

DANIEL

Message:

Daniel wrote to foster hope of future restoration among the covenant people of God by showing that God is sovereign over all the kingdoms of man, and that the future coming of the Son of Man will result in the judgment of all the Gentile kingdoms of the world and the restoration and blessing of Israel under His reign from Jerusalem.



Title

The Hebrew title of this book is *daniyyel* which means “God is (my) Judge.” The book is named after its principal character and author, Daniel. This was in keeping with the Hebrew custom of affixing the name of the author to the book he wrote.

Author

While little is known about Daniel’s family background, he was born into the royal family (1:3) and was of noble birth (1:6). He is avowed to have been physically attractive and mentally astute (1:3-4). Ezekiel often refers to Daniel, citing his righteousness (14:14, 16, 18, 20) and wisdom (28:3). He is compared in these passages in Ezekiel with Noah and Job, who were historical personages; thereby proving that Daniel was also a historical person and not a fictional character.¹ Daniel was deported to Babylon in 605 B.C. when King Jehoiakim paid homage to King Nebuchadnezzar, giving him tribute and hostages, one of which was Daniel. After his deportation to Babylon, Daniel spent his entire life in exile where he ministered as a statesman and prophet in the court’s of both Babylon and Persia. Daniel rose to prominence in Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian court in 603 B.C. (2:1). His last dated prophecy occurred “in the third year of Cyrus” (10:1), which was in 536 B.C. Thus Daniel’s ministry spanned a period of at least 70 years (605 to 536 B.C.). If he was around 16 years of age when deported “as a youth” to Babylon (605 B.C.), he was 85 in Cyrus’ third year (536 B.C.). Daniel’s contemporaries were Jeremiah in Jerusalem and Ezekiel among the Jewish refugees in Babylon.

Date of Composition

Assuming Daniel wrote the book² (8:1; 9:2, 20; 10:2; 12:4), the date of composition can be determined by two internal chronological notices recorded in the book itself. Daniel was

¹J. Dwight Pentecost, “Daniel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986), 1323.

²Commenting on the external evidence supporting Daniel’s authorship Thomas L. Constable writes: “the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of this book as the writing of Daniel (Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14). The Jews believed that Daniel was its writer from its earliest appearance. The early church father Jerome argued for [and defended]

deported to Babylon in Jehoiakim's third year, which was 605 B.C. Daniel's last dated prophecy occurred "in the third year of Cyrus" (10:1) which was in 536 B.C. "According to the contents of the Book of Daniel, it was written in the sixth century B.C. by [the prophet] Daniel who lived during the events [he faithfully recorded]."³ The explicit dates recorded in the Book of Daniel cover a time period of approximately 68 years. The book begins with Daniel in his teens (probably around 16 years of age); and records his remarkable career as a statesman in the Babylonian and later Persian courts until his eighties.⁴

*The Objections of Modern Critics to the Early (6th Century) Date of Daniel.*⁵ Modern criticism has objected to the traditional early 6th century date for the writing of Daniel. Proponents of the critical view hold that the Book of Daniel was written by an anonymous author about 167 B.C. during the Maccabean period to encourage Jewish resistance during the persecutions carried-out by Antiochus Epiphanes.⁶ Several reasons are given for their abandonment of the traditional view in favor of the later 2nd century date (ca. 167 B.C.):

1. The book does not claim to be the work of Daniel.
2. The book is not quoted in Jewish Inter-testamental literature until after 180 B.C.
3. The book was placed among the *Kethubim* ("Writings") in the Hebrew Canon⁷ instead of among the Prophets; therefore it could not have been written in the seventh century B.C. If it had been written in the seventh century B.C., it would have been placed among the Prophets.
4. The writer records several apparent historical inaccuracies which seem to indicate that he was not familiar with the historical situation. Therefore, the book must have been composed sometime after the time period in question.
5. The language of the book indicates a later time period; that is, the author uses several Greek loan words which point to a composition after 330 B.C. when the Greek language had spread throughout the Middle East.
6. The book records the rise of the Greek empire which took place about 330 B.C.

The Conservative's Response. Each of the alleged problems has been answered by conservative scholars.⁸ The first two objections are arguments from silence and are not at all

Daniel's authorship against a contemporary critic of his, Porphyry, who contended that someone composed it about 165 B.C. and claimed that he was Daniel" ("Daniel" [notes published by Sonic Light and available for online downloading from www.soniclight.com, May 2000 Edition], 3).

³Pentecost, "Daniel," in *BKC*, 1323.

⁴Ronald B. Allen, "Notes on the Book of Daniel" (unpublished class notes in 304 Old Testament Prophets, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fall 1998), 6.

⁵For a detailed treatment on issues of authorship see Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, rev ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 379-403. John E. Goldingay provides an exhaustive historical review on the various stages of interpreters' views on the authorship of the Book of Daniel in the *Introduction* of his commentary on *Daniel*, Word Biblical Commentary, ed. David A. Hubbard, et al., vol. 30 (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), xxv-xl; and a summary in his Conclusion 320-334.

⁶Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody, 1976), 264.

⁷Daniel was placed among the "Writings" (*Kethubim* or *Hagiographa*) in the Hebrew Bible, rather than among the "Prophets" (*Nebi'im*) because, even though he recorded many prophetic visions, his ministry was primarily that of a statesman in the royal courts of Babylon and Persia.

⁸See Bruce K. Waltke, "The Date of the Book of Daniel," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 133 (October-December 1976):319-29; Gleason L. Archer, Jr., "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136

decisive. Third, Daniel was placed among the *Kethubim* because of his office as a statesman rather than a prophet. Fourth, the alleged “historical inaccuracies” have been refuted by numerous archaeological finds.⁹ The co-regency of Belshazzar with Nabonidus actually supports an early date for Daniel. The record of Belshazzar’s co-regency was lost by the time of Heroditus (ca. 450 B.C.) and was not rediscovered until recently. Thus Daniel must have been composed before 450 B.C. while the records were still available. Fifth, the presence of Greek and Persian loan words can be explained by their function as describing musical instruments (cf. 3:5), and as such, were words which crossed national boundaries. Sixth, the references to the Greeks are supported by extra-biblical records that indicate that Greeks were sold into slavery in Babylon and Persia as early as 700 B.C. Finally, the argument from historical situations is based on the assumption that predictive prophecy is not possible. If one allows God to supernaturally *foretell* the rise of Persia, Greece, and Rome, then there is no problem with Daniel predicting these future nations even though he lived during the kingdom of Babylon.

Concerning Daniel’s composition of this book, we concur with Archer that

Despite the numerous objections which have been advanced by scholars who regard this as a prophecy written after the event, there is no good reason for denying to the sixth-century Daniel the composition of the entire work. This [book] represents a collection of his memoirs made at the end of a long and eventful career which included government service from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar in the 590s to the reign of Cyrus the Great in the 530s. The appearance of Persian technical terms indicates a final recension of these memoirs at a time when Persian terminology had already infiltrated into the vocabulary of Aramaic. The most likely date for the final edition of the book, therefore, would be about 530 B.C.¹⁰

Recipients

Although the book does not mention who it was addressed to, it seems clear that it was originally intended for the Jewish exiles in Babylon but also for the Jewish remnant from the time of the return to the land, as well as for all successive generations.

Historical Background

The entire Book of Daniel is set in the period of the Jewish Diaspora and records “the times of the Gentiles.”¹¹ Daniel was taken into captivity in 605 B.C. as part of Nebuchadnezzar’s first deportation of Jews from Judah. Daniel prophesied that the times of the Gentiles had begun with Babylon’s destruction and domination of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar himself

(April-June 1979):129-47.

⁹Edwin M. Yamauchi, “Archaeological Backgrounds of the Exilic and Postexilic Era—Part I: ‘The Archaeological Background of Daniel,’” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 137 (January-March 1980):3-16; William H. Shea, “Daniel 3: Extra-Biblical Texts . . .,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20 (Spring 1982):29-52.

¹⁰Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 379.

¹¹See the discussion below under “Literary Features” in Daniel.

was the head of gold that initiated Daniel's fourfold statue representing the four Gentile kingdoms of mankind that would eventually be destroyed by Messiah (chaps. 2 and 7). Daniel ministered for the full duration of the Babylonian domination as a prophet of the living God and high court official of the Chaldean government. The Book of Daniel concludes shortly after the first Jewish faithful (50,000) returned to Jerusalem from Babylon in 537/536 B.C. Cyrus, the King of Persia, who had conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., in keeping with his policy of permitting captive peoples to return to the land of their birth, had issued a royal decree allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4). Daniel recorded his last dated prophecy in the third year of Cyrus which would have been in 536 B.C. (Dan 10:1). For additional information on the background of this time, see the "Introductions" to Jeremiah and Ezekiel in the earlier notes (Arguments) on these books.

Literary Features

Daniel as Apocalyptic Literature. Daniel is commonly referred to as the "Apocalypse of the Old Testament." As such, Daniel shares many similarities with the New Testament Apocalypse, the Book of Revelation, particularly in its vivid imagery and symbolism. As Ron Allen states "The book [of Daniel] is apocalyptic, dramatic, memorable and troubling. It is also wonderful."¹² Apocalyptic literature is of a particular genre (literary type), and may be defined as "symbolic visionary prophetic literature, composed during oppressive conditions, consisting of visions whose events are recorded exactly as they were seen by the author and explained through a divine interpreter, and whose theological content is primarily eschatological."¹³ Apocalyptic literature was primarily designed to provide encouragement and hope for God's people in the midst of their terrible sufferings. The Book of Daniel is one of only three Old Testament books that is apocalyptic.¹⁴ The apocalyptic sections are chapters 2, 7, 8, and 10-12. The other two books are Ezekiel (37:1-14; 40:1-48:35) and Zechariah (1:7-6:8). In the New Testament corpus, Revelation is the only apocalyptic book.¹⁵ Archer states that, "In reference to New Testament prophecy Daniel is referred to more than any other Old Testament book."¹⁶

Daniel as the Key to Understanding Biblical Eschatology. The Book of Daniel provides an amazingly comprehensive overview of biblical prophetic history and serves as the foundational component for understanding biblical eschatology. Walvoord points out that Daniel is indispensable to the development of biblical prophetic revelation and provides the key to the overall interpretation of prophecy:

In many respects, the book of Daniel is the most comprehensive prophetic revelation of the Old Testament, giving the only total view of world history from Babylon to the second advent of Christ and interrelating Gentile history and

¹²Allen, "Notes on the Book of Daniel," 1.

¹³"Hermeneutics of Old Testament Apocalyptic Literature" (Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1968), 1.

¹⁴Nearly all of the prophetic books contain at least some element of apocalyptic in them.

¹⁵Elements of apocalyptic also appear in Matthew 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 21; and 2 Pet 3:10-13.

¹⁶Gleason L. Archer, Jr., "Daniel," in *Daniel-Minor Prophets*, vol. 7 of Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 3.

prophecy with that which concerns Israel. Daniel provides the key to the overall interpretation of prophecy, is a major element in premillennialism, and is essential to the interpretation of the book of Revelation. Its revelation of the sovereignty and power of God has brought assurance to Jew and Gentile alike that God will fulfill His sovereign purposes in time and eternity.¹⁷

Of the three prophetic programs revealed in Scripture, outlining the course of the nations, Israel, and the church, Daniel alone reveals the details of God's plan for both the [Gentile] nations and Israel. Although other prophets like Jeremiah had much to say to the nations and Israel, Daniel brings together and interrelates these great themes of prophecy as does no other portion of Scripture. For this reason, the book of Daniel is essential to the structure of prophecy and is the key to the entire Old Testament prophetic revelation.

A study of this book is, therefore, not only important from the standpoint of determining the revelation of one of the great books of the Old Testament but is an indispensable preliminary investigation to any complete eschatological system.¹⁸

The Two Languages of Daniel. A feature that has baffled critics and scholars alike is that Daniel is composed in two different languages. Daniel is made up primarily of historical narrative, chapters 1 through 6 and apocalyptic (revelatory) material found mainly in chapters 7 through 12. After an introductory chapter written in Hebrew (chapter 1–2:3), Daniel switches to Aramaic (the common language of the ancient Near East) in chapter 2:4 and continues in that language through 7:28, where he reverts back to Hebrew in chapters 8–12. Some believe that the Aramaic section of Daniel has particular reference to the future course of the four Gentile world kingdoms of human history and to the coming kingdom of God that will put an end to the Gentile kingdoms of the world and establish His own righteous rule over mankind forever (see 2:44-45 and 7:13-14, 26-28). Likewise, chapters 8–12 of Daniel reveal the future struggle of the Jewish nation under Gentile domination.

The Times of the Gentiles. As pointed out above, Daniel chapters 2 through 7 which were written in Aramaic, appear to have particular reference to the future of the Gentile nations of human history. This revelation is commonly referred to as “the times of the Gentiles.” Pentecost defines the “times of the Gentiles” revealed by Daniel as:

that extended period of time in which the land given in covenant by God to Abraham and his descendants is occupied by Gentile powers and the Davidic throne is empty of any rightful heir in the Davidic line. The times of the Gentiles, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Jerusalem in 605 B.C., will continue till the Messiah returns. Then Christ will subdue nations, deliver the land of Israel from its Gentile occupants, and bring the nation Israel into her covenanted blessings in the millennial kingdom¹⁹

¹⁷John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody, 1971), 27.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁹Pentecost, “Daniel,” in *BKC*, 1329.

Daniel provides an amazing chiasitic structure in chapters 2–7 which appears to highlight his teaching concerning “the times of the Gentiles.” This is also seen to highlight the major *theme* and *theology* of the book, which is *the sovereignty of God*. The times of the Gentiles demonstrates that nations rise and fall according to the sovereignty of God, who further reveals that He will ultimately rule over the whole earth through His conquering messianic Son who He will send to destroy all Gentile opposition and establish His own rule and authority in Jerusalem (2:44-45; 7:13-14, 26-28). Note the following chart that depicts the chiasitic structure recorded in chapters 2 through 7 of Daniel.²⁰

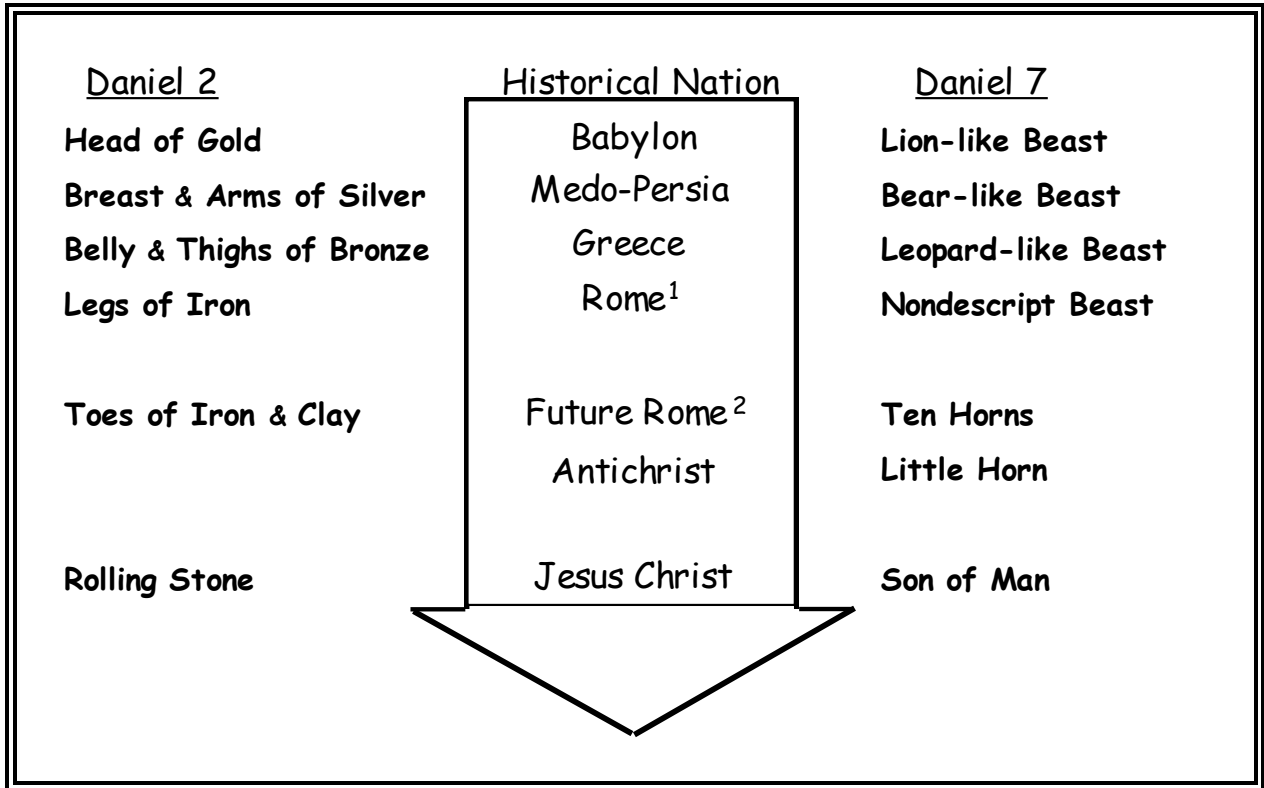
<i>Statue</i> (chap. 2)	Re: Gentile world kingdoms
<i>Fiery Furnace</i> (chap. 3)	Re: Sovereign protection of Jews
<i>Image of the Tree</i> (chap. 4) (Divine discipline)	Re: <i>Pride/downfall of Gentile ruler</i> King Nebuchadnezzar
<i>Writing on the wall</i> (chap. 5) (Divine discipline)	Re: <i>Pride/downfall of Gentile ruler</i> King Belshazzar
<i>Lion’s Den</i> (chap. 6)	Re: Sovereign protection of Jews
<i>Four Beasts</i> (chap. 7)	Re: Gentile world kingdoms

It is clear from the above diagram, that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great image, which will someday be destroyed by the “rolling stone” (Messiah, Jesus Christ) hurled down upon the great image from heaven by God (Dan. 2) and Daniel’s dream of the four beasts (Dan. 7) are interrelated. Both dreams (Dan. 2 and 7) represent the four world ruling empires of history, namely Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (historical and future). The following chart²¹ presents the elements of these dreams with suggested identifications:

²⁰Adapted from Stephen Bramer, “Daniel” (unpublished class notes in course #304 Old Testament Prophets, Dallas Theological Seminary, Summer 2001), 4.

²¹This chart is adapted from Ron Allen, “Notes on the Book of Daniel,” 14; and Charles H. Dyer, “A Class Handout On Daniel 2/7” (unpublished class notes in course #304 Old Testament Prophets, Dallas

Daniel 2 and 7



Theology

The theological theme of the book is God’s sovereignty. “The absolute sovereignty and transcendence of God above all angels and men literally permeates the book.”²² As King Nebuchadnezzar learned from first hand experience: “The Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men” (5:21). Daniel always presents God as in sovereign control and triumphant over all the affairs of world history (7:11, 26-27; 8:25; 9:27; 11:45; 12:13). The Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans will come and go, but God will establish His glorious kingdom through His promised messianic Redeemer, the eternal Son of Man.

The climax of God’s sovereignty is described in the Book of Revelation: “The kingdoms of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 11:15; cf. Dan. 2:44-45; 7:27).

Theological Seminary, Fall 1998)

²²John C. Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Everyman’s Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1985), 17.

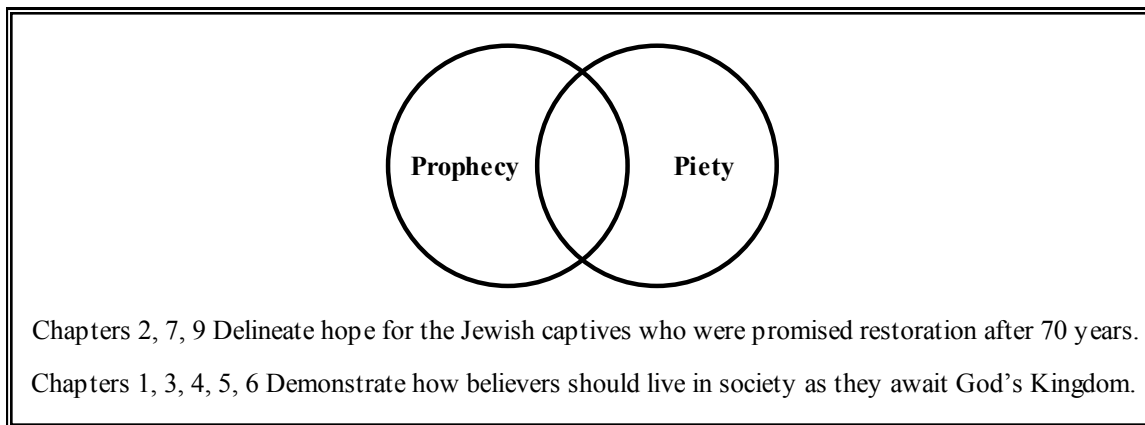
The theme running through the whole book is that the fortunes of kings and the affairs of men are all subject to God's decrees, and that he is able to accomplish his will despite the most determined opposition of the mightiest potentates on earth.²³

Daniel's Purpose

Daniel wrote his book to illustrate that even though Israel and Judah had been destroyed, God would providentially care for His people in exile by seeing them through this time (70 years) of suffering and threat of extinction (Ruth) after which He would restore them to their promised land and would bring glory to Himself by sending His Son, the messianic Son of Man, to establish His dominion and glorious kingdom over all peoples, nations, and men of every language (Dan 2 and 7) as He annihilates and destroys the Gentile kingdoms of mankind forever (Dan 7:16-27).

Dyer suggests a twofold purpose for Daniel's writing his book (see following diagram, adapted from Dyer):

Daniel's purpose in writing was to blend the themes of *prophecy* and *piety*. He wrote first to show God's future program for Israel (in light of her fall) during and after 'the times of the Gentiles.' Second, he wrote to show what the believer's *present* response should be during 'the times of the Gentiles' as he or she awaits the coming kingdom of God.²⁴



Outline

There are generally two ways to outline Daniel, the traditional/content approach and the linguistic approach.²⁵

²³Archer, "Daniel," in *Daniel-Minor Prophets*, 8.

²⁴Dyer, "Daniel" (class notes for course #304 Old Testament Prophets), 2.

²⁵There are, to be sure, other approaches, such as found in Gleason Archer, *Old Testament Introduction*, 377-79 (in which he presents twelve main divisions).

The <i>traditional</i> approach:	chapters 1-6: historical chapters 7-12: prophetic
The <i>linguistic</i> approach:	chapter 1-2:4a: introduction (in Hebrew) chapters 2:4b-7: Aramaic (referring to Gentiles) chapters 8-12: Hebrew (referring to Jews)

I. Prologue: Daniel’s Early Life in the Babylonian Court 1:1-21 (1:1-21 In Hebrew)

- A. The Historical Introduction 1:1-2
- B. The Deportation of Daniel and Other Hebrew Youths 1:3-7
 - 1. Their selection 1:3-4
 - 2. Their diet 1:5
 - 3. Their new Babylonian names 1:6-7
- C. The Dedication of Daniel to the God of Israel 1:8-16
 - 1. The request of Daniel 1:8
 - 2. The response of the overseer 1:9-14
 - 3. The result 1:15-16
- D. The Divine Enablement and Blessing of God 1:17-21
 - 1. The provision of wisdom by God 1:17-18
 - 2. The appointment of Daniel to the king’s service 1:19
 - 3. The wisdom of the Hebrew youths 1:20
 - 4. The duration of Daniel’s service to Nebuchadnezzar 1:21

II. The Prophetic Plan of God for the Gentile Nations 2:1–7:28 (2:4–7:28 In Aramaic)
(The Course of Gentile World History Revealed—“The Times of the Gentiles”)

- A. Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Great Image 2:1-49
 - 1. The dream concealed by Nebuchadnezzar 2:1-16
 - a. The dream of Nebuchadnezzar 2:1-2
 - b. The dream concealed from the wise men 2:3-11
 - c. The decree of the king: death for failure to make the dream known 2:12-13
 - d. The declaration of Daniel 2:14-16
 - 2. The dream revealed to Daniel by God 2:17-23
 - a. The request by Daniel 2:17-18
 - b. The revelation of the dream to Daniel 2:19
 - c. The praise of Daniel 2:20-23
 - d. The instruction of Daniel 2:24
 - 3. The dream explained to Nebuchadnezzar by Daniel 2:25-45
 - a. The presentation of Daniel 2:25-30
 - b. The revelation of the dream 2:31-36
 - c. The explanation of the dream 2:37-45
 - 4. Daniel is honored by the king 2:46-49
- B. Nebuchadnezzar’s Golden Statue 3:1-30
(Deliverance of God’s servants from the fiery furnace)
 - 1. The construction and dedication of the image 3:1-7

- a. The construction of the great golden image 3:1a
- b. The erection of the image on the plain of Dura 3:1b
- c. The dedication of the image and command for all to bow down 3:2-7
2. The accusation against the three Hebrew young men 3:8-12
3. The interrogation and warning by King Nebuchadnezzar 3:13-18

4. The casting of the three Hebrew youth into the fiery furnace 3:19-27
 - a. The king's attempted execution of the three Hebrew young men 3:19-23
 - b. The divine preservation of the Hebrew young men 3:24-27
5. The decree of Nebuchadnezzar to worship God alone 3:28-30

- C. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Tree: Debasement of Nebuchadnezzar 4:1-37
(Debasement of prideful Gentile world rulers)
 1. The king's proclamation 4:1-3
 2. The dream of the tree reported by Nebuchadnezzar 4:4-18
 - a. The search for the dream's interpretation 4:4-9
 - b. The stating of the dream's interpretation 4:10-18
 3. The dream of the tree interpreted by Daniel 4:19-27
 4. The dream of the tree fulfilled by God 4:28-37
 - a. The realization of the dream by King Nebuchadnezzar 4:28-33
 - b. The restoration of King Nebuchadnezzar by God 4:34-37

- D. Belshazzar Feast: Destruction of Belshazzar and Babylon 5:1-31
(Destruction of prideful Gentile world rulers)
 1. The revelry of the king 5:1-4
 2. The revelation to the king 5:5-29
 - a. The writing on the wall 5:5-7
 - b. The wise men's failure to interpret 5:8-9
 - c. The suggestion of the queen 5:10-12
 - d. The summons of Daniel by Belshazzar 5:13-16
 - e. The interpretation of the writing by Daniel 5:17-28
 - 1) The admonition to repent 5:17-24
 - 2) The actual message reported 5:25-28
 - f. The promotion of Daniel 5:29
 3. The revelation fulfilled 5:30-31
 - a. The death of Belshazzar 5:30
 - b. The destruction of Babylon 5:31

- E. The Decree of Darius the Mede 6:1-28

(Deliverance of God's servants from the lion's den)
 1. The prominence of Daniel 6:1-3
 2. The plot against Daniel 6:4-9

3. The prayer of Daniel 6:10-11
4. The proposal (accusation) against Daniel 6:12-15
5. The placement of Daniel in the lion's den 6:16-18
5. The preservation (deliverance) of Daniel 6:19-23
6. The proclamation of the king and vindication of Daniel 6:24-28
 - a. The execution of Daniel's enemies 6:24
 - b. The edict of Darius for all to worship Daniel's God 6:25-28

F. Daniel's Dream of the Four Beasts 7:1-28
(The course of Gentile world power: Only four kingdoms)

1. The revelation of the dream 7:1-14
 - a. The four beasts 7:1-8
 - b. The Ancient of Days 7:9-12
 - c. The Son of Man 7:13-14
2. The interpretation of the dream 7:15-27
 - a. The four Gentile kingdoms 7:15-22
 - b. The fourth kingdom 7:23-28
 - c. The Son of Man 7:13-14

**III. The Prophetic Plan of God for Israel During the Times of the Gentiles 8:1–12:13
(8:1–12:13 In Hebrew)**

A. Daniel's Vision of the Ram, the He-Goat, and the Little Horn 8:1-27
(Israel's struggle under Medio-Persia and Greece)

1. The revelation of the vision 8:1-14
 - a. The ram 8:1-4
 - b. The he-goat 8:5-8
 - 1) The destruction of the ram 8:5-7
 - 2) The description of the he-goat 8:8
 - c. The little horn 8:9-14
 - 1) The domination of the little horn 8:9-12
 - 2) The duration of the little horn 8:13-14
2. The interpretation of the vision 8:15-27
 - a. Gabriel's intervention 8:15-18
 - b. Gabriel's interpretation 8:19-26
 - 1) The ram 8:19-20
 - 2) The he-goat 8:21-22
 - 3) The destroyer 8:23-26
 - c. Daniel's response 8:27

B. Daniel's Prayer and Vision of the Seventy "Sevens" (490 Years) 9:1-27

1. The historical data 9:1-2

- a. The time: In the first year of Darius the Mede (538 B.C.) 9:1
 - b. The discovery of Jeremiah's prophecy of the duration of Jerusalem's desolation (70 years) which was about completed 9:2
 2. Daniel's prayer for forgiveness and restoration 9:3-19
 3. Gabriel's intervention on Daniel's behalf 9:20-27
 - a. Gabriel's intervention in angelic warfare 9:20-23
 - b. Gabriel's explanation of the prophecy of seventy weeks 9:20-27
- C. Daniel's Vision of Israel's Future: The Seventy-Sevens Explained 10:1–12:13
1. Revelation of things to come 10:1-3
 2. Revelation from the heavenly messenger 10:4–11:1
 3. Prophecies of the heavenly messenger 11:2–12:3
 - a. Events to transpire during the first sixty-nine weeks 11:2-35
 - 1) The details of Israel's history under Persia 11:2
 - 2) The details of Israel's history under Greece 11:3-4
 - a) The reign of Alexander the Great 11:3
 - b) The division of Alexander's empire 11:4
 - 3) The details of Israel's history under Egypt and Syria 11:5-35
 - a) The conflict between Ptolemy, the king of the south and Selucid, the king of the north 11:5-20
 - b) The contemptible person: Antiochus Epiphanes 11:21-35
 - i. Antiochus' rise to power 11:21-24
 - ii. Antiochus' invasion of Egypt 11:25-27
 - iii. Antiochus' hatred for and persecution of the Jews 11:28-35
 - a. His disdain for the covenant people of God 11:28
 - b. His defeat by the Romans 11:29-30
 - c. His defilement of the temple and erection of the abomination of desolation 11:31-35
 - b. Events to transpire during the final or seventieth week 11:36–12:13
 - 1) The details of Israel's history under the Antichrist 11:36-45
 - 2) The details of Israel's history during the end times 12:1-3
 - a) Distress and deliverance 12:1
 - b) Two resurrections 12:2-3
 4. Conclusion 12:4-13
 - a. Instructions to Daniel concerning the preservation of his book 12:4
 - b. Inquiry concerning the Great Tribulation 12:5-13

Argument

The Book of Daniel was written to reveal that God is sovereign over all events of human history, and to shed light on the future of Israel throughout the course of Gentile world history, better known as “the times of the Gentiles.” Daniel provides a blueprint on Gentile

world history by showing that four Gentile kingdoms (Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome) will dominate Israel throughout the course of world history, until Messiah, the Son of Man, comes to destroy all the Gentile kingdoms of this world and establish His own glorious kingdom in Jerusalem. The book may be divided into three sections according to the movement from Hebrew (chap. 1) to Aramaic (chapters 2:4 through 7:28), and back to Hebrew (chapters 8:1–12:13).

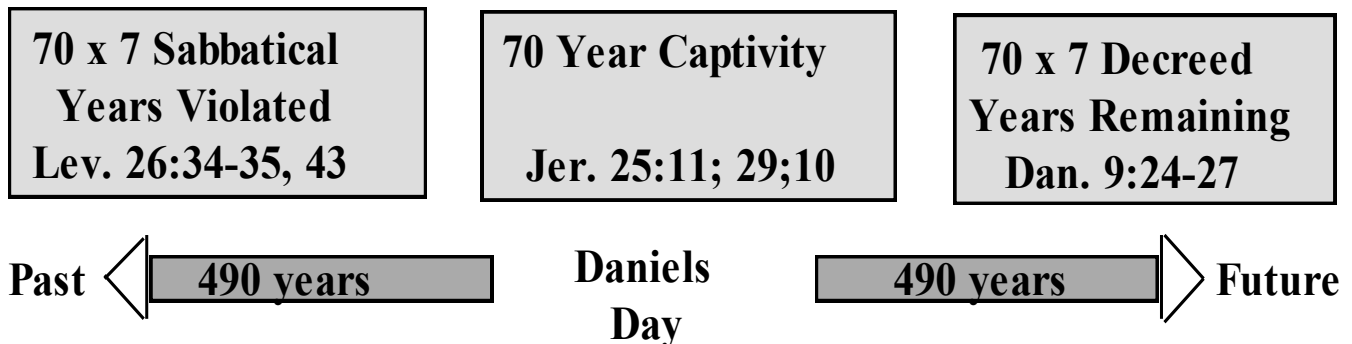
The first major section of the book introduces a Prologue in which Daniel's Early Life in the Babylonian Court is enumerated (1:1-21 in Hebrew). Following the historical introduction (1:1-2), Daniel recounts the deportation of himself and other Hebrew youths to Babylon in 605 B.C. (1:3-7). Shortly after arriving in Babylon, Daniel and several other Hebrew youths were chosen to partake in a three year program designed to educate them in all matters of Chaldean literature and language. Daniel and his other young friends prove that dedication to the God of Israel is paramount in their lives (1:8-16). Each of the young men, including Daniel, were instructed to eat of the king's food and drink his wine. Daniel, accompanied by three faithful friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, asks his overseer to permit them to eat food other than the king's food so as to not be defiled. The overseer agrees, but only on a trial basis. After ten days, Daniel and his friends were compared with the other young men and their appearance was found to be healthier than all the others. The overseer allowed Daniel and his young friends to continue with their wholesome diet. At the end of their three year training program, Daniel and the other Hebrew young men were brought before the king and as a result of the divine enablement and blessing of God were found to be much wiser and ahead of the other young men in every way, the king then promoted them to a position of prominence within his kingdom (1:17-21).

The second section of the book delineates The Prophetic Plan of God for the Gentile Nations (2:1–7:28; 2:4–7:28 Is in Aramaic). This extended section presents a series of dreams and prophecies designed to reveal the course of Gentile world history, better known as "the Times of the Gentiles." First, Nebuchadnezzar has a dream of a great image comprised of various metals which symbolized the succession of Gentile kingdoms that would rule the world during the course of history (2:1-49). Second, Nebuchadnezzar erects a great Golden Statue and commands all to bow down before it or suffer his wrath; Daniel's three friend's refuse to bow before the king's idol and are thrown alive into a fiery furnace from which they are delivered through miraculous the intervention of God (3:1-30). Third, Nebuchadnezzar has a second dream of a tree that is cut down which refers to and results in his own personal humbling (4:1-37). Fourth, Daniel recounts Belshazzar's drunken feast which ends in the personal debasement of Belshazzar and destruction of Babylon (5:1-31). Fifth, the edict of Darius the Mede, that results in Daniel's being thrown into a lion's den from which he is delivered by God, is narrated; and results in Darius's commanding the execution of Daniel's enemies and issuance of a royal edict calling for all people to worship Daniel's God (6:1-28). And finally, the prophecy or revelations concerning Gentile world powers concludes with the dream of the four beasts (7:1-28) which corresponds with the dream of the four-part metal statue recorded in chapter two. Both of these dreams (ch. 2 and 7) represent the four great Gentile world powers that would rule during the course of human history: namely, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (2 phases). The first beast was a lion with wings of an eagle (Babylon). The second beast was a lopsided bear with three ribs in its mouth (Medo-Persia). The third beast was a leopard with four wings and four heads (Greece). The fourth beast was a terrifying and powerful beast with ten horns (Rome). As Daniel was pondering the meaning of

the ten horns, he watched as a little horn grew up and displaced three of the ten horns (Anti-christ). The little horn next began to spew blasphemes against the Lord. Daniel continued to watch until the antichrist was eventually destroyed by the Son of Man (Jesus Christ), who will be exalted by the Ancient of Days (God the Father). Daniel was greatly troubled by his vision and his face turned pale, yet he kept the vision to himself.

In the third section of his book (8:1–12:13), Daniel switches back to Hebrew to describe The Prophetic Plan of God for Israel During the Times of the Gentiles. The events are revealed through a series of visions. Daniel’s first Vision is of the Ram, the He-Goat, and the Little Horn which depicts Israel’s struggle under Medio-Persia and Greece (8:1-27). The second vision of the Seventy “Sevens” (490 Years) was prompted by Daniel’s discovery of Jeremiah’s prophecy of the duration of Jerusalem’s 70 years of desolation, which was drawing to completion, and his personal prayer of confession and intercession for the restoration of the nation (9:1-27). God dispatched Gabriel to intervene in angelic warfare on Daniel’s behalf, and after a protracted warfare with these spiritual forces of darkness (9:20-23), he explained the time involved in the prophecy of “seventy sevens” to Daniel (9:20-27). Gabriel informs Daniel that the events of the vision will occur in the “time of the Gentiles.” This time began with Nebuchadnezzar’s reign and will end with the second coming of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. The angel Gabriel then proceeds to interpret Daniel’s vision. Gabriel informed Daniel that each of the seventy sevens was equal to one week, or 70 periods of 7 years which equals 490 years.

Daniel’s View of the Past and Future Seventy Sevens²⁶



From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (March 5, 444 B.C.) until the Anointed One comes, there will be sixty-nine “weeks;” and after the sixty-nine “weeks” have run their course the Anointed One (Messiah, Jesus Christ) will be cut off (March 30, A.D. 33) (Dan 9:26a).²⁷ And the people (Romans) of the prince who is to come (anti-christ) will destroy Jerusalem and the temple (A.D. 70) (Dan 9:26b). In the latter days a ruler (anti-christ) will then come and make a peace treaty with Israel for a “week” (Dan 9:27a). In the middle of the “week” he will put an end to sacrifice and offering and set up an abomination of desolation

²⁶Chart adapted from Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 118.

²⁷According to Revelation 19:11-21, Jesus Christ will descend from heaven in a display of resplendent glory(cf. Matt 24:29-31) and He will destroy the Gentile armies of the nations after which He will take hold of the anti-christ and his false prophet and throw them alive into the eternal lake of fire.

until he is destroyed²⁸ (Dan 9:27b; cf. Matt 24:15 and 2 Thess 2:4). The effect of the vision on Daniel was so great that he had to sleep for several days. He then rose to continue to do the king's (Belshazzar) business.

In the concluding chapters Daniel receives a prophetic panorama concerning Israel's future history as it relates to the seventy-sevens, or 490 years (10:1–12:13). The final vision of the book takes place in the third year of King Cyrus (536 B.C.). Daniel receives a message of such enormous conflict that he responds by mourning and fasting for three weeks. This results in Daniel's being left in a state of complete physical exhaustion which in turn caused him to fall into a very deep sleep (10:1-9). Daniel is revived and strengthened by an angelic messenger who was dressed in pure linen and wore a belt of gold. The angelic messenger proceeded to explain that he had come to give Daniel an understanding of Israel's future (10:10–11:1). The angelic messenger continues by presenting Daniel with a series of prophecies concerning the nations (11:2–12:3). He first details events to transpire during the first sixty-nine weeks of Israel's history under Persia and Greece (11:2-35). Alexander the Great (Greece) destroyed Persia, but his empire divided following his death (11:2-4).

Israel's history would be impacted most by two of Alexander's successors Ptolemy, the king of Egypt and Selucid, the king of Syria (11:5-20). These two dynasties incessantly fought, but when Antiochus Epiphanes was defeated by the Romans he turned his wrath against the Jews and initiated a protracted and bloody persecution against them culminating in his defilement of the temple and erection of the abomination of desolation (11:28-35).

The angelic messenger next relates events to transpire during the final or seventieth week of Israel's history which is the Tribulation Period (11:36–12:3). Daniel is instructed to preserve his book by sealing it up (12:4). Daniel concludes with questions concerning the Great Tribulation which the angel dressed in white linen answers (12:5-13).