

DANIEL

“*God is my Judge*”

(605-532 B.C.)



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 kingdom reign from Jerusalem. 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 millennial kingdom in Jerusalem.

Structural Division

The book may be organized into a three-fold arrangement according to the movements from Hebrew (1:1–2:3) to Aramaic (2:4–7:28), and back to Hebrew (8:1–12:13).

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| 1:1-2:3 | Introduction: This section (<i>written in Hebrew</i>) functions, in part, as a sort of <i>de ja vu</i> reminder of Joseph, and is designed to establish Daniel as <i>trustworthy</i> before his (Hebrew) people, even though/or better because he is a high-ranking government official in a Gentile court. | | |
| 2:4-7:28 | Prophecies related to Gentiles (Aramaic section) | | |
| | 2:4b-49 | A | Prophecy of four Gentile world empires |
| | 3:1-30 | B | God's power to deliver his servants (<i>from fiery furnace</i>) |
| | 4:1-37 | C | God's judgment on a proud ruler (Nebuchadnezzar) |
| | 5:1-31 | C' | God's judgment on a proud ruler (Belshazzar) |
| | 6:1-28 | B' | God's power to deliver his servant (<i>from lion's den</i>) |
| | 7:1-28 | A' | Prophecy of four Gentile world empires |
| 8:1-12:13 | Prophecies related to Jews /or, Israel in relation to the Gentile kingdoms (Hebrew section) | | |
| | 8:1-27 | A | (Antiochus) Antichrist and prophecies about Gentiles |
| | 9:1-27 | B | The end times and the Jews |
| | 10:1-11:45 | A | Antiochus-Antichrist and prophecies about Gentiles |
| | 12:1-13 | B | The end times and the Jews |

*For a complete set of notes on the Book of Daniel visit www.HorizonAlive.com

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). 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 (1:4). 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 vegetarian 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 promoted them to a position of prominence within his kingdom (1:17-21).

Outline

There are generally two ways to outline Daniel, the traditional/content approach and the linguistic approach.¹

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|----------------------------------|---|
| 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

¹There are, to be sure, other approaches, such as found in Gleason Archer, *Old Testament Introduction*, 377-79 (in which he presents twelve main divisions).

- 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: Debasing of Nebuchadnezzar 4:1-37
(Debasing 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).

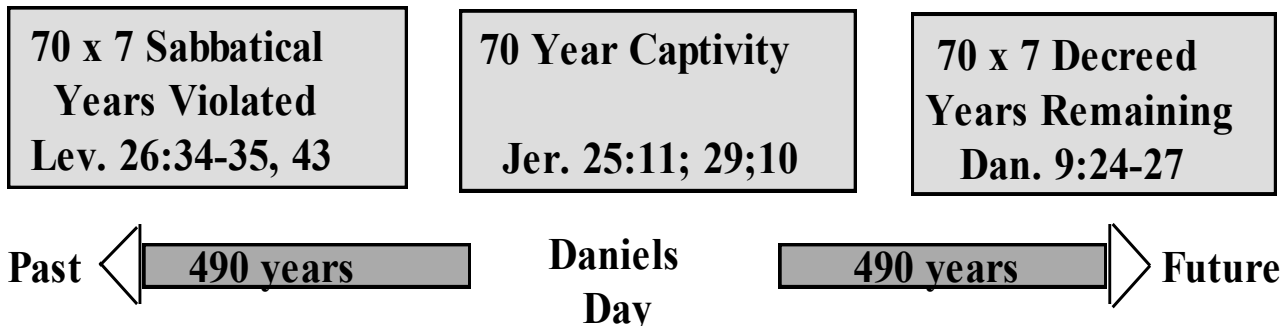
The first major section of the book introduces a Prologue in which Daniel’s Early Life in the Babylonian Court is enumerated (1:1-21 in Hebrew). Following the historical introduction (1:1-2), Daniel recounts the deportation of himself and other Hebrew youths to Babylon in 605 B.C. (1:3-7). Shortly after 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 Sevens²



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).³ 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

²Chart adapted from Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 118.

³According 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.

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 until he is destroyed⁴ (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
