nebuchadnezzar’s time. She had the utmost confidence in Daniel’s ability (under God) to give the answer to the strange mystery on the wall. More than likely she had witnessed all of the other situations in which God had intervened and she had also witnessed the conversion of Nebuchadnezzar.

4. Daniel is now brought in. Belshazzar butters him up and tells him that if he can give the interpretation which the wise men have failed to give, then he will be made the third ruler in the kingdom. Thus Daniel is offered the same reward which had been offered to the wise men.

D. Daniel's sermon to Belshazzar. 5:17–24

1. ¹⁷ *Daniel answered the king, “Keep your gifts or give them to someone else, but I will tell you what the writing means.* ¹⁸ *Your Majesty, the Most High God gave sovereignty, majesty, glory, and honor to your predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar.* ¹⁹ *He made him so great that people of all races and nations and languages trembled before him in fear. He killed those he wanted to kill and spared those he wanted to spare. He honored those he wanted to honor and disgraced those he wanted to disgrace.* ²⁰ *But when his heart and mind were hardened with pride, he was brought down from his royal throne and stripped of his glory.* ²¹ *He was driven from human society. He was given the mind of an animal, and he lived among the wild donkeys. He ate grass like a cow, and he was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God rules the kingdoms of the world and appoints anyone he desires to rule over them.*
²² *“You are his successor, O Belshazzar, and you knew all this, yet you have not humbled yourself.* ²³ *For you have defied the Lord of heaven and have had these cups from his Temple brought before you. You and your nobles and your wives and concubines have been drinking wine from them while praising gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone—gods that neither see nor hear nor know anything at all. But you have not honored the God who gives you the breath of life and controls your destiny!* ²⁴ *So God has sent this hand to write a message.*
2. Daniel spurned these gifts. He was absolutely contemptuous of Belshazzar. I am sure that if the king had not been so filled with fear, he would not have ignored Daniel's insult. After all, why did Daniel need this reward? He would not have had it but for a few hours. Before Daniel interprets the handwriting on the wall, he gives to this young king who is reigning under his father the best sermon he probably ever could receive. Daniel is not the young man who went into the presence of old King Nebuchadnezzar; he is now an old man going into the presence of a young king.
3. Nebuchadnezzar had been an absolute ruler on this earth. There has not been another ruler like him and there will not be another until Antichrist rules.

Daniel recites for Belshazzar how God had dealt with his grandfather. How God had put him on the throne and had given him a world kingdom. Then he tells Belshazzar of the experience Nebuchadnezzar had had.

4. Daniel preaches a very pointed and powerful sermon to Belshazzar. God had given the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar, and he had been an absolute sovereign whom no man could question or hinder and whose wishes and whims were the law of the realm. However, when Nebuchadnezzar became filled with pride, God humbled him to a tragic episode. He is reminding this young proud king that if he is lifted up by pride, it is either because of his drinking or because he is insane.
5. Belshazzar was a proud and vain man. Although he knew of his grandfather's insanity and of his descent to the level of a beast, he had not profited by this experience. Instead, he had committed sacrilege in using the vessels taken from God's temple in Jerusalem. He had defied the living and true God; and, by the profane use of that which had been holy, he had mocked God and insulted Him. Knowing the truth, he yet rejected it. God destroys only those who have known the truth and have refused it. During the Great Tribulation period those who will be deluded are those who have rejected the light. Paul writes in *2 Thessalonians 2:9–12* ⁹ *"This evil man will come to do the work of Satan with counterfeit power and signs and miracles. ¹⁰ He will use every kind of wicked deception to fool those who are on their way to destruction because they refuse to believe the truth that would save them. ¹¹ So God will send great deception upon them, and they will believe all these lies. ¹² Then they will be condemned for not believing the truth and for enjoying the evil they do."* Daniel is telling Belshazzar the principle by which God operates and which Paul has also since confirmed. The Lord Jesus also made this very clear when He said: *"For I have come to you representing my Father, and you refuse to welcome me, even though you readily accept others who represent only themselves."* (John 5:43). Daniel concludes his sermon by stating that the handwriting was from God whom Belshazzar had spurned and ridiculed and blasphemed.

E. Daniel's interpretation of the writing. 5:25–28

1. ²⁵ *"This is the message that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN. ²⁶ This is what these words mean: Mene means 'numbered'—God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end.*

²⁷*Tekel means ‘weighed’—you have been weighed on the balances and have failed the test.*

²⁸*Parsin means ‘divided’—your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”*

2. “*MENE*” is translated “number,” and it is repeated—Number, Number. It meant that God had numbered the kingdom of Babylon. We have a common colloquialism today, “His number is up.” That is an accurate expression of the idea here. Also, in Psalm 90:12, we read, “*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*” Only God knows when “our number is up”—when our earthly journey is over. “*MENE, MENE*” means that God had numbered the days of Belshazzar. He keeps track of every moment of every day. He determines beforehand the length of our days, and we cannot change that.
3. “*TEKEL*” simply means “weight.” Babylon had been put on the divine scales and had been found wanting. The people of Babylon didn’t weigh enough—they were lightweight. God had raised up Babylon, and now He is going to put it down. Why? Because Babylon had not measured up to God’s standards. We read in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation about the seven churches of Asia Minor. There we see the Lord Jesus in the midst of the lampstands which represent the churches. He trims the wicks, pours in the oil, and snuffs out those which fail to light. He also judges the church today. Christ weighs us on the divine scale, and He had to say to every one of the churches, “*Repent. You haven’t measured up.*” He says the same thing to you and me today. Our righteousness is not only insufficient, it is filthy rags. Only His righteousness is going to stand the test and weigh out. Romans 3:21–23 says, “²¹ *But now God has shown us a different way of being right in his sight—not by obeying the law but by the way promised in the Scriptures long ago.* ²² *We are made right in God’s sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done.* ²³ *For all have sinned; all fall short of God’s glorious standard.*” God weighs all the actions of mankind.
4. “*PERES*” is the singular form of “*UPHARSIN*” (as it was given in verse 25), and it means “divisions.” The kingdom of Babylon is now to be divided and given to the Medes and Persians. In other words, the head of gold is to be removed; it is now time for the arms of silver to come into place. God is in supreme command of the kingdoms of the earth. Ezekiel wrote,

“²⁷ Destruction! Destruction! I will surely destroy the kingdom. And it will not be restored until the one appears who has the right to judge it. Then I will hand it over to him.” (Ezek. 21:27). God will continue to turn over kingdoms until Christ comes.

F. Medo-Persia conquers decadent Babylon. 5:29–31

1. ²⁹ *Then at Belshazzar’s command, Daniel was dressed in purple robes, a gold chain was hung around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.*
³⁰ *That very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed.* ³¹ *And Darius the Mede took over the kingdom at the age of sixty-two.*
2. At the very time this banquet was being held, the Medes were marching underneath the walls of Babylon where the waters of the canal had flowed. Underneath the walls had been a canal which had brought water through the city, and now the waters had been cut off and channeled back into the main stream of the Euphrates River. Gobryas marched his army into the inner city where the palace was located. History records that he and his men were on the inside of the inner city before the guards had even detected that anything was wrong. It is Xenophon, the Greek historian, who recorded for secular history the way in which the Persians took the city.
3. Belshazzar had rejected God, he had been weighed and found wanting, and he was slain. Darius the Mede becomes the ruler of the kingdom of silver. He came with a sudden attack and destroyed Babylon. Isaiah had prophesied the fall of Babylon in Isaiah 21. Secular writers speak of Cyrus’s taking Babylon by surprise, with the assistance of two deserters that showed him the best way into the city. Daniel states it was *“Darius the Mede who took the kingdom.”* This was done in partnership with, and by the consent of, Cyrus.

Chapter Six of Daniel

I. Daniel Serves Under Darius the Mede. 6:1–28

A. Daniel's continued government service. 6:1–3

1. *Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a prince to rule over each province.* ² *The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the princes and to watch out for the king's interests.* ³ *Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and princes. Because of his great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire.*
2. With the opening of this chapter, we have again moved ahead historically. The kingdom of Babylon, the head of gold, has now disappeared; it has been removed from the number one spot of world power. Instead of Babylon, we have the Medo-Persian Empire, which was represented by the arms of silver in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. "Darius" is the Darius Cyaxares II of secular history, and he ruled for only two years. Cyrus, who followed him, was the son of Darius' sister Mundane and of Cambyses the Persian. This was what brought the empire together into the Medo-Persian Empire which now ruled the world.
3. Although we have moved into another empire, we still find Daniel in the position of prime minister under Darius the Mede. Here we can see that the inferiority of this kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar's is quite evident. Nebuchadnezzar's reign was autocratic and absolute—he did not share authority with anyone. Darius had "*an hundred and twenty princes*" who shared the responsibility and leadership with him. Over this group Darius placed "*three presidents*" who served as liaison officers between the princes and the king. There was therefore a distribution of responsibility and rulership. We are told that these three presidents (Daniel was one of them) held their position "*to watch out for the king's interests.*" This suggests that the presidents were to prevent the princes from stealing from or undermining the king in any way. Daniel was number one of the three presidents, and he was an old man at this time. Daniel not only had seniority in this group, he had superiority. That he was "*more capable*" means Daniel was a Spirit-filled man. The king had such confidence in him that he placed Daniel next to himself in position and power.

B. The conspiracy against Daniel. 6:4–9

- ⁴ *Then the other administrators and princes began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling his affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize. He was faithful and honest and always responsible.* ⁵ *So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the requirements of his religion."*

⁶ *So the administrators and princes went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius!"* ⁷ *We administrators, prefects, princes, advisers, and other officials have unanimously agreed that Your Majesty should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to Your Majesty—will be thrown to the lions.* ⁸ *And let Your Majesty issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked."* ⁹ *So King Darius signed the law.*
- Daniel had a remarkable life behind him. These men could not find anything in this man's character or in his past life which they could seize upon and make something of. Daniel was different—God makes His people different. When he was first brought to the court of Nebuchadnezzar as a boy slave, he had asked for a different diet. From then on, the life of Daniel was different, and these men were aware of that. They said, *"If we are going to find anything wrong with him, we are going to have to find it in his religion."* When they said *"wrong,"* they meant something which they could accuse him of before the king. The only vulnerable spot in Daniel, as these politicians saw it, was his religion. This was certainly a case of Daniel's good being *"evil-spoken of."* They knew that Daniel was faithful to God and was dependent upon Him. His prayer life was something that was well known. Therefore, they are going to have to draw a conflict between the king and Daniel's religion.
- These men flattered Darius, and he yielded to it. So he drafted a bill, and it was made a statute. He thus elevated himself to the position of deity, and prayer was to be offered only to him. Darius yielded to his weakness, and now this decree which has gone out, signed by the king, cannot be changed. Even the king of the Medes and Persians himself cannot change it after it has been passed. All this puts Daniel in a bad spot.

C. Daniel's continued devotion to God. 6:10

1. ¹⁰ *But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.*
2. Notice the reaction of Daniel to this new law. He did not do anything audacious or foolhardy when he opened those windows—he had been doing that for years. He simply did not back down. He did not act in a cowardly and compromising manner by closing the windows but went about his usual prayer life. Notice also that Daniel prayed toward Jerusalem. That was the direction of Daniel's life, and he didn't intend to change because of Darius' decree. When away from the temple in Jerusalem, God's people of that day were to pray facing in that direction.

D. Daniel accused before Darius. 6:11–15

1. ¹¹ *The officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help.* ¹² *So they went back to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to Your Majesty—will be thrown to the lions?"*
"Yes," the king replied, "that decision stands; it is a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked."
¹³ *Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is paying no attention to you or your law. He still prays to his God three times a day."*
¹⁴ *Hearing this, the king was very angry with himself for signing the law, and he tried to find a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament.* ¹⁵ *In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty knows that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed."*
2. These men called attention to the fact that Daniel was disobeying: he was at an open window praying toward Jerusalem. This distressed the king as Darius could not change his own law; Nebuchadnezzar would have been able to. This is evidence of the deterioration from one kingdom to the next. Daniel is to be put in the den of lions, and there is nothing the king can do about it.

E. Daniel preserved in the den of lions. 6:16–23

1. ¹⁶ *So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, “May your God, whom you worship continually, rescue you.”* ¹⁷ *A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel from the lions.* ¹⁸ *Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn’t sleep at all that night.*
¹⁹ *Very early the next morning, the king hurried out to the lions’ den.* ²⁰ *When he got there, he called out in anguish, “Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you worship continually, able to rescue you from the lions?”*
²¹ *Daniel answered, “Long live the king!* ²² *My God sent his angel to shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty.”*
²³ *The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him because he had trusted in his God.*
2. Darius recognized that the God of Daniel was omnipotent and sovereign and could deliver him. He also saw that Daniel was faithful to God. Daniel’s testimony in the court of two world powers was nothing short of miraculous. His unaffected and unassuming life was a powerful witness to the saving grace of God in that day.
3. Even though he could personally do nothing to help Daniel, Darius believed Daniel’s God would intervene on his behalf. After the den of lions was made secure, Darius went home; but he did not spend the night as he usually did. Darius hastened to the den early the next morning and called hopefully to Daniel. Daniel responded politely and announced the reason for his safety, *My God sent his angel to shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me.* God had found Daniel innocent of all wrongdoing—by divine standards.
4. The law had been kept, Daniel had suffered the punishment for disobedience—except that the lions had not been as obliging as his enemies had hoped.

F. Daniel's accusers punished and his God praised. 6:24–28

1. ²⁴ *Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den.* the den.

²⁵ *Then King Darius sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world:*

"Peace and prosperity to you!

²⁶ *"I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel.*

For he is the living God, and he will endure forever.

His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end.

²⁷ *He rescues and saves his people; he performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions."*

²⁸ *So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.*

2. The lions got fed after all! Not only the villains themselves, but also their children, and their wives, were fed to the lions. Darius sent out a worldwide decree which was his personal testimony. He had found the same peace that had come to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:1). This testimony of peace comes from the same man who could not sleep the night before.

Remember Darius was 68 years of age when he came into power and only reigned for two years. But he found out who the Living God was and from his recorded words, we can tell that he believed in God.

3. Daniel's position was secure, and he maintained it to the end of his life which came during the reign of Cyrus. It was Cyrus who made the decree permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem (see 2 Chron. 36:22–23; Ezra 1:11). This concludes the historical section of the Book of Daniel and the prophetic history of the Gentiles. From this point on the book will be mainly concerned with the visions and prophecies which were given to Daniel concerning the Jewish prophetic history.

Chapter Seven of Daniel

Prophetic Plan for Israel

I. Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts. 7:1–28

A. The vision received by Daniel. 7:1–14

1. *Earlier, during the first year of King Belshazzar's reign in Babylon, Daniel had a dream and saw visions as he lay in his bed. He wrote the dream down, and this is what he saw.*

² *In my vision that night, I, Daniel, saw a great storm churning the surface of a great sea, with strong winds blowing from every direction. ³ Then four huge beasts came up out of the water, each different from the others.*

⁴ *The first beast was like a lion with eagles' wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off, and it was left standing with its two hind feet on the ground, like a human being. And a human mind was given to it.*

⁵ *Then I saw a second beast, and it looked like a bear. It was rearing up on one side, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And I heard a voice saying to it, "Get up! Devour many people!"*

⁶ *Then the third of these strange beasts appeared, and it looked like a leopard. It had four wings like birds' wings on its back, and it had four heads. Great authority was given to this beast.*

⁷ *Then in my vision that night, I saw a fourth beast, terrifying, dreadful, and very strong. It devoured and crushed its victims with huge iron teeth and trampled what was left beneath its feet. It was different from any of the other beasts, and it had ten horns. ⁸ As I was looking at the horns, suddenly another small horn appeared among them. Three of the first horns were wrenched out, roots and all, to make room for it. This little horn had eyes like human eyes and a mouth that was boasting arrogantly.*

⁹ *I watched as thrones were put in place and the Ancient One sat down to judge. His clothing was as white as snow, his hair like whitest wool. He sat on a fiery throne with wheels of blazing fire, ¹⁰ and a river of fire flowed from his presence. Millions of angels ministered to him, and a hundred million stood to attend him. Then the court began its session, and the books were opened. ¹¹ I continued to watch because I could hear the little horn's boastful speech. I kept watching until the fourth beast was killed and its body was destroyed by fire. ¹² As for the other three beasts, their authority was taken from them, but they were allowed to live for a while longer.*

¹³ *As my vision continued that night, I saw someone who looked like a man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ He was given authority, honor, and royal power over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed.*

2. ***The first year of Belshazzar*** was the date of this vision received by Daniel during the night. This vision occurred several years prior to the events recorded in chapters 5 and 6. Those chapters were primarily history. This chapter contains the first of the revelations that came directly to Daniel and concerned prophetic events. Daniel saw ***four great beasts*** that ***came up from the sea***, the lion, the bear, the panther (or leopard), and a composite beast which is a nondescript beast. The last was a wild-looking animal which has never been seen on land or sea or in the air—it simply does not exist as a real beast.
3. With the four world kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream before him, Daniel probably wondered how God’s plan and program of raising up a world ruler from David would fit into all this. The rest of the Book of Daniel is going to answer that question. It will give us world history prewritten, history that has been followed right down to the minutest detail for twenty-five hundred years since the time it was written.
4. In the vision God gives to Daniel, He lets him in on the inward character and the true nature of the kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. The four beasts of Daniel’s vision correspond to the four metals in the image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. In *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the historian Edward Gibbon, who was not a Christian, said, “The four empires are clearly delineated; and the invincible armies of the Romans are described with as much clearness in the prophecies of Daniel, as in the histories of Justin and Diodorus.” The following chart summarizes the correspondence between the two visions and the four kingdoms they represent:

MULTI-METALLIC IMAGE (Chapter 2)	FOUR BEASTS (Chapter 7)	NATIONS DESIGNATED
Head of Gold	Lion	Babylon
Arms of Silver	Bear	Media-Persia
Sides of Brass	Panther (leopard)	Graeco-Macedonia
Legs of Iron; Feet of Iron and Clay	Composite beast	Rome

5. The four winds broke violently “*upon the great sea,*” that is, upon the Mediterranean Sea, for that is the name given to it. The “*winds*” speak of agitation, propaganda, public opinion, and disturbance. The “*sea*” suggests the masses, the mob, and the peoples of the Gentiles (see Matt. 13:47; Rev. 13:1; Isa. 57:20). In Revelation we read: “*One of the seven angels who had poured out the seven bowls came over and spoke to me. “Come with me,” he said, “and I will show you the judgment that is going to come on the great prostitute, who sits on many waters.... And the angel said to me, “The waters where the prostitute is sitting represent masses of people of every nation and language.”*” (Rev. 17:1, 15). The sea, therefore, is the conglomerate population of Gentiles throughout the world.
6. The wind usually blows from only one direction at a time, but here it is a tornado of great violence with the wind coming from all directions. It refers not only to the disturbed conditions out of which these four nations arose, but particularly to the last stage of the fourth kingdom (vv. 11, 12, 17). We are very close to the time when the Roman Empire will be brought back together again. It still exists—it lives in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, and all the nations in Europe which were in the Roman Empire. All it needs is someone who will put it back together.
7. All these nations are to be brought back together with their different ideologies, forms of government, and viewpoints. We are seeing this happen now, as Europe is uniting with its monetary system. The governments will not be far behind. With the formation of the United Nations, we are getting set for the formation of the last world ruler to come.
8. It is the “*little horn*” of this chapter who will succeed in capturing the minds of the masses. He is described as having “*a mouth speaking great things*” (v. 8). He is going to sell himself to the world when he appears. And the world will be in a greater state of confusion than we are seeing today with the sudden disappearance of millions of people and all the children, when Christ comes for His Church. The Antichrist will be a man under Satan’s control at this time of the Tribulation. But at about mid Tribulation, he will be Satan incarnate.
9. This is a frightful picture and a disturbed scene that Daniel is presenting to us. What we are seeing happen today are the birth pains of the beginning of the fulfillment of prophecy.

10. Verse 9 shifts the scene to heaven from earth, and the throne of God is revealed. This is the same scene described in chapters 4 and 5 of the Book of Revelation. It is the preparation for the judgment of the Great Tribulation and the second coming of Christ to the earth.
11. Verse 10 does not describe the Great White Throne of judgment which occurs after the Millennium, but is the setting for the judgment of the Great Tribulation and the return of Christ to establish His millennial Kingdom here upon earth (see Rev. 5:11–14).
12. On earth “*the little horn*” is blaspheming and boasting the loudest (see Rev. 13:5–6). However, his judgment is fixed and his kingdom is doomed. The emphasis with this kingdom, represented by the last beast, is not on its beginning but on its end. The appearance of “*the little horn*” is right before the Second coming of Christ. This period is the Great Tribulation.
13. Jesus has been given the authority to take the kingdoms of this world from the Gentiles and establish His Kingdom. Therefore what we have here is a very clear-cut statement that the Lord Jesus is that “*stone cut out without hands*” which breaks the image—He will establish His Kingdom here upon earth. Jesus Christ is going to rule here on earth. At the Second Coming, he will set up the Millennial rule. He will put out all rebellion, and those who are obedient will enter into the Kingdom and rule with him.

B. The vision interpreted for Daniel. 7:15–28

1. ¹⁵ *I, Daniel, was troubled by all I had seen, and my visions terrified me.* ¹⁶ *So I approached one of those standing beside the throne and asked him what it all meant. He explained it to me like this:* ¹⁷ *“These four huge beasts represent four kingdoms that will arise from the earth.* ¹⁸ *But in the end, the holy people of the Most High will be given the kingdom, and they will rule forever and ever.”*
¹⁹ *Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, the one so different from the others and so terrifying. It devoured and crushed its victims with iron teeth and bronze claws, and it trampled what was left beneath its feet.* ²⁰ *I also asked about the ten horns on the fourth beast’s head and the little horn that came up afterward and destroyed three of the other horns. This was the horn that seemed greater than the others and had human eyes and a mouth that was boasting arrogantly.* ²¹ *As I watched, this horn was waging war against the holy people and was defeating them,* ²² *until the Ancient One*

came and judged in favor of the holy people of the Most High. Then the time arrived for the holy people to take over the kingdom.

²³ *Then he said to me, "This fourth beast is the fourth world power that will rule the earth. It will be different from all the others. It will devour the whole world, trampling everything in its path." ²⁴ Its ten horns are ten kings that will rule that empire. Then another king will arise, different from the other ten, who will subdue three of them. ²⁵ He will defy the Most High and wear down the holy people of the Most High. He will try to change their sacred festivals and laws, and they will be placed under his control for a time, times, and half a time.*

²⁶ *"But then the court will pass judgment, and all his power will be taken away and completely destroyed. ²⁷ Then the sovereignty, power, and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be given to the holy people of the Most High. They will rule forever, and all rulers will serve and obey them."*

²⁸ *That was the end of the vision. I, Daniel, was terrified by my thoughts and my face was pale with fear, but I kept these things to myself.*

2. As the dream of the image troubled Nebuchadnezzar, this vision disturbs Daniel. He approaches one of the heavenly creatures for an explanation.
3. These four beasts are not only kingdoms but kings. Nebuchadnezzar, together with his kingdom of Babylon, was represented by the head of gold and the two-winged lion. Alexander the Great, synonymous with the Graeco-Macedonian Empire, is depicted by both the sides of brass and a panther. These wild beasts are representative of the character of both the king and the kingdom.
4. The angel is very clear that as awful as these kingdoms will be, that God's people will have the final rule. When Christ comes to defeat the final ruler, we will be there with Him. As a believer at this time in history, we have the potential of not dying but of being raptured when Christ removes His Church before He judges the world for rejecting Him. Revelation 20:4 describes the rule of the saints, *"Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus, for proclaiming the word of God. And I saw the souls of those who had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their forehead or their hands. They came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years."*

5. The emphasis is placed on the fourth beast. His power and fierceness is described. The ferocity of the beast, with its iron teeth and brass nails, is noted. The ten horns that grow out of the beast, note a later development, not a separate kingdom. The horns do not grow out of a dead beast. Rome *lives* in the fragmentation of the empire in the many existing nations of Europe and North Africa. At the time of the end, three of the horns will fall before "*the little horn*" who is dominant in personality, ability, propaganda, and public appeal. "*The little horn*" is Antichrist.
6. The Roman Empire will be put together again, and the Antichrist will be the one to do it. He will come to world power and will become the world ruler. This will be the first of the seal judgments described in Revelation 6:2, "*I looked up and saw a white horse. Its rider carried a bow, and a crown was placed on his head. He rode out to win many battles and gain the victory.*" We are told he will blaspheme the God of heaven: "*And he spoke terrible words of blasphemy against God, slandering his name and all who live in heaven, who are his temple.*" (Rev. 13:6).
7. "*The Ancient of days*" is Christ; He is the only One who is going to be able to defeat Antichrist.
8. There are ten horns that come out of this fourth beast, and they denote the final form of the fourth kingdom. Each of these kings represents a kingdom. An eleventh king, "*the little horn,*" will arise. He is going to be diverse from the others and will move to world power by subduing three of the kings. He will actually become the dictator of the entire world. This is the picture that is given to us in Revelation 13:7, "*And the beast was allowed to wage war against God's holy people and to overcome them. And he was given authority to rule over every tribe and people and language and nation.*" He is the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, and he is going to rule the world during the Great Tribulation period, which is a period of seven years.
9. The judgment in verse 26 describes the Great Tribulation and is consummated by the return of Christ to the earth to establish His Kingdom.
10. After the judgment of God against the world and the Jewish people who have rejected the Messiah, Christ will set up His earthly rule and we will be there with Him.

11. Daniel did not divulge to his contemporaries the visions and their contents since they belonged to the end time. They were disturbing to Daniel, and made such an impression on him that they altered his entire outlook. This was something brand new to him. The study of prophecy today is not for vain knowledge. But rather, the careful, prayerful study of prophetic Scripture should have a transforming effect upon the life of a believer.

Chapter Eight of Daniel

I. Daniel's Vision of the Ram and the He Goat. 8:1–27

A. The vision received by Daniel. 8:1–14

1. *During the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, saw another vision, following the one that had already appeared to me.² This time I was at the fortress of Susa, in the province of Elam, standing beside the Ulai River.*

³ As I looked up, I saw in front of me a ram with two long horns standing beside the river. One of the horns was longer than the other, even though it had begun to grow later than the shorter one.⁴ The ram butted everything out of its way to the west, to the north, and to the south, and no one could stand against it or help its victims. It did as it pleased and became very great.

⁵ While I was watching, suddenly a male goat appeared from the west, crossing the land so swiftly that it didn't even touch the ground. This goat, which had one very large horn between its eyes,⁶ headed toward the two-horned ram that I had seen standing beside the river.⁷ The goat charged furiously at the ram and struck it, breaking off both its horns. Now the ram was helpless, and the goat knocked it down and trampled it. There was no one who could rescue the ram from the goat's power.

⁸ The goat became very powerful. But at the height of its power, its large horn was broken off. In the large horn's place grew four prominent horns pointing in the four directions of the earth.⁹ From one of the prominent horns came a small horn whose power grew very great. It extended toward the south and the east and toward the glorious land of Israel.¹⁰ His power reached to the heavens where it attacked the heavenly armies, throwing some of the heavenly beings and stars to the ground and trampling them.¹¹ He even challenged the Commander of heaven's armies by canceling the daily sacrifices offered to him and by destroying his Temple.¹² But the army of heaven was restrained from destroying him for this sin. As a result, sacrilege was committed against the Temple ceremonies, and truth was overthrown. The horn succeeded in everything it did.¹³ Then I heard two of the holy ones talking to each other. One of them said, "How long will the events of this vision last? How long will the rebellion that causes desecration stop the daily sacrifices? How long will the Temple and heaven's armies be trampled on?"¹⁴ The other replied, "It will take twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings; then the Temple will be restored."

2. This is the third year of the reign of Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon. The vision given in chapter 7 was in the first year of his reign; therefore, both of these visions took place toward the end of the Babylonian empire.
3. In the vision Daniel finds himself at Shushan, which is Susa, the capital of Medo-Persia, the second world empire. The reason for the setting of the vision being at Susa rather than at Babylon is that this vision concerns the second and third world empires. The events foretold in this vision were all fulfilled within two hundred years. Such fulfillment is so remarkable that the liberal critic insists upon a late dating of the Book of Daniel. They maintain that Daniel was written *after* these events had transpired and so is merely a historical record. And again the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 prove the Book of Daniel was written at the time that Daniel lived.
4. A ram which had two horns will be identified later as Medo-Persia (see v. 20). This ram, then, with its two horns and one horn more prominent than the other, is the Medo-Persian Empire with the Persians being the greater.
5. Persia was in the East and made no further advance into the Far East. If they had gone farther in that direction, they would have stepped into the Orient, into India and China. However, they were projecting their empire in all other directions. This is the empire which was represented by the bear in chapter 7.
6. As Daniel was marveling at the power and ability of the ram, from the West came a goat with great movement and a dominant horn. The goat represents Greece (see v. 21), and the horn typifies Alexander the Great. Under Xerxes, Persia intended to move west, but from the West came this goat which was moving so fast it "*didn't touch the ground*"—that corresponds to the four wings of the panther and denotes the speed with which Alexander moved his army.
7. Xerxes was the last great ruler of Persia, and he made an attempt against Europe, and against Greece. He moved with an army of 300,000 men and their families. The Greeks were smart; they didn't go out to meet him. Instead, they waited until he got to Thermopylae, which was a narrow pass into which he could not fit a big army. Since one Greek soldier was equal to at least ten of the Medo-Persians, who were not a trained and disciplined army as the Greeks were, the Greeks gained the victory at Thermopylae. They decimated that tremendous Persian army as it attempted to advance through the pass a few soldiers at a time. And then at Salamis, Xerxes' fleet of three hundred vessels was destroyed by a storm.

When word was brought to him that his fleet had been destroyed, he went down to the sea, took off his belt, and beat the waves with it!

8. Now there rises in the West this tremendous general, a young man, Alexander the Great. He was only thirty-two years old when he died. He was a military genius, one of the greatest. He could move a striking force by land quicker than any man ever had. He is the goat from the West.
9. “*When he was strong, the great horn was broken.*” We are told that when he came to power, the whole world was under the heel of Alexander the Great. Tradition says that he sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer—he had conquered the then-known world. However, in the midst of his vast projects, he was seized by a fever after a nightlong drinking bout, and he died in Babylon in the year 323 B.C. at the age of thirty-two. “*When he was strong, the great horn was broken.*”
10. All three of these empires—the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, and the Graeco-Macedonian—went down in a drunken orgy. And the Romans were not far behind them as far as living for the flesh.
11. When Alexander died, his empire was divided among four men (which correspond to the four heads of the panther in ch. 7). These were the four generals who divided the empire: Cassander, who was married to Alexander’s sister and took the European section (Macedonia and Greece); Lysimachus who took the great part of Asia Minor, which is modern Turkey; Seleucus who took Asia, all the eastern part of the empire, except Egypt; and Ptolemy who took Egypt and North Africa.
12. The “*little horn*” of this chapter is not the same as described in the previous chapter. There the little horn arises out of the fourth kingdom; here the little horn comes out of the third kingdom. This little horn is historical, while the little horn of chapter 7 is yet to be revealed in the future. The little horn being considered here came out of Syria from the Seleucid dynasty. He was Antiochus IV, or Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus the Great. He is sometimes called Epiphanes, “the madman”—he was another demented ruler.
13. Antiochus came to the throne in 175 B.C. and he made an attack on Jerusalem. It was against him that the Maccabees were raised up in Judah. Anti-Semitic to the core, he tried to exterminate the Jews. He placed an image of Jupiter in the Holy Place in the temple in Jerusalem. This was the first “*abomination of desolation.*” He rode a pig into the Temple of God.

14. The vision then turned to hear a question—**How long** should this sanctuary desolation continue with the interruption of the daily sacrifice? The answer was for 2300 days, or nearly six and one half years. Then temple will be restored. This clearly refers to the actual Jewish Temple cleansing that took place in 165 B.C. or 164 B.C. by the Maccabees. This occurred on the twenty-fifth day of Chislev, or the Jewish December. One day’s supply of oil miraculously kept the golden lampstand burning for eight days. That cleansing has been celebrated ever after by the Jews as the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22), also called Hanukkah today. The books of I and II Maccabees in the Apocrypha contain a detailed account of all these transactions.

B. The vision interpreted to Daniel by Gabriel. 8:15–27

1. ¹⁵ *As I, Daniel, was trying to understand the meaning of this vision, someone who looked like a man suddenly stood in front of me.* ¹⁶ *And I heard a human voice calling out from the Ulai River, “Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of his vision.”*

¹⁷ *As Gabriel approached the place where I was standing, I became so terrified that I fell to the ground. “Son of man,” he said, “you must understand that the events you have seen in your vision relate to the time of the end.”*

¹⁸ *While he was speaking, I fainted and lay there with my face to the ground. But Gabriel roused me with a touch and helped me to my feet.* ¹⁹ *Then he said, “I am here to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath. What you have seen pertains to the very end of time.”* ²⁰ *The two-horned ram represents the kings of Media and Persia.* ²¹ *The shaggy male goat represents the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes represents the first king of the Greek Empire.* ²² *The four prominent horns that replaced the one large horn show that the Greek Empire will break into four sections with four kings, none of them as great as the first.*

²³ *“At the end of their rule, when their sin is at its height, a fierce king, a master of intrigue, will rise to power.* ²⁴ *He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause a shocking amount of destruction and succeed in everything he does. He will destroy powerful leaders and devastate the holy people.* ²⁵ *He will be a master of deception, defeating many by catching them off guard. Without warning he will destroy them. He will even take on the Prince of princes in battle, but he will be broken, though not by human power.*

²⁶ *“This vision about the twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings is true. But none of these things will happen for a long time, so do not tell anyone about them yet.”*

²⁷ *Then I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for several days. Afterward I got up and performed my duties for the king, but I was greatly troubled by the vision and could not understand it.*

2. Daniel was puzzled by the vision, and he desired to learn the meaning of it. There appeared to him the angel Gabriel. This is the first time Gabriel is introduced to us in the Bible.
3. Gabriel will make it clear that Antiochus Epiphanes is but a picture in miniature of the coming Antichrist. *“For at the time of the end will be the vision.”* *“The time of the end”* locates the complete fulfillment of this prophecy in the period which our Lord Jesus called the Great Tribulation. The man referred to is the Antichrist, also called the Man of Sin and the little horn of chapter 7. This prophecy goes beyond the immediate future and is projected into the distant future. Antiochus is merely a figure of the other *“little horn”* who will come at the end of the *“times of the Gentiles.”* Many times in prophecy, the prophet is given a vision that covers the immediate future but also gives a picture of the future yet to come. This is true when Christ gave to John a message to the churches. These were actual churches that John knew about but also was a prophetic picture of the history of the Church. We know this because we can look back on the message and how it correlates to what actually happened in Church history.
4. Gabriel moves from the local fulfillment in Antiochus to the time of the end. The ram is clearly identified for us; we do not have to speculate. The ram definitely represents the kings of Media and Persia.
5. So the *“shaggy goat”* is likewise labeled the king of Greece, and the *“great horn”* is the first king, Alexander the Great.
6. None of the four kings would have the power that Alexander the Great had. The *“little horn”* is Antiochus Epiphanes of the line of the Seleucidae that took Syria. The only adequate explanation of verse 23 and of the facts of history is that this man was demon possessed. In this respect he is also a picture of the coming Antichrist, who will be demon possessed and then will be Satan incarnate.
7. *“The holy people”* refers to Israel. The slaughter of these people by Antiochus Epiphanes seems almost unbelievable. He was as bad as Hitler. Antiochus represented the Antichrist yet to come. Revelation 13:7, *“And the beast was allowed to wage war against God’s holy people and to overcome them.”* Antichrist will put many Jews and Christians to death during the Tribulation.

8. Daniel was told that the vision would be for the distant future. The physical and psychological effect of this vision on Daniel was devastating. At this point God was beginning to mesh the “*times of the Gentiles*” into the history of the nation Israel. How can God mesh His program with Israel into His program for the Gentiles in the world? The answer is simple, God is calling out a people to His name, both Jews and Gentiles and we are called “the Church.” The promises made to God’s people of Israel are still true today, even though they have rejected the Messiah He sent. Those that accept Christ are a part of the Church and will be removed before God judges the world for rejecting Christ.

Chapter Nine of Daniel

I. Daniel's Supplication and the Seventy Weeks Prophecy. 9:1–27

A. Daniel repents for himself and his people. 9:1–19

1. *It was the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, the son of Ahasuerus, who became king of the Babylonians. ² During the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, was studying the writings of the prophets. I learned from the word of the LORD, as recorded by Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years. ³ So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and fasting. I wore rough sackcloth and sprinkled myself with ashes. ⁴ I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: “O Lord, you are a great and awesome God! You always fulfill your promises of unfailing love to those who love you and keep your commands. ⁵ But we have sinned and done wrong. We have rebelled against you and scorned your commands and regulations. ⁶ We have refused to listen to your servants the prophets, who spoke your messages to our kings and princes and ancestors and to all the people of the land. ⁷ “Lord, you are in the right; but our faces are covered with shame, just as you see us now. This is true of us all, including the people of Judah and Jerusalem and all Israel, scattered near and far, wherever you have driven us because of our disloyalty to you. ⁸ O LORD, we and our kings, princes, and ancestors are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. ⁹ But the Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him. ¹⁰ We have not obeyed the LORD our God, for we have not followed the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets. ¹¹ All Israel has disobeyed your law and turned away, refusing to listen to your voice. “So now the solemn curses and judgments written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out against us because of our sin. ¹² You have done exactly what you warned you would do against us and our rulers. Never in all history has there been a disaster like the one that happened in Jerusalem. ¹³ Every curse written against us in the law of Moses has come true. All the troubles he predicted have taken place. But we have refused to seek mercy from the LORD our God by turning from our sins and recognizing his truth. ¹⁴ The LORD has brought against us the disaster he prepared, for we did not obey him, and the LORD our God is just in everything he does. ¹⁵ “O Lord our God, you brought lasting honor to your name by rescuing your people from Egypt in a great display of power. But we have sinned and are full of wickedness. ¹⁶ In view of all your faithful mercies, Lord, please turn your furious anger away from your city of Jerusalem, your holy mountain. All the neighboring nations mock Jerusalem and your people because of our sins*

and the sins of our ancestors.

¹⁷ *“O our God, hear your servant’s prayer! Listen as I plead. For your own sake, Lord, smile again on your desolate sanctuary.*

¹⁸ *“O my God, listen to me and hear my request. Open your eyes and see our wretchedness. See how your city lies in ruins—for everyone knows that it is yours. We do not ask because we deserve help, but because you are so merciful.*

¹⁹ *“O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, listen and act! For your own sake, O my God, do not delay, for your people and your city bear your name.”*

2. This is in the first year of the reign of Darius. Daniel has now seen a new great world empire come into position, and he is wondering about the future and especially the future of his own people. So Daniel turns to a study of the Word of God. He reads the book of the prophet Jeremiah who said that Israel would be in captivity for seventy years. The date is about 537 B.C. in this chapter. Daniel is between eighty-five and ninety years of age. He had been captured back in 605 B.C. when he was about seventeen. That means that the seventy-year period is coming to a close. It is about the time that his people will be given the opportunity to return to their own land.
3. Daniel was concerned about his people. We should notice that the determining factor which brought Daniel to this prayer was his study of the Word of God. The Word reveals the will of God. A study of God’s Word, followed by prayer, is the formula for determining God’s will. These are the promises which Daniel read: *“This entire land will become a desolate wasteland. Israel and her neighboring lands will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years.”* (Jer. 25:11). *“The truth is that you will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again.”* (Jer. 29:10). Keep in mind that Daniel had been studying Jeremiah’s prophecy about these seventy years. When Gabriel used the expression, *“seventy weeks”* (v. 24), he was extending the time of the seventy years. The seventy weeks will cover the entire time of the nation Israel in this time of testing before the Kingdom is established on earth.
4. Daniel demonstrated a purposeful persistence in prayer. Daniel is down on his face before God. He recognizes the attributes of God. First we see that he rests upon his personal relationship to God. He calls Him, *“My God,”* appealing to God in a very personal way. Before he makes his confession, he dwells on the greatness of God. Daniel acknowledges that God keeps the covenant and mercy to them that love Him. He not only makes promises, but He keeps them. He is also a God of mercy. It was by His mercy that the nation Israel had been preserved. It is by His mercy that you and I have been brought to

this present moment. It is by His mercy that He saves us. *“It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not”* (Lam. 3:22). God is gracious, but God also expects us to mean business, and God expects to be obeyed.

5. Daniel’s confession of sin included himself. *“We have sinned.”* Daniel identifies himself with his people back there in the land of Israel when they rebelled against God, which resulted in their captivity. He is specific in his confession. He labels each sin: iniquity, wickedness, rebellion, disobedience, and refusal to hear God’s prophets. He writes them all down. He doesn’t leave any out.
6. Up to this point have you noticed how Daniel contrasted God’s goodness with Israel’s sin? He contrasted His righteousness with their *“confusion of face”* which was their shame. They were scattered because of their trespass against God. They *deserved* the punishment they had received. God was righteous in sending them into captivity. God was right; they were wrong. Daniel’s attitude was not one of poor me but of we have sinned and deserve what has happened.
7. Daniel recalls how God led Israel out of Egypt. God did it because of *His* righteousness, not because of theirs. He found the explanation for their deliverance in Himself, not in the people. The only thing that made an appeal to God from the people was their groaning. In other words, God saw their misery, and He remembered His mercy. Now Daniel asks God to repeat Himself by delivering them again because of His righteousness. God is righteous when He extends His mercy to us
8. Daniel makes a climactic plea, he asks God to hear and answer because of who God is and what He has promised. No good thing rests upon Israel. Daniel doesn’t plead because he is Daniel. Rather, he associates himself with his people and says, *“We have sinned,”* including himself. God’s name is at stake, and Daniel is deeply concerned about the name of God and the glory of God. This is the basis for his plea.

B. God’s sending of Gabriel to answer Daniel’s prayer. 9:20–23

1. ²⁰ *I went on praying and confessing my sin and the sins of my people, pleading with the LORD my God for Jerusalem, his holy mountain.* ²¹ *As I was praying, Gabriel, whom I had seen in the earlier vision, came swiftly to me at the time of the evening sacrifice.* ²² *He explained to me, “Daniel, I have come here to give you insight and understanding.* ²³ *The moment you began praying, a*

command was given. I am here to tell you what it was, for God loves you very much. Now listen, so you can understand the meaning of your vision.

2. Now we shall see that while Daniel was praying, an answer was on its way. Gabriel was an angel and apparently appeared in human form. The time of his appearance was at the hour of the evening sacrifice at Jerusalem, which would be approximately three o'clock in the afternoon.
3. Notice that Daniel gets an immediate answer to his prayer and that Daniel was "*loved very much*" in heaven.

C. The disclosure of the Seventy Weeks prophecy. 9:24–27

1. ²⁴ *"A period of seventy sets of seven has been decreed for your people and your holy city to put down rebellion, to bring an end to sin, to atone for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to confirm the prophetic vision, and to anoint the Most Holy Place.* ²⁵ *Now listen and understand! Seven sets of seven plus sixty-two sets of seven will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and strong defenses, despite the perilous times.* ²⁶ *"After this period of sixty-two sets of seven, the Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished nothing, and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple. The end will come with a flood, and war and its miseries are decreed from that time to the very end.* ²⁷ *He will make a treaty with the people for a period of one set of seven, but after half this time, he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings. Then as a climax to all his terrible deeds, he will set up a sacrilegious object that causes desecration, until the end that has been decreed is poured out on this defiler."*
2. Here is the prophecy delivered by Gabriel which makes this chapter of such great importance in the study of eschatology. (Chart)
3. "*Seventy weeks*" does not mean weeks of seven days. The Hebrew word for "seven" is *shabua*, meaning "a unit of measure." It would be comparable to our word *dozen*. When it stands alone, it could be a dozen of anything—a dozen eggs, a dozen bananas. So here, seventy weeks means seventy sevens. It is to be explained in units of years because Daniel has been reading in Jeremiah about *years*, seventy years. Jeremiah had been preaching and writing that the captivity would be for seventy years. The seventy years of captivity were the specific penalty for violating seventy sabbatic years. That would be seventy sevens, a total of 490 years. In those prior 490 years, Israel had violated exactly seventy sabbatic years; so they would go into captivity for

seventy years. “So the message of the LORD spoken through Jeremiah was fulfilled. The land finally enjoyed its Sabbath rest, lying desolate for seventy years, just as the prophet had said.” (2 Chron. 36:21).

1 week = 7 years

70 weeks = 490 years

70 weeks divided into 3 periods:

7 weeks—62 weeks—1 week

4. There are 3 main divisions of the 70 weeks.

The 1st 7 sevens or 49 years was for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.

Then 62 sevens or 434 years was from the completion of the temple to when Messiah is cut off or crucified.

The last seven or 7 years is yet to come. This is the Tribulation period. This will begin when Israel signs a covenant with Antichrist and is sacrificing in the temple again and after the Rapture happens. The Tribulation or Daniel’s seventieth week will end with the Second Coming of Christ.

The 70 weeks are interrupted by the Church Age. This correlates with the Time of the Gentiles, (Luke 21:24, “*They will be brutally killed by the sword or sent away as captives to all the nations of the world. And Jerusalem will be conquered and trampled down by the Gentiles until the age of the Gentiles comes to an end.*”). This period of time is undetermined and is only described as the Age of Grace or the time of the Church. The time of the Gentiles began when Israel was no longer under sovereign rule. This happened in 605 B.C. The period of time beginning when the Messiah is cut off until the Rapture is the Age of Grace. This is the time when anyone can come freely to Christ without hindrance. There will never be an easier time to come to know Christ as Savior. This is the current time we live in and is rapidly coming to an end.

5. The Seventy Weeks concern “*your people,*” meaning the people of Daniel. That would be Israel. And they concern “*the holy city,*” which can be none other than Jerusalem. Sixty-nine of those “weeks” have already passed, and one “week” is yet to be fulfilled. But there is an interruption in the Seventy Weeks. This is the Age of Grace, the Church Age that we are currently in. God has not completed His promises to the Jewish nation. Many believe that God is done with Israel just because they have rejected the Messiah He sent.

They think the promises have been transferred to the Church. From what we are told in this chapter of Daniel, we see that there are 6 reasons for the seventy weeks to happen.

- a. *“To finish the transgression.”* This refers to the transgression of Israel. The cross provided the redemption for sin—for the sin of the nation, but not all accepted it. Today the Word has gone out to the ends of the earth that there is a redemption for mankind. But in that last *“week”* we are told that God says, *“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications ...”* (Zech. 12:10). And in Zechariah 13:1: *“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”* That has not been opened yet. All you have to do is to look at the land of Israel and you will know this has not been fulfilled.
 - b. *“To make an end of sins.”* The national sins of Israel will come to an end at the second coming of Christ. They are just like any other people or any other nation. They are sinners as individuals and as a nation. They have made many mistakes as a nation (so have we), but God will make an end to that.
 - c. *“To make reconciliation for iniquity.”* During this period of Seventy Weeks, God has provided a redemption through the death and resurrection of Christ. This, of course, is for Jew and Gentile alike.
 - d. *“And to bring in everlasting righteousness”* refers to the return of Christ at the end of the 490 years to establish the Kingdom.
 - e. *“To seal up the vision and prophecy”* means that all will be fulfilled, which will vindicate this prophecy as well as all other prophecies in Scripture.
 - f. *“To anoint the most Holy”* has reference to the anointing of the holy of holies in the millennial temple about which Ezekiel spoke (Ezek. 41–46).
6. The decree of Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign (Neh. 2:1–8) meets the requirements of verse 25. The commandment to rebuild the city of Jerusalem was issued in the month Nisan 445 B.C. That, then, will be our starting point of the Seventy Weeks.

7. The first seven weeks of forty-nine years bring us to 397 B.C. and to Malachi and the end of the Old Testament.
8. Sixty-two weeks, or 434 years, bring us to the Messiah. From the first of the month Nisan to the tenth of Nisan (April 6) B.C. 32, is 173,880 days. Dividing them according to the Jewish year of 360 days, He arrives at 483 years (69 sevens). On this day Jesus rode into Jerusalem, offering Himself for the first time, publicly and officially, as the Messiah.
9. After the 69 weeks, or 483 years, there is a time break. During this time, the Messiah is cut off or crucified. He is not recognized as the Messiah by the Jewish people. And the temple is destroyed as predicted by Christ in 70 AD.
10. The final “week” (the seventieth), a period of seven years, is projected into the future and does not follow chronologically the other sixty-nine. The time gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks is the Age of Grace—unknown to the prophets (Eph. 3:1–12; 1 Pet. 1:10–12). The Seventieth Week is eschatological; it is the final period and is yet unfulfilled.
11. The ruler in verse 26 is talking about Titus, the Roman General who came in and destroyed the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D. The end will come like a flood, meaning it will penetrate everything and go everywhere. And there will be miseries until the very end. So there will be no world peace until Christ is reigning here on earth.
12. Verse 27 then switches to the Antichrist, “*he will make a treaty with Israel, the people, for one set of sevens or seven years*”. How can Antichrist make a treaty with the Jewish people if they are not a nation? After 70 A. D., they were not a nation. It was difficult for Christians to understand how all of this could take place until they became a nation again and this was accomplished in 1948. This is how we know we are at the end of the Age of Grace and will soon enter into the seventh week.
13. “*But after ½ this time,*” means in the middle of the Tribulation period. This is the time that Antichrist will put an end to sacrifices. At this time in history, there have not been sacrifices in the Temple of God since A.D. 70, so how can Antichrist put an end to something that is not happening? In order for this to take place, the Temple will have to be rebuilt and the Jewish people will have to sacrificing again. All of this is yet to happen. After Antichrist signs the treaty with Israel, they will rebuild the Temple and will begin sacrificing again. This will all take place in the first ½ of the Tribulation period.

14. Mid Tribulation, Antichrist will suffer a fatal blow and come back to life. (Rev. 13:3, “*I saw that one of the heads of the beast seemed wounded beyond recovery—but the fatal wound was healed!*”) He will now be Satan incarnate. The False Prophet will build a statue of him, this is the sacrilegious object. The desecration is Antichrist going into the Temple and setting himself up as god to be worshipped. Christ spoke of this in Matthew 24: 15, “*The time will come when you will see what Daniel the prophet spoke about: the sacrilegious object that causes desecration standing in the holy place*”—reader, pay attention!

15. “*Until the end that has been decreed*”, speaks about the fact that Antichrist’s time is limited. God will only allow him so much time and it is limited. From Daniel’s vision, we know it is only for a period of 7 years.

Chapter Ten of Daniel

I. Daniel's Vision of the Heavenly Messenger. 10:1–21

A. Daniel's Vision of the Heavenly Messenger. 10:1–11

1. *In the third year of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) had another vision. It concerned events certain to happen in the future—times of war and great hardship—and Daniel understood what the vision meant.*

² When this vision came to me, I, Daniel, had been in mourning for three weeks. ³ All that time I had eaten no rich food or meat, had drunk no wine, and had used no fragrant oils. ⁴ On April 23, as I was standing beside the great Tigris River, ⁵ I looked up and saw a man dressed in linen clothing, with a belt of pure gold around his waist. ⁶ His body looked like a dazzling gem. From his face came flashes like lightning, and his eyes were like flaming torches. His arms and feet shone like polished bronze, and his voice was like the roaring of a vast multitude of people.

⁷ I, Daniel, am the only one who saw this vision. The men with me saw nothing, but they were suddenly terrified and ran away to hide. ⁸ So I was left there all alone to watch this amazing vision. My strength left me, my face grew deathly pale, and I felt very weak. ⁹ When I heard him speak, I fainted and lay there with my face to the ground.

¹⁰ Just then a hand touched me and lifted me, still trembling, to my hands and knees. ¹¹ And the man said to me, “O Daniel, greatly loved of God, listen carefully to what I have to say to you. Stand up, for I have been sent to you.” When he said this to me, I stood up, still trembling with fear.

2. The “third year of Cyrus” was 534 B.C., which was about four years after the vision of the Seventy Weeks. Daniel was an old man by this time and probably retired from public office.
3. Daniel didn't take a bath for three weeks! The cause of Daniel's mourning is not told us, but we can speculate. Remember that it was the third year of Cyrus' reign, and in his first year he had made the decree which permitted Israel to return to her land (see Ezra 1:1–4). Two full years had passed and only a paltry few had returned to the land of Israel under Zerubbabel. This is before the group under Ezra and the group under Nehemiah had returned. This was a rigorous time for Daniel. It brought grief to the heart of this aged prophet of God, now past ninety, to see that his people did not want to return to their homeland. Probably retired now from active participation in office,

evidently having served through the first year of Cyrus, he gave himself entirely to the service of God. He fasted for three weeks because he did not get an immediate answer to his prayer.

4. Daniel gives us the exact place and date when he received his vision and revelation. He was by the great river Hiddekel, which is the Tigris River. The time was the twenty-fourth of Nisan, April 24. Daniel is dealing with exact dates. This makes it difficult for the critics to wrestle with, because the one who wrote this was dealing with specific dates and he was not giving a *late* date for the Book of Daniel!
5. No longer does Daniel see an image or visions of beasts or weeks. He sees a certain man. He sees Christ.
6. Although others were with Daniel, he alone saw the vision. Daniel is alone with God, and he has this vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, “*there remained no strength in me*”—it had a tremendous effect upon him. Daniel apparently lapsed into unconsciousness. The Lord Jesus left him, and when Daniel regained consciousness, he found that an angel had come and ministered to him.

B. Daniel’s Vision of the Heavenly Messenger. 10:11–21

1. ¹² *Then he said, “Don’t be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. ¹³ But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I am here to explain what will happen to your people in the future, for this vision concerns a time yet to come.”*
¹⁵ *While he was speaking to me, I looked down at the ground, unable to say a word. ¹⁶ Then the one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing in front of me, “I am terrified by the vision I have seen, my lord, and I am very weak. ¹⁷ How can someone like me, your servant, talk to you, my lord? My strength is gone, and I can hardly breathe.”*
¹⁸ *Then the one who looked like a man touched me again, and I felt my strength returning. ¹⁹ “Don’t be afraid,” he said, “for you are deeply loved by God. Be at peace; take heart and be strong!”*

As he spoke these words, I suddenly felt stronger and said to him, “Now you may speak, my lord, for you have strengthened me.”

²⁰ He replied, “Do you know why I have come? Soon I must return to fight against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia, and then against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Greece. ²¹ But before I do that, I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (There is no one to help me against these spirit princes except Michael, your spirit prince.

I have been standing beside Michael as his support and defense since the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede.)

2. Here a veil is lifted momentarily, and it reveals a heavenly warfare going on. It reveals there is a great deal more about this universe in which we live than meets the eye. There is a great deal more to this world than what we see, feel, hear or know.
3. This reveals that in the world which is unseen by us there is a conflict going on, a conflict of the ages between good and evil, light and darkness, God and Satan. It reveals that there are satanic forces and heavenly forces.
4. *“Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven.”* The angel is saying that Daniel’s prayer was heard immediately and he was sent as a messenger with an answer. But on the way his pathway was blocked; he couldn’t get through to Daniel.
5. The angel said to Daniel, *“When you began to pray, God sent me to answer your prayer, but I couldn’t get through to you because on the way the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days.”* Who is he? No earthly or human prince could do such a thing. This evidently was an envoy of Satan, one of the demons. We know that God has His angels organized, and apparently Satan also has his demons organized like an army. There are the generals and the colonels, the lieutenants and second lieutenants, sergeants and corporals, and so on. Apparently this angel was outranked by the satanic angel who was the prince of the kingdom of Persia, and so he couldn’t get through and had to send back for reinforcements. In fact, Michael, the archangel, had to come to open up the way for him.
6. Why would the way be blocked? Daniel is going to be given information about the kingdom of Persia and about the kingdom of Greece—we will see that when we get to the next chapter. Satan didn’t want that kind of information to get out. It was secret information that he didn’t want released to humans. But God wanted the information to get through to Daniel.

7. Apparently there was a conflict going on involving the kings of Persia (remember that Daniel was in Persia), and there needed to be some heavenly forces to help. This was about the time that Daniel had the experience of being put into the den of lions.
8. This is the key which opens the door to the understanding of the remainder of the Book of Daniel. There are three features which characterize this closing vision.
 - a. The vision concerns “*your people*.” This is Daniel’s people, Israel.
 - b. It will be accomplished “*in the future*.” This places the final fulfillment in the period of the Seventieth Week, which is the time of the Great Tribulation period. The “*latter days*” places it at the end of that period.
 - c. “*For this vision concerns a time yet to come*.” This emphasizes the fact that a long period of time is involved—not only in fulfillment—but before the vision will be finalized. We will come to the two parts of the vision: the historical (it was prophetic when it was given, but now has been fulfilled) and the prophecy yet to be fulfilled.
9. This was having a tremendous effect upon Daniel physically. The angel tells Daniel that he must return to fight against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia, and then against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Greece. But before he leaves, he will reveal to Daniel what is written in the Book of Truth.
10. The angel reveals that the heavenly warfare was to be directed against Persia and then Greece. Each of these nations was to have power over God’s people. Both Persia and Greece were represented by evil “spirit princes,” or demons. But God is in control of the past, present, and future, and he has all events recorded in his “Book of Truth.”

Chapter Eleven of Daniel

I. The Prophecy of Israel's Future to the Maccabees and Beyond. 11:1–45

A. Syrian and Egyptian relations foretold down to 165 B.C. 11:1–20

1. *“Now then, I will reveal the truth to you. Three more Persian kings will reign, to be succeeded by a fourth, far richer than the others. Using his wealth for political advantage, he will stir up everyone to war against the kingdom of Greece.*

³ *“Then a mighty king will rise to power who will rule a vast kingdom and accomplish everything he sets out to do. ⁴ But at the height of his power, his kingdom will be broken apart and divided into four parts. It will not be ruled by the king's descendants, nor will the kingdom hold the authority it once had. For his empire will be uprooted and given to others.*

⁵ *“The king of the south will increase in power, but one of this king's own officials will become more powerful than he and will rule his kingdom with great strength.*

⁶ *“Some years later, an alliance will be formed between the king of the north and the king of the south. The daughter of the king of the south will be given in marriage to the king of the north to secure the alliance, but she will lose her influence over him, and so will her father. She will be given up along with her supporters. ⁷ But when one of her relatives becomes king of the south, he will raise an army and enter the fortress of the king of the north and defeat him. ⁸ When he returns again to Egypt, he will carry back their idols with him, along with priceless gold and silver dishes. For some years afterward he will leave the king of the north alone.*

⁹ *“Later the king of the north will invade the realm of the king of the south but will soon return to his own land. ¹⁰ However, the sons of the king of the north will assemble a mighty army that will advance like a flood and carry the battle as far as the enemy's fortress. ¹¹ Then the king of the south, in great anger, will rally against the vast forces assembled by the king of the north and will defeat them. ¹² After the enemy army is swept away, the king of the south will be filled with pride and will have many thousands of his enemies killed. But his success will be short lived. ¹³ “A few years later, the king of the north will return with a fully equipped army far greater than the one he lost. ¹⁴ At that time there will be a general uprising against the king of the south. Lawless ones among your own people will join them in order to fulfill the vision, but they will not succeed. ¹⁵ Then the king of the north will come and*

lay siege to a fortified city and capture it. The best troops of the south will not be able to stand in the face of the onslaught.

¹⁶ “The king of the north will march onward unopposed; none will be able to stop him. He will pause in the glorious land of Israel, intent on destroying it. ¹⁷ He will make plans to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will form an alliance with the king of the south. He will give him a daughter in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom from within, but his plan will fail.

¹⁸ “After this, he will turn his attention to the coastal cities and conquer many. But a commander from another land will put an end to his insolence and will cause him to retreat in shame. ¹⁹ He will take refuge in his own fortresses but will stumble and fall, and he will be seen no more.

²⁰ “His successor will be remembered as the king who sent a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor, but after a very brief reign, he will die, though neither in battle nor open conflict.

2. Chapters 10–12 all deal with the same vision, and therefore chapter 11 is a continuation of the previous chapter. It is a very important chapter because it fills in some of the details of the Seventy Weeks of chapter 9, which specifically concern Daniel’s people, Israel. It also fills in some of the details of the last three of the four nations symbolized in the multimetallic image of chapter 2 and in the beasts of chapter 7. The very importance of this chapter caused Satan to hinder the angel in coming to give Daniel the answer to his prayer, because this prophecy does concern two of the nations which were all-important in relation to Daniel’s people. The two nations were Persia and Greece.
3. There is a remarkable division in this chapter which separates history and prophecy—the historical from the eschatological section. Remember, it was all future when it was originally written, but part of it has been fulfilled. This prophecy is rather complicated and goes into prophecy a little deeper than the average person likes to go into it.
4. This prophecy bridges the gap from Media-Persia over to Greece, from Asia to Europe. It tells of the transition of world powers from one continent to another, from the East to the West. Remember that the prophecy concerns the people of Daniel. It was especially important to Israel because they would be caught in a vise between these different powers. It would be a period of great suffering for these people.

5. The speaker here is the angel, and this is a continuation from chapter 10. The angel may have been Gabriel; we are not told his name. Remember that it occurred during the reign of Darius when Daniel was thrown into the den of lions. Darius tried in vain to deliver Daniel, but he was trapped by his own decree.
6. The prophecy of this chapter is so detailed and so accurate that the liberal critic will not accept the fact that it was written before it happened. When the angel gave this information to Daniel, he knew that Daniel would not live to see it fulfilled. Obviously, it was recorded for the comfort and encouragement of the people of God who would live through the difficult days it describes. Also it was written for all generations as a testimony to the fact that God knows the end from the beginning.
7. The angel told him that there would be four notable kings of Persia to follow Cyrus. We think we can identify them today: (1) Cambyses, 529 B.C. (2) Pseudo-Smerdis, 522 B.C. (3) Darius Hystaspis, 521 B.C. (4) Xerxes who invaded Greece in 480 B.C. He was defeated, and never again did Medo-Persia make a bid for world dominion. Incidentally, It is believed that Xerxes is the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther. He was very rich, as the prophecy here said he would be.
8. “*A mighty king*” in verse 3 is Alexander the Great who came to power in 335 B.C. over the Graeco-Macedonian Empire. He put down Persia and assumed world dominion.
9. Alexander the Great was a world ruler and probably the greatest military strategist the world has ever seen, but he died an alcoholic in 323 B.C. leaving no heirs. Four of his generals divided the empire into four geographical areas, each ruled by one general. The division was roughly this: Cassander took Macedonia; Lysimachus took Asia Minor (modern Turkey); Seleucus Nicator took Syria and the remainder of the Middle East; and Ptolemy took Egypt. All four families warred among themselves. Eventually they all lost their kingdoms when the Romans marched east.
10. “*The king of the north*” refers to the line of the Seleucidae. This verse brings us to about 250 B.C. Although historians differ on some of the minor details, they have recorded some of the manipulations that went on in the courts of that day, which fulfill this prophecy very accurately. To form an alliance between these two warring families, Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt gave his

daughter Bernice in marriage to Antiochus Theos of Syria. Antiochus was already married to Laodice, whom he divorced. After two years Ptolemy Philadelphus died; so Antiochus Theos put away Berenice with her son and took back his first wife, Laodice. She, in turn, poisoned Antiochus Theos and ordered the death of Berenice and her son. Then Laodice put her own son, Seleucus Callinicus, on the throne. That was some juggling act, and it is interesting how this is covered in the prophecy given to Daniel.

- 11 Verse 6 is referring to Ptolemy Euergetes, brother of Berenice, who came with an army and captured Syria, and he seized the fort which was the port of Antioch in that day.
- 12 Verse 8 & 9 are backed by the historical fact that Ptolemy Euergetes took into Egypt as booty four thousand talents of gold, forty thousand talents of silver, and twenty-five hundred idols. Do you see how this scripture was literally fulfilled?
13. There was continual warfare between Egypt and Syria. Many in the nation of Israel were slain at this time. They incurred untold suffering from both the king of the north and the king of the south.
14. Verses 15 & 16 predict what history now records as the victory of Antiochus the Great over Egypt. It was a decisive victory, and it caused Israel to suffer immeasurably. You will find that Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled in a remarkable way. There is a period of 125 years that was fulfilled in detail.
15. Verse 17 brings us to about 198 or 195 B.C. when Antiochus the Great made a treaty with Egypt and gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy Epiphanes in marriage.
16. "*He will turn his attention to the coastal cities*" refers to Greece and all the Greek islands. This is where Antiochus the Great was beginning to move at this time—not only against Ptolemy in the south, but against Lysimachus in the west.
"A commander from another land" would refer to another line, that is, Rome, which was beginning to arise in the West and move toward the East. Rome, exacted taxes from the Syrians. The Romans were probably the best tax assessors and tax gatherers in the world until modern America perfected the system. As Rome began to rise, she was building a tremendous empire by taxing the people she was capturing. The Syrians began to fall before Rome.

B. The career of Antiochus Epiphanes foretold. 11:21–35

- ²¹ *“The next to come to power will be a despicable man who is not directly in line for royal succession. But he will slip in when least expected and take over the kingdom by flattery and intrigue. ²² Before him great armies will be swept away, including a covenant prince. ²³ By making deceitful promises, he will make various alliances. With a mere handful of followers, he will become strong. ²⁴ Without warning he will enter the richest areas of the land and do something that none of his predecessors ever did—distribute among his followers the plunder and wealth of the rich. He will plot the overthrow of strongholds, but this will last for only a short while.*

²⁵ *“Then he will stir up his courage and raise a great army against the king of the south. The king of the south will go to battle with a mighty army, but to no avail, for plots against him will succeed. ²⁶ Those of his own household will bring his downfall. His army will be swept away, and many will be killed. ²⁷ Seeking nothing but each other’s harm, these kings will plot against each other at the conference table, attempting to deceive each other. But it will make no difference, for an end will still come at the appointed time.*

²⁸ *“The king of the north will then return home with great riches. On the way he will set himself against the people of the holy covenant, doing much damage before continuing his journey.*

²⁹ *“Then at the appointed time he will once again invade the south, but this time the result will be different. ³⁰ For warships from western coastlands will scare him off, and he will withdraw and return home. But he will vent his anger against the people of the holy covenant and reward those who forsake the covenant. ³¹ His army will take over the Temple fortress, polluting the sanctuary, putting a stop to the daily sacrifices, and setting up the sacrilegious object that causes desecration. ³² He will flatter those who have violated the covenant and win them over to his side. But the people who know their God will be strong and will resist him. ³³ “Those who are wise will give instruction to many. But for a time many of these teachers will die by fire and sword, or they will be jailed and robbed. ³⁴ While all these persecutions are going on, a little help will arrive, though many who join them will not be sincere. ³⁵ And some who are wise will fall victim to persecution. In this way, they will be refined and cleansed and made pure until the time of the end, for the appointed time is still to come.*
- Verse 21 now introduces to us Antiochus Epiphanes, who was king in Syria and is easily identified in history. He is the “little horn” that has already been fulfilled, as we studied back in chapter 8. Not the Antichrist yet to come but a type of Antichrist.

3. This prophecy is concerned with one king in the line of the Seleucidae, Antiochus Epiphanes. Most fundamental interpreters of Scripture consider this section to be a direct reference to this man. The prophecy fits the history of Antiochus Epiphanes. (He is at the same time a type of the Antichrist, thus illustrative and figurative of the Man of Sin who is yet to come. The careers of both are strikingly similar.) Antiochus Epiphanes came to the throne in 175 B.C. He is called vile because of his blasphemies. He came to the throne with a program of peace. (The Antichrist will come to power in the same way. He will introduce the Great Tribulation with three and one half years of peace, and the people of the world will think they are entering the Millennium when they are really entering the Great Tribulation period.) Antiochus was a deceiver and a flatterer.
4. *“The covenant prince”* of verse 22 was probably the high priest, Onias III, who was deposed and murdered at this time by the deceitful devices of Antiochus when he came to power.
5. Verses 25-28 describe the campaign of Antiochus and his victory over the king of Egypt, which brought him much riches and prestige. *“These kings will plot against each other at the conference table”* refers to the fact that he was an unreliable liar. It also reveals that the conference tables of that day were very much like the conference tables of our own day, where nations meet and make treaties which become meaningless scraps of paper.
6. Antiochus made a second campaign against Egypt but was not successful due to the navy of Rome, *“the ships of Chittim.”* He broke his covenant with Israel, but notice that some of the Jews betrayed their own people, *“and he will withdraw and return home. But he will vent his anger against the people of the holy covenant and reward those who forsake the covenant.”*
7. Antiochus came against Jerusalem in 170 B.C., at which time over one hundred thousand Jews were slain! He took away the daily sacrifice from the temple, offered the blood and broth of a swine upon the altar, and set up an image of Jupiter to be worshiped in the holy place of the temple of God. This was an *“abomination that makes desolate,”* but it was not the abomination to which our Lord Jesus referred which was future when He was on earth and is still future in our day. It is the abomination which Antichrist will set up. Antiochus set up an image of Jupiter in the holy place, and the Antichrist will probably set up an image of himself in the holy place.

8. It was during this time that God raised up the family of the Maccabees. In 166 B.C. Mattathias the priest raised a revolt against the awful blasphemy. The family was called the Maccabees, that is, the hammer. Although they are not recorded in Scripture.
9. *“The time of the end”* leaps forward in prophecy from Antiochus Epiphanes to the Antichrist. We move now from the history of that day into that which is yet in the future. All of this prophecy was in the future when Daniel gave it—some is now history and some is yet future..

C. The career of Antichrist foretold. 11:36–45

1. ³⁶ *“The king will do as he pleases, exalting himself and claiming to be greater than every god there is, even blaspheming the God of gods. He will succeed—until the time of wrath is completed. For what has been determined will surely take place. ³⁷ He will have no regard for the gods of his ancestors, or for the god beloved of women, or for any other god, for he will boast that he is greater than them all. ³⁸ Instead of these, he will worship the god of fortresses—a god his ancestors never knew—and lavish on him gold, silver, precious stones, and costly gifts. ³⁹ Claiming this foreign god’s help, he will attack the strongest fortresses. He will honor those who submit to him, appointing them to positions of authority and dividing the land among them as their reward. ⁴⁰ “Then at the time of the end, the king of the south will attack him, and the king of the north will storm out against him with chariots, cavalry, and a vast navy. He will invade various lands and sweep through them like a flood. ⁴¹ He will enter the glorious land of Israel, and many nations will fall, but Moab, Edom, and the best part of Ammon will escape. ⁴² He will conquer many countries, and Egypt will not escape. ⁴³ He will gain control over the gold, silver, and treasures of Egypt, and the Libyans and Ethiopians will be his servants. ⁴⁴ “But then news from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in great anger to destroy many as he goes. ⁴⁵ He will halt between the glorious holy mountain and the sea and will pitch his royal tents there, but while he is there, his time will suddenly run out, and there will be no one to help him.*
2. At this point history ends and prophecy begins. The text passes from Antiochus Epiphanes to the Antichrist yet to come.

3. *“The king shall do according to his will.”* Antichrist is self-willed. *“He shall exalt himself.”* The little horn (the name given to Antichrist in ch. 7) tries to be a big horn.
4. *“And magnify himself above every god.”* In 2 Thessalonians 2:4 Paul wrote of the Antichrist: *“Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”* And in Revelation 13:8 we are also told: *“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*
5. *“And shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished.”* The willful king will be successful at first and for a brief time. God will permit this to come to pass during the last half of Daniel’s Seventieth Week.
6. *“Neither shall he regard the God of his ancestors.”* It has been assumed from this statement that Antichrist would have to be an Israelite. But he could be of any religion and just not regard it. He will oppose all religions and worship, except worship of himself. He is not only a believer in the ecumenical movement, he promotes it; in fact, he is *it*. One religion for one world will be his motto, and *he* is that religion.
7. Satan will offer to Antichrist control of the world and he will accept the offer that Christ rejected and become the world’s dictator.
8. This is going to be Satan’s hour. He will make the most of it, as he knows his time is short. *“Rejoice, O heavens! And you who live in the heavens, rejoice! But terror will come on the earth and the sea. For the Devil has come down to you in great anger, and he knows that he has little time.”* (Rev. 12:12). Antichrist will be the pliant tool to completely do the will of Satan in that day. He will rule over many people and dispose of property as he pleases. He is the willful king and the final world dictator.
9. It is *“the time of the end,”* not the end of time. It is the end which Daniel has had in mind all through this section, the last days of the nation Israel, which the Lord Jesus labeled the Great Tribulation.
10. In verse 40, *“The king of the south”* is evidently a ruler of Egypt, but it is impossible for us to identify him. This king who is going to arise at the time of the end will probably unite all of Africa as no leader of Egypt has ever been able to do, and he will come against Antichrist.

“*The king of the north*” is more easily identified. The king of the north is Russia and/or Russian held territories that now make up Eastern Europe. These countries are fast becoming Moslem controlled. Russia will open the campaign of Armageddon which will not be just a battle, but an entire war. At the very beginning, the king of the north will be eliminated as God moves in judgment upon that nation.

11. The entrance of Russia into Palestine precipitates the great crisis and conflict of the Great Tribulation period. When Antichrist enters Palestine, that is, “*the glorious land*,” he will find that he is going to have trouble with Edom, Moab, and Ammon. That is the territory where the sons of Ishmael, the Arabs, are today. He is going to have trouble with them, for a while at least.
12. Verses 42 & 43 tell us that Egypt and the king of the south will yield to the Antichrist. He will have control of the wealth of this world. He will control the entire money markets of the world at that time. Libya and Ethiopia will surrender to him—he will have control of Africa.
13. “*News from the east*”—that means the Orient with its millions of people. A great army will come from there to the Battle of Armageddon, and this world ruler will be troubled. At that time, there will be no hope for God’s people, except in God Himself. “*The seas*” refer to the Mediterranean Sea, and “*the glorious holy mountain*” is Jerusalem. In other words, at that time Antichrist will establish his headquarters for world conquest between the Mediterranean Sea and Jerusalem. However, instead of ruling from there he will be destroyed by the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:17–20). Evil will have taken over, and only in the personal coming of Christ to establish His Kingdom will any on this earth be delivered and saved.

Chapter Twelve of Daniel

I. Daniel's Final Revelation. 12:1–13

A. The Great Tribulation and the resurrections. 12:1–3

1. *“At that time Michael, the archangel who stands guard over your nation, will arise. Then there will be a time of anguish greater than any since nations first came into existence. But at that time every one of your people whose name is written in the book will be rescued.”*² *Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*³ *Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who turn many to righteousness will shine like stars forever.*
2. *“At that time”* identifies the time frame as the time of the end (Dan. 11:35, 40; 12:4) and the latter days (Dan. 10:14). This is now the end of the vision given to Daniel, and it ends with the Great Tribulation period.
3. *“Michael”* is identified for us here. He is the only angel given the title of archangel (see Jude 9). His name means *“who is like unto God?”* He is the one who is going to cast Satan out of heaven (see Rev. 12:7–9). He is the one who protects the nation Israel and stands in her behalf, as Daniel makes clear here. His strategy is outlined by John in Revelation 12:14–16.
4. *“Your nation.”* This is the nation Israel. *“There will be a time of anguish.”* This is the Great Tribulation period as our Lord so labeled it in Matthew 24:21. The believing remnant of Israel will be preserved (see Matt. 24:22; Rom. 11:26; Rev. 7:4).
5. *“Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life.”* The remnant of Israel living in the Great Tribulation period will be preserved, and that great company of Gentiles who are to be saved during that time also will be preserved. Scripture clearly states that at the Rapture those *“... which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him”* (1 Thess. 4:14, italics mine). Only, *“... the dead in Christ shall rise first”* (1 Thess. 4:16, italics mine). We are *in Christ* by the baptism of the Holy Spirit which began on the Day of Pentecost and will end at the Rapture. This particular body of believers is called the Church.

6. God's servants in the dark of the Great Tribulation will shine as lights. The remnant in that day will be God's witness in the world, and they are going to *"turn many to righteousness."* That righteousness is Christ, the only righteousness which is acceptable to God. God is not accepting our works; He is accepting the righteousness of Christ, and that is provided only by faith.

B. Daniel told to close up the book and wait. 12:4–13

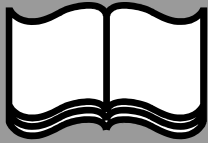
1. ⁴ *But you, Daniel, keep this prophecy a secret; seal up the book until the time of the end. Many will rush here and there, and knowledge will increase.*
⁵ *Then I, Daniel, looked and saw two others standing on opposite banks of the river.* ⁶ *One of them asked the man dressed in linen, who was now standing above the river, "How long will it be until these shocking events happen?"*
⁷ *The man dressed in linen, who was standing above the river, raised both his hands toward heaven and took this solemn oath by the one who lives forever: "It will go on for a time, times, and half a time. When the shattering of the holy people has finally come to an end, all these things will have happened."*
⁸ *I heard what he said, but I did not understand what he meant. So I asked, "How will all this finally end, my lord?"*
⁹ *But he said, "Go now, Daniel, for what I have said is for the time of the end.*
¹⁰ *Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined by these trials. But the wicked will continue in their wickedness, and none of them will understand. Only those who are wise will know what it means.*
¹¹ *"From the time the daily sacrifice is taken away and the sacrilegious object that causes desecration is set up to be worshiped, there will be 1,290 days.* ¹² *And blessed are those who wait and remain until the end of the 1,335 days!*
¹³ *"As for you, go your way until the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days, you will rise again to receive the inheritance set aside for you."*

1. These prophecies were to be sealed until *"the time of the end."* This does not mean the end of time but refers to that definite period of time which in the Book of Daniel is the Seventieth Week. In view of the fact that we are in the interval immediately preceding this period, it is difficult to know just how much we understand. Since so many Christians differ today on the interpretation of prophecy, it would seem to indicate that there is much that we do not understand. All of this has been opening up as we reach the end of the age of Grace.
2. *"Many will rush here and there."* This may refer to running up and down the Bible in study of prophecy—many shall search it through and through. There is a serious study of prophecy being made by many scholars today which has

not been done in the past. Different great doctrines of the church have been studied and developed during different periods of the history of the church. At the very beginning, the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures was pretty well established—also the doctrine of the deity of Christ and of redemption. Other doctrines were developed down through history. Today I think we are seeing more study of prophecy than ever before. “*Knowledge will increase.*” I believe this means knowledge of prophecy. It is true that knowledge has increased in every field today, but this refers primarily to the study of prophecy.

3. Verses 5-7 return us to the vision which Daniel had seen at the beginning of chapter 10. “*The man dressed in linen*” has been previously identified as the post incarnate Christ. Two others join Him here—one stands on one bank of the Tigris River and the other on the opposite bank. One asks how long these events will take, and the post incarnate Christ swears that it will be three and one half years, which is the last half of Daniel’s Seventieth Week. “*When the shattering of the holy people has finally come to an end*” is a strange phrase. It may mean that the rebellion of Israel will have finally been broken by the end of the Great Tribulation period and that there will have been a great turning to God at that time.
4. In verse 8 Daniel was a witness to this scene; he did not understand what he saw and heard. Daniel was puzzled and wanted to know how all of these things he had just witnessed would work out. He is reminded again that these things would take place in the time of the end and are temporarily sealed (see v. 4).
5. These great principles of God prevail from Daniel’s day to the time of the end, irrespective of dispensations:
 1. “*Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined by these trials*” refers to those who have come to Christ, “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy ...*” (Titus 3:5).
 2. “*None of the wicked will understand.*” refers to those who have made their choice against God. They have made their choice and will not understand what God is doing at this time.
 3. “*Only those who are wise will know what it means.*” Those who choose Christ will have understanding of what God is doing at this time.

6. For 1,290 days the idol of the Beast remains in the temple. Actually, this is thirty days beyond the three and one half years. The last half of the Great Tribulation is 1,260 days, and for some unexplained reason the image of Antichrist will be permitted to remain 30 days after Antichrist himself has been cast into the lake of fire.
7. Another series of days is given to us in verse 12 with no explanation. No one has the interpretation of this—it is sealed until the time of the end.
8. Daniel is told (as the Lord Jesus told Simon Peter) that he would die. He would not live to see the first or second return of Christ, but he would be raised from the dead to enter the Millennium. Daniel will be raised with the Old Testament saints at the beginning of the Millennium. “*At the end of the days*” brings us to the entrance into Christ’s kingdom. That is the future that is before us right now, a future that says Jesus is coming to this earth to establish His Kingdom. This is the hope we should keep before us in these days.



The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (490 years)

Dextee of Artaxerxes March 14, 445 B.C. to Nehemiah—		Presentation of Messiah as Prince—April 6, A.D. 32		Covenant of Antichrist with Israel		Return of Messiah to Establish Kingdom of God	
v. 25 Sixty-nine Weeks (483 Years)		v. 26 Gap of Time		v. 27 Seventieth Week (7 years)			
(Seven Weeks) 49 years to Compete Rebuilding of Jerusalem	(Sixty-two Weeks = 434 Years)	Messiah cut off— A.D. 33 Jerusalem and Sanctuary Destroyed A.D. 70		3 1/2 Years Image of Antichrist in Temple	3 1/2 Years Desecration by Antichrist Six Purposes v. 24		