

*Chapter by chapter
study of the*

Secrets
of
Daniel



Bruce R. Edwards

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

SECRETS OF DANIEL CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

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FORWARD

I pray this book will be a tool the Holy Spirit can use to help you better understand the book of Daniel. The prophet Daniel is unquestionably one of the most remarkable men in the Bible. He was used by God to bring a message of understanding and hope for the people of Israel and provides key information needed to understand the end of this age and to help prepare us for the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.

I realize there are many who have gone before me and have provided great insight and study of the Book of Daniel. I know there are often different views and interpretations regarding various passages in Daniel. I humbly offer the insights and information contained in this book and submit them before the Lord. The Holy Spirit is the teacher. We need to look to Him and allow Him to enlighten us and bring us revelation knowledge.

I pray that your time studying the Book of Daniel will be fruitful and edifying. As with any study there could always be more said, and further explanation give. I am providing a chapter by chapter overview with hopefully enough detail and explanation to bring a better understanding of what Daniel is sharing in the context of history and what we know will come in the future base on other insights from other books of the Bible.

Enjoy and be blessed!

Pastor Bruce

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INTRODUCTION

The book of Daniel gives us detailed and revealing insights to 3 important points;

- 1) It explains God's plan for Israel,
- 2) It explains God's plan for the Gentile nations and
- 3) It explains God's plan for His coming Kingdom

The book accurately predicts the rise and fall of world empires spanning thousands of years of human history. Its predictions about coming world empires are so accurate that biblical critics in the 18th century concluded the book must be a forgery, however the date this book was written happened before any of the prophesied events. We will see how Daniel dates his writings in a very precise manner. This is critically important for his credibility as a prophet. He wanted to make sure that we understand he wrote about these future events before they came to pass which means the knowledge came from God.

Daniel explains many critical events of **the end times** not addressed by any other book of the Bible.

Daniel can be broken down into "twos", four different ways:

- First, the book is divided by two languages – Aramaic and Hebrew
- Second, the book was written to two audiences

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- Thirdly, the book has two messages
 - First, Daniel explains God's future plan for Israel in delivering the promised Kingdom, but only after a period of judgment
 - Secondly, Daniel demonstrated how God's people are to live in faith even now while they await the Kingdom
- Fourthly the book has two themes:
 - first theme is the sovereignty of God
 - second theme is God's grace for His people



Before we begin looking at each chapter of Daniel it is important to have a good understanding of the purpose and history of the nation of Israel. Here is a brief outline.

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HISTORY OF the NATION OF ISRAEL

When you talk about the history of Israel most people think about the start of Israel in 1948, but Israel was a nation birthed by God and called out as "His chosen people" thousands of years ago. They are central to God's plan of redemption. The Messiah, the Savior for all mankind (Isaiah 49:6), would come through the nation of Israel.

Israel began with God's covenant with Abraham in approximately 2000 B.C., "I will make you into a great nation" (Genesis 12:2). Abraham had a son Isaac who had twins, Esau and Jacob. Jacob after wrestling with an angel at Jabbok (Genesis 32:28) is given the name Israel by God. The name "Israel" means "one who fights victoriously with God" or "a prevailing prince with God". From this point the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are referred to as the "Children of Israel."

Israel goes through many years of growth pains including 430 years of bondage in Egypt until God supernaturally delivers them in 1446 BC when Moses leads them to the promised land. Israel becomes the chief nation on the earth under the leadership of David, and later Solomon. They ruled and reigned for about 80 years around the year 1000 BC.

At this point in the history of Israel no Gentile nation could challenge Israel. However, after Solomon died, a number of tribes elected to rebel against the rule of Judah. They split away and formed a separate kingdom. At this time the Assyrian Empire had conquered Egypt and was becoming the dominating world power. In 721 BC, the Assyrian army

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(History of Israel continued from previous page)

captured the Israelite capital of Samaria and carried away the citizens of the northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity.

Meanwhile, under King Hezekiah Judah, Benjamin and Levi the Southern Kingdom, avoided destruction from the forces of Assyria through a miraculous intervention (2 Chronicles 32).

God sent prophet after prophet to Israel, warning them of coming judgment if they did not change. The Babylonian Empire rises to be the world power and conquers the Assyrians. Like the Northern Tribes the people of Judah failed to heed the warnings of God and ultimately the Babylonians under the rule of King Nebuchadnezzar are taken captive over a period of 20 years through 3 different invasions 605 through 585 BC when the city of Jerusalem is destroyed.

The Lord would no longer defend Israel as He once did under David and Solomon. Instead, the Lord said He would send wave after wave of Gentiles against His people - first the Babylonians, then the Persians, then the Greeks, and then the Romans.

This is what we will discover as we study the book of Daniel. Daniel is taken captive during the first invasion and we will discover how God uses Daniel to give us insight to the future of the Jewish people and Gentile nations until the return of Christ.

As you study the following explanations for each chapter, you should first read through the chapter and then keep your Bible open so you can refer to it throughout our study. Be blessed!

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Chapter 1

Verse 1-7

The first seven verses give us an introduction to the book. First, Daniel dates his writing during the third year of Jehoiakim's reign which corresponds to 605 BC. Daniel dates his writing in a very precise manner because Daniel's predictions were so specific, it's critically important for his credibility as a prophet that we understand he wrote before the events came to pass which means the knowledge came from God.

In that year, a Babylonian prince named Nebuchadnezzar led the army of his father, Nabopolassar, against two enemies: Assyria and Egypt and conquered them and also attacked Jerusalem and took many Jews captive

Background to the political world powers in that day.

Assyria had been the dominant world power in the Near East for centuries, Assyria had conquered the great power of Egypt, making the Pharaoh and his people Assyria's slaves, Assyria had also conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and took them.

But now Babylon was gaining power and challenging Assyria for world supremacy. Five years earlier, in 609 BC, Assyria and Egypt fought together to retake the Assyrian capital of

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(continued from previous page)

Harran from Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army who had seized it.

King of Judah, Josiah decided to attack Egypt. He thought he saw a chance to free Judah from Egyptian oppression because Egypt was weakened from years of Assyrian domination.

2 Chronicles 35:20-24 tells of the battle. It explains how the Egyptian Pharaoh, Neco, warned Josiah to go home and not interfere. In fact, he tells Josiah that God Himself will destroy Josiah if he gets in the way. Ironically here's a Jewish king receiving a word from Israel's God from the mouth of a Gentile enemy. Regrettably, Josiah would not listen to the "mouth of God" referring to the words spoken by, Neco. So, Josiah decides to attack anyway, contrary to God's wishes and as a result Josiah dies in the battle

The people of Israel then appoint Josiah's son, Joahaz, as king (2Chron 36:1) Three months later, Neco returned to Judah and deposed of Joahaz and Neco placed his brother, Jehoiakim, on the throne, since he was willing to submit to Egyptian authority (vs 4)

*Jehoiakim, became king in 608 BC He ruled three years under Egyptian authority, until 605 BC. Then In 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar arrived at Jerusalem, having conquered Assyria at Carchemish. Nebuchadnezzar immediately took control of Judea. He robbed the temple of some of its artifacts and **he took captive some Jewish nobles and royalty.***

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Daniel is one of these nobles and was probably age 14 when taken to Babylon. He and these other young men were the best and brightest of Israel, which is why Nebuchadnezzar wanted them in his court.

We are told Daniel was a man of character, intelligence and discernment. Daniel had a “different – excellent - extraordinary” spirit. These traits become tools in God’s hand to accomplish great things for His glory.

Nebuchadnezzar gave Daniel the very best – of everything including education and training. The king wanted these boys trained in the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

Daniel uses the word “Chaldean” to refer both to the culture of the Babylonians and to the profession of magician. The magicians of Babylon were the keepers of all science and ancient knowledge. These “Chaldeans” were society’s experts in natural science, mathematics, medicine, history, and astrology, Daniel was going to become an expert in all these things. Among those taken in his group were Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Their names were changed to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego.

Verse 8-21

We read about the first conflict between Daniel’s convictions in service to God and the king’s authority. Nebuchadnezzar commanded the boys be fed from the king’s table, which meant first-class dining. Sounds great only one problem – this meant eating meat that was not kosher and probably had been sacrificed to idols.

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Daniel made up his mind to not defile himself – but Daniel searches for a way to obey God, while still respecting the king’s authority. (great lesson for us to learn) He doesn’t want to become a martyr, if he can avoid it, so Daniel seeks permission of the commander of the officials to forgo eating the meat provided by the king

In v.10, Daniel tells the commander to let them eat vegetables and drink water for ten days, and then examine their appearance. The results of maintaining their diet proved successful. These boys didn’t simply hold their own, they were actually *better* looking than their peers who continued to eat a regular diet. Daniel also grew in his knowledge and intelligence while in training by God’s grace

Daniel’s introduction comes to an end, as he graduates from this Babylonian academy. When the king consults these young men for counsel, he finds them ten times better than any other Chaldean in his service. The chapter ends telling us Daniel served the king of Babylon until Babylon was conquered by Cyrus of Persia in 538 BC. His work as a minister in the court of the king lasted 65 years, making Daniel nearly 90 years old at the end of that time.

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Chapter 2

Daniel begins to share the prophecies he receives. The first is his interpretation of a dream for the king of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar has troubling dream that he can't understand. He asks all his experts to tell him the dream and then interpret it for him. They can't. They claim that only gods could reveal the things that the king seeks to know.

Verse 12-30

As a result Nebuchadnezzar declares that all wise men are to be destroyed this includes Daniel and his friends. When Daniels hears this, he decides to go to the king and ask for some time - the reason he gives is so that he can interpret the kings dream.

Lesson for us - Be smart, be creative, be adaptable, be calm, be thoughtful and be unyielding in your character and godliness - Trusting God for whatever comes next

Daniel prays that night and receives the answer – God shows him the dream. The Lord delivered the coded message to the king, but He delivered the decoded interpretation to Daniel. It's important to note that Daniel responds to the Lord revealing the dream to him by giving God all the praise and glory. He takes none. We should always do the same whenever God uses us.

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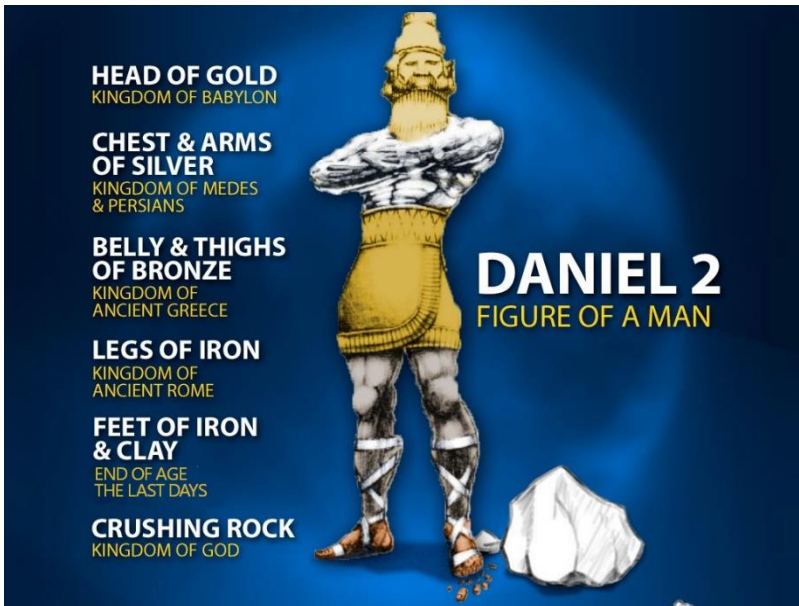
Daniel is brought to the King. He starts by telling the king that the dream is really a prophecy and it is about “latter days”. The term “latter days” simply means future days of the end, but this dream is also a description of an entire age, from beginning to end, not just of the last days. However, the most important part this prophecy is how the age ends.

The age this dream is covering is what Jesus calls the **Age of the Gentiles**. (Luke 21:24) It is defined as a period of Jewish exile and of the city of Jerusalem under Gentile domination. It's called the **Age of the Gentiles** because it will be a period of history when Gentile nations rule over Israel. This age began in 605 BC when Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem. We know the age was still ongoing in Jesus' day and we know its purpose is to subject Israel to Gentile domination until the age is completed. Like all ages, this age has a beginning and an end, so one day, Gentiles will no longer dominate Israel once this age is over. ***This dream will help us understand how the Age of the Gentile progresses and how it ends.***

Verse 31-43

Daniel begins to explain to the king what none of the other men could do: he describes the king's dream. He describes a large statue. The materials of the statue vary from head to toe. They progress from greater value to lesser value and from softer to more brittle. Daniel describes the divisions of the statue from head to toe; a gold head, silver chest and arms, bronze torso and thighs, lower legs of iron and feet of clay mixed with iron.

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Daniel now interprets the dream. The **FIRST KINGDOM** - The head of gold at the top of the statue represented Nebuchadnezzar as ruler of Babylon, but Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar another kingdom will arise to replace his kingdom. It will be a kingdom that is less majestic and not as powerful as Babylon. Daniel doesn't name it, but we are able to know because of additional historic information available to us.

The **SECOND KINGDOM** - represented by the silver section which we know was the Medo-Persian empire. The Medo-Persians conquered and replaced the kingdom of Babylon in 550 BC. This kingdom was less majestic than Babylon because the king of Medo-Persian empire was not as powerful as was the Babylonian king.

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The **THIRD KINGDOM** - to assume power over the world and replace the Medo-Persian empire, was the Greek Empire ruled by Alexander the Great. Alexander extended the Greek empire out of central Europe and into the East. He defeated the Persians in 330 BC. He is represented by bronze because the leader of the Greek empire was far less powerful than those of either the Medes or Babylonians.

The Greek Empire splits in two as represented by the statue's division of its legs – the **EAST AND THE WEST**. Alexander the Great died four years into his reign. At that point, he had no heirs, so his kingdom was divided into four parts assigned to four generals to rule. The two generals in the West allied together and the other two generals in the East were allied

This East-West political divide has never changed. The division that began under Alexander the Great remains throughout the rest of the age just as the legs in the statue remain forever separated.

The **FOURTH KINGDOM** – which replaces the Greeks is the least valuable of the four and is represented by the more brittle materials: iron and clay. Finally, as the kingdom comes to its end, a division of ten emerges, represented by the ten toes of the statue.

Most think this fourth kingdom is just the Roman Empire BUT - we can't call this fourth kingdom only the Roman Empire. Here is why - Certainly, the Roman Empire began this fourth period, but the period extends beyond the Roman

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Empire itself. The Roman Empire has never completely disappeared, at least not in the sense intended by the statue.

This fourth kingdom is made up from “pieces” not a single entity. These pieces combine for periods of time, but like iron and clay, they don’t adhere, so they eventually break apart. This pattern has never ended. Western and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and even North Africa and Western Asia have all experienced this pattern. Instead of calling them “Rome”, we might call this kingdom the Imperialistic-Democratic Alliances. Collectively, these parts serve to dispossess Israel and keep Jerusalem under Gentile authority. *(don’t miss this point it is huge in understanding the end times)*

So, we see that the statue represents a timeline **for the Age of the Gentiles**. We know the age began in 605 BC, when Nebuchadnezzar first conquered Judah and Jerusalem. We also know the age was still ongoing in Jesus’ day. (Luke 21) and it is still going on today. Like all ages, this age has a beginning and an end, so one day, Gentiles will no longer dominate Israel once this age is over. As we study the rest of the dream, we will come to understand how the **Age of the Gentile** progresses and how it ends. Daniel’s gave very little time to the second and third empires because they were not important features in this timeline. The part of the timeline that is most important is how it ends and therefore, the fourth kingdom has much more information and explanation. Remember the purpose of the Age of the Gentiles is subject Israel to Gentile domination until the age is completed.

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Verse 44-49

Finally, the last piece of the puzzle, the stone falling from the sky that crushes the statue. This stone is itself a new kingdom!

- It brings to an end the Age of Gentiles.
- It begins a new age and new kingdom
- It cannot be another Gentile Kingdom - it must be a Jewish Kingdom,
- This new Kingdom will endure forever...no more transitions, hence the end of the statue
- This Kingdom is set up by God Himself. He doesn't just place another man as king of the world. God Himself is the King on Earth and He personally sets up the Jewish Kingdom that replaces the Gentile powers.
- the falling uncut stone pictures the coming of Christ to set up His literal Kingdom on earth

Daniel's interpretation reveals a long history of world empires that bridge history from Judah's first dispersion until their final regathering under Christ. Daniel's interpretation more than satisfies the king and he appoints Daniel over all other wise men and gives him gifts of great wealth.

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Chapter 3

Verse 1-12

Nebuchadnezzar builds and erects his own massive statue similar to the one in his dream except this one is made entirely of gold. It was 90 feet high, equal to an eight-story building, and it was about 9 feet wide. He informs the people that from this point forward, the image will be the center of worship for everyone in the nation. Nebuchadnezzar's message is clear He now believes his rule will never end.

Historical Background

*It's been 20 years since Nebuchadnezzar first attacked Jerusalem and took Daniel captive. During those 20 years Nebuchadnezzar had to contend with one insurrection after another in Judea. Finally, in about 597 BC, 11 years after his first attack, he attacks Jerusalem a second time because king Jehoiakim had rebelled. He surrenders and Nebuchadnezzar takes another ten thousand Judaeans (men - including the prophet Ezekiel) captive to **Babylon**.*

Nebuchadnezzar strips the Temple of all the gold articles made by King Solomon and Zedekiah is installed as a puppet king until Nebuchadnezzar returns a third and final time to lay waste to what remained of the city and temple. He carried off the rest of the Jews into slavery leaving behind a city in ruin. At this time in history, the Jewish people began the practice of

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meeting in synagogues. They had little choice, since they were living in exile and lacked a temple, they also

(Historical background continued)

formed many of the religious traditions that persist today. In fact, you could say that modern Judaism began during the exile

Nebuchadnezzar issues an edict - all peoples are to bow to this statue and anyone who failed to abide by his command would be thrown into a furnace of fire. It is a way to test the loyalty of the people. He is working to consolidate power and expose disloyalty in his government.

This is not a problem for the people of Babylon who are used to worshipping idols but for the Jews it presents a challenge because their Law specifically prohibited worship of graven images. The Chaldeans notice that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego have declined to bow and worship the image as required. The king's edict exposes the Jews' commitment to show allegiance to Yahweh over the king. When the king learns of the boys' rebellion, he becomes enraged and reacts in a predictable way.

Verse 13 -27

The King himself questions them but they do not waver in their faith to God. So, Nebuchadnezzar orders them to be thrown in the fiery furnace AND orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. they declare their God is more powerful than Nebuchadnezzar, and He can deliver them from the furnace.

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One very important note. As the Hebrew children declare their faith and trust in God, in verse 18 they say, “**and if not**”. Most people read this and interpret as if the – “if not” means if God doesn’t deliver them. This is not what it says. Daniel never wavered or thought for one moment God was not going to deliver them. What this “if not” says is - if they are not thrown in the furnace, they still are going to worship God.

The king expects to see three bodies to instantly burst into flame under the intense heat, but instead, he stands up in astonishment as he witnesses men standing and moving around in the furnace fire, seemingly unharmed and he sees not just three men, but there is a fourth man as well. This fourth person was the Angel of the Lord. God delivers them out of the fire. Their clothes are not even burned.

Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges this outcome as God-ordained and he yields to it and he declares these men deserve praise for standing up for what they believed. Then, he reverses his prior edict to have these men punished for their defiance His new decree is that no one may speak a word against the God of Israel. Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

REVIEW MEANING & PURPOSE OF CHAPTERS 2 & 3

The dream in Chapter 2 foretold that Israel would suffer under Gentile kings. The main point of that chapter was to explain God’s plan to place Israel under four successive Gentile authorities and it gave Israel the context to understand their fate in captivity.

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(continued from previous page)

The events of Chapter 3 remind God's people that these kings still remain under God's sovereign control. It reminds Israel

that though they were under Gentile oppression, the Lord has not abandoned His people particularly, the remnant within Israel was assured of the Lord's continuing favor, even in the midst of this time of judgment.

Daniel 3 is strong reminder that God did not just create the world and step back to let it rule itself. Instead, the Lord is active and engaged in steering the world, even as He reveals His larger plans

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Chapter 4

This chapter has the second dream of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel's interpretation. It is written from the first-person perspective of Nebuchadnezzar himself. It was penned by Daniel, but it's Daniel recording the testimony of the king.

Verse 1-9

The king starts out praising the Lord of Heaven for His mighty works. This is amazing because this king is a Gentile and a pagan who took God's people captive, killing many of them in the process, yet, he declares that God Himself is greater and that His Kingdom is always in control.

Now the king calls for his magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers and starts to tell the story of another dream. Unlike the dream in Chapter 2, this time, the king is willing to tell them what the dream was up front, but again they were not able to interpret or at least unwilling to. Then Daniel shows up.

Verse 10-33

The king shares the dream with Daniel. The dream is of a very large tree that is fruitful and abundant. Then an angel removes the tree. Only the roots of the tree and its stump were allowed to remain. The stump was shackled with bronze and

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iron. Then, the stump is allowed to simply sit in the field of grass,

In verse 17 it becomes clear at this point that the tree stands for a man, he is to live in the wild like an animal and he receives the mind of a beast, acting like an animal and this strange period in the man's life will continue for 7 years.

Daniel reluctantly shares the meaning of the dream. The tree represents Nebuchadnezzar and depicts his complete and total rule over the earth. Then, Daniel explains the angelic woodcutter means that the Lord will drive Nebuchadnezzar away from his kingdom for a time. The fact that the root remains means this will not spell the end of the king's time as ruler. The king will be taken out of power as a judgment from God. He will be out of power for a short period of time, but during this time, he will endure a humiliating set of circumstances.

Daniel then exhorts the king to do what he can to stop this from happening. Specifically, Daniel says stop sinning, repent and do works of mercy for the poor. But the king didn't make use of the opportunity as is the case so many times and so the events of the dream come to pass - twelve months later.

One powerful truth in Scripture is that repentance can stop or forestall God's judgment. God is merciful. It is very important to understand while God has placed judgement and troubling consequences in the paths of peoples live it ultimately is the result of people's choices. AND even if we make bad choice that create bad consequences because of God's mercy He still gives opportunities for us to choose to repent and be rescued.

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The downfall of the king is clearly the consequence of **pride** in his position over the kingdom and the world. He admits it himself in vs 30 – where he says he himself made the nation great by means of his own might and for his own glory. Ancient records show the King had much to boast about -

- His impressive building exploits were some of the most ambitious in all ancient history
- Babylon's capital city was walled to a circumference of about 17 miles
- The king's palace sat inside the city, behind a second wall running about 5 miles in circumference
- The river Euphrates ran through the palace
- The hanging gardens of Babylon inside the palace were one of the lost seven wonders of the world, fed by an elaborate water supply
- Statues of bulls and dragons lined a huge processional avenue leading to a huge ziggurat temple to Marduk,

He couldn't have been more wrong - he didn't make Babylon great, the Lord did
He didn't accomplish anything in his own might; it was the Lord's power that created, Babylon and Babylon wasn't elevated to bring Nebuchadnezzar great glory; it was for glory to God.

Verse 34 - 37

At the end of the chapter we see that Nebuchadnezzar comes to his senses and looks up to heaven, praises God and then he declares that God deserves honor, the One Who lives forever and ever and he emphasizes the never-ending dominion of the Lord, and he acknowledges the absolute

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sovereignty of God. He went from the best of times to the worst of times and now, he finds himself back in a position of power once again. In the end the king

- is fully restored to power
- he recognizes that his own pride was the cause of his downfall
- he gives Him praise and honor as the King of Heaven

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Chapter 5

The backdrop for Chapter 5 is the end of the Babylonian kingdom. The year is 539 BC It's been about 67 years since Daniel entered Babylon in captivity. That means he is probably about 80 years old at this point.

By 539 BC, the Medes and Persians had united against their common enemy, Babylon. The two nations had been winning victories against the Babylonians and were descending upon the capital city.

The city of Babylon, whose ruins are located in present-day Iraq, was founded more than 4,000 years ago it was located along the Euphrates River in present-day Iraq, about 50 miles south of Baghdad.

The narrative in this chapter changes from Nebuchadnezzar to Belshazzar but Belshazzar is not Nebuchadnezzar's successor in fact, he's not even a king at all, though the text uses that title to reflect he was in charge at this time.

BACKGROUND OF BELSHAZZAR

Belshazzar is the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar had a son, named Evil-Merodach. His son ruled for barely 2 years. Following his death, Nebuchadnezzar's son-in-law Neriglissar reigned for another 4 years before he

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(background of Belshazzar continued)

died. Finally, a second son-in-law, Nabonidus, reigned until the end of the Babylonian empire.

Nabonidus had a habit of staying away from the capital city of Babylon for prolonged periods. In fact, during the final ten years of the kingdom, Nabonidus never set foot in the city. In his absence, he appointed his son, Belshazzar, as regent or ruler of Babylon. Technically, Belshazzar was second in command, but in the king's absence the nation needed a man in the capital who could make decisions. So, though he was not the king, he acted as king.

Verse 1-16

The chapter opens with Belshazzar presiding over a great feast where it says he is entertaining a thousand nobles from the kingdom. They should have been focused on planning or devising how to defend against and defeat the oncoming Persian army, however, instead these leaders of the kingdom are gathered, eating and drinking and being merry.

Even worse Belshazzar makes a more foolish decision by calling for the golden vessels from the Jewish temple to be used to serve drink to the female guests. As they drink from these vessels which were intended to honor the God of Israel, the Lord steps in on their evening to make clear His displeasure with the king and in typical form, the Lord speaks in a way that necessitated Daniel's involvement.

God writes with the finger of a floating hand on the wall. No one but the king noticed the writing and the kings carefree,

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merry attitude turns to fear. The writing on the wall was in Aramaic, yet no one knew what it meant.

So, like his grandfather before him Belshazzar calls for all the magicians to interpret the message and offers them great riches if they provide an interpretation and for the third time, the Babylonian magicians strike out.

The queen appears (not the real queen most likely this woman is Belshazzar's mother, Nebuchadnezzar's daughter) and she tells the king not to be afraid because there is one who can solve this problem. So, she introduces Daniel and after a short conversation with Daniel the king asks for his help,

Verse 17-30

Daniel speaks to the “king” – Daniel is much older; he has watched the circumstances for Israel go from bad to worse. He begins by giving Belshazzar a family history lesson reminding him that his grandfather was put in power by God, but when he became puffed up in pride he was removed from power and for 7 years was subject to living like an animal – **UNTIL** he recognized that God Most High was the true ruler! Daniel gets to the point of why he was reviewing the history in v.22, - it's because “YET” Belshazzar did not learn the lesson of his family's history and he likewise has dishonored God – with that background he now is ready to reveal the meaning of the writing.

The words on the wall were - MENE, **MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN**. These are Aramaic Words, and they are words for various weights or measures of value.

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- mina was worth 50 shekels
- Tekel was worth 1 shekel
- upharsin means “half a shekel

So, the phrase would be somewhat like us saying “Dollar, dollar, nickel, penny”.

Daniel interprets the meaning - he says that the mina means God has numbered Belshazzar’s kingdom and brought it to an end. He explains that this message is one of judgment for both the king and the nation of Babylon. Daniel says the nation’s days were numbered and the kingdom was going to be given to the Medes and Persians, also Daniel interprets the repetition of the first word to mean that Babylon’s end is coming immediately.

We might think that this interpretation would bother the king, or at least distract him a little, but he seems to go on with little regard for Daniel’s words. He proceeds to reward Daniel as promised, even though Daniel refused it and in verse 30 it says – “That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.”

STORY OF THE PERSIAN DEFEAT OF BABYLON

In October 539 B.C., the Persian army under the rule of Cyrus the Great completed work north of Babylon on a dam across the Euphrates river in order to divert the flow of the river to a nearby lake, greatly reducing the amount of water flowing toward the city of Babylon.

This reduced the rivers level, so it was now low enough for the Persian soldiers to wade up the riverbed that ran through the city. The watchmen on the wall towers above the city would

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(Persian defeat of Babylon continued)

have been scanning the horizon for large troop ships coming up the Euphrates or ground forces marching to the walls, so they never noticed columns of men quietly wading through the drying riverbed below under the cover of darkness. The Persian troops were able to easily enter the city without a fight. The city was so large most citizens had no idea the city had fallen including those at the party of Belshazzar. As the king was celebrating that night, the troops were already inside the walls.

As Daniel pronounced the king's downfall, the troops were probably at the doors of the palace. As a result of the king's execution the nation fell swiftly and a new king took power, a man named Darius, the Mede of Persia.

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Chapter Six

In Chapter 6 the antagonists and the protagonist change.

- Antagonist - Instead of the king of Babylon, it is the king of the Medes (Darius), now that the Persians have defeated Babylon
- Protagonist - instead of Daniel's friends, it's Daniel himself who suffers

This chapter chronicles how the new king is manipulated into persecuting Daniel, and yet, Daniel is protected, and his enemies overcome by the Lord

BACKGROUND OF PERSIA

History records that the first ruler of the new Medo-Persian Empire was not a Mede, but a Persian, Cyrus. Scripture confirms that Cyrus was ruling at the time – (Isaiah 45) Even Daniel confirms he served Cyrus in the final verse of Chapter 6, but he does say he served BOTH King Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian. This makes it clear they were two different men. Darius the Mede most likely was a short-term appointment of Cyrus initially after the defeat of the Babylonians. Darius inherits the service of Babylon's previous court, including Daniel.

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Verse 1 - 15

Daniel is appointed as one of 3 governors who together oversee 120 rulers appointed by the new king. The king takes note of the excellence of Daniel over the others and is ready to promote him over them all.

In jealousy over Daniel's success, his peers begin to conspire against him. They begin to investigate and look for anything they can find against Daniel, but these men couldn't find anything against Daniel.

So, they turn to the only solution left to them – v.5 says, ***“We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God”***. Literally they are going to find a way to turn the Law of Daniel's God against him – not by how Daniel might violate God's law, but rather they are going to look for a way to turn his obedience to the Law against him in the eyes of the king. These men devise a plan to bring Daniel's obedience to the Word of God into conflict with the expectations of a pagan king

So, they appeal to the pride of the king and suggest a test to ensure that everyone is loyal to him. Everyone must worship only the king and should anyone disobey this law, they will be cast into a den of lions. The governors' trick worked, and the king signed the document, sealing Daniel's fate.

When Daniel learns of the decree you would expect Daniel to change his routine of prayer that could get him killed but instead he immediately goes and prays and praises the Lord every day, three times a day, without fail as he always did.

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Daniel's adversaries conspired to go to Daniel's house at one of his appointed times of prayer which they and everyone else were well aware of. After they observe Daniel in violation of the order, they quickly return to the king and make their accusations. Because these men realize that Darius thinks highly of Daniel and favors him, they FIRST remind the king of his edict and remind him that an order by the king is binding, even upon the king himself. To which the king agrees and only then do they reveal to the king what Daniel had been witnessed doing.

The King was distressed and wanted to find a way to rescue Daniel, but the king can do nothing to help Daniel. So, all that remained was for the sentence to be carried out

Verse 16-28

Daniel is put into the lion's den, and it is sealed shut by the King. It is interesting that the King cannot sleep he is troubled by what has happened and it says he fasted through the night. When morning comes, he goes to the den with some anticipation it appears he believes that Daniel's God has the potential to do something miraculous for Daniel. When he arrives, he calls out to Daniel. His exact question is this: **Has your God been able to deliver you?** (vs.20)

Daniel responds to the king, "O king, live forever!" as he comes out unscathed, it's clearly a miracle. Daniel reports that the Lord sent His Angel to guard the lions' mouths. The king then cast all of Daniels adversaries and their families into the den and this time the lion's mouths were not shut. The king judged them guilty of the very crime they accused Daniel of. They weren't guilty of praying to another god, but they

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were guilty of disloyalty by conspiring against one of the king's loyal advisors

The chapter finishes with the king making a decree that all *men must* tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. We are reminded that Daniel forevermore enjoyed success under these kings in Persia.

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Chapter Seven

The events of this chapter as well as chapter 8 occur before the events that were recorded in Chapter 6. Daniel 7 expands upon the teaching of Chapter 2 and reveals much more detail about future events.

Quick review of what we learned in Chapter 2

Chapter 2 is about the dream Nebuchadnezzar has of the large statue and Daniels interpretation. The dream was a prophecy about the Age of the Gentiles. The Age of the Gentiles is a period of history that God has planned for Israel and the world. Which is the time we are in now.

- *First, it is a time for Israel to be scattered outside their land*
- *Secondly, their city, Jerusalem, will be under Gentile domination*
- *Thirdly, this age must continue until the Messiah's Second Coming*
- *At Christ's return, the Jewish nation will be returned to her place as the supreme nation on earth*

Verse 1- 6

Daniel dates this chapter to the first year of Belshazzar's reign as king of Babylon. Remember Chapter 5 described how Belshazzar's reign came to an end and then, Chapter 6 moved forward to the reign of the Medo-Persian king, Darius, but now we are back to the beginning of

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Belshazzar's reign. This means that Daniel is in his mid-sixties and still serving the king of Babylon.

Daniel himself now has a troubling dream and in v.2, Daniel begins to describe his strange dream. There are 3 key elements to begin the dream:

- 1) The Four Winds – is a reference to God's power over His creation
- 2) The Great Sea – is symbolic of the peoples of the earth. It means the masses of humanity, but particularly the Gentile nations of the earth
- 3) The Four Beasts – these four animals correspond to the same four kingdoms depicted in the dream Nebuchadnezzar had of the large statue. The beasts emphasize the nature of each kingdom

INTERPRETATION OF THE BEASTS -

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1

- Like a Lion
- With eagle's wings
- Wings plucked later
- Lifted up from earth
- Man's heart given



2

- Like a Bear
- Raised up on its side
- Had 3 ribs in its mouth
- Was told to arise and devour much flesh



3

- Like a Leopard
- With 4 fowl's wings
- Had 4 heads
- Given dominion

1. **The Lion** with wings like an eagle – this represents Babylon

2. **The Bear** raised up on one side with three ribs in its mouth – this represents Medo-Persian empire

3. **The Leopard** with four heads and four wings – this represents the Greek Empire of Alexander the Great, which conquered the Medo-Persians

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There are details about each of these beasts that depict exactly the nature of each kingdom, but we won't go into them because they really are of little interest to us, except they confirm the accuracy of Daniel's prophecy which is very important. In fact, everything up to this point, chapters 1 to 7:6 is evidence and proof that Daniel is hearing from God.

Our focus and real interest are with the fourth kingdom. The fourth kingdom receives the most attention both in Chapter 2 and here in Chapter 7 because it's the most important historically. After all this is the kingdom that will usher in the Kingdom of Christ.

It is the kingdom we currently are living in. All of the details moving forward will be very important to us because they speak of our future as we look ahead to the end of this age.

So, I am drawing a heavy line at this point in my notes because moving forward beginning in verse 7 we are going to learn important details about how the last kingdom comes to an end in preparation for the Lord's return.



- 4
- Exceedingly dreadful, terrible beast
 - Iron teeth, brass nails
 - Had 10 horns
 - A little horn, which plucked 3 horns

Verse 7-

The 4th Beast

This represents the 4th kingdom.

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The first thing we notice about Daniel's description is his inability to compare it to any living creature. The first 3 beasts he compared it to being like a living animal. This beast is different. One of the important attributes of this beast is it has ten horns and there is an eleventh horn that suddenly appears on the beast. This horn is unique, in that it has facial features of a man and is able to speak. In v.9, we see the end of all the beasts and the arrival of an entirely new Kingdom.

Each of these 4 beasts and what they represent are similar to the dream of the statue in chapter 2. The 4 beasts here represent the same 4 kingdoms as the statue did which all refer to the **Age of the Gentiles** and the Age of the Gentiles will end when the Lord returns to set up His Kingdom on earth and v.9, is a description of Jesus' return and the new Kingdom.

Beginning in verse 9 Daniel describes his vision – he sees what he calls the Ancient of Days taking His seat upon the throne - this is a reference to the Father God. (similar to John's description Rev. 1:13-14)

He describes the throne blazing with a river of fire that is flowing around it and Father God is surrounded by tens of thousands of angels and others and there are books being opened. This indicates a judgment that is according to Law is about to take place. After the Father sits down to judge, our attention is turned to events on earth, where the Father's judgment is directed.

- First, the beast and the little horn are slain and destroyed. They are given over to a judgment of fire – vs 11

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- Second, judgment is pronounced against the Gentile kingdoms that rule during the Age of the Gentiles, vs. 12
- Third, a new Kingdom arises in verse 13

This new Kingdom begins with the Son of Man coming from the clouds of Heaven.

This scene is described in detail in Revelation 4 & 5

Beginning in verse 15 someone appears to interpret for Daniel what he has seen. He confirms that with Daniel that –

- the four beasts are four kingdoms, the same kingdoms as in Chapter 2
- And the final kingdom is the Kingdom of God that comes to rule the earth after the end of these four Gentile kingdoms

But Daniel now has other things he wants to know -, in particular Daniel wanted to know about the horns and the eleventh one.

The angel begins to share and describe the last days of the fourth kingdom in remarkable detail. First, the angel says in v.23 that the fourth kingdom is a different type of kingdom. This kingdom is different than the rest because-

- You won't find a single nation or government to represent the whole of this kingdom - don't try -
- Because God has designed it to be different than the pattern that He established in the earlier three kingdoms

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- The fourth kingdom continues to exist and to exert its controlling authority over Jerusalem and the Jewish people – up to this very time.

NOTE: This is one of the primary mistakes interpreters make in trying to label the fourth kingdom in historical terms. If we assign the fourth kingdom to the Roman Empire alone, then this kingdom can't be said to be truly different from the rest. In fact, it would be very much like the rest. The fourth kingdom period may have started with a monolithic power in Rome, but it doesn't end that way. After Rome, the fourth kingdom lives on, dividing and recombining into new alliances. These alliances being formed from among the crushed "pieces" of the earlier kingdoms.

In v.24, the angel begins to explain the horns. He says each horn represents a king. Also, notice that these ten horns are contemporaries - they exist and rule at the same time. These ten kings must come at the very end of the age, right before the Lord's return we know this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. They have not yet appeared though many have assumed they have.

The angel continues in v.24 to explain the meaning of the strange eleventh horn. This extra horn is also a ruler, but he is different - not like the other 10 (we will get more detail in Chapters 9 and 11)

Here in this chapter, the angel tells us this horn will subdue three of the 10 existing kings at that time. The other

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seven don't need to be subdued because they don't oppose him. Once this eleventh king has consolidated his power, he begins to go to war against God Himself and the saints of God, that is, believers.

Then, the angel says this king will have his way on earth for a period of time, specifically a time, times and half a time. We know this phrase describes **3.5 years of time**. So, the eleventh horn reigns over the earth, persecuting the saints and opposing God, for three and a half years

In v.26, the angel explains that judgment will come on this eleventh king and his dominion is taken away and destroyed forever. In his place, rule of the whole earth is handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. We will live in this Kingdom with our King – this kingdom is what we refer to as the Millennium

BOOK OF REVELATION CONFIRMS DANIEL 7

Daniel 7 is a very similar to the book of Revelation – some refer to it as “little Revelation”, because it describes the way the Heavenly judgments of Tribulation result in earthly destruction. Revelation confirms much of what is in Daniel. In Revelation 13, we're told of a coming world ruler, called “the beast”, who will conquer the entire earth. How is he able to do these things? In Revelation 13:2, we are told that the **dragon** gives his power to the beast, enabling him to resurrect and command the world's obedience. (*Revelation 12 tells us that this dragon is Satan himself.*) This leader is killed and yet, after a time, his “fatal” wound is healed, in other words, he is resurrected. As a result of his miraculous

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(continued from previous page)

resurrection, the world is amazed and begins to follow this man, thinking him all powerful. After this event, he begins to boast arrogantly. Rev. 13 says that he has his time in the spotlight for 42 months, which happens to be 3.5 years.

So, now we have a clear understanding –

- 1) of the purpose of the “**Age of the Gentiles**”. It is a period God uses to bring to pass judgment against his own people (Israel, the Jews). It is an age that covers many centuries of Gentiles ruling over Israel.
 - It is a time marked by four major empires
 - And today right now - we are living near the end of the fourth empire

- 2) despite subjecting Israel to this Age of the Gentiles, the Lord hasn't forgotten them
 - He will continue to preserve a remnant among Israel
 - When they are persecuted by the Gentiles, the Lord will be their strength
 - Even though the Gentile rulers have control over it. Israel doesn't mean they are able to act with total liberty or license – God is still in control

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Chapter 8

This chapter begins the second part of Daniel's book. Chapters 2-7 were written in Aramaic, and therefore, they were directed at both the Jew and Gentile. Those chapters told us how Israel would be conquered and oppressed by Gentile nations but, also how God would still be watching over them through it all.

In this chapter Daniel writes exclusively in Hebrew, indicating he's speaking only to the Jewish people in Israel. The events that he describes are some of the most fascinating and important prophecies in all of the Bible.

In Chapters 8-12, Daniel receives visions with additional details about the Gentile nations (empires). He briefly deals with the first 3 empires and then provides many details about the 4th empire.

The purpose is not to provide a complete accounting of everything these empires do during the hundreds of years that they rule, but instead **the prophecies focus on how these kingdoms impact Israel.** In particular, we learn how each kingdom is used to accomplish the central purpose of the Age of the Gentiles.

Daniel dates the writing of this prophecy in the third year of Belshazzar which would be about 547 BC. This

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chapter focuses on the Medo-Persian and Greek empires. Daniel explains how the Medo-Persians transition to the Greek Empire.

It is important to realize Daniel wrote this long before the events happened. Alexander the Great defeats the Persians in about 331 BC over 200 years after Daniel. The reason this is important is that this chapter serves to authenticate later chapters' prophecies.

Verse 1-14

This chapter begins with Daniel being transported in the spirit to Susa.

INFO ABOUT SUSA

Susa or Shushan was an important city in the Babylonian Empire, it was located about 200 miles east of Babylon and 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf what is modern-day Iran. The city would become the capital of the Medo-Persian empire, after it defeated Babylon. (see the map)

He sees a **ram with two horns** standing in Susa one of the horns was larger than the other. The details given about the ram lets us know that the ram represents the **Persia Empire**, and the horns represent the two parts of the Empire, the Medes and Persians.

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THE MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE 4-6TH CENTURY B.C.

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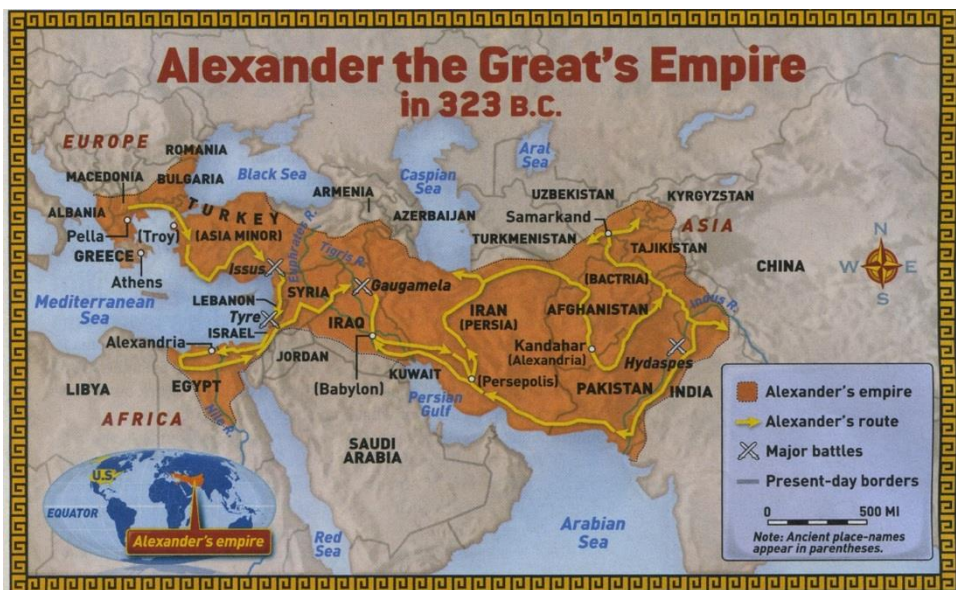
At this point Daniel is writing in the first person. He goes on sharing what he sees, which is the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, it doesn't go east. The nation of Persia was the power of the east, so it conquered in the other directions. In verse 5 Daniel sees a goat that contends with and challenges the ram. The change in type of animals is used to indicate a change in kingdom.

The goat represents the **Greek Empire**. In v.7, we're told the goat completely ends the strength of the ram. As history tells us Alexander the Great defeated the Persians in a series of decisive battles that resulted in the end of their reign over the world. In verse 8 Daniel predicts the early death of the leader of this kingdom. He says, "at the moment he

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becomes mighty, the horn is broken". In other words, this leader doesn't stay in power after he has conquered the ram. Then, we're told that in place of the large horn four prominent or conspicuous horns grow. These represent 4 leaders that replace Alexander. This is a perfect description of what happened to Alexander the Great.

It is amazing how all the details given in these verses match what we know of these two Empires. Up to this point, the prophecy is covering the same thing Chapter 2 did only Daniel is giving it with a different perspective and some added detail.



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NOTE:

Remember the events in this chapter are history to us - we know what happened with these empires. Daniel did not. All these facts are being prophesied by Daniel before they happen. Years before the Medo-Persia Empire rose to power, and centuries before the birth of Alexander, Daniel predicted the empires rise and fall and even Alexanders early death. Again, this is important because this chapter serves to authenticate later chapters' prophecies.

We Are About to Get New information beginning in verse 9.

Out of one of those four horns comes **a little horn** which grows exceedingly toward the south, toward the east, and toward the *Glorious Land*.

This is NOT exactly the same as the little horn described in chapter 7. In that chapter, the little horn described a man who arrives in the **fourth kingdom** at the very end. We identified him as the antichrist who will come 3.5 years before the Lord's return. Chapter 8's little horn is part of the third kingdom, and he comes soon after Alexander's death. So, clearly, this little horn is different. However, they are similar, and the Lord uses the symbol to draw our attention to their similarity.

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Antiochus IV fits the little horn in this Chapter 8.

Here's a brief history of Antiochus IV

Antiochus IV was the eighth king of the Seleucid empire. He took the throne at the age of eighteen in 222 BC. The Seleucid empire was located in present-day Syria and it was one of the four divisions of the Greek Empire after Alexander's death. He fought against the other Greek divisions, seeking to gain power over them. He fought to gain territory in the east and the south

- And most famously, invaded Palestine and conquered the land of Israel
- he defeats the sons of Israel and brings them to destruction. History records that when Antiochus arrived in Palestine, he came with a particular vengeance against the Jewish people
 - In just one campaign against Israel, he killed 40,000 Jews and took another 10,000 into slavery Having conquered the land, he continued moving south to defeat the Romans in Egypt. Instead, he lost to the Roman commander Popilius Laenas.
 - Having conquered the land, he continued moving south to defeat the Romans in Egypt. Instead, he lost to the Roman commander Popilius Laenas and he added the term *Epiphanes* to his name, which means "the manifestation of God", comparing himself to God
- Later, the Jews changed the word slightly to *Epimanes* which means "madman"
- In 171 BC, he removed the legitimate high priest of Israel and appointed a wicked man to serve him in that role. His actions against Israel culminated with the **abomination of desolation** in 168 BC (Jesus talks about in Matthew 24)

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We will learn more detail about this man in Chapter 11 and his connection to the antichrist.



So, the little horn in this chapter is Antiochus IV who attacks Israel destroys the temple and removes the high priest which means there can be no sacrifices. In verse 14 Daniel is told the stopping of the daily sacrifices, will last 2300 days. History bears out the truth of this prophecy. Beginning on September 9, 171 BC the regular authorized sacrifices were not possible, without a legitimate high priest, but the Maccabean revolt ended with the rededication of the temple on December 25, 165 BC and allowed Israel to reinstate the sacrifices. There are 2,300 days on the Jewish calendar between those two dates

Verse 15- 27

Now the Lord has the Angel Gabriel begin providing Daniel an interpretation of the vision in the second half of the chapter. Daniel didn't have the benefit of hindsight like we do so he doesn't understand the meaning of all that he has seen.

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The Angel starts by telling Daniel that this vision is about the time of the end then, Gabriel explains the full meaning of the ram and goat and horns. His explanation follows the explanation above, but now the angel adds a deeper more profound meaning to the vision.

It is what we call the “law of double reference”. Not only does the prophecy apply to just one event in the future – it also has application to a second event during the end of times.

WHILE THIS LITTLE HORN REPRESENTS ANTIOCHUS IV IT ALSO IS A REFERENCE TO THE ANTICHRIST

Gabriel explains that this vision describes not only what Antiochus would do in his day, but it also is describing another king that would be at the end of the age. The first king, Antiochus, is a type of the second king. The second king is a reference to **the Antichrist**

The antichrist will do similar things, but in greater and more terrible ways. The details given by the angel Gabriel make this very clear particularly in verse 25 which says he “shall cause deceit to prosper” that “deceit” is how he fools the people into believing he is God, the resurrected Messiah.

Finally, we’re told that this coming king will oppose Jesus Himself. Again, we know Antiochus opposed God too, but he didn’t oppose Jesus personally. We know Jesus will be opposed by the antichrist. That is the meaning of “antichrist” ... it means one who opposes Christ. The Bible says this opposition culminates with the Lord’s Second Coming to destroy him.

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Notice at the end of vs. 25 Gabriel says this king will be destroyed without “*any human means*”. Clearly this is a reference to Jesus defeating the antichrist at His Second Coming.

Paul spoke of this deception in 2 Thes. 2:7-12

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The man of lawlessness is a reference to this same man, the antichrist. Paul says he will come according to the activity of Satan He comes with Satan’s power and with false wonders and he comes with deception of wickedness. It’s the false testimony that the resurrected antichrist is the Messiah

Gabriel also says this man will “destroy many in their prosperity (or when they feel secure or when they least expect it). The antichrist will come into power promising peace, but destruction comes upon those with him. Jesus confirms this as well

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Jesus Speaks of Days Leading Up to Mat. 24:24:36-39

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. “For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. “For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.”

So, the little horn of Chapter 7 was a vision of the coming antichrist, and the little horn of Chapter 8 is also a reference to the antichrist, but the little horn in Chapter 8 also stands for Antiochus IV. This association is to help us better understand what the antichrist will do. Also, remember one of the primary purposes this was written was to help Israel understand how the Age of the Gentiles would impact them.

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CHAPTER NINE

As we begin Chapter 9 it would be good for you to go back to the beginning of our study and reread the highlighted section on the - "HISTORY OF ISRAEL". So, far we have seen how Daniel foresees the future for his people under the control of Gentile Nations, and it has left him astounded, exhausted, speechless and even sick for days, as he states at the end Chapter 8. However, Daniel's visions do not foretell the destruction of the Jewish people. On the contrary, his visions of the Age of the Gentiles always ends with the Promised One returning to save Israel

At the end of the age of the Gentile rule, the Messiah will return to establish a new Kingdom to replace all Gentile authorities. When that day comes Israel will receive the promises God gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This dark period will eventually come to an end and Israel will be restored to glory. However, up to this point in our study, the Lord has not given any indication to Daniel how long this age will last.

Daniel is hoping that it won't be long. Unfortunately, the **Age of the Gentiles** isn't a short-lived period. In fact, it will run a very long time. During this time Israel will experience various situations, including bondage, exile, regathering, and exile again. Specifically, the Lord told Israel through another prophet, Jeremiah, that Judah would be held in captivity during the early years of this age, but at an appointed time they would be allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls. However, they will remain under Gentile authority.

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Verses 1-19

As we begin our study in this chapter, we find Daniel reading from a scroll of the prophet Jeremiah. Daniel puts the date of his writing here during the first year of King Darius, the son of Ahasuerus. So, the events of this chapter happened after Chapter 5 and long after Chapter 8. He's reading what we know today as Jeremiah 29:10-14. Daniel learns that the length of time the Lord intends to hold Judah in captivity in Babylon and Persia would be 70 years. However, Daniel misinterprets the exact meaning of what he reads. He thinks that 70 years will be the end of the **Age of Gentiles**.

BACKGROUND OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah and was also known as the "weeping prophet". He was born in the town of Anathoth, about three miles from Jerusalem. Jeremiah served as a prophet from the days of Josiah all the way through the reigns of Judah's last four kings: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Jeremiah died in 570 B.C. He was a contemporary of Daniel.

Jeremiah was about 40 years old when Daniel was taken into exile to Babylon. However, Jeremiah was never sent to Babylon like Daniel. Instead Nebuchadnezzar allowed Jeremiah to choose where he would live. Jeremiah chose to remain in Judah until 586 BC when he was taken against his will to Egypt by Jewish rebels seeking to flee Babylon's control. He then finished his prophecies while in Egypt, and eventually died there, probably when Daniel was in his late thirties or forties.

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After 70 years 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah record how Cyrus, king of Persia, released the exiles to return to Judah to rebuild the temple. However, the people of Israel did not see an end to Gentile oppression over them and the city of Jerusalem. The Age of the Gentiles continues, even as they return to the land and they still endured Gentile resistance, even as they built the temple. Then in the following years the Persian kings continued to threaten Israel and when Alexander the Great conquered the city the Greek generals desecrated the temple and then Rome came to do the same. Even today the gentile nations continue to attack and threaten Israel. In other words, the end of exile didn't mean the end of the Age of the Gentiles, and that is an important difference. Israel would be under Gentile authorities until the Messiah's return, but Judah's exile in Babylon would only constitute the first 70 years of the age.

Daniel sees the two periods as one and the same, and so Daniel believes it's time to put God's plan into action and begins to pray.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT WE UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT OF THIS PRAYER.

Most misinterpret Daniels prayer. They assume that Daniel's prayer was prompted by what he read from Jeremiah. Note - Jeremiah says - that **after** the people have returned to Jerusalem they will pray, not before. Jeremiah is referring to the moment the people pray at the temple ruins when Zerubbabel leads the exiles back to Jerusalem. Jeremiah's prayer is after the exiles have returned, it's not the prayer to prompt their release.

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However, Daniel's prayer is a national prayer of confession as required by the Law of Moses given to Israel in the Old Covenant. When Daniel learns that the exile is about to end, he begins to pray asking for the judgment against the city of Jerusalem and the temple to be lifted and asks the Lord to bring the Age of the Gentiles to an end at this moment. But there's a problem with Daniel's interpretation of all that he has read and heard.

Daniel **assumes** several things incorrectly:

- He assumed wrongly that these two periods of judgment are one and the same
 - They are not
- He's assumed that the Age of the Gentiles is only 70 years long
 - Israel's exile lasted 70 years – but, the Age of the Gentiles, which must take place prior to the Kingdom, will be much longer than 70 years
- He's assumed that Jeremiah's prophecy of the end of Israel's exile in Babylon is also the end of the curses promised in Leviticus 26
- He's assuming that his confession on behalf of the people of Israel is the confession Moses described in Leviticus 26
 - His confession is not the one Moses described

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- He assumed that praying that confessional prayer would lead to the arrival of Israel's promised Messiah and Kingdom
 - That confession awaits a day in Israel's future and the Kingdom was not about to arrive

Because Daniel has been assigned the mission of explaining these things to Israel, the Lord cannot afford for His prophet to remain confused, so the Lord intervenes in a unique way to offer Daniel correction

Verse 20- 27

As Daniel is praying, the archangel Gabriel is sent to give Daniel "***instruction and understanding***". Notice how Daniel was praying and confessing the sin of both himself and that of his people. This confirms that Daniel definitely was seeking to fulfill the prayer of Leviticus 26:40 and misunderstood what was happening. While, his intentions are noble and admirable, his timing is way off. His understanding was lacking in two ways

- First, he lacked details of God's plans. Daniel only had some of the facts, so he needed more data to have the full picture of what God was planning
- Second, even the things Daniel did know from reading Moses and Jeremiah he had misunderstood it. Daniel needed someone to explain the meaning of those texts in a proper way

Look at v.23 and we see something very interesting. It basically says the Lord sent Gabriel expressly to ensure Daniel gets this right!

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We now come to the heart of the chapter. It is here we find the main message of Daniel 9. There is no single prophetic utterance in all the Bible more crucial in the fields of Biblical interpretation, apologetics and eschatology than this passage. This passage holds the key to understanding the entire breadth of Israel's prophetic history, but the style in which it is written makes a correct interpretation tricky.

WHEN DOES THE AGE OF THE GENTILES END?

Beginning in verse 24 Daniel receives a correct interpretation from Gabriel about the length of time of the **Age of the Gentiles** and as a result of what Daniel hears he now knows –

- 1) that Israel's time in exile is coming to an end
- 2) but her time under judgment in the Age of the Gentiles is just beginning
- 3) that it won't end until numerous Gentile kingdoms have risen and fallen
- 4) and ultimately not until the antichrist has ruled the entire earth

The first thing Gabriel tells Daniel is that the Age of the Gentiles will not last 70 years, but seventy "weeks". This needs some explanation which I will give in just a moment.

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First notice that Gabriel explains how these seventy weeks of judgment are decreed (by God) in order to accomplish the following six things:

1. to finish “the” transgression which was the rejection of the Messiah so the Age of the Gentiles will result in all Israel accepting their Messiah
2. to put an end to sin in general – that is what Leviticus explained that their failure to keep the Old Covenant would result in a period of curses, and the Age of the Gentiles is that period
3. this age will serve as Israel’s atonement for their sin under the Old Covenant
4. the age will bring in everlasting righteousness this is a clear reference to the Kingdom
5. to seal up vision and prophecy - presumably, these are done away with because they are no longer needed since all things are known.
6. a new temple is anointed in Jerusalem - this temple will be the Millennial Kingdom temple and the anointing is the presence of Christ Himself living in Jerusalem

All these things will be accomplished by the conclusion of the **Age of the Gentiles**, but in the meantime, it will be a period of suffering for Israel. The big question is how long will Israel have to wait for these things to come to pass? Gabriel said seventy weeks, but this doesn’t make sense.

Explanation of the “70 Weeks”

The word in Hebrew for “weeks” is *shavat*, which is literally translated “seven”. So, Gabriel is telling Daniel there

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are seventy “sevens” that have been decreed for Israel. The “sevens” here are referring to “**years**”. This means that the angel was telling Daniel that the Age of the Gentiles is a period of 70×7 years, or 490 years.

The natural thing to do would be to simply count forward 490 years to arrive at the date of Christ’s Second Coming and the start of the Kingdom... wrong! Why? Because Gabriel gives more details that complicate our interpretation.

First, in v.25, Gabriel lists three events (or time markers) and two spans of time measured in periods of sevens that we need to account for.

➤ Here are the three events:

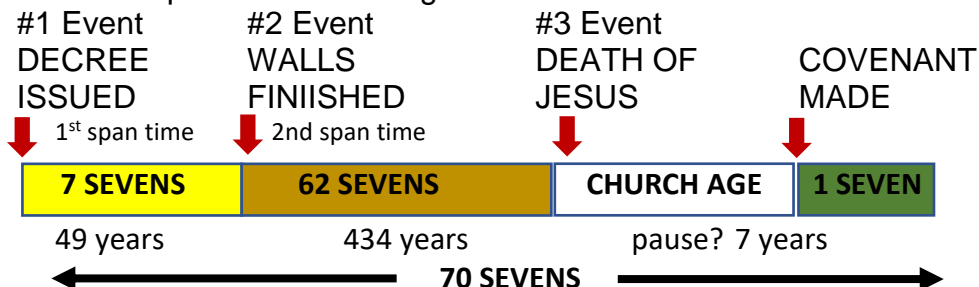
1. the Decree to rebuild the temple
2. the Cutting off of the Messiah (death of Jesus)
3. the Completion of the Temple

➤ Here are the two spans of time -

1. 7 – sevens – which would be the time between event 1 and event 2
2. 62 – sevens – which would be the time between event 2 and event 3

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- Here is a timeline laying out how these events and spans of time tie together –



From the books of Ezra and Nehemiah we know that Israel took 49 years to complete the temple, including the city walls. So, between the decree of Cyrus and the completion of the walls and pit surrounding the city, were “seven sevens”, or 49 years.

We also know according to the Biblical Calendar and historical records, that the time from the Decree of Cyrus until the death of Jesus Christ was 483 years – 456 BC until 27 AD, the death of Jesus. While some argue about various differences of dates based on different calendars these dates can be reconciled by Biblical records and confirmed by known historical facts. When you subtract the 7 sevens (49 years) from 483 years you have 434 years which is 62 sevens.

That means we are missing one seven-year period which would get us to the total of 490 years. We find that final seven years in v.27, when Gabriel says that a covenant will be made for a “week”, or for seven years. This is one of the most important revelations we gain from Gabriel’s explanation to

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Daniel plus that missing and final seven years of the 490 (the 70 sevens) is still waiting to be completed, it is on pause. How do we know this?

THE FINAL 7 YEARS

Gabriel gives us a “time marker” that signals the start of that final seven years, it is the – “covenant” that is made by the “prince”. But notice, there is no connection between that event and the death of Jesus. Those final seven years are literally floating apart from the rest of the timeline.

Ever since Jesus’ death, God has suspended the countdown and according to vs. 27- it will only resume when the “prince” confirms (makes) a covenant. At the start of the covenant, the clock starts to run again as the final seven years begins. When that final seven-year period ends Jesus will return to bring an end to the age and the Kingdom on earth will begin.

There are three important elements of what Gabriel shares that need to be explained and understood:

- 1) Who is the “prince”?
 - 2) What is the “covenant”?
 - 3) Why the “Pause” – what’s its purpose?
- **The prince.** We learned earlier in Chapter 8, the prince is the **antichrist**, the man who comes to rule the world in the last days of this age.
 - **The covenant.** It will reinstitute the Jewish people (many) performing “sacrifices and grain offerings” in the

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temple. Now we know the last seven years will begin when this man (the prince – the antichrist) brokers a covenant to permit Israel to return to their temple mount. Then at the midpoint of the Tribulation (after a time, times and half a time or 42 months), the antichrist will suspend the sacrifices. We also know the antichrist will be killed at this time, but then he is resurrected by the power of Satan, at which point, he will assume control of the entire world government. Paul said the antichrist will also seat himself in the Jewish temple calling himself god and demanding the world's worship.

Gabriel confirms this event in v.27, saying the prince will commit an abomination on the wing. The word "wing" is a Jewish euphemism that refers to the highest point of the temple. Jesus also spoke of it in Matthew 24:15,16,21.

- **The pause.** This gap was made necessary by God's promises to Abraham concerning other nations. Gen. 12:3 – "*And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.*" The Lord promised to bless the entire world with the promises He gave to Abraham's descendants. The Church is the vehicle the Lord is using to reach all nations. The Lord is "patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." (2Peter 3:9) The Lord is giving time for people to receive and for the promise to be fulfilled, so He suspends the clock for 2,000+ years to make room for the Church to receive the New Covenant.

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Gabriel ends, saying a complete destruction will come upon the one who desolated the temple. The death of the antichrist is the final act of this age and with it, Gentile rule over Israel will finally be over after 70 years of exile plus another 490 years of judgment. So, with that, Daniel receives his correction from the angel and Daniel now knows –

- that Israel's time in exile may be coming to an end
- but her time under judgment in the Age of the Gentiles is just beginning
- and it won't end until numerous Gentile kingdoms have risen and fallen
- and until the antichrist has ruled the entire earth

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CHAPTER 10

In this chapter, Daniel is given a vision of both near and future events concerning Israel and the Age of the Gentiles. The things revealed in chapter 10 are connected to the next 2 chapters. In this chapter and the first part of chapter 11 Daniel receives an explanation of near-term events.

Then in the last of half of chapter 11 and chapter 12 Daniel's vision shifts to an explanation future event. The prophecy deals with events of the very end days. It looks ahead to the end of the fourth kingdom and to the tumultuous events that conclude the age, and it reveals a fascinating connection to the Book of Revelation.

We are also introduced to three additional characters. These three characters will continue throughout the last three chapters of Daniel. Let's get started.

Verse 1-13

Daniel dates receiving this vision in the third year of Cyrus' reign. Cyrus was the Persian king who released Israel to rebuild its temple in Judah. Remember Chapter 9 was set in the first year of Cyrus so, Chapter 10 follows two years later.

This is the last vision Daniel received. He is probably approaching 90 years of age. The message he receives describes war between the Gentiles and Jews, and between God and Satan

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At this point Daniel knows Israel's final exodus victory is a long way off and that for now Israel will endure thousands of years of Gentile oppression. As this chapter begins Daniel is mourning about God's judgment against His own people. In v.5, we are introduced to another character. Daniel is standing by the bank of the Tigris river, which ran through Babylon and he looks up to see a figure, which Daniel calls "a certain man". Daniel's description of this man is like the one Daniel saw briefly in Chapter 8 verses 15 &16, suspended over a river.

However, this time Daniel provides a description of the Man. He says the Man seems to be glowing almost white hot and then with the additional detail he gives we recognize this person to be Jesus. The description is similar to that of John in Revelation 1:10-15. And like John, Daniel is terrified by the appearance of Jesus.

The books of Daniel and Revelation contain several important connections. The book of Daniel has been called the Revelation of the Old Testament for good reason. The books are linked in one especially surprising way, which we come to see in these next three chapters

As Daniel sees Jesus, he falls to the ground unconscious. The "Man" Jesus then sends the angel (Gabriel) to revive Daniel and to continue the conversation and bring Daniel the interpretation. The angel directs Daniel to stand up and not to fear so he will be able to pay attention and receive this revelation of God.

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Verse 14-20

Gabriel then tells Daniel that he has come to make him understand what will happen to his people in the latter days – “the vision *refers to many days yet to come.*” (vs. 14)

The angel has to revive and strengthen Daniel again. Gabriel tells Daniel to be strong and courageous because there is prophetic work to do. Daniel responds go ahead speak and tell me what I need to hear.

Before beginning the revelation, the angel asks Daniel, do you know why I am here, and do you realize how important this revelation is? Then in v.21 to make sure Daniel knows he says, “I’m here to tell you what you must inscribe in Scripture”. What Gabriel goes on to tell Daniel is what becomes Chapters 11-12.

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CHAPTER 11

Gabriel is going to give Daniel a long and detailed prophecy. He first begins with a detailed prophecy concerning the final kings of Persia and then uncanny detail about the Greek Empire that will cover multiple generations of the two key leaders that will take over the Greek Empire. Then finally the rise of Antiochus IV to power and how he is a type of the antichrist.

NOTE: Gabriel's explanations include near-term and future events. The events and details given take place in the Age of the Gentiles, but they also apply to or are related to end time events.

First, Gabriel tells Daniel that there will be four more kings over Persia. History confirms this prophecy. The four kings were Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis, Darius I, and Xerxes. He then provides an in-depth description of the two kingdoms – the North and South, that will come out of the Alexandrian empire and will be at war with each other. The prophecies concerning these kingdoms cover a span of several hundred years and reveal subsequent rulers and circumstance about each. History proves out all the details Gabriel gives Daniel. Below is a short record of history and how it lines up with all that Gabriel described.

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HISTORY OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH EMPIRES

Xerxes King of Persia ca. 486 BV - 465 BC - became so powerful that he decided he could conquer Greece but, he was defeated in a famous naval battle (*the Battle of Salamis 480 BC*) and was forced to retreat. His attack on Greece laid the groundwork for the rise of Alexander the Great. He is the mighty king who does as he pleases that Gabriel describes in vs. 3.

The “North” and “South” kingdoms Gabriel refers to in verses 5ff we know from history were the Seleucid Empire and the Ptolemy Empire respectively. The Ptolemy empire occupied present-day Syria and into northern Judea and extended east, as far as India. The Seleucid Empire occupied Egypt and extended up into southern Judea. The border that separated these two empires ran right through the middle of Israel. So, when these two empires fought back and forth for control, the front line was Israel.



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HISTORY CONTINUED -

Ptolemy I Soter, the king of the south, who was a general under Alexander, decided to make himself king or pharaoh over Egypt. He didn't need or want to answer to anyone. He called himself pharaoh to gain acceptance from the Egyptian Population.

Meanwhile, another ex-Alexandrian general, **Seleucus I Nicator**, the king of the north, rose to power over Babylon. He was forced to defend Babylon against another of Alexander's generals, Antigonus. Antigonus was threatening to take over Babylon, so Seleucus I Nicator asked Ptolemy I Soter to help him. As a consequence of this action Seleucus I Nicator became Ptolemy's "prince", as Gabriel says in v.5. So effectively, Ptolemy I Soter will have power over both empires.

Eventually, these two men die and one day Ptolemy II rules in the south and Antiochus II rules in the north. They become bitter enemies, but in 250 BC, they decided to make peace through marriage. The daughter of Ptolemy II, Bernice marries Antiochus II, who had divorced his wife, Laodicea, in order to take Ptolemy's daughter. However, when Ptolemy II died (246BC), Antiochus decided to take back his first wife. When Laodicea was back in favor, she had the new wife, Berenice, killed, along with her infant son. Eventually, her son, Seleucus II, succeeds his father in the North. (*These are the events described in v.6*)

Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III, comes to power in the south and attacks Seleucus II. The battle took place in Syria at Antioch. He succeeds and gains control of much of the northern kingdom's territory and held it until his death. (*These are the events of v.7*)

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HISTORY CONTINUED -

Ptolemy III returns to Egypt and he brings with him with religious artifacts from Syria. (*This is spoken of in v.8.*) When Seleucus II dies he is succeeded by his son, Seleucus III, who is succeeded by his brother, Antiochus III the Great. Eventually, the Seleucids succeeded in driving the Ptolemaic Egyptians back into the Sinai. (*These are the battles described in vs.10*)

Ptolemy IV Philopator the son of Ptolemy III and Berenice II takes over and soon attacks Antiochus III at the new border in Southern Israel – (The battle of Raphia 217 B.C.) This campaign is described in vs.11-12. He finally succeeds in retaking Palestine in 203 BC (*This attack is described in v.13*)

Remember these battles have been centered on Israel. The Jewish people were driven from place to place with each battle. So, when Antiochus III entered the land the second time the people of Israel decided to side with him. They opposed the Egyptians of the Ptolemaic kingdom and helped Antiochus repel them. (*This recorded in vs 14*)

Antiochus III (the king of the North) invaded and defeated the city of Sidon in northern Palestine (a fortified city). This event is recorded in v.15 Antiochus III now had the Land of Israel (the Glorious Land) to himself. (*As written in v.16*)

However, a new threat was rising in the west. Rome was gaining power and threatening to take over the world. So, Antiochus III initiated peace with Egypt even offering his daughter, Cleopatra I Syra, as a wife to Ptolemy V, but instead, she became loyal to her new Egyptian husband. (*This is found in verse 17*)

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HISTORY CONTINUED -

Rome rises to power, so Antiochus III goes home and dies. (This is what v.19 means.)

Antiochus' Son, Seleucus IV, succeeds his father and has to submit to Roman authority. One of the major consequences of Rome's control - they require taxes be paid. Seleucus IV must tax his people, including the Jews. He appoints a Jewish man named Heliodorus to collect taxes in Judea. Heliodorus aggressively commands the Jews to pay taxes, which obviously, makes him despised by the people. Heliodorus decides he must kill the king or be killed by his own people. He poisons Seleucus IV and kills him. *(All these events are related in v.20)*

One of the reasons for all the detail given about the near term events of the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms is with all the incredible accuracy of those predictions it gives us complete assurance that Daniel received this knowledge from God. There is no other explanation for being able to predict with such accuracy things that would happen hundreds of years later. This means we can take the rest of his prophecy with the same assurance which will be about **the end times**.

In addition, all the history covered above provides background to what comes next in verses 21 through 35. In these verses **Antiochus IV becomes a focal point in Gabriel's message to Daniel**. You may remember this man from our study of Chapter 8. Daniel saw a goat with four horns, followed by a small horn that grew stronger than the rest. That small horn was Antiochus IV. He was called a

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small horn because he serves as a type for another wicked and diabolic leader in the future. That future leader will be none other than the antichrist, who was also represented by another small horn in Chapter 7. So, we have two leaders, one near-term to Daniel - Antiochus IV and one in the future - the antichrist. Antiochus serves as a type, or forerunner, to the antichrist. I shared a brief overview of the life of Antiochus IV in chapter 8. Gabriel is going to now give us some more detail.

Verse 21-35

Verse 21 refers to Antiochus IV Epiphanes illegitimate rise to power in about 175 BC and the next several verses reveal how wicked, vile, and cruel he will be particularly to the Jewish people. We are going to share actual historic events and relate these things to the prophecies here in Daniel. Antiochus IV attacks Egypt in 170 BC. Ptolemy VI opposed him by sending a much larger army against him, but Antiochus was able to defeat Ptolemy VI's forces with his smaller force. He captures the city of Memphis by the means of lies and deception (verse 25), but he could not capture the key Egyptian city of Alexandria (verse 27) so, Antiochus IV returns to Syria with a considerable amount of plunder taken from Memphis. (verse 28)

On his way back home, he passes through Israel and takes time to install two Jews as illegitimate priests in the place of Onias III the real high priest. Onias III objects and schemes against Antiochus and creates a division among the Jews. So, Antiochus has Onias III killed creating a politically unstable situation. He becomes so upset with all the political maneuvering he decides to attack Israel.

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In **168 BC** he enters the city of Jerusalem killing 80,000 Jews and desecrated the temple and at the same time he continued southward to attack Egypt again. In (**verse 30**), we're told that ships from Kittim would come against him. And in fact, ships containing Roman troops led by the Roman consul Popillius Laenas were sent from Cyprus to secure the territory for Rome. Cyprus is the modern name of Kittim. Antiochus was not able to contend with the Roman troops and had to return home again.

Let's take a moment here to be reminded that Antiochus IV is a type of the antichrist. This is why this chapter of Daniel is so significant. The actions of Antiochus IV mimic or are similar to what the antichrist will do, though on a smaller scale. At some future time, the antichrist will come to power amidst 10 other world rulers. Initially, he will gain power through deceit and military victories. Three of the 10 world rulers of that day will rise up and conspire against him. The person who is the antichrist (unknown yet) will die, but he comes back to life and as a result will gain even greater power to deceive the world. This monumental event occurs at the middle of the Tribulation. Now with even greater power he turns his attention to persecuting the Jewish people, especially in Jerusalem. This is what Antiochus IV does as we will see. His similarities to the antichrist only grow as we continue to the end of the chapter.

Again verse 30 explains, how Antiochus IV was so enraged by the loss to Rome that he decides to take the loss out against the Jewish people. Antiochus IV set his mind on exterminating the Jewish people and ending Jewish religious

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practice forever. He desecrated **the temple** and abolished **the daily sacrifice**.

In seeking to exterminate Judaism and to Hellenize the Jews, he forbids the Jews from following their religious practices (including their festivals and circumcision) and commanded that copies of the Law be burned. Then he **set up the abomination that causes desolation**. In this culminating act he built on December 16, 167 b.c. an altar to Zeus on top of the altar of burnt offering outside the temple and had a pig sacrifice on the altar. The Jews were compelled to offer a pig on the 25th of each month to celebrate Antiochus Epiphanes' birthday. Antiochus promised those who... violated the covenant (**vs. 30**) great reward if they would set aside the God of Israel and worship Zeus, the god of Greece. Many in Israel were persuaded by his promises (**flattery vs. 32**) and worshiped the false god. However, a small remnant remained faithful to God, refusing to engage in those abominable practices. Antiochus IV died insane in Persia in 163 b.c. (Dan. 8:31)

In Matthew 25:15-21 Jesus warned of this very event -

¹⁵ "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days

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were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. ²³ *"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.* ²⁴ *For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.* ²⁵ *See, I have told you beforehand.*

²⁶ *"Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.* ²⁷ *For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.* ²⁸ *For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.*

Of course, Jesus spoke this many years after Antiochus IV lived and died. Jesus is speaking about a future time and a different event, BUT - Jesus specifically referred back to Daniel and his reference to this event and where the antichrist is described. The words of Jesus here confirm that what we are studying and reading in Daniel about Antiochus are a picture, or type, of something greater yet to come. Jesus added the words "let the reader understand" (*highlighted above*) to emphasize that a deeper understanding is required. That deeper understanding is knowing that Antiochus IV pictures the antichrist

So, to summarize what we have learned – the antichrist will make a covenant with the people of Israel to allow them to restart sacrifices in their temple then at the midpoint of the Great Tribulation he will stop the sacrifices and grain offering and he will set up another abomination of desolation in the temple.

The apostle John gives us some insight about this event in Revelation 13:15-16, "*And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to*

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the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. ¹⁵ He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed."

John explains how at the time the antichrist rises to power he will be assisted by the false prophet who will deceive the world into worshipping the antichrist as god. To help convince the world to worship the antichrist, the false prophet will set up an image of the antichrist in the temple. This image will have supernatural power to speak, which will astonish the world and inspire their devotion all the more. There is no doubt that Antiochus IV is a depiction of these events.

but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits, Daniel 11:32b

Antiochus cunningly pitted the various groups of Jews against each other and ultimately was able to lead them into idolatry through his manipulation. However, the Jewish people final revolt as (**verse 32**) alludes to. Horrified by the Temple desecration and cruelty toward the Jewish people, a priest named Mattathias and his sons rose up in rebellion.

The revolt of the Maccabees, as it came to be known, continued on and ultimately drove the Seleucids from Judea in 160. The Maccabees had accomplished their pursuit of religious liberty and were going after political independence. Jewish culture became more conservative and the Mosaic Law returned with greater zeal. Those who knew God's law began to spread its practice and understanding among the apostate Jewish population. (**verse 33**) In fact some of those who were leaders during this period later became the Pharisees of Jesus' day and others became the Essenes, who

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wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls. Those opposed to the revolt in the beginning later turned their support to the Maccabees,

which is the hypocrisy mentioned in (verse 34). It is interesting to note that the people of Israel have remained for the most part true to the Law in every generation since that time.



Although the Jewish people supported their fight against the forced religious desegregation, they were unsure of the political and cultural influence of the Maccabees. The Hellenistic way of life was already entrenched onto the Jewish people. However, after the

Maccabees conquered the whole of Judea and enforced the collapse of the Seleucid Kingdom the Jewish people imposed themselves as an autonomous group. Judea was now free from the Seleucid rule and the death of Antiochus VII in 129 BCE confirmed this.

Verse 35 tells us those who have insight will fall. These are the godly who love the Lord and His Law. Gabriel explains why this must happen, it is to refine, purge and purify the rest

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until the end. “**The rest**” refers to the rest of Israel. The nation of Israel was brought back into a degree of orthodoxy by the actions of Antiochus IV. It required the intense evil of such a man to unite the people of Israel to follow their Law. In the last days, a new revival will be needed and so another wicked and despicable man will be required for this to happen. The Lord will permit the rise of the antichrist to be used to bring Israel back into the bond of the Covenant. Just as Antiochus tried to destroy the Jewish people, so will the antichrist place special emphasis on eliminating Israel.

Verses 36- 40

Now we transition to FUTURE FAR TERM prophecies concerning the antichrist himself.

These verses at first appear to be still talking about Antiochus IV. However, what is described cannot be accurately applied to Antiochus, so they are referring to someone in the future. This future ruler will do as he pleases. No one will challenge his power. He will magnify himself above every god everywhere. This is one of the reasons we know Gabriel is no longer talking about Antiochus. While Antiochus called himself a god, he still acknowledged other gods like Zeus that he sacrificed to. We also know that Antiochus couldn't do everything he pleased, especially where Rome was concerned.

We find something very interesting in **verse 37** which says the antichrist will have no regard for any god worshipped by his “fathers” and he will have NO desire for women. This tells a little about the man who will be the one who will be the antichrist.

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Then in v.38, Gabriel says this man will “honor” a god of fortresses, a god his fathers didn’t know. Gabriel references this God again in verse 39 calling it “a foreign god”. Revelation 13:2-4 tells us that after the antichrist is resurrected in the middle of the tribulation, he causes the world to worship both the dragon and himself. The antichrist seeks to be a messiah and Satan is his foreign god who is worshipped because of the false messiah.

Finally, Gabriel describes how this man comes to his end beginning in verse 40. Similar to Antiochus IV, the antichrist will fight neighboring nations. According to Gabriel, the antichrist will succeed in moving through these nations and subduing all of them. Then like Antiochus IV, the antichrist will make a special point of invading Israel, the “Glorious Land” (verse 41). Just as Antiochus tried to destroy the Jewish people, so will the antichrist place special emphasis on eliminating Israel. The enemy’s focus on destroying Israel is directly related to Israel’s role in Christ’s Second Coming.

In v.44, we’re told that the antichrist will be drawn into battle with rumors from the East and North and he will attack them, “with great fury to destroy and annihilate many”. Gabriel tells us (Daniel) that the antichrist will camp his army west of Jerusalem, between the holy mountain and the great sea. He will attack the city on the western side. There, he meets his end as a result of Christ’s Second Coming. Christ comes through the east gate of the city and leads the population out of the city to safety. Then he fights the antichrist and destroys him.

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**The antichrist's death is the last act of the
Age of the Gentiles**

The book of Revelation gives us much more detail and insight to several of these events surrounding the antichrist and the return of Jesus.

MY STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION GOES INTO THESE DETAILS.

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CHAPTER 12

This chapter begins right where chapter 11 left off. We are at exactly the same moment in time. The time is the time of the Tribulation, as the antichrist rises to power and then is defeated and now, we are told that Michael, a great prince (an arch angel), will arise. Michael is sent by God to bring the Age of the Gentiles to an end, so that Israel may be returned to her place of glory.

Verse 1 - 4

Verse 1 is describing the entire period of Tribulation – “a time of trouble”. Remember from chapter 9, that this seven-year period of great tribulation will be for Israel not the church or the nations. It was decreed against Israel for six reasons all of which are for the benefit Israel. Ultimately it permits God to grant the people the promise He said He would (*according to the Mosaic Covenant*) that it is - **the Kingdom**. Note the end of the verse says, “that many of Daniel’s people will be rescued”.

Those who are rescued (*saved*) will be those who are found “written in the book”. This is referring to the Book of Life, the book in which the names of all who will inherit eternal life are listed. (Revelation 13:5 & 20:15) It is a list of **all** the saints destined for eternal life in the Kingdom. The book holds the names of both those who were once Jew and

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Gentile. Gabriel is letting us know that some of those who are found in this book are being saved in these difficult days.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Once a person is “saved” they become a part of the kingdom of God – no longer Jew or Gentile, but a citizen of heaven. (Galatians 3:28) Also, it is important to know that within the Bible there are really only 3 groups of people God deals with: 1) Israel (the Jews), 2) the Gentiles (nations) and 3) the Church. When reading and studying the Bible it is you need to identify which people God is addressing. Many mistakes are made when interpreting scriptures that are referring to or addressing the Jews and trying to apply it to the church or vice versa.

Revelation 7:1-4 & 9 & 14 tells us about the incredible evangelistic power during the Tribulation;

- 144,000 Jewish men are brought to faith in the Tribulation by God’s grace
- they become servants to bring the Gospel to an uncountable number of Jews and Gentiles

The Old Covenant promises all Israel salvation. The last act of the Tribulation will be to restore Israel back to that Covenant, so they may receive the Kingdom. Gabriel is speaking of this group when he describes the great rescue at the end of Tribulation. (Paul also refers to it in Romans 11:25-27)

Then after they are spiritually saved, the Lord takes the final step of bringing these saints new bodies. Verse 2 says

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that many of Israel who “sleep” in the dust of the ground will awaken. To sleep means to die, to be without a body, so Gabriel describes the moment of Israel’s resurrection as an awakening of those in the dust of the ground to everlasting life.

- The Church saints were resurrected before Tribulation began, at a moment commonly called the Rapture
- But the saints who died prior to Pentecost are not the Church...they are Old Testament saints

So, Gabriel says the OT saints receive their new bodies at the end of Tribulation. Revelation 20 says that the Resurrection of the righteous throughout history takes place prior to the Kingdom. The Church is resurrected before tribulation, while the OT saints are resurrected after Tribulation. So, both groups are resurrected before the Kingdom.

Meanwhile, the resurrection for those not in the book of life will take place at the end of the Kingdom, according to Revelation 20. Their resurrection waits until then so that all unbelieving humanity, including those who come out of the Kingdom, can be judged together – the Great White Throne.

After Gabriel explains to Daniel about the resurrection of the Old Testament saints, he says to him,

“shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end”. (Verse 4)

At first, this can seem confusing because we’re reading the very words of Daniel now. The Book of Daniel was never

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sealed. So, there must be another book or an additional part of Daniel that is not included here that gives more details about the end times. In fact, Daniel is given more than is shared here. He is shown some very disturbing things to come that are not revealed in the book of Daniel.

ANOTHER BOOK?

- What things are to come that we find in such a book?
- Is there such a book?
- And why did the angel ask Daniel to write it and yet not allow anyone to see it?
- The answers will come later in this chapter

At the end of verse 4 it says, “knowledge will increase”. While many have interpreted this in different ways it most likely refers to the increase of spiritual knowledge, resulting from more revelation from God. After all there were more books of the Old Testament written after Daniel’s day and the entire New Testament was yet to be written. Plus, Jesus the Messiah was yet to come and all that would be revealed through that major event – the first coming of Jesus.

Verses 5-

Beginning with verse 5 Daniel begins to speak instead of Gabriel. He tell us what he sees and he sees the man in linen, who we know as Christ, above the waters of the Tigris River and on each bank of the river there are two others standing one of which is Gabriel. In verse six one of them asks, how long until the end of these wonders?

In verse 7 Jesus answers the question. He says, “these wonders will last a time, times and half of time”. It is a

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phrase we have already seen before. It appears in Revelation 12 and we know and understand it means 3.5 years. Then Jesus adds that at the conclusion of this time, the holy people (Israel) will be “*completely shattered*” and all the events will be completed. Therefore, this lets us know clearly that the 3.5 years Jesus mentions here are the final three and a half years of the seven-year Tribulation.

INSIGHT ABOUT THE “OTHER BOOK”

We know that Daniel was troubled by the visions he saw, so Gabriel was sent to give him additional insight and to help him properly understand them. Some of that insight was recorded for our benefit in Chapters 10-12. These things covered the kings of Persia, kings of the Greek Empire and provided us some insights to the coming antichrist in the Tribulation. BUT then Daniel was told to record other information and wonders of the end times that were to be sealed up and not to be revealed. These are things that are different and in addition to what Daniel wrote and has given us – another book?

*Daniel himself was confused about these wonders and why he must know them, but not write them. In fact, in verse 8 Daniel asks the Lord, “**what will be the outcome of these events?**” In other words, please explain to me what the events mean, what’s their purpose, and how does this thing end?*

The Lord responds by telling Daniel to drop it, go your way, because the meaning of these things won’t be revealed until the end time. (Verse 9)

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We will come back to this other book to finally discover the secret of what happened to it. But for now, Jesus goes on to give Daniel an overview of what life will be like until that end time –

First, in verse 10 Jesus says many Jews will be purged and refined. However, through the trials and persecutions that Israel endures over hundreds of years of the “Age of the Gentiles” will produce a harvest of many believing Jews

Second, He explain how the wicked will continue to act wickedly and they will not understand the truth. but He will grant insight to some, “the wise”. along the way, and this remnant of Israel will understand the Word of God and be saved.

THE OTHER BOOK REVEALED

So, what happened to Daniel’s book? If he sealed it and never shared it with the world, then how do those of the end times come to know what’s in it? The answer is found in Revelation 10:1-11 (go and read it now).

John sees a strong angel descending from Heaven and he is carrying with him a little book. The angel says now is the time to reveal what is in the book and he instructs John to eat it. This book that John receives is the one Daniel wrote that he sealed up. The angel delivering it is Michael, as promised in Daniel 12.

Daniel was given a detailed explanation of the events of the final half of Tribulation, including the vial or bowl judgments (Revelation 16). However, Daniel didn’t fully understand them and what he saw greatly disturbed him.

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(THE OTHER BOOK REVEALED CONTINUED)

Gabriel gives Daniel insight and explains many things about the end times, (we read many of those things in the book of Daniel), but he was not given a full understanding of everything. Those who live in the end time will be allowed to know what the things sealed up until then mean. But the Lord did see fit to give Daniel this preview so that he could write it for John. Then John received it and was commissioned to write it for us. So, the events recorded in Revelation 11-19 are what Daniel wrote in the little book and sealed up. John received them and was permitted to give them to us. Even then, the understanding of Revelation has alluded believers for centuries since John wrote it.

Today we are blessed to not only have the book of Daniel but the rest of the Bible and all that Revelation shares, plus additional fulfillment of Bible prophecy that helps us better grasp God plans.

Verse 11-12

Finally, the Book of Daniel ends with one last amazing and fascinating prophecy about what follows the end of the Tribulation.

Jesus tells Daniel there will be an additional 75 days after the end of the Tribulation. Jesus says that from the midpoint of the tribulation, this is the point when the antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel, it is the half way point of the “seven”, as we read in Daniel 9 and it is the beginning of the 3.5 years that Daniel recorded in his little book.

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Jesus says to count **1,290 days** from this midpoint. The Jews count 360 days to a year. So, there are 1,260 days in 3.5 years. This means Jesus is asking us to count an additional 30 days after the antichrist dies and the Lord returns.

Then Jesus goes on to say that those who attain or last until **day 1,335** will be blessed. (Verse 12) This means we are adding another 45 days to the 30 additional days that were given earlier. So, we have a total of an additional 75 days after the end of the tribulation. Hmm?

What are these 75 days for? The Bible does not give us a clear answer or least not that I have been able to uncover, but we do have some clues.

First the period of 30 days we are told is to be counted until the restoration of the temple (verse 11). It is likely these 30 days are needed to cleanse the temple and prepare it for the Millennial Reign of Christ.

The remaining 45 days before the New Kingdom begins maybe time required to get everything and everyone ready to begin the Millennial Kingdom.

The Millennium will take place on the same earth that will have hosted all of mankind from the days of Genesis. Much of it will be in ruins from all of the damage caused by the judgments carried out during the Tribulation. So, there will need to be a massive cleanup. Then there is the process of Jesus separating the sheep and goats which He described in Matthew 25. All of this will more than likely will take some

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time. Whatever needs to happen without question it will be accomplished supernaturally.

Then in the last verse Jesus says, “*As for you, Daniel, go and live your life until the end. You will get your rest. At the end you will rise from death and receive your share of the promise.*” (verse 13) Daniel will die, but at the appointed time he will be resurrected, as will all saints and like all saints, he will receive a portion in the Kingdom as his reward. **The main point here is Daniel was being assured that he would not experience the tribulations that he foresaw.**

We too share that promise. We don't see the Tribulation, but be assured, they will all come to pass...and sooner than you think.

(think about this - one day you will get to meet Daniel!)

Secrets of Daniel

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Get ready to discover the secrets that the Angel Gabriel reveals to the profit Daniel. Daniel accurately predicts the rise and fall of world empires spanning thousands of years of human history including events that will happen at the end of this age when the antichrist rises to power and ultimately is defeated when Christ returns.

Daniel gives us detailed and revealing insights to 3 important points;

1. God's plan for Israel,
2. God's plan for the Gentile nations and
3. God's plan for His coming Kingdom

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