

# DANIEL

## INTRODUCTION

Daniel means “God is Judge.”

Daniel was taken to Babylon as a young man probably about twenty years old. (605 B.C.) Daniel did not return to Palestine with his people but spent his life in Babylon. Daniel was made ruler over the province of Babylon and chief of the governors over its wise men under two Babylonian emperors, and under Darius the Mede, he was one of three presidents of the satraps.

Daniel is in the very center of that world power which had overthrown all the eastern nations including Judah. Daniel unveils the development of 600 years of world power closing with the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth.

The captivity served a threefold purpose.

1. Punishment for their sins. (2 Chronicles 36:15-17)
2. Purification and preparation of the remnant. (Ezekiel 36:22-31)
3. Bless the Gentile nation in preparing them to be called into the Messianic kingdom. (Micah 5:7)

## Chapter 1

### Verse 2

God permitted Nebuchadnezzar to exercise his fury against Jerusalem and to take the covenant people into captivity for the good of God’s people.

### Verse 3

Ashpenaz was commanded by the king to select the most eminent of the captives, those of royal stock. He was to select a body of talented young diplomats. Daniel was from the tribe of Judah, the royal tribe of Israel.

### Verse 4

The king was selective in gathering a group of young men for he was eager for them to learn the science and culture of the Babylonians. Daniel studied for three years. It was the Babylonians who inherited the numbering by sixties from the Sumerians. (60 seconds, 60 minutes, 360 degrees)

Algebra appears in Babylonian literature as well as science of astronomy. In the field of medicine certain scientific advances were made. As early as the code of Hammurabi (1700 B.C.) physicians performed delicate operations on the human eye.

### **Verse 5**

These young men enrolled in Babylonian culture were also instructed on how to eat like the Babylonian men of eminence.

### **Verses 6-7**

Babylon changed Daniel's name as well as Hananiah's, Mishael's, and Azariah's names, to honor their gods for the victory over the Hebrews whose God the Babylonian believed had vanquished.

Daniel's name was changed to Belteshazzar which means "protect his life."

Hananiah's name was changed to Shadrach which means "command of Aku (moon-god)."

Mishael's name was changed to Meshach which means "who is what Aku (the moon-god) is."

Azariah's name was changed to Abed-Nego which means "servant of Nebo."

Even though Babylon attempted to get these young men to disassociate themselves from Hebrew ways, they remained true.

### **Verse 8**

Daniel did not eat the king's food because the meals served were of foods used in worship ceremonies dedicated to heathen idols.

### **Verses 11-13**

For ten days Daniel suggests they be fed vegetables and bread. After ten days Daniel and his companions' appearance was better and they were fatter than all the other youths.

### **Verse 17**

God gave Daniel and his companions wisdom—the ability to rightly apply knowledge. Daniel received an extra gift—the ability to understand all visions and dreams.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Verse 1**

Nebuchadnezzar has a dream of a great image that disturbs him.

The Chaldeans lived in southern Babylon. They were a warlike group who eventually overcame the Assyrians.

### **Verse 4**

The king refused to tell the Chaldean his dream because they would have compared the details with their astrological charts, cast their horoscopes, made their incantations, submitted the dream to their magic and came up with a flattering answer to the king.

### **Verses 5-6**

If they couldn't come up with the details of the dream they were to be torn limb from limb and their homes torn down.

### **Verses 12-13**

Since no one of the Chaldeans could come up with the details of the dream, the king demanded that all wise men be put to death. Arioch comes to take Daniel and his companions into custody.

### **Verses 14-16**

Daniel requests time to tell the king of his dream.

### **Verses 17-24**

The secret of the king's dream was revealed to Daniel in a vision. He asks Arioch to take him to the king and he would reveal to him the interpretation of his puzzling dream.

Through God's grace Daniel saves the lives of the Babylonian wise men.

### **Verses 25-26**

Arioch seizes the opportunity to feather his cap by claiming to have found the answer to the king's dream. The king then asks Daniel if he can both tell him the dream and its interpretation.

### **Verse 29**

Daniel tells the king that God sent him this dream to tell him what would happen in the future.

### **Verse 31**

Daniel begins by telling the king that the image of his vision was a great statue bearing the resemblance of a man.

### **Verses 32-33**

As Daniel describes the precious metals of the image there is a steady descending scale of preciousness from the head to the foot.

### **Verses 34-35**

Here we see a stone cut loose from the mountain without natural or human aid. That stone is a symbol of the kingdom of God. The great statue was directly in the path of the moving stone. The stone struck the feet, the most vulnerable part because they were part iron and part clay. The statue was demolished, utterly destroyed, ground to dust, and blown away with the wind.

The stone grew to such large proportions that it became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

### **Verses 36-38**

Daniel now prepares to tell the king the divine interpretation of the vision. The main thrust of the whole dream is God's victory over principalities and powers and the establishment of God's kingdom here on earth.

Daniel designates Nebuchadnezzar as the head of gold, the first representative of absolute world dominion.

Herodotus was at Babylon some ninety years after the era of Nebuchadnezzar and was amazed at the amount of gold which he found in the sanctuary of Bel.

### **Verse 39**

Daniel now designates a second kingdom of silver, collected by taxation and hoarded to form the muscles of war. The silver kingdom was stronger than the golden kingdom. Babylon, at the time of Judah's captivity, ruled the ancient world for 70 years, the Medo-Persians for over 200 years.

The third kingdom of bronze was then stronger than the silver kingdom. The bronze kingdom represented Greece.

## **Verse 40**

The fourth kingdom was iron representing the Roman Empire. Iron swords and armor took the place of bronze weapons. The Roman war machine was much more destructive than all its predecessors.

The Greeks' power lasted 130 years while the Roman Empire lasted some 500 years.

## **Verses 41-43**

The feet of clay and the toes of clay emphasize the divided and weakened nature of the Roman Empire.

There is no unity in this fourth empire shown by the idea of iron and clay not fusing together. Never again will a world empire dominate the entire population of the earth.

The important thing to remember about this image is that it represents symbolically pagan, heathen, carnal world power in opposition to the kingdom of God.

Gold represented Babylon. Silver represented Medo- Persia. Bronze represented Greece. Iron and clay represented Rome.

## **Verses 44-45**

The kingdom of God is to be established in the days of the Roman Empire and is to be of eternal duration. If this were a reference to a millennial kingdom, which literally means 1000 years, then it could not be everlasting as this verse says.

Today, whenever the gospel is preached it has victory and is continuing to overthrow the kingdom of the god of this world, Satan.

## **Verses 46-47**

The word “worship” does not always mean religious worship. It was a common practice for pagan rulers to bow before those whom they thought were representatives of gods.

Nebuchadnezzar recognized the superiority of Daniel’s God over all other gods of his pantheon, for Daniel’s God is able to do what the gods of the Chaldeans' wise men could not do—reveal his dream.

## **Verses 48-49**

Daniel's reward was probably social and political status next to the king himself. Daniel became the chief overseer or ruler of the province of Babylon. Shadrack, Meshack, and Abed-Nego were made Daniel's assistants.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Verse 1**

It appears that Nebuchadnezzar is overcome with pride and erects an image of gold to do honor to his gods for victory as well as to do honor to himself.

### **Verses 2-3**

To dedicate this golden image Nebuchadnezzar sent invitations to all the officials of his kingdom. The word "satraps" means "kingdom guardians," the governors of large provinces.

### **Verses 4-7**

All the invitees were to bow down before the image or be cast into a furnace of blazing fire. The furnace was probably a furnace used commercially as a lime-kiln, or brick kiln. Daniel might have been on some official mission and was excused by the king so that his presence before the image was not required.

### **Verse 8**

The Chaldeans were a prominent class holding positions of influence in government and probably had a great amount of jealousy and status-seeking qualities.

The Hebrews had quick promotions and success which may have caused the jealousy.

### **Verses 9-12**

The Chaldeans made a charge that sounds like a charge of ingratitude for the king appointing the Hebrew youths to high office.

### **Verses 13-14**

The king could not believe that anyone would defy his order especially these foreigners he had done a favor for.

### **Verse 15**

In a rage of fury he gives them another opportunity and if they refuse, to the furnace they go.

### **Verses 16-18**

The Hebrew lads know that God will deliver them from the fire and the whole issue of who is most powerful, Nebuchadnezzar or God, will be cleared up.

### **Verses 19-21**

The king is enraged when they refuse to bow down and so he orders the furnace to be heated seven times hotter. Bound hand and foot, the Hebrew lads were cast into the roaring inferno fully clothed.

### **Verses 22-23**

In the process of placing the Hebrew lads into the fire the flames consumed the soldiers.

### **Verses 24-25**

The king took a position where he could see what happened. He sees six amazing things.

1. He sees not three but four in the furnace.
2. They are not bound, but free.
3. They are walking about.
4. They are not consumed by the fire.
5. The fourth person looked like a son of the gods. (literally means a “son of deity”)
6. They are not searching for an escape.

### **Verses 26-27**

Nebuchadnezzar sees that these men are not going to be consumed so he calls them forth from the furnace. Their hair was not singed and so smell of smoke was upon them. Their shoes were not scorched.

### **Verse 28**

Nebuchadnezzar admits that the God of the Hebrew lads was more powerful than any other god.

### **Verse 30**

The king “promoted,” that is supported and favored them so that their positions were made easier in spite of opposition.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Verses 4-6**

The word “fearful” is stronger than “terrified,” he is literally petrified with fear. So again, the king calls the wise men to interpret his dream for him.

### **Verse 9**

After relating his dream to the wise men, they could not interpret the dream for the king. So, the king calls for Daniel and asked him to tell him the meaning of the symbolism he dreamed.

### **Verses 10-11**

In the king’s dream he sees a tree occupying a central position on the earth. The tree grows until it reaches into the sky indicating its preeminence and importance.

Trees were figurative, especially in Oriental dreams, of monarchs.

### **Verse 12**

All living things on earth are represented as finding sustenance and security in this great, towering, affluent tree.

### **Verse 13**

This is the only verse of Scripture in the Bible where angels are called “watcher.”

### **Verse 14**

In the king’s dream the angel shouted to cut down this towering, proud tree.

### **Verses 15-16**

The angel also says to leave a stump of the tree indicating a possibility off reviving the tree. “Let him be wet” changes the subject from a tree to the man. He was also to share with the beasts the grass of the earth. This was to continue for a fully-determined period of time.



### **Verses 17-18**

Babylon, especially in the days of Nebuchadnezzar came to symbolize the pride and the spirit of arrogance and rebellion of world power against God.

### **Verse 19**

Daniel had to pronounce a judgment in interpreting this dream upon the man who had treated him justly and had promoted him to a position of great influence.

### **Verses 20-23**

Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that he is the man of the dream.

### **Verses 24-25**

Nebuchadnezzar was told by Daniel that he would live like a wild animal, eating grass.

### **Verses 26-27**

The dream depicting the stump predicated the possibility of Nebuchadnezzar's rule being restored to him if he acknowledges God's omnipotent rule.

### **Verses 28-30**

Twelve months later while Nebuchadnezzar was walking on the roof, his pride overcame him.

### **Verses 31-32**

The king had not finished boasting when he was driven to live and act like beasts of the field.

### **Verse 33**

The king's hair grew untrimmed and is described as feathers. His fingernails and toenails grew unattended also.

The king was insane and grotesque, but was not exposed to curiosity seekers. He appears to have been consigned to the precincts of the royal palace.

### **Verses 34-35**

Finally, Nebuchadnezzar is convinced of the omnipotence of God and thanks God for restoring his sanity and his kingdom.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Verses 1-4**

Belshazzar was possibly a son of Nebuchadnezzar. One of his wives married Nabonidus and they had a son who became the king. The feast that was held would have been a drunken orgy. Using the vessels from the Jewish Temple Belshazzar and his drunken court offered toasts to their idols.

Nebuchadnezzar was guilty of pride, Belshazzar was guilty of insolence.

### **Verses 5-7**

During the feast a human hand appeared and with the finger inscribed some words on the white plaster of the banquet hall.

Color drained from the king's face as he saw the hand. He screams for his wise men and promises them a place of preeminence if they could decipher the writing on the wall.

### **Verses 8-9**

The wise men could not decipher the characters on the wall.

### **Verses 10-12**

The queen entered the banquet hall and speaks to Belshazzar of Daniel.

### **Verses 17-19**

Daniel agrees to read the writing for the king. Daniel tries to prepare Belshazzar's heart for repentance telling how Nebuchadnezzar became great by the power of God.

### **Verses 22-23**

Daniel tells the king that even pagan kings are held morally responsible by God.

### **Verses 24-28**

The writings were probably Aramaic. (MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PERES)

“Mene” means not only “to count” but also “to fix the limit of,”—this king and his kingdom's number is up.

“Tekel” means to “weigh.” Belshazzar has been weighed or tested by God to see if he balances to God's standards. He does not!

“Peres” means “to break or divide.” Daniel reveals that Belshazzar’s kingdom is to be divided up and given to the Medes and Persians.

“Upharsin” refers to the Persians and gives emphasis to the much longer Persian supremacy.

### **Verses 19-20**

Daniel received the promise of Belshazzar appointing him as the third ruler of the kingdom. That night Belshazzar was slain. By whom, we do not know. Darius, the Mede, received the kingdom.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Verses 1-2**

Darius appointed governors in Babylon to expedite the Persian system of taxes. Over these governors, the king appointed three cabinet members and Daniel was one of them.

### **Verses 3-4**

It was not mere talent that raised Daniel to such favor with the king. It was his unswerving faith in God. It does not take jealous enemies long to find fault in us, but they found none in Daniel.

### **Verses 5-9**

The envious satraps had heard of Daniel’s religious practices and knew Daniel would not compromise his religious convictions.

The Babylonians used the furnace to administer capital punishment. The Persians worshiped fire, so they destroyed their condemned criminals by casting them to savage beasts.

Darius yielded to flattery of thinking himself as being prayed to as a god and ordered capital punishment to all who did not pray to him.

### **Verses 10-11**

Daniel prayed toward Jerusalem. His contemporaries appear to have set up a watch at his window. Seeing enough they made haste to tell the king.

### **Verses 12-13**

They “psyched” the king into emphatically declaring an impossibility of changing his decree. Then they exaggerate the truth saying Daniel had no regard for the king.

### **Verses 14-15**

Darius realized that he had been tricked. Losing his most loyal president did not make him happy.

### **Verses 16-18**

The king seems to have some hope that Daniel’s God would deliver him. The king could not eat, he was in no mood for any entertainment, and could not sleep after Daniel was placed in the lion’s den.

### **Verses 19-22**

At the first sign of dawn he and a few servants made haste to the lion’s den. He called out, “Daniel, are you still alive?” Daniel answered that God had shut the mouths of the lions.

### **Verses 23-24**

The king was “exceedingly glad,” and Daniel was hoisted out of the pit. The men who had lied about Daniel, along with their wives and children, were then cast into the lion’s den. Before they reached the bottom of the pit the lion’s crushed all their bones.

### **Verses 25-28**

Darius wrote to all his sub-rulers commanding that Daniel’s God be worshiped along with all the other Persian gods.

This ends Daniel’s historical portion of the book. His purpose has been to record God’s power to deliver and to rule over the greatest of pagan powers.

Next, Daniel deals with the deliverance of the captive Jews. The people of God will be victorious over all bondage and persecution. If God can deliver from the fiery furnace, from the lion’s den, and can bring down a Nebuchadnezzar and a Belshazzar, then he can deliver these captives.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Verses 1-3**

The “four winds” symbolize some power of God. God does not overrule the will of man and force a man to think something he does not want to think. God uses natural means at various times to overrule the actions of men but not their wills.

The “great sea” symbolizes mankind, and especially Gentile world powers hostile to God and Israel.

The “four beasts” appear as rising from the sea, powers hostile to God.

The word “beast” represents all world powers. Eventually all worldly rulers and governments will be banished, and the only kingdom remaining in a new heaven and a new earth will be the kingdom of God. “Beast” does not mean one specific world empire, unless a certain beast is named.

### **Verses 4-6**

The lion represents Babylon, for Babylon was the first power to achieve world domination. Babylon is represented by the “heads” of two animal kingdoms, the lion and the eagle. The people of that day were familiar with the emblems of the Babylonian power.

The plucking out of the wings from the lion symbolizes the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar for conquest was taken from him by God.

The “second beast” was like a bear and symbolizes the Medo-Persian Empire. The three ribs it is devouring in its mouth, represents the beast as not content with one body but devouring many. The bear is commanded by God to arise and attempt to devour more. The Persian Empire was greedy, it devoured quite a bit more than did Babylon and attempted to devour as far as Macedonia and Greece.

The “third beast” is like a leopard with four wings and four heads and symbolizes Alexander the Great and the Grecian Empire.

When an assassin’s knife cut down Alexander’s father, he made his father’s dream his own. Alexander left Pella in 335B.C. leading 30,000 foot soldiers and 5000 soldiers on horses, and for the next eleven years spent a whirlwind of warfare, hardships, and revelry.

Alexander entered Babylon in the spring of 323 B.C., worn out by wounds, hardships, and overdrinking, he fell ill of a fever. Soon he could neither move nor speak. He was propped up and each officer and soldier filed past. He acknowledged each man with his eyes or a slight movement of his head. Two days later, Alexander died, not yet 33 years old.

The “four heads” on the beast symbolize the four-way division of this great empire at Alexander’s death.

The four major kingdoms were ruled over by his chief generals (Egypt-Ptolemy; Asia-Antigonus; Macedonia-Cassander; and Thrace-Lysimachus).

### **Verses 7-8**

The “fourth beast” had ten horns and symbolizes the Roman Empire. Using its great “iron teeth” it broke things in pieces and devoured them, and what it could not devour it stamped with its “feet” grinding it into dust.

Rome was greedy, cruel, and destructive as a world power. She could never get enough of conquest.

The “ten horns” represent the first ten recognized emperors of Rome.

The “little horn” is Domitian, the eleventh emperor of Rome. A suspicious, perhaps cruel temperament, Domitian came to the throne determined to rule without respect for others. Domitian made it a law that he must be addressed as “Lord and God.” There is no record of anyone issuing a decree that they must be worshiped.

### **Verses 9-10**

“Ancient of Days” symbolizes eternity and divine wisdom. The “Ancient of Days” is God the Father and the Son. He is clothed in holiness and purity, symbolized by His white garments, and His nature is wisdom, symbolized by His white hair. His throne is fire and fire issues forth from it representing judicial power, splendor, and majesty.

The “books” are symbols of the fact that God records the actions of His enemies. Nothing escapes the eye of God.

### **Verses 11-12**

The “little horn” was continuing to boast and brag “great” things of itself. Daniel sees the east (including the little horn) slain and destroyed.

Daniel's vision correlates precisely with John's vision of the end of the "beast" in Revelation 19:20-21 where it is thrown into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

### **Verses 13-14**

These verses reveal the downfall of the Roman Empire as a consequence of the judgment of "one like a son of man," who came to the Ancient of Days. The "son of man" is the Lamb, the Christ. The Roman Empire did not fall completely in the reign of Domitian (81-96 A.D.), but that is where the fall began.

From the end of the first century A.D., the history of Rome is a story of financial disaster, civil war, decimation by famine and disease, weakening by constant attack of its enemies, and moral disintegration.

It would have been irrelevant to Daniel's purpose to write what was to transpire in detail about the fall of the fourth beast. That is left to John in Revelation, which 700 years later we "plugged in" exactly where Daniel left off his dissertation on the fourth beast.

John, in Revelation, takes us from the confrontation of the seven churches of Asia Minor with the "beast" in the first century A.D. to the casting of the "beast" into the lake of fire without giving all the details of the "beast's" history. Then John telescopes our perception from the fall of the "beast" down to the final judgment day without telling us the world's history in between.

Daniel's and John's main point is that these ferocious beasts cannot thwart God's program to establish His eternal, universal kingdom on earth. The kingdom of God will be the last universal kingdom on earth.

### **Verses 15-18**

Daniel is confused and perplexed by all this information and wants to know the explanation of all the symbols given him. The angel gives him a capsulized form of the interpretation. The vision concerns four kings but their power will not stop God's redemptive work.

The church was established before the fall of the fourth empire but its universal spread had to await the taking out of the way the most threatening of all beasts—the fourth.

The main point of emphasis in this vision is: the saints shall have an everlasting kingdom.

### **Verses 19-20**

There is an additional symbolism attached to the “little horn” and that is it looked stouter than the other horns.

### **Verses 21-22**

Daniel saw the “little horn” making war against the saints and prevailing over them until judgment was given for the saints of the Most High to prevail.

Rome did oppress the Jews from Pompey’s conquest of Palestine about 64 B.C. and had a hand in crucifying the Messiah. Then they persecuted the church until the edict of toleration by Constantine in 313 A.D.

The most crucial time for the infant church was during the reign of Domitian (81-96 A.D.). That is why John’s Revelation is addressed to the churches of Asia Minor. That is when it appeared as if the “beast” was invincible.

Daniel is shown the eventual rise of the Roman Empire with its hatred for God’s people, but Daniel is also shown that God’s kingdom will prevail. The Roman Empire put to death the Son of God but it did not stop God’s redemptive work.

### **Verses 23-25**

The one horn is to make war upon the saints and even seem to prevail over them. John wrote Revelation to tell the infant churches of Asia Minor that the beast was human—not divine, and would be destroyed while the church would be victorious. Revelation 13:18

Before the beast was to meet his doom, he would deceive the world except believers, insist that the world worship him, withhold food from those who would not worship him, and persecute and kill many believers.

But John is quick to inform believers that in the war of the beast upon the church those who die will “rest from their labors.” (Revelation 14:12-13) The war of the beast upon the saints will continue until the judgment upon the beast. (Daniel 7:26)

These verses are the crucial section of chapter 7. They must be understood in the light of Daniel’s purpose. He aims only to reveal to his readers that God’s covenant people will prevail over four successive world empires. The covenant people will have their victory over the enemies of God’s redemptive plan in the person of the Messiah. (9:24-27) (2:44-45)



Daniel is informed that the attempt of the fourth beast to “wear down” (verse 25) God’s covenant people will fall short. The saints are to be given to the fourth beast for three and one-half times. Three and one half is half of seven a complete or perfect number. Three and one-half usually symbolizes a brief time in the time perspective of God.

It was better to endure three-and-one-half times of war from the fourth beast than endure eternal judgment for worshipping the beast.

### **Verses 26-28**

Domitian was cruel, sadistic, and a squanderer of money. Seutonius says Domitian would spend hours alone every day catching flies and stabbing them to death with a needle-sharp pen. He ordered one of the Vestal Virgins to be buried alive and her lovers clubbed to death. (Vesta was a Roman goddess of the hearth, virgins tended the sacrificial fires.)

Another man who insulted him he ordered to be torn to pieces by dogs. He hit upon the novel idea of scorching his prisoner’s genitals to make them divulge the whereabouts of other rebels still in hiding, and cut off the hands of many more.

Domitian inaugurated a reign of terror that kept Rome in a state of constant fear. He assumed the right of voting first in the Senate, so that anyone who voted differently would be a marked man.

Domitian issued his letters and imperial edicts with the salutation: “Our Lord God instructs you to do this.” He demanded that anyone addressing him say, “Lord and God.” He demanded to be hailed as Jupiter’s son and heir, the earthly ruler and representative of the king of the universe.

Seutonius says of Domitian that “he was extremely lustful,” consorted with prostitutes and homosexuals. He seduced his young niece who became pregnant by him and died as the result of an abortion which he forced on her.

Domitian’s ambition to be worshiped as God coupled with the worship of the Roman state created a new politico-religious atmosphere in direct conflict with the Lord’s church. Emperor worship demanded the suppression of any group that resisted it and placed upon Christians the stigma of treason against the State.

Under Domitian, Christianity had to enter a struggle of life or death with the imperial power. But verse 26 says justice prevailed and his dominion was taken away.

Domitian was assassinated by one of his wife's servants and his body was cremated by his nurse at her suburban home and the ashes were deposited in the temple of the Flavian family. With Domitian the Flavian dynasty ended.

The Roman Senate had his images and consecrated shields engraved with his likeness, smashed and all records of him obliterated. Daniel 7:27 Between the close of the first century and the later part of the second century the church enjoyed a period of relative peace and prosperous growth.

There were more persecutions to come to Christians from Rome under Diocletian 284-305 A.D., but in 313 A.D. the edict by Constantine gave the church its victory over the fourth beast.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Verses 1-2**

Elam (eastern part of Babylon or Iraq) was a country situated on the east side of the Tigris River opposite Babylonia in a mountainous region and was one of the earliest civilizations.

Susa was the summer capital of the Persian Empire. In the 1880's archeologists uncovered in Shushan (Susa) the great palace of King Xerxes (486-465 B.C.) in which Queen Esther lived.

### **Verses 3-4**

The ram is Medo-Persian. The two horns are the two parts of the empire, Media and Persia. The taller horn came up last indicating Persia, who eventually became supreme and assassinated the Medes. The ram is an emblem of princely power.

Persia's rapid conquest of the world is symbolized by the butting of the ram toward the west, north, and south. It did not butt east because Persia was the eastern most part of her empire. The three points agree with the three ribs in the mouth of the bear. Daniel 7:5

There was little resistance to the Persian conquest of the world until Alexander the Great's father.

## Verses 5-8

The male-goat is a fitting symbol for the empire of Greece for it represents ruggedness and power. It also represents sure footedness and quickness. I Maccabees 1:3 Alexander's conquests were so rapid the male goat is represented as "not touching the ground."

The prominent horn on the male-goat represents Alexander the Great.

The "canal" or "river" symbolizes the historic clash of the Greeks and the Persians at the Grancius River.

The Persian Empire was conscripting men, ships, and arms for a land and sea invasion of Greece. In 481 B.C., Xerxes, successor of his father's throne, massed three forces on the Asian shore of Hellesport. Athens, Sparta, Corinth, and Aegina responded by forming a defensive league that would eventually include 31 city-states.

But most Greeks, awed by Persian might, favored neutrality or even alliance with the invaders.

Xerxes bridged the channel with boats. His Egyptian subjects, renounced as the world's best rope makers, produced the great bridge cables (a sample of their craft has been excavated in an Egyptian quarry (rope 18 inches in diameter attached to a 7 ton block of stone).

Sod covered the mile-long plank roadway and high screens lined it so that animals crossing on it would not shy at the seething current.

Across the Hellesport in 480 B.C. tramped an army that ancients numbered in the millions. Some 1000 ships paralleled the army's march, landing men and supplies as the invaders headed westward through Thrace, Macedonia, and Thessaly. The fleet traveled a canal Xerxes had ordered cut through the Mount Athos peninsula.

The Persians were great meat eaters, so their fleet maintained food dumps holding beasts for slaughter and stores of salt meat of every kind. The depots also had piles of papyri for paper work.

Xerxes, enthroned near the pass to watch his men pour through, laughed at a scout's report of vain Greek warriors bathing and preening on the eve of the battle. But a Greek, serving Xerxes, heard the report and understood the troops were Spartans, ritualistically preparing to die.

“The Greek’s bronze sheathed rams smashed into the Persians till hulls rolled over, and the sea itself was hidden, strewn with wreckage, dyed with the blood of men. The dead lay thick on the reefs and beaches, and flight broke out.”  
(Aeschylis)

Herodotus wrote: “Neither snow, nor rain, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

The following summer the Persian messengers had more bad news to spread, an army of some 100,000 Greeks had wiped out the last of the invaders in a battle at Plateau in the hills of Thebus.

And the rest belongs to the history of Alexander the Great, the he-goat, whose armies went about the task as though avenging a great wrong.

Alexander’s hate for the Persians grew into a rage and he determined to obliterate every bit of Persian control on the earth. In 331 B.C. Alexander encouraged by his drunken colleagues burned Xerxes’ palace in revenge against the king.

In 330 B.C. Alexander marched north to Persia’s summer capital Ecbatana, to capture Darius himself. Darius fled the city but when the Macedonian’s caught up with him they found Darius dead, murdered by his own generals.

At the Beas River, just inside present India, Alexander’s men homesick and having reports of greater armies ahead refused to go on. Alexander sulked in his tent for three days and then led his men back to Persepolis where he died at the age of 32.

Even Buddha owes his image to Alexander’s march into the Orient. Inspired by the statues the Greeks brought back, sculptors created Buddha in the image of Apollo, but added to his forehead the Oriental third eye, which emits spiritual light.

As a result of Alexander’s conquests Greek became the language of the court and commerce and the common language of the people.

### **Verses 9-10**

The little horn is Antiochus Epiphanes and the Seleucids. There followed almost a century and a half of war between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids for sovereignty in Syria and Palestine.

### **Verse 10**

This verse brings us abruptly to Antiochus Epiphanes (about 175-165 B.C.)

The “glorious land” is the Holy Land, Palestine. The “host of heaven” and the “stars” are simply God’s covenant people. (Jeremiah 33:22; Daniel 12:3)

Antiochus’ deeds against God’s people were in reality arrogant wickedness against heaven itself.

### **Verses 11-12**

Antiochus, “the little horn” arrogated to himself the attributes of Almighty God. He actually considered himself equal to God and commanded that the likeness of himself be placed in the temple of the Jews and worshiped as God.

Antiochus actually prohibited the Jews from offering their regular sacrifices. <sup>1</sup> Maccabees 1:44-52

Antiochus did not actually tear down the temple, but desecrated it to such a point, even commanding that a swine be slain on the temple altar, so that the altar was not fit for use. He also substituted an altar to Jupiter for the altar of burnt offerings. This was the crowning abomination.

Great numbers of the people of Israel consorted with Antiochus and welcomed his Hellenization of their culture. The pagan ruler burned every copy of the Jewish scriptures that could be found and many faithful Jews were slain.

### **Verses 13-14**

God sent His angels to Daniel so that he might arrive at an authoritative interpretation through their words.

### **Verse 14**

The period, 2300 days, is undoubtedly referring to the period of Antiochus’ abominable treatment of the Jews. This treatment began in the year 171 B.C., one year before his return from his second expedition to Egypt. In this year began the laying waste of the sanctuary. The termination would then be the death of Antiochus in 164 B.C.

The 2300 days covers a period of six years and about 4 months. The number (being a little short of 7 years) possesses a symbolic meaning namely, not quite the full duration of a period of divine judgment. The 2300 days is the period of the desecration of the sanctuary.

### **Verses 15-17**

Daniel seeks to understand more and Gabriel, the angel, will tell him more. The vision has to do with “the time of the end.” This is not speaking of “the end of all time.” It refers to the time when distress, or the ingratitude permitted upon Israel, comes to an end.

It is the end of the Old Testament period and the beginning of the New Testament period. This “time of the end” reaches only to the end of those afflictions that are to come on the people of the Jews before the Messianic period.

### **Verses 18-19**

The term “indignation” or “wrath” refers to the captivities of the covenant people by Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. (Isaiah 10:5, 25; 26:30) “Indignation” designates the wrath of God and His displeasure executed in giving the covenant people over to captivity, or to oppression by their pagan enemies.

The abominations of Antiochus will be a sign that the indignation of God against the covenant people for their idolatry during the Divided Kingdom period is coming to a fierce finality.

It is known from history that when Antiochus died about 165 B.C., the Maccabean brothers continued their war of Jewish liberation and gave the Jews about 100 years of freedom and self-rule until about 63 B.C.

In 63 B.C., Pompey, one of the Roman rulers, occupied Palestine as part of the Roman Empire.

In “the fullness of time” God sent forth His Son, to establish His kingdom, the church. Most of the Jews rejected the Messiah and crucified Him, but God raised Him from the dead and established His church.

In 70 A.D., God permitted the Roman army to destroy the Jewish temple, slay a million Jews and sell another half-million into slavery all over the world. The Old Testament dispensation was nailed to the cross at the death of Jesus. This fulfilled Jeremiah 31:31 ff.

Through Daniel God revealed that this indignation and wrath was going to end some day, every appointed time of God has an end.

### **Verses 20-22**

God is revealing to Daniel that Persia and Greece would appear on the scene of history. This revelation is given 400-500 years before it actually happens. The entire span of history given to Daniel really covers the period between the Babylonian captivity and Christ, some 600 years.

### **Verses 23-25**

Antiochus Epiphanes is the king of fierce countenance. The four kingdoms when Alexander's great empire was divided ran its course, and now this new king puts in his appearance.

It would seem as if evil and deceit are about to take over the whole world when this king reigns. He prospers and he has the power and cunning to do as he pleases. When his opponents think they are perfectly safe, he is plotting their destruction, which through his cunning he executes craftily and speedily.

His pride and self-exaltation lead him to blaspheme and challenge the almighty God, but God will not allow such evil and rebellion to thwart His divine purposes. God without hands will break this tyrant. God only allowed this persecutor his day because God was willing that he be given opportunity to repent.

### **Verses 26-27**

Since the prophecy was a long time in the future, Daniel was to "shut up" or keep this vision "secret."

To "shut up" or "keep secret," means that it is to be permanently preserved by writing it down for posterity's sake. The psychological effect of the vision upon Daniel was exhausting and he was sick for days before he could carry on the king's business.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Verses 1-2**

Darius, the Mede, was appointed governor and was co-ruler in 539 B.C., with Cyrus the Great. But Darius was probably appointed king of Babylon and Chaldea in 536 B.C., when the Jews were permitted to return to Jerusalem.

Daniel has a scroll of Jeremiah and chapter 25:9-11 caught his attention, which stated that the desolation would last seventy years.

When the Jews returned to Jerusalem to rebuild they found Judah inhabited by “squatters,” people from the northern regions of Palestine immigrated there by the Assyrians. They were known as Samaritans. They did not want to move out and even accused the Jews of trying to revolt against Persia.

Daniel seemed to think that God’s indignation for His people was over and that the 70 years would end their troubles. Due to his lack of understanding God is going to tell Daniel that the Jewish people must face 490 years of “indignation” or “trouble” before God provides ultimate forgiveness in the Messiah.

This is the revelations then of chapters 9-12.

### **Verses 3-6**

The answer is precise in delineating the time when full and merciful pardon shall come—in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of 70 weeks of years.

The answer emphasizes the fact that complete forgiveness is 490 years future to the return from captivity. During that 490 years there will be continual “trouble” for the Jews.

### **Verse 5**

Daniel uses four synonyms for sin to emphasize the stubborn deliberations—willful disobedience.

### **Verses 7-11**

The word “confession” in the Greek means “to say the same as.” In Daniel’s confession he is saying the same as God about rebellion against God’s will and the consequences of such rebellion.

### **Verse 11**

“Poured out” is similar to that of the “pouring out” of the bowls of wrath symbolizing the wrathful judgments of God depicted in the book of Revelation 16:1-4.

### **Verses 12-14**

Daniel is frightened because they have not “entreated” or “sought” the favor of God. “Entreated” or “sought” means literally “to make the face sweet.”

They had not sweetened the face of God toward themselves by turning from their sinful ways in repentance and obeying the will of God. There is no



unfairness or unrighteousness in God's actions. He has done only what He said He would do.

### **Verses 15-19**

Daniel begins his petition to God to deliver the captives like He did the weak, humiliated sinful Israel from Egypt.

### **Verse 16**

Daniel asks God to withdraw His desolation from the Holy City, the Holy Land, and the Holy People, not from any selfish motive but that God might be vindicated before the eyes of the heathen world. They had taken delight in God's people seeming powerless at the heathen's hand.

It is not the eloquence of man's prayer, and it is not the quantity of prayers that move God to action, it is the attitude. Prayer does not change things, men are changed. God cannot act to bless any one that does not pray, believing, trusting, and repenting.

### **Verses 20-23**

Gabriel appears in the midst of Daniel's prayer to deliver God's answer to his prayer. Notice the answer comes before Daniel finished his prayer. God knows what we need before we ask for it. But God also knows that our greatest need is to ask for it.

### **Verses 24-26**

The word translated "weeks" is literally "sevens." 70 sevens, seventy weeks of years, to finish the transgression. These 490 years express the period of time God decreed for the accomplishment of all that is necessary for the "restoration of the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem.

The "cups of iniquity" or "end of sin" was to be filled to the brim. They would reject the Messiah and in so doing they reached the culmination of all their wickedness. No greater sin was possible.

In Christ's death, God will triumph over man's rebellion and give the power to conquer sin. He will punish all sin in His Son, and offer to man a way to overcome his rebellion. (Sin was not removed under the old law, but now is removed through Christ.)

To make atonement for sin, to reconcile man to God's will and way, God took the initiative and presented His Son as an atonement, (a covering). John 3:16

Man's heart is broken and he is drawn to God by the love of His Son, Jesus.  
Colossians 1:20-21

The work of the Messiah would bring in everlasting righteousness. There are two aspects of righteousness:

1. Imputed righteousness--is righteousness which God declares we have, which we do not merit.
2. Practiced righteousness--which we are prompted to do by faith and love in God as He reveals to us in His Word, the way of righteous living.

With the accomplishment of the work of the Messiah in fulfilling God's prophesied plan of redemption, prophecy was confirmed, fulfilled, validated, and thus sealed up, paid in full.

The anointing of the Messiah is to be accomplished during this period of time (70 weeks). To "anoint the most holy" means "thing" not "place." The dispensationalists insist that all the events of verse 24 are still in the future.

They say "to make an end of sin" means to eliminate moral evil completely from this world. They also insist that the 70<sup>th</sup> week is the entire church age.

Hebrews, in the New Testament, represents all these transactions of verse 24, as having been fulfilled in the climatic event of the plan of God's redemption at Calvary. Hebrews 9:28; 10:12-14

Notice, at Christ's second coming He is not going "to deal with sin" for sin has already been dealt with. Verse 24 was fulfilled and completed at the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ and the establishment of His church.

### **Verse 25**

This verse tells us exactly how many years shall intervene between the return of the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah. (69 weeks of years,  $69 \times 7 = 483$  years)

In 457 B.C., the first 7 sevens ( $7 \times 7$ , or 49 weeks of years) we arrive at the date of 408 B.C. for the restoration of the Jewish commonwealth. 408 B.C. accords accurately with the historical facts as to when the work was completed.

From the 408 B.C. to the next period of time, 62 sevens ( $62 \times 7$  weeks of years) or 434 years, we come down to the year 26 A. D., as the close of the second period. (Note: we know that our present years are in error by 4 years.)

The close of this period brings us to the Messiah according to the prophecy. This was the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Christ's life when Christ began His public ministry.

### **Verses 26-27**

The "cutting off" of the Messiah is said to be in the middle of the week. This should settle once and for all that the 70<sup>th</sup> week is not now waiting for Christ's second coming.

When Jesus was nailed to the cross, the Law of Moses, in its entirety was nailed to the cross with Him, for He fulfilled its penalty and its purpose. (Colossians 2:13-15; Ephesians 2:13-16; 2 Corinthians 3:7ff) Christ was crucified in the middle of the last prophetic week ("the middle of the week") or three-and-one-half years after He began His public ministry.

Three-and-one-half years are left to be accounted for. The gospel privileges were confined to the Jews for approximately three-and-one-half years after the death of Christ. Thus the 490 years are finished and all that remains is about 35 five years of grace from God before His wrath comes upon them. 1  
Thessalonians 2:15-16

"And the people of the Prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary." The Jews did destroy their own city! They are "the people of the Prince who is to come." To a large degree they destroyed their own city when the Romans besieged Jerusalem in 66 A.D. and for three years allowed the Jews to starve to death, kill one another and destroy most of the city themselves.

Then in 70 A.D., Titus Vespasian, made desolate the city of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:1-35). Thus, the decreed end was poured out. Actually, the Jews destroyed as much or more of Jerusalem as did the Romans. The Romans set up siege works around Jerusalem in 66 A.D. in order to quell a Jewish revolt.

Hundreds of thousands of Jews found themselves shut up inside the walls of Jerusalem unable to escape. They soon ran out of food and water. They killed and robbed one another unmercifully. They burned, looted, and tore down houses and storage buildings to find food. Political parties killed one another to gain control of the city.

They looted their own temple; they killed their own countrymen as they worshiped in the temple courts. One woman roasted and ate the flesh of her own child. Many died of diseases, starvation, and pestilence. There was a "flood" of desolation and death in Jerusalem by the "people of the Prince to come." the Jews. (Josephus, "Antiquities and Wars of the Jews")

The Messiah will “make a firm covenant with the many” during the 70<sup>th</sup> week. He will cut off or put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering. The New Covenant is to be established and the Old covenant “done away with.”

## **Chapter 10**

These last three chapters of Daniel contain the Last Revelation of Things to Come. Chapter 10 is an introduction, chapter 11 is the body of this last revelation, and chapter 12 is a conclusion.

### **Verses 1-3**

The “Last Revelation of Things to Come” is the last revelation of things to come upon the Old Testament covenant people. In chapter 11, Daniel recounts the history of the final centuries of Israel’s history as it relates to the Ptolemies and Seleucids.

Daniel did not return to Palestine with the remnants under Zerubbabel, but remained in Babylon. He was now an old man, possibly around ninety years old. God had yet one more revelation to give him on behalf of the covenant people.

In order to understand the full significance of this entire revelation concerning the Ptolemies and the Seleucids and other enemies of God’s people like the Samaritans in the ending of the Old Testament covenant, one must understand that already obstacles had been placed in the way of the first returnees to Palestine. The Samaritans had tried to persuade Cyrus that the Jews he allowed to return to Palestine were plotting treason against his rule.

God tells Daniel that much more tribulation and persecution is to come upon the Jews in their restoration before the Messiah comes.

The Jews with carnal mindedness, took Daniel’s prophecies in stride, endured the tribulations, but were hoping in a Messiah who would come to avenge all that took place during the abominations of the Seleucids.

Daniel never predicted a carnally oriented Messiah, he predicted One who would accomplish spiritual victories. Daniel 9:24 Daniel was able to understand this vision causing him great turmoil of spirit. He mourned three weeks as a result of his grief.

### **Verses 4-6**

Daniel received this vision as he was beside the Tigris River.

The being who appeared to Daniel with the revelation of God was dressed in linen (symbolizing purity); girded with pure gold (symbolizing high station); his body was like a rare gem from Tarshish (beryl, symbolizing association with royalty); his face flashed with startling brilliance like lightning (symbolizing truth); his eyes flamed like torches burning in the night (symbolization judgment); his arms and feet glistened like polished brass) symbolizing power).

His voice thundered like a roar of the mighty sea (symbolizing power also).

Appearing to Daniel in the human form, some have taken him to be a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus because this man's appearance and the Lord's appearance in Revelation 1:13-15 are so similar. Daniel was severely affected by what he saw.

The directness of this revelation literally drained every bit of physical strength from Daniel.

#### **Verses 10-11**

The hand of the divine stranger imparted strength to Daniel who was lying unconscious.

#### **Verse 12**

What a consolation to know that God hears those of humble and contrite hearts—hears and is able to answer.

#### **Verses 13-14**

Daniel's prayer had been concerned with the relation of Persia to God's people and the current slanderous attack upon them by the Samaritans, who seemed to have convinced the Persian court that the few Israelites who had been released to return to Palestine were planning rebellion.

The heavenly helper does not exert his force against the Samaritans or even against the Persian monarch, but against "the prince of the kingdom of Persia." Who is "the prince of the kingdom of Persia"? It is an angel-prince, demon, evil angels.

It appears that in the downward plunge away from truth and morality, the Gentile nations, even as they chose to worship and seek the fellowship of demons came under the powerful influence of Satan's angels. 1 Corinthians 10:20-22 These demon-spirits became the controlling, deceiving power of decadent, depraved men, and they used whatever powers they had to hamper God's work and thwart His purposes.

When Christ came, He destroyed Satan's power for all who will believe in Him, and "bound" Satan to a much more restricted sphere of influence. Since a particular "prince of the kingdom of Persia" is mentioned, it seems to be a valid conclusion that every godless, cruel, tyrannical nation is dominated by some such prince.

Evil angels had held the controlling position at the Persian court. They did not hold it, without the consent of the governed.

When men become so willingly bereft of the truth that they have no love for the truth but take pleasure in unrighteousness, God will send them a strong delusion, that they may believe a lie.

It must have been the desire of the heart of Cyrus to know and be able to live the truth; so God sent His angel Michael to overthrow the rule of evil angels in the minds and hearts of the Persian court.

The angel "stood by the side or remained with the kings of Persia." After the present king shall have passed from the scene, the same angelic influence from God will remain with his successors.

There are powerful forces of evil at work in and through the nations and their rulers to defeat and overthrow the people of God. This may alarm and cause terror when one considers how powerful these demons are. On the other hand, there are still more powerful agents of good at work who, by harmonious cooperation, will prevail over their wicked opponents. So the cause of the kingdom is in good hands, and its success is assured.

This is one of the great truths of the Bible not often taught in our day and among our people. Yet it sheds light on many puzzling situations in the course of historical developments and would help God's children to keep a balanced judgment as well as a sure hope in today's mad world.

#### **Verse 14**

The "latter days" refers to the last days of the Old Testament Dispensation, from the Persian era to the Roman occupation of Palestine, the Persian and Greek empires.

#### **Verses 15-17**

The angel touched Daniel's lips and enabled him through divine assistance to find boldness to address supernaturalism. This divine appearance took Daniel's breath away.

How often we treat the things of glory lightly; we who are so familiar with divine things need to be aware for they are not to be taken lightly; example Lord's Supper, giving, singing, etc.

### **Verses 18-19**

The message from God was "peace, be strong, fear not." This knowledge of being approved of and at peace with God brings strength to the weakest sinner.

### **Verses 20-21**

Daniel should remember that the angel had been sent to overcome the evil angel who was being allowed to influence the decisions and actions of the rulers of Persia. God's angel had overcome this evil spirit and now announces that he is about to return and continue such overruling. Evidently God's angelic helper to Persia will not go unchallenged but will have to continue in the spiritual struggle preparing them, (the covenant people), to bring forth the Messiah.

As soon as the one conflict with Persia ends, the angel will be engaged in the same sort of conflict with another demon angel sent from hell to attempt to thwart God's plan by influencing the rulers of Greece.

The "writing of truth" is a phrase to inform Daniel that the history which is about to be revealed in chapter 11 contains events of which God's wisdom alone bears record and, as always is infallibly accurate.

## **Chapter 11**

### **Verse 1**

The angelic speaker is relating how he had previously helped Michael to overcome great obstacles at the Persian court in the first year of Darius.

### **Verse 2**

Three kings of Persia would follow Cyrus and after them a fourth king gaining far more riches than all of them. Cambyses is the first of the three to follow Cyrus. He was Cyrus' son. While returning home from a long campaign against Egypt and Ethiopia, he died of a wound accidentally self-inflicted when mounting his horse. The Persian record of his death suggests suicide.

Cyrus had two sons, Cambyses and Bardiya. Cambyses is reported to have murdered Bardiya. Before Cambyses' death a revolt in the homeland had been initiated by Gaumata. The news of this revolt was what caused Cambyses' hasty

return from Egypt. Gaumata claimed the throne after Cambyses died. Two months later Gaumata was taken prisoner and executed. Gaumata is the second to follow Cyrus and is known as Smerdis.

The third to follow Cyrus is Darius Hystaspis. He was one of seven Persian nobles who agreed that the one whose horse neighed first after sunrise would be king. Through the trickery of his groom, the throne was won for Darius.

Darius Hystaspis is the emperor who protected the Jews from their Samaritan enemies, who were trying to thwart the rebuilding of the walls and temple of Jerusalem.

Darius found Cyrus' decree that the Jews be permitted to re-occupy and rebuild their commonwealth. Darius determined that the decree must be honored. Ezra 6:1-8

Darius as an organizer of the civil government has seldom been equaled. Xerxes, the fourth successor after Cyrus, was the son of Darius by Atossa, a daughter of Cyrus.

For twelve years he served under his father as viceroy of Babylon before coming to the throne at the death of Darius, his father.

Xerxes was defeated by the Greeks at Salamis in 480 B.C. He lived 14 years after this defeat. He was murdered by a usurper, Artabanus, who reigned seven months before being killed by Artaxerxes, the third son and legitimate heir of Xerxes. Xerxes was about fifty-five years old when he was assassinated.

From this time on the strength of the Persian Empire began to wane, and it was finally overwhelmed by Alexander the Great.

#### **Verses 3-4**

When Alexander died in 323 B.C., he left no heir. Alexander had many able generals, but there was not one that arose as his logical successor. By 315 B.C., after seven years of struggle, four outstanding leaders appeared.

Antigonus, who occupied the country from the Mediterranean to central Asia; Cassander, who ruled Macedonia; Ptolemy Lagi who ruled Egypt and southern Syria; and Lysimachus, ruler of Thrace.

In 315 B.C., Ptolemy, Cassander, and Lysimachus formed an alliance to check Antigonus, who agreed to become a second Alexander. In 301 B.C., Antigonus died on the battlefield with Lysimachus, Seleucus (now almost independent of Ptolemy), and Cassander and his Asiatic Empire came to an end.



Ptolemy had remained on the sidelines during the fighting at Ipsus. It had been agreed that Syria and Palestine would be assigned to Ptolemy after a victory over Antigonus. Since Ptolemy did not participate in the fighting, the three allies decided that the territories of Syria and Palestine be assigned to Seleucus.

It is amazing how accurate Daniel's minute details of the actual history of this period was, when they were made about 300 years before it transpired.

### **Verse 5**

This prophecy concerns Ptolemy and Seleucus.

### **Verse 6**

Ptolemy I was succeeded by his son Ptolemy II (Philadelphus). Seleucus was murdered in 281 B.C. and succeeded by his son Antiochus I.

In 275 B.C., Ptolemy II invaded Syria and was repulsed by the Seleucid forces. Ptolemy's naval power enabled him to prolong the war. Hostilities ceased without a decisive victory for either side.

When Antiochus II succeeded his father to the Syrian throne in 261 B.C., war broke out again. The results were indecisive, and peace was concluded in 252 B.C.

At this time Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II, was married to Antiochus II, for political purposes. But Antiochus was already married to Laodice, who had given him two sons.

Berenice was brought to Antiochus in great pomp. Two years later Ptolemy II died, and Antiochus divorced Berenice, taking back Laodice, from whom he had been separated. Laodice fearing lest her husband might turn again to Berenice had him poisoned and encouraged her son Seleucus to murder both Berenice and her infant thus obtaining the throne for his self.

Daniel knows the intrigues of political marriage between two powerful enemies of God's covenant land centuries in advance.

### **Verses 7-8**

Ptolemy II died and was succeeded by Ptolemy III (Euergetes). Ptolemy III was the brother of Berenice.

Thus is fulfilled the prophecy of this verse that "one of the shoots from her roots" will stand in the place of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

War broke out again between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies when it was learned that Berenice had been murdered, with her infant son. The murder of the daughter and grandson of Ptolemy II was an outrage to the honor of the Ptolemies and resulted in the “Laodicean War.”

After a series of brilliant victories, northern Syria was completely subjugated and the murderess Laodice was put to death. Ptolemy III was called back to Egypt to care for a local problem.

### **Verse 13**

All during the years Ptolemy IV was “living it up” and letting his defenses deteriorate, Antiochus III was making plans to annex Palestine. He gathered a vast army and better equipment than before and launched an attack.

Ptolemy Philopator was dead and his son and an heir apparent was only a child of four. Egypt was rent with turmoil and rebellion. After some bitter battles without much success Antiochus the Great finally won a decisive battle at Panion. The phrase “after an interval of some years” does not refer to the “Antichrist coming at the end of the world as our premillennial friends say, but simply describes the years between Antiochus’ defeat by Ptolemy IV and Antiochus’ victory at Panion.

### **Verses 14-15**

Antiochus III, the Great, made a league with Philip of Macedon against their own government. Antiochus also had the support of certain violent and factious Jews who eventually brought trouble upon their country. This confirms the predictions of the vision of Daniel in 9:25 about the “troublesome times” of this era. In 198 B.C. the whole of Syria was in the hands of Antiochus.

### **Verse 16**

In passing through his newly acquired territories, Antiochus came to Jerusalem where, according to Josephus, the inhabitants gave him a cordial welcome.

Antiochus III released Jerusalem from all taxes for three years, and afterwards from one-third of the taxes. He also sent a large sum of money for the service of the Temple and released the elders, priests, scribes, and singing men from all taxes for the future.

## **Verse 17**

Antiochus plots to overthrow all the power and cunning of this whole kingdom at Egypt in order to conquer her. Antiochus the Great gives his daughter to Egypt to corrupt Egypt.

In a treaty (198 B.C.) with Ptolemy V (Epiphanes), who was then only seven years of age, Antiochus III betrothed his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V. The marriage was not consummated until five years later.

Antiochus hoped to gain an advantage over the king of Egypt by trusting that his daughter would be he father's ally rather than her husbands. But Cleopatra constantly sided with her husband against her father.

## **Verses 18-19**

Hannibal was defeated by the Romans and fled to the court of Antiochus III for refuge. Interested in stirring up trouble for Rome, Hannibal encouraged Antiochus to invade Greece. The Romans under the brilliant Cornelius Scipio defeated Antiochus in 190 B.C. He had to surrender his war elephants, his navy, and pay an enormous indemnity.

His younger son, later to rule as Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), was taken to Rome as hostage for payment of the indemnity. Antiochus III marched against the revolted Armenians in 187 B.C.

In order to replenish his exhausted treasury, he attempted to plunder their temple and both he and his soldiers were slain by the Elamites. He died in disgrace and violence.

## **Verse 20**

Rome had so thoroughly defeated Syria that she was now able to demand and get an enormous tribute annually. Syria was forced to exact heavy taxes for its tributary nations which included Palestine. A special tax collector by the name of Heliodorus was sent to appropriate the rich treasure of the Temple at Jerusalem.

More of the "troublous times" predicted in 9:25 that is to come upon the Jews came when Heliodorus possibly poisoned Seleucus IV after he had been on the throne a short time. But these "troublous times" are mild compared with what is to come under Antiochus IV (Epiphanes).

It overwhelms the mind to think that Daniel predicts in detail 200 years of history before it happens. Make no mistake, the Bible is the Word of God and

God reveals history before it happens and is active in it to serve His glorious purpose to redeem and purify a people of His own who are zealous for good works.

### **Verse 21**

The “despicable person” is Antiochus Epiphanes. Antiochus IV came to power by posing as the guardian of the boy-king Antiochus, and later when the boy-king was murdered by Andronicus, Antiochus promptly put Andronicus to death. By flattery he won over the king of Pergamus to his cause, all the Syrians gave in peaceably. He was a master of intrigue.

### **Verse 22**

Antiochus marched his army against Egypt three times.

In these “troubled times” the high priest was to lose his rule. In the early days of the reign of Antiochus IV, Jerusalem was ruled by the high priest, Onias II, a descendant of Simon the Just, a strictly orthodox Jew.

The Jews, who looked favorably on the Greek culture, opposed Onias and espoused the cause of his brother Jason. By promising larger tribute to Antiochus, Jason succeeded in having himself appointed high priest and Onias was slain by command of Antiochus in 172 B.C.

Jason encouraged the Hellenizing of Palestine. A gymnasium was built in Jerusalem. Jewish lads exercised there in the nude. Greek names instead of Jewish names were adopted by the people and for their cities. Hebrew ways and doctrines were looked upon as “behind the times.”

To this paganizing arose a resistance movement so zealous it became fanatical. The Hasidim Jews (the separated ones) swore to follow the ways of their fathers, and even welcomed death to do so. This caused unrest and Antiochus sought a means of solving the unrest in Palestine.

Menelaus, of the tribe of Benjamin, could make no legal claim to the office of high priest, but by offering higher tribute to Antiochus than Jason was paying was nominated to the office of high priest.

A Syrian garrison was stationed in the citadel of Jerusalem to insure order and respect for the new high priest. This infuriated the Hasidim and Jason began plotting ways and means to regain his office.

### **Verse 23**

Antiochus was on a campaign against Egypt. By many devices of intrigue, flattery, and deceit, and with a small army, he won a significant victory at Pelusium. He captured Memphis and generally all of the lower and central Egypt.

Antiochus deceitfully made it a point to establish as friendly a relationship with a defeated opponent as possible.

### **Verse 24**

Another device of Antiochus was to lavish upon his troops a distribution of the plunder taken in conquest. This purchased for him influence and loyalty.

While Antiochus was busy fighting in Egypt, Jason raised an army and raided Jerusalem. Menelaus beat off the attack but it became obvious to Antiochus that large segments of Judaism was still opposed to Hellenism and Syrian control of Palestine.

On his return from Egypt, Antiochus was welcomed to Jerusalem by Menelaus who placed the temple treasure at Antiochus' disposal.

### **Verse 25**

Antiochus was forced to return to Syria to quell a revolt. Later he raised a great army to go against the king of Egypt once again. In the battle Antiochus came as close as he ever came to subduing the empire of the Ptolemies.

The king of Egypt was defeated by intrigue and treason on the part of his own court.

### **Verse 26**

It appears that the guardian and state minister of the young Ptolemy Physcon betrayed the king. Ptolemy Physcon and Cleopatra had allied themselves against Ptolemy Philometor, their brother, to defend Physcon's rule of Alexandria.

### **Verse 27**

"Both kings" has reference to Antiochus and Ptolemy Philometor. Antiochus called a truce and met Philometor at the table. Antiochus "pretended" to be conducting his campaign against Egypt in order to help Philmetor regain control of Egypt.

Philometor “pretended” to believe him. The decisive victory of this second Egyptian campaign was the victory of Antiochus over Physcon and Cleopatra in a massive naval action near Pelusium.

“For the end is still to come at the appointed time,” is very significant.

Although Antiochus and Philometor would “pretend” an alliance to conquer Egypt, it failed because “in the appointed time” of Almighty God it was not “yet” time for the end of wars between Syria and Egypt, which in turn were bringing such “troublous times” upon the covenant people.

God knows exactly when and how the troubled times of His covenant people shall be ended. Their troubles shall come to an end after “sixty-nine sevens.” The “Seventieth seven” shall be the era in which their troubles shall cease, and the “cutting off of a Prince” shall be how it is accomplished.

Thus, the peace predicted for the troubled saints was to be the peace found in the Messiah and in His kingdom, the church.

### **Verse 28**

Laden with the spoils of war, Antiochus returned to his own land to attend to its affairs. A part of that land was the Holy Land, and he had to pass through it in order to get to Syria.

“His heart will be set against the holy covenant,” indicates that there is a burning hatred in Antiochus’ heart against the Jews. The plundering of the Jews is recorded in 1 Maccabees 1:20-28.

The prophecy here made by Daniel was intended to strengthen the Jews in that future time when it appeared as if evil was prospering under Antiochus. They were to understand that it was only temporary and that in the appointed time of God it would come to an end.

### **Verse 29**

“At the appointed time” means within the providential schedule of God. God knows the future of all history and whatever happens, God uses to serve His purpose.

This third expedition of Antiochus IV against Egypt in the spring of 168 B.C. ultimately served the divine purpose toward the Jews. Antiochus’ efforts against Egypt did not fare well. In fact, he was humiliated. In Egypt the two brothers Ptolemy Philometor and Ptolemy Physcon, were no longer at odds with one another.

Their sister, Cleopatra, had succeeded in persuading them that their interests lay along the same lines, and that any effort to allow Antiochus to control the situation for them was pure folly. Because the brothers had sought Roman support, Antiochus decided to attack.

### **Verse 30**

Kittim is Cyrus, but to Palestine it meant Rome. Laenas headed the Roman embassy when it encountered Antiochus besieging Alexandria. Laenas told Antiochus to go home and then with his staff drew a circle around the king and told him a decision had to be made before he stepped outside the circle, or else he would have to meet the Romans in war.

Antiochus knew the Roman's strength and decided to withdraw from Egypt immediately. The rage he was unable to vent on Egypt is now turned against the people of Palestine. He dispatched Appolonius, his general, to occupy the city of Jerusalem.

In a Sabbath attack, when he knew the orthodox Jews would not fight, he slaughtered large numbers of the Jews. The city walls were destroyed, and a new fortress, the Akra, was built on the site of the citadel.

Antiochus "showed his regards" to those that were forsaking the holy covenant.

### **Verse 31**

The Akra was garrisoned by a large force of Syrian soldiers expected to keep the Jews in submission to Antiochus. One of Israel's darkest periods began.

Force was used to try and enforce Hellenistic deities to be worshiped by all. An elderly Athenian philosopher was sent to Jerusalem to supervise the enforcement of the order. He identified the God of Israel with Jupiter and ordered a bearded image of the pagan deity perhaps in the likeness of Antiochus, set upon the temple altar.

The Jews spoke of this as "the abomination of desolation." Syrian soldiers and the paramours (lovers) performed licentious rites in the very temple courts. Swine were sacrificed on the altar.

The drunken orgy associated with the worship of Bacchus was made compulsory. The Jews were forbidden to practice circumcision, Sabbath observance, or their feasts, upon penalty of death. Copies of the Hebrew

Scriptures were ordered destroyed. All of this can be obtained from the historical record of 1 Maccabees.

### **Verse 32**

The pious Jews suffered extreme tortures, but they left examples of courage and faith. An aged scribe, Eleazar, was flogged to death because he refused to eat swine's flesh. A mother and her seven children were butchered in the presence of the governor for refusing to pay homage to an image. Two mothers who had circumcised their new born sons were driven through the city and cast headlong from the wall.

But such loyalty to God's laws in the face of suffering only served to fan the spark of freedom in the hearts of the pious Jews. The spark would ignite later and burn into a flame in the Maccabean family.

### **Verses 33-35**

In the midst of all the paganizing of the covenant people in the centuries to come there will be a "faithful remnant"—the wise ones. In the book of Maccabees they are called "the godly ones—Hasidim."

The "little help" of verse 34 probably refers to Judas Maccabees whose efforts were valiant enough, but he was never able to put an end to all the distress of the people.

The suffering this remnant had to endure for its faith would have a purging, purifying effect. It did not take long to separate the hypocrites from the true "godly ones."

This purging process was to last until "the end," because it is yet for the time appointed. God has appointed the exact time within which these "troublesome times" shall occur. It appears "the end" came with the end of the Syrian domination and the occupation of Palestine by Rome, near the end of the Jewish dispensation and the coming of the Messiah. Galatians 4:4, Daniel 8:19

### **Verse 36**

The king" is Antiochus Epiphanes who in his proud imagination, conceived of himself as the only god. He caused to be inscribed the following words: "O King Antiochus, God, Manifest, and Victory-Bearer."

Antiochus "magnified himself above every god" plundering temples at Jerusalem, Elymais, and other places. He commanded that all national religious



systems under his power should be united in one which he himself had decreed. He blasphemed the name of God in word and action.

### **Verse 37**

Antiochus who had lived some years in Rome, had learned to despise Syrian gods, and to prefer Jupiter, Olympus, and Xenias of the Romans and Greeks. But secretly he had contempt for all religions except a religion of military power.

“The desire of women” is a title applied to one of the pagan goddesses, such as the goddess of nature, Astarte, Artemis, and Nanaea. It is reported of Antiochus that he inflicted gross indignity on the worship of the great goddess by attempting to plunder a temple of Artemis or Aphrodite in Elymais.

### **Verses 38-39**

It is not so much a particular god whom Antiochus honors as it is a tendency to trust in and worship fortifications and war in general. He will regard no god, but only war, the taking of fortresses he will make his god.

Antiochus Epiphanes was a mad man. He arrogantly denied every god known and unknown, except military power.

### **Verses 40-43**

These verses are a summary of the whole war-like career of Antiochus especially against Egypt and Israel.

### **Verses 44-45**

Antiochus had his armies in the field in Judea attempting to put down the Maccabean revolt when he heard that Parthia and Armenia were also revolting.

To quell the insurrection, Antiochus set out for Parthia and Armenia. He left Lysias behind, as regent and guardian of his young son, Antiochus V, orders to depopulate Judea. Lysias dispatched a large body of troops along with merchants to purchase the expected slaves.

At Emmaus, Judas Maccabees inflicted a defeat that caused the Syrian troops to flee out of the country.

In 165 B.C. Lysias led a still larger army against Judas. Maccabeus and was completely defeated at Bethzur.

Judas Maccabeus regained possession of the entire country and on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Chislev (December) entered the Temple and removed all the signs of paganism which had been installed there.

The altar dedicated to Jupiter was taken down, and a new altar was erected to the God of Israel. The statue of Zeus-Antiochus was ground to dust.

Beginning with the 25<sup>th</sup> day of Chislev they observed the eight day Feast of Dedication, known as Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights.

Meanwhile Antiochus had been baffled in an attempt to plunder the temple of Nanaea in Elymais. He retired to Babylon, and moved from there to Tabae in Persia, where he became mad and died in 164 B.C.

The heroic Maccabean struggle lasted another 29-30 years. Much blood was shed. Eventually an uneasy peace came to the Holy Land in 134 B.C., when the Hasmonean dynasty began to rule.

For some 60 years, filled with hate, intrigue, and murder within the Hasmonean family, the land of the Jews knew no foreign occupancy. The news of this chaos reached Rome and Pompey decided to intervene. Palestine was then occupied by the Romans, the fourth world power, during whose reign the kingdom of God was to be established by the Messiah.

So, Daniel painted a panorama of predicted history from the release of the captive Jews from Persia by the edict of Cyrus, through “troublous times,” to the death of Antiochus, all in the preparation for the coming of the Anointed One.

Daniel’s message in all this was; God will not desert His people and His Holy covenant in any of the storms and changing events of the history of the nations, but He will send deliverance in the precise moment when the need has reached its highest point.

## **Chapter 12**

### **Verse 1**

The human suffering under Antiochus Epiphanes and its termination is the revelation being made to Daniel, for in the termination of this convulsion shall be the sign that the age of the Messiah is beginning to rise on the horizon.

“There will be a time of distress such as never occurred” is no exaggeration. But those who were true Israelites would be delivered because their names were found written in the book. (Matthew 24:21)

## **Verse 2**

This verse seems to give a very short perspective from the “troublous times” in the days of Antiochus to the deliverance predicted of the Messiah in Daniel 9:24-27, to the final resurrection of the dead.

The Old Testament teaches a doctrine of the resurrection of the just and the unjust. It is veiled and sparse; life and immortality was not brought to light until the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The aim of verse 2 is to give hope in the hearts of the people of God when they would be undergoing the persecution predicted.

## **Verse 3**

The wise will understand what the angel has revealed to Daniel, that those who remain faithful unto death in the midst of persecution will be “delivered” at the final judgment. Revelation 2:10

## **Verse 4**

Daniel is not told to “hide” this prophecy. He is commanded to discontinue writing and to ensure that what has been revealed is confirmed as a revelation from God.

“Knowledge will increase” as the prophecies of Daniel are taught during the Christian age. “Until the end of time” refers to the end of the “troublous times” and the end of the Old Testament dispensation and the nearing establishment of the eternal kingdom of God. It does not refer to the end of all time—the second coming of Christ.

## **Verse 5**

The angels were likely witnesses to confirm what the angel in linen had spoken.

## **Verse 6**

“The end of these wonders,” is the extraordinary sufferings which Antiochus IV was to bring upon the holy people.

## **Verse 7**

“Three-and-one-half times” symbolizes a time that shall not be complete or last forever. The time from when Antiochus IV first removed the sacrifice from the Temple until Judas Maccabeus purified the Temple was a little over 3 1/2 years.

The angel says, “And as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.” It is interesting to observe that when the scattered Jews are finally rallied under Judas Maccabeus, the purifying of the Temple takes place and the death of Antiochus Epiphanes is announced. (1 Maccabees 8-10)

### **Verse 8**

These predictions were made to Daniel about 400 years before they occurred. The temple had not yet been rebuilt—the Jews were still in Persian captivity; no wonder he didn’t understand.

### **Verse 9**

Daniel asked in verse 8, “What will be the outcome” and in verse 9 the answer is, “Go your way, Daniel.” In other words, Daniel you have a work to do in Persia and these predictions are reserved for the future.

### **Verse 10**

The god-fearing Jews will by faith endure and profit spiritually by the terrible experiences which will come upon them. The god-fearing Jews would understand that God’s redemption in the Anointed One is drawing nigh and would therefore sanctify and purify them and teach others to do so.

### **Verse 11**

1290 days was the time when in the end of May 168 B.C., Antiochus Epiphanes forced the cessation of Temple services and commanded Appolonius to erect an altar to Jupiter in the Temple until Judas Maccabeus removed this abomination and purified the Temple, December 25, 165 B.C.

### **Verse 12**

Add to the 1290 days 45 more days and one has 1335 days, the time from the abomination of desolation until the time of Antiochus’s death.

In 1 Maccabees 2:26-37, we have an account of the situation of Antiochus while in Palestine. His treasury was empty. He had already robbed the Temple of everything valuable in it; so he was forced to look for some other source of booty. He left half of his army with Lysias and marched over the Euphrates to plunder the countries of the east.

First he subdued Armenia, and then turned off to rob the Temple at Elymais, where he met with disgrace and eventually death.

In 1 Maccabees 6:iff, we have an account of Antiochus death and disgrace at Elymais.

Abomination of Desolation	First of June 168 B.C.
Purification of Temple	December 25, 165 B.C.
Time Expired	Three-and-one half years Plus one month or 1260 Days, Plus 30 = 1290 Days

Death of Antiochus	Early Spring 164 B.C. 1335 Days after Abomination Set up or 45 Days after The 1290 Days
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Daniel's mission is recording this revelation was to comfort and strengthen the people of God when it appeared the covenant people were about to be exterminated.

It might have appeared to the covenant people that the fulfillment of the covenant made with Abraham would fail. They needed some encouragement and reassurance.

### **Verse 13**

Daniel was told not to let these awesome predictions paralyze him with fear and anxiety but go on in his labors until his labors ended.