



The Kingdom of Heaven

[Examining the Book of Daniel]



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Introduction to the Book of Daniel

Title: Kingdom of Heaven

Several key narratives and visions highlight YHWH as the “King of Heaven,” (e.g. 4:37) in contrast to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. One primary purpose of the book of Daniel is to defend the glory of YHWH amidst a pagan nation, after the fall of Jerusalem.

Background Considerations:

1a. Name = *God is my Judge*; lived ca. 620-535 BC; carried to Babylon in 1st deportation - 606 BC (Dan 1:1; 2 Kgs 24:1)

- The Babylonian Exile unfolded in three major deportations:
 1. Daniel was part of the 1st. 605 B.C.
 2. Ezekiel was part of the 2nd. 597 B.C.
 3. Jeremiah was part of the 3rd. 586 B.C.
- Daniel refers to himself in the 1st person multiple times throughout the book (7:15; 8:1-8; 9:2, 22; 10:2-19; 11:1; 12:5-8).
- Daniel was born and raised during the revival of Josiah, recorded in 2 Kings 22-23 (c. 622-609 B.C.). Prophecies of Zephaniah indicate Josiah's reforms had little real impact on the nation, yet they impacted Daniel!

2a. Daniel outlived the Babylonian empire (important to how God is using Daniel to protect His Name)

- The history of Daniel demonstrates how God's people were to live while amidst exile (cf. Deut. 4:25-31).
- The visions of Daniel are meant to prepare God's people for a difficult future ahead.

3a. Primary purpose of book: show how Yahweh preserved His glory at a time when His glory was in jeopardy. Cf. 4:34-35

4a. Relate the book – its content and focus – to what is happening in the purposes of God when it is written!

5a. Structure:

① @ to focus (1-6 – history; 7-12 – prophecy)

② @ to language (1:1-2:4a – Hebrew; 2:4b – 7:28 – Aramaic; 8-12 – Hebrew)

Outline:

I The Historical Night (1-6)

1. Captivity: Daniel taken captive, refuses the king's food (1)
2. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream: Daniel interprets the emperor's "image" dream, foretells the "times of the Gentiles" (2)
3. Fiery Furnace: Three Hebrew youths thrown into a fiery furnace, protected by a 4th Person (3)
4. Nebuchadnezzar's Madness: B/c of his pride, Nebuchadnezzar warned via a dream & then humbled by God (4)
5. Writing on the Wall: Belshazzar's foolish pride & the fall to the Persians (5)
6. Lions' Den: Daniel promoted in Persian empire, jealous rivals plot to get him thrown in den of lions (6)

II. The Prophetic Light (7-12)

1. Four Beasts: Daniel's vision of the "times of the Gentiles," w/ emphasis on the "little horn" out of the 4th beast (7)
2. The Ram & the Male Goat: vision of Alexander's victory, w/ emphasis on another "little horn" out of the 3rd (8)
3. 70 Weeks: Daniel's prayer and the visionary answer concerning the future of Israel after Babylon (9)
4. End-Time Warfare: a historical struggle (inter-testamental) anticipates an eschatological struggle (10-12)

Authenticity of Daniel:

- Along with Genesis, the book of Daniel is the most attacked books of the Bible by the critical world.

- Critics deny the supernatural, believing it impossible, and thus must explain away the element of prophecy.
- If the book itself is to be believed, then it was written by a Jewish captive in Babylon c. 530 B.C. (Dan. 10:1).
- The one tool used by critics is to late date the books of the Bible, especially the book of Daniel.

Attacking the Authenticity of Daniel

- Historic Inaccuracies
 - Daniel 1:1 contradicts Jeremiah 46:2.
 - Daniel 1:1 misspells the name Nebuchadnezzar.
 - Daniel 1:1 mislabels Nebuchadnezzar as "king."
 - "Ashpenaz" (Daniel 1:3) is nowhere attested to outside the Bible.
 - Daniel 2:2 misapplies the term "Chaldeans."
 - Daniel 5:1 says Belshazzar was king, yet Babylonian records say Nabonidus was the last king.
- Linguistic Anomalies
 - Daniel uses 15 old Persian words that must indicate a late date of composition.
 - The Aramaic of Dan. 2:4-7:28 is a late Palestinian Aramaic of Maccabean era.
 - Daniel 3:5 contains three Greek words, thus proving its later composition in the Greek period, not Persian period.
- Doctrinal Aberrations

Defending the Authenticity of Daniel

1. Daniel's inclusion in the OT canon helps date the book.
2. Daniel's translation in the LXX helps date the book.

3. Daniel is quoted by 1 Maccabees 1:54 & 2:49-70, and therefore must predate the book of 1 Maccabees.

4. Josephus records the presentation of the book of Daniel to Alexander the Great in

5. The discovery of the DSS corroborates Daniel.

6. Ezekiel, a contemporary with Daniel, corroborates Daniel (Ezek. 14:14, 20; 28:3).

7. The Apocryphal book of Baruch is dated by many scholars to the 4th century B.C., yet it makes allusions to Daniel.

Fulfillment of Prophecy Authenticates Daniel:

- 70 Weeks Prophecy foretells the very day of the coming of Messiah. Yet this was written down, translated etc. centuries before the life of Jesus.

Daniel Authenticated by Jesus

- Recall Matthew 24:15, where Jesus alludes to Daniel calling him a "prophet."

Daniel and His Friends Obey God (Daniel 1)

Sequence of Events (v. 1)

- 612 B.C. Nineveh Falls to Babylon as predicted by Nahum the prophet.
- 609 B.C. Pharaoh Necho leads army to aid Assyria, Josiah confronts him & dies in battle.
- Judah becomes vassal to Egypt as Johoiakim is enthroned (2 Kings 23:29-35).
- 605 B.C. Babylonian Victory at Carchimesh, & Subjugation of Judah to Vassal status (Jer. 46:1-2).
- Daniel and friends are taken into captivity to Babylon (Dan. 1:1).

Sovereign hand of God (v. 2)

- Dan. 1:2 "The Lord GAVE Jahoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God..."
- Dan. 1:2 "...which he carried into the land of Shinar (Gen. 11) to the house of HIS god..." (cf. 1 Sam. 4-5; 17; 31; & Dan. 5).
- We sense God's sovereignty via prophecy (cf. Is. 39 & Jer. 25).

Scene of Assimilation (v. 3-7)

- Training of the Captives:
 1. Content = Language & Literature of Babylon (v. 4) e.g. *Enuma Elish*, *Epic of Gilgamesh*.
 2. Length = 3 years (v. 5)
 3. Purpose = Total Assimilation
- Renaming of the Captives
 1. To Demonstrate Ownership
 2. To Define Identity

Daniel = "God is my Judge"

Hananiah = "YHWH is Gracious"

Mishael = "Who is what God is?"

Azariah = "YHWH is my helper"

Belteshazzar = "Bel protect his life"

Shadrach = "The command of Aku"

Meshach = "Who is what Aku is?" moon god

Abed-Nego = "Servant of Nego" aka Nebo

- Yet these captives resisted total assimilation (cf. Psalm 137).
 1. Prayer
 2. Praise
 3. Prophecy

Stand (v. 8)

- "Daniel purposed in his heart..." i.e. he drew a metaphorical "line in the sand."

- "That he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat & wine..."

Note what Daniel did participate in...

- New Language
- New Literature
- New Culture
- New Name
- New Job

Nothing Wrong with Secular Education as long as it does not change your worldview:

- Cf. Moses (Acts 7:22)
- Cf. Paul (Acts 17:28)

Why did Daniel draw the line at the meat and wine?

- Issue of Identity Lev 11 & Dt 14
- Issue of Idolatry Ex. 34:15; Dt. 32:36-38; Ps 106:28

Daniel's stand illustrates the difference between moral and amoral issues... (Read Hebrews 5:11-14).

- "Discernment" (Gk. "judge between"):
- An Accurate Appraisal of a Situation by Seeing its full Reality.

What about us? Where do we draw the line for civil disobedience? How do we navigate the troubled waters in our society?

Look at the Issues & Discern Between

- Moral Issues
- Amoral Issues
- Moral Issues are made so because of clear commands from God.

- Amoral Issues are so because no clear command of God addresses it.
- Don't take your stand on amoral issues, which the Bible does not address, because you have no Biblical authority to do so.
- Be sure of the moral issue at stake before you take your stand.
- But once you have a "thus says the Lord" then stand firm on it!

How do we Take our Stand?

- "Daniel purposed IN HIS HEART..." The heart of the matter is always the matter of the heart (Pr. 23:7).
- We must decide to obey God before a situation calls for it.
- Firm resolve grows best in the soil of quiet contemplation (Ps. 119:97-112).
- Recall the words of Christ in John 17. We are to be "in the world," but not "of the world."

Note the Example of Christ

1. Morally spotless
2. Aloof from the 4 major sects
3. Associated with sinners
4. Selflessly served others
5. Sold out for God's kingdom

Daniel Honors God's Name

- Daniel purposes in his heart (v. 8)
- Daniel petitions his authorities (v. 9-11)
- Daniel proposes an alternative (v. 12-14)
- Daniel passes the test (v. 15-21)

God Grants Daniel a Name

- Reread verses 2, 9, & 17.

- Who's in charge here?
- Compare Daniel 1:9 with 1 Kings 8:44-53.
- Note what God does for Daniel (cf. Isaiah 39; 56; & Ezek. 14).
- Note why God exalts Daniel (cf. Dan. 1:21 with Isaiah 45).

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Daniel 2:1-23)

The King's Dream (v. 1-18)

Issue of Chronology

- Either chap. 2 is a flashback looking within the 3 yr. training period (1:5)
- Or 2:1 does not count the accession yr. and thus the "2nd yr." would be the "3rd yr." making chap. 2 subsequent to the 3 yr. training period.
- This latter option would place chap. 2 in 603 B.C., soon after Nebuchadnezzar subjugated Ashkelon and secured his borders.

Snapshot of Nebuchadnezzar

- Young king of the newly minted Neo-Babylonian Empire, who has been sole ruler for only 2-3 years.
- His father died during the siege of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar crossed the Arabian desert to claim the throne, from which he will rule for 43 yrs. (605-562 B.C.).
- Mentioned more than any other Gentile king in the Bible.
- Specifically chosen by God to be His "servant" (Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 43:10), to bring judgment upon Judah & surrounding nations.
- Portrayed as proud, vain, vengeful, impatient, & autocratic (Dan.2:12; 3:19; 4:30).
- Yet God specifically reveals Himself to & through Nebuchadnezzar, probably because he is the 1st king during the "times of the Gentiles."

Nature of Dreams

- Eccl. 5:3 "a dream comes from a multitude of business..." king felt insecure & inadequate... perhaps concerned about the future of his kingdom.
- Ancients believed the gods communicated through dreams.
- YHWH also used dreams (vs. visions), especially with pagans (Gen. 20; 41; Judg. 7).
- Thus dream interpreters were considered an essential part of ancient courts (Gen. 40 & Esther 1).
- Lengthy & elaborate dream interpretation literature has been uncovered from Egypt to Mesopotamia.
- Did Nebuchadnezzar forget his dream, or is he testing his court?

Note Daniel's Wisdom

1. Don't Panic
2. Deescalate the Situation through Sound Reasoning
3. Depend upon God & His Promises

The King of Dreams (v. 19-30)

1. Daniel Praises YHWH (2:19-23)

- Acknowledge God's goodness.

2. Daniel Proclaims YHWH (2:24-30)

- Daniel knows where wisdom comes from (compare Dan. 1:17 with Isaiah 47).
- Nebuchadnezzar must now learn the true source of wisdom!
- YHWH alone knows & controls the future (Isaiah 41:21-29), yet He has also come to dwell among men (cf. Dan. 2:10-11).

We may not know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future.

Daniel Explains the Dream (Daniel 2:24-49)

The Backbone of Biblical Prophecy

Extent of Biblical Prophecy (cf. Barton Payne)

- 1/3 of Bible is prophetic
- 8,352 verses out of 31,124 total verses.
- 1,817 prophesies detailing 737 separate events.

Nature of Biblical Prophecy

- An Accurate & authoritative declaration of future events.
- Consists of a trajectory & destination with milestones along the way.

Purpose of Biblical Prophecy

- Not meant to be exhaustive, but informative, so that God can authenticate Himself (Isaiah 41:21-29; 45:20-25).

Subject: "Times of the Gentiles"

- Time period from the Babylonian exile to the 2nd Coming in which the scepter of world-dominion promised to Israel is given over to Gentiles.

- Title rooted in Luke 21:24.

- Period Illustrated by Neh. 9:30-38.

- Daniel 2 practical for Jews in exile.

Flow of Passage

Daniel Rehearses the King's Dream (v. 31-35)

Daniel Interprets the King's Dream (v. 36-45)

The King Exalts Daniel (v. 46-49)

Observations about the Image

- Dazzling in Appearance

- Enormous in Size
- Sequence Signifies flow of world empires during the Times of the Gentiles.
- The value and weight of the metals decrease from head to foot, while the hardness increases.
- The world empires diminish in centralized power, yet increase in duration and extent.
- i.e. reverse of evolutionary model.

Head of Gold = Babylon

- Babylon likened to gold (Daniel 2:37-38; Is. 14:4; Jer. 51:7).
- Herodotus reports extravagant amounts of gold in empire.
- Extremely centralized power (Jeremiah 27:1-7); the king was law, Rex Lex.
- Yet lasted under 100 years (612-539 B.C.).

Chest & Arms of Silver = Medo-Persia

- Clearly identified elsewhere as the Medo-Persian empire (Is. 13:17; 45:1; Jer. 51:11, 28; Dan. 5:28; 8:20-21; 10:20; 11:1-3).
- Larger in size than Babylon, yet with less centralized power; the law was king; Lex Rex.
- Persian Empire demanded its taxes be paid in silver. Empire lasted 200 yrs (539-331 B.C.).

Stomach & Thighs of Bronze = Greece

- Specifically identified later in the book as Greece (Dan. 8:20-21 & 10:20).
- Alexander the Great began to equip his soldiers with bronze equipment & demanded to be called "king of all the earth" (cf. v. 39).

- Greek empire was larger & lasted longer than Persia, enduring over 300 yrs. (331-30 B.C.).

Legs of Iron?

- The book of Daniel does not specifically identify the fourth kingdom pictured by the legs of iron.
1. Greek View
 2. Roman View
 3. Muslim View
- Critical scholarship favors the Greek view, which states that the legs and feet are the Greek empire, which crumbles and falls, ultimately to be replaced by the Church.
 - The classic view is to interpret this kingdom as Rome with its "iron legions." This is perhaps the most persuasive view.
 - A more modern interpretation is to view the fourth kingdom as a coming world-wide Islamic caliphate.

Feet of Iron & Clay = Coming world Order

- Feet of Iron mixed with clay is the final world kingdom before the Messianic age. It will in some way be connected to the fourth kingdom, i.e. an extension of sorts.
- Ten toes = ten kingdoms (cf. 7:23-24; Rev. 17:12), which will form a sort of world-wide coalition in the final world kingdom.
- Iron mixed with clay refers to a lack of unity and therefore durability.
- Whether ethnic, cultural, political, or economic, the lack of unity in this ultimate kingdom will be severe.
- This final stage of the final kingdom will be a world-wide kingdom but will only last a 3 1/2 years at its apex... (Rev. 13 & 17).

Stone = Messianic Kingdom

- A Stone "cut out without hands" parallels 7:13-14 (the coming of the Son of Man).
- This signals something pure, apart from human involvement (cf. Ex. 20:25), & totally supernatural (Lk 1:35).
- Christ later identifies Himself as a Stone, & the kingdom of Messiah is symbolized elsewhere as a great mountain that fills the whole earth (Psalm 2; 48; 118:22-23; Isaiah 2:1-4; 28:16; Zech. 8:3; Luke 20:18; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pt. 2:6).

Debate: Literal Kingdom or Spiritual?

- Spiritual Kingdom would reference the church age that "conquered" Rome... yet all the other kingdoms were literal to history...
- If a literal kingdom, it would be future... so why the gap between the fourth & final kingdoms of vv. 40 & 41?

MY OPINION

1. Fourth kingdom is Rome:

2. Final Kingdom is Revived Rome:

- Charlemagne tried it
- Spanish Armada tried it
- Britain's golden age tried it
- Napoleon tried it
- Bismark & Hitler tried it
- Stalin tried it
- Modern agendas from the E.U. & American Globalism to a world-wide response to a Pandemic are trying it
- Demolish borders & localized authorities
- Do away with cash currency & unify world economies
- Control population growth & movement

3. Eventually someone will succeed and we will have a one-world-order (cf. Rev. 13 lectures).

4. This one-world-order will be violently overthrown by the supernatural return of Christ to destroy His enemies & set up His kingdom on earth (cf. Ps. 2 & Rev. 19).

What have we Learned?

1. The world is inevitably advancing toward a one-world order.
2. This order will consist of a 10-nation coalition, which will in some way derive from the old Roman empire.
3. Yet history's dream of globalism will ultimately fail.
4. Mankind can ultimately NEVER build an everlasting kingdom.
5. Yet the Messiah will return to establish perfect justice, peace, and prosperity.

Lessons to Linger on

1. Never place your ultimate trust in human governments:

- All are corrupt to some degree
- All monuments of men will ultimately fall
- Globalism will NEVER work

2. Only ONE is worthy of our ultimate trust.

- ONE is perfectly pure & just
- ONE can bring in lasting peace & prosperity

3. Seek FIRST the Kingdom of God and His righteousness & all these things will be given unto you (Matt. 6:33).

- Stop prioritizing temporal things.
- Start pursuing eternal things.

Times of the Gentiles

- An era of world history spanning from Babylonian Exile to 2nd Coming.
- The scepter of world dominion promised to Israel, and to whom it will return, is passed to Gentile nations (cf. Dan. 2:37-38).
- This era serves to punish Israel, and bring her back to God (cf. Jer. 25:1-11).

Sequence of World Empires

1. Babylon
2. Medo-Persia
3. Greece
4. Rome & Revived Rome

Identity of the Stone = Messianic Kingdom

- The following passages identify God & Christ as a Stone, & the kingdom of Messiah as a great mountain that fills the whole earth (Gn. 49:24; Psalm 2; 48; 118:22-23; Isaiah 2:1-4; 28:16; Zech. 8:3; Matt. 21:44; Luke 20:18; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pt. 2:6).
- A Stone "cut out without hands" parallels 7:13-14 (the coming of the Son of Man).
- This signals something pure, apart from human involvement (cf. Ex. 20:25), & totally supernatural (Lk 1:35).
- Nebuchadnezzar's chief deity was Bel-Meradach, to whom he assigned the name Shadu-Rabu, because of his victory over the city of Nippur and the god Enlil.
- The name Shadu-Rabu translates into "the great mountain." YHWH is the one who rightfully owns that title!

Debate: Literal Kingdom or Spiritual?

- Spiritual Kingdom would reference the church age that "conquered" Rome...
- Yet all the other kingdoms were literal to history... are we meant to take the final kingdom as non-literal?

- If a literal kingdom, it would be future... Jesus said specifically that He did not come to destroy Rome (Jn. 18:36)... Rather, Rome lived on for centuries more.
- If literal how to we explain the gap between the fourth & final kingdoms of vv. 40 & 41?

Why the Gap?

Recall the context & Read Matt. 21:33-46. Note Jesus as the 2nd Jeremiah (Compare Romans 11:1-25 & Deut. 32:21).

1. Like a second Jeremiah, Jesus predicted another exile for Israel, i.e. the times of the Gentiles prolonged.
2. During this judgment, Israel was outside her land growing jealous because of Gentile enjoyment of her covenant promises.
3. Yet the end times scenario necessitates Israel be residing once again in her land... So what did God do?

Israel Back in her Land

First, God carried out the full extent of the curses written in Leviticus 26 & Deuteronomy 28, and the predictions of Jesus in Matthew 21-23 were fulfilled.

Second, God kept His Word by restoring Israel to her land in 1948.

(cf. our series "Patterns in Prophecy").

Now, with Israel back in her land, the stage is set for the end times drama to unfold.

What have we Learned?

1. The sequence of world empires in Daniel 2 has occurred.
2. Israel is now back in her land, and the Times of the Gentiles seems to be nearing an end.
3. The world is inevitably advancing toward a one-world order.

4. This order will consist of a 10-nation European coalition, which will in some way derive from the old Roman empire.
5. Yet history's dream of globalism will ultimately fail, because mankind can NEVER build an everlasting kingdom.
6. The Messiah will return to establish perfect justice, peace, and prosperity.

So, What Do We Do?

1. Get Excited! "When these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws nigh" (Lk. 21:28).
2. Get Ready! "Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame" (Rev. 16:15).
3. Get Busy! "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing" (Matt. 24:46).

SO WHERE IS AMERICA?

- America is nowhere explicitly mentioned in the Scripture.
- Several unlikely suggestions have been made.
- Possible veiled allusion in Ezekiel 38:13.
- Yet the clearest statement is found in the silence of Scripture!

America's Path

- If our understanding of Revived Rome is correct, the major superpower in the end times will be Europe.
- This European dominance is best explained by America's decline.
- Read Romans 1:18-32

The Cycle of Nations: British Historian Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975)

1. Bondage
2. Faith
3. Freedom

4. Abundance
5. Complacency
6. Apathy
7. Dependency
8. Bondage

Snapshot of Roman History

1. Triumph of the Roman Republic after overthrow of the Tarquin kings till victory in the Punic Wars (509-146 B.C.).

- No king shall rule in Rome.
- Rule of Law, election of leadership
- Peaceful transition of leadership
- Twin burnings of Carthage & Corinth (146 B.C.) high water mark of Rome
- Golden age c. 146-91 B.C.

2. Social War: Beginning of the End of the Roman Republic (91-31 B.C.)

- Prosperity (esp. slave trade) led to neglect of personal responsibility.
- Deep divide develops between upper & lower classes, lowering standards for legionaries.
- Lack of patriotism & promotion of personal self interests including financial freedom to do so.

3. Fall of the Republic (49-31 B.C.)

- Politics get corrupt & leadership transitions violent.
- Professional soldiers replace free citizen soldiers, loyal to generals.
- Erupts into civil war, and falls into the hands of dictators.
- The Republic officially dies at Battle of Actium (31 B.C.)

America's Social War

- Growing corruption in Politics
- Absence of Moral Absolutes
- Deep social divides
- Leadership Transitions growing violent
- Rule of Law being undermined
- Attitude of Entitlement vs. Responsibility

America's Decline:

America's moral decay

- Nearly 50% out of wed-lock birthrate.
- Over 50 million abortions since 1973.
- Pornography is a \$12 billion industry existing as one of our largest exports.
- Homosexual activists advance their agenda in line with Romans 1:26-32.
- Thomas Macauley, a British Parliamentarian, wrote these sobering words about the United States in 1857: "Your Republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the 20th century as the Roman Empire was in the 5th century, with this difference—the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and your Huns and Vandals will have been engendered within your own country."
- Christian prophecy writer Mark Hitchcock wrote, "It now appears that the huns and vandals of moral rot are upon America. Romans 1 says that when open sexual sin is condoned, judgment has already begun."

America's economic crisis

1. Uncontrolled Spending: The numbers on America's infamous debt clock near New York's Times Square have been spinning faster and faster. More and more Americans are looking to the

government for support, with cradle-to-grave entitlements leading us to have what is being dubbed “a nanny state.” The words of Thomas Jefferson are a stark reminder and warning: “A government big enough to give you everything you want is strong enough to take everything you have.”

2. **Enormous Debt:** The United States could collapse under the weight of its own excess, greed, and big government. "Arithmetic of Imperial Decline." Debt is not just an economic issue. It affects other areas of life as well. For example, debt threatens the security and even the continued existence of nations. For instance, the US Air Force says it needs more money to maintain the US dominance of the skies that it's enjoyed for decades. The American military machine is aging, and new fighters and technology are carrying bigger and bigger price tags. If the US economy hits hard enough times, hard decisions will have to be made and money allocations will have to be prioritized. That more funds are needed to support entitlement and other government programs will mean less funds for national defense, which would leave the United States more vulnerable than ever. Past empires have fallen under the crushing weight of massive debt service and their resulting inability to fund their military. Hapsburg Spain, pre-revolutionary France, the Ottoman Empire, and even the British in the build-up to World War II—all went the same way. This is how empires begin to decline. It begins with a debt explosion. It ends with an inexorable reduction in the Army, Navy, and Air Force. As interest payments eat into the budget, something has to give and that something is nearly always defense expenditure.

The Rise of Europe?

- The fall of America may well be the event that paves the way for Europe to take the lead role across the globe, which in turn sets the stage for the end times drama.

What do we do? What did Jesus do?

Recall the Jewish social war surrounding Greco-Roman culture in the 1st century.

1. Sadducees incorporated with culture

2. Pharisees insulated from culture
3. Essenes isolated from culture
4. Zealots instigated violence to control culture

We ought to the very thing Jesus told His disciples to do when they faced a seemingly insurmountable task. Read Matthew 28:18-20.

1. Recognize the Universal Authority of Jesus. He is on the throne!
2. Rely on the Great Commission Plan of Jesus. Make disciples!
3. Rest in the Personal Promise of Jesus. His presence is real!

The Image of Gold (Daniel 3)

Structure of Passage:

A. King's Decree (v. 1-7)

B. Accusing the Jews (v. 8-12)

C. Threatening the Jews (v. 13-15)

D. The Jews take their stand (v. 16-18)

C.' Punishing the Jews (v. 19-23)

B.' Vindication of the Jews (v. 24-27)

A.' King's Decree (v. 28-30)

The Setting? Two Candidates:

- c. 594-93 After several internal revolts.
- Cf. 2 Kings 24:8-20 & Jer. 51:59-64
- About 10 years after chapter 2.
- c. 586 B.C. after destruction of Jerusalem
- LXX states 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar to sync with Jer. 52:29.
- 16 yrs after chapter 2.

The Image

- Set up in Dura, a "plain" SE of Babylon.
- "Image" = Statue in human form, overladen with gold.
- 9ft. X 90ft. = Ratio of 10/1. Average Human = 5/1 Ratio.
- French archeologist Oppert believed he discovered the base for this image in 1862, measuring 45ft. square x 20ft. high.
- Herodotus speaks of solid gold statues to Babylonian god Bel in his day, as does Diodorus Siculus.
- Famous Colossus of Rhodes was just over 100 ft. tall.
- Image of Nebuchadnezzar?
- Image of Bel-Meradoch, Nabu, or another Babylonian god? Nebuchadnezzar did not become a monotheist in 2:47...
- Significance being all gold (cf. 2:38)?

Bowing to the Image

- Religious significance: "Worship" appears 11x in chapter.
- Political significance: A.N.E. cultures united religion & politics. Most cultures tried to knit their kingdoms with religion.
- Modern Islam illustrates this, & it will occur in the final world religion (Rev. 13).
- In the Western World we are expected to bow to the whims of political correctness.

Issue at Stake for the Jews

- Torah clearly commanded the Jews not to bow down to graven images of false gods (Ex. 20:4-5; 32:4; Lev. 26:1; Deut. 16:22).
- The Bible considers idolatry as the primary evil YHWH attacks, because it is the root of all other evils!

The Punishment

- Death by fire was common for Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 29:22).

- Examples of furnaces exist in northern Iraq.
- Some as large as a city block, and two stories (32ft.) high.
- Fed from the bottom, but open at the top, able to be stoked to 1800°F.

Where is Daniel?

- Often asked, no clear answer.
- Suggested that the three friends ruled over provinces and were required to be present (cf. 2:49 & 3:2), yet Daniel was in the King's gate back in Babylon (cf. 2:49).
- Or Nebuchadnezzar put Daniel in a closet somewhere, because he knew he wouldn't bow!

Accusation Against the Jews

- The 3 accusations in v. 12. Note especially the order.
- The time elapse between the first & second chances to bow.

The Second Chance

- Nebuchadnezzar undoubtedly embarrassed by this disobedience.
- Nebuchadnezzar hesitates executing these valuable officials (cf. 1:19-20; 2:49),

The Setup

- Nebuchadnezzar grants them a stern warning & a second chance in v. 15.
- Yet v. 15 sets up the remaining narrative, and the deliverance recorded in v. 19-30.

How do they Stand?

1. No Hesitation, already decided (v. 16)
2. No Reservation, though outcome unknown (v. 17)
3. No Compromise, come what may (v. 18)

How do we Face the Furnace?

1. Affirm God's ability to intervene.
2. Acknowledge God's sovereign right not to intervene.
3. Admit God's purposes are higher than ours.

Collecting Courage

1) Follow Principle

- a) Sometimes God calls us into the arena to become a spectacle before men & angels (1 Cor. 4:9). Loyalty to God must be a matter of principle, not personal benefit. We serve Him because He is worthy, not because we are rewarded.
- b) Chaplain Studdert-Kennedy (WW1) in Letter to his son: ++"The first prayer I want my son to learn to say for me is not 'God keep daddy safe' but 'God make daddy brave, and if he has hard things to do, make him strong to do them.' Life and death don't matter, my son. Right and wrong do. Daddy dead is daddy still, but daddy dishonored before God is something awful, too bad for words."

2) Focus on the Future

- a) Courage in the present comes from hope for the future. Carefully reread v. 17, "He will deliver us..."
- b) Does this contradict v. 18? Cf. Heb. 11:13-16, 33-34.
- c) They had confidence in ultimate, eternal deliverance!

Into the Furnace

- A man full of fury will be full of folly!
- Stokes Furnace 7 times hotter (v. 19).
- Doesn't even strip the prisoners before execution (v. 21), which will be an important detail later.
- Nebuchadnezzar looses his best men in the process (v. 22).

Why the Test?

- A cause for confusion and bitterness in the hearts of many a Christian.
- Recall Isaiah 40-66 forms the theological context for Daniel.
- Read Isaiah 42:18-43:2. Realize that testing is not meaningless, but has a purpose.

Purpose of Trials: Purpose of Trials is to Glorify God (Jn. 9:1-4)

1. Purging Sin (Heb. 12)
2. Producing Character (Rom. 5:3-5)

"When a goldsmith puts substance in the crucible, he does not put in dross; he puts in gold just because it is gold... When God tries us and throws us into the furnace, it is because God sees in us pure gold... and His purpose is to purify us... The graces of God are always seen best, they glitter most gloriously, in the light of the fire of the furnace." (W.A. Criswell)

Promise in Trials: Amidst every trial God says this to His children.

1. "You are Mine"
2. "I Will be With You"

The Fourth in the Furnace: Who/What does Nebuchadnezzar See?

- Aramaic = "a son of the gods" i.e. angel of deliverance (v. 28).
- Some Eng. Trans. = The Son of God.
- Clearly a heavenly being. Either an angel, or the Angel of the Lord.

Deliverance

1. Note the Reason for Deliverance (Purpose of God)
 1. Recall that Isaiah 40-66 forms theological context for book of Daniel.
 2. Recall Daniel 3:15 & cf. Isaiah 36:13-20.
 3. Read Isaiah 44:6-26 & Recognize the fulfillment.

2. Note the Result of Deliverance (Praise for God)
 1. Recall setting for this narrative in v. 2, gods of all nations are represented. Especially the powerful "gods" of Babylon, and the image set up v. 1-18.
 2. Note title Nebuchadnezzar gives to YHWH in v. 26. Reason for this title is given in v. 28-29.

BIG POINT

1. GOD IS THE HERO
2. MY LIFE IS AT HIS DISPOSAL

Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream (Daniel 4)

Nebuchadnezzar's Spiritual Biography

- In chapter 2 Nebuchadnezzar learned God is the revealer of secrets.
- In chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar learned God is the mighty deliverer of His people, who can overrule the word of kings.
- In chapter 4 Nebuchadnezzar will learn that God is the sovereign Lord over ALL things without limits.

Structure of Chapter

1. Letterhead (v. 1-3)
2. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (v. 4-18)
3. Interpretation of the Dream (v. 19-27)
4. Fulfillment of the Dream (v. 28-37)

Uniqueness of Chapter

- Written by a pagan, gentile king as a personal testimony of conversion.
- Epitome of Proverbs 16:18 "Pride goes before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

- A.N.E. Kings NEVER recorded failures.
- Yet chapter was published across both the Mesopotamian & Mediterranean worlds. God has always taken special precautions to declare His mighty deeds to the ends of the earth (Ps. 47; 66; 67). Men are without excuse (Rom. 1-2)!
- The similarities between Daniel 4:3 & Psalm 145:13 have led some scholars to conclude Daniel helped write the letter.

Purpose of Chapter

- This final recorded event in the life of Nebuchadnezzar serves as an illustration of what God revealed in Daniel 2.
- God humbles proud Nebuchadnezzar, thereby demonstrating how He can also bring an end to all powerful human governments (cf. Gen. 11; Is. 13-14; Rev. 17-18).

The Setting: "Flourishing" (v. 4)

- c. 564-562 B.C. near the end of Nebuchadnezzar's 43 yr. reign.
- Perhaps 25-30 years after the fiery furnace.
- Nebuchadnezzar had a long and storied career of military, social, economic, and architectural achievement.
- Sometime before the events of chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar experienced victories over Egypt & Tyre, the most coveted conquests in A.N.E.
- Nebuchadnezzar also transformed the city of Babylon into the famous "city of gold."
- Many ancient writers from Berossus to Herodotus describe Babylon as a walled city 15 miles square, with a double wall system separated by a moat. The walls were 350 ft. high & 87 ft. thick, so that 6 chariots could race atop the wall. [Joel Kramer showed us a picture he took on the site of ancient Babylon. The ruins of the walls extend for MILES! Babylon was a magnificent city!]

- The Euphrates river flowed through the city watering extensive gardens, including the famed "hanging gardens," which Nebuchadnezzar built for his homesick Median wife.
- More than 50 temples adorned the city, connected by wide, well-conceived streets including city parks.
- The famous Ishtar gate stood both as statement of beauty and an impenetrable fortification, along with numerous other armaments.

The Warning

- Verse 4 pictures Nebuchadnezzar secure & prosperous.
- Yet God wasn't done with Nebuchadnezzar. He had one more lesson to teach to him and through him.

The Dream

- Replaying chapter 2, the "wise men" of Babylon could not interpret the dream.
- The imagery of the dream was common in A.N.E. literature. They couldn't or wouldn't interpret?
- Daniel comes in last, unassociated with the "wise men."
- Nebuchadnezzar calls Daniel "Belteshazzar," i.e. his Babylonian name.
- Nebuchadnezzar notes the "spirit of the gods" in Daniel.
- Cf. Isaiah 10 & Ezek. 31, which use trees as a symbol for mighty Assyria.
- A.N.E. cultures often employed the image of a great cosmic tree as the symbolic link between heaven and earth.
- Cutting down the tree has obvious overtones of humiliation, yet leaving the stump signals opportunity.
- Note v. 17 as central verse of the chapter (trace "rule" v. 17, 25, 26, 32).

The Interpretation

- Astonishment of Daniel may betray genuine affection for Nebuchadnezzar.
- Compare 4:20-22 with 2:37-38 & Jer. 27:1-7. Jer. 27 given c. 46 yrs before, and Dan. 2 occurred c. 3-4 years afterward. Nebuchadnezzar ignored WHO got him where he was!

The Personal Plea (v. 27)

- Evidences Daniel's concern for Nebuchadnezzar.
- Evidences God's grace toward Nebuchadnezzar.
- Contrasts the evil Belshazzar (chap. 5).

God's Patient Grace

1. God warns before judgment.
2. God promises to preserve Nebuchadnezzar's life & kingdom.
3. God provides a means of escape.
4. God waits 12 months.
5. God restores Nebuchadnezzar upon his repentance.

Nature of Pride

- Pride = an exaggerated self-evaluation.
- It's what we want people to believe about us.
- Nebuchadnezzar's sin was not that he was talented & successful, but that he considered himself the source of it all.
- Pride rears its ugly head when we refuse to credit God with all that is good about us (Rom. 1:21).

Humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar

- While walking atop his palace and beholding his mighty works, Nebuchadnezzar reveled in his own glory. So God was forced to keep His threat.
- Our humanity and dignity derives from God, & when we reject Him, we become beastly.

Nebuchadnezzar's Insanity in History

- Josephus & Eusebius also record this event.
- A Greek writer named Abydenus may also allude to it, as he quotes an earlier source known as Megasthenes.
- Babylonian historian Berossus alludes to an illness suffered by Neb. soon before death.
- Greeks called this sort of insanity Lycanthrop (Gk. = "wolf-man")
- It is a mental disorder where a man believes himself an animal.
- The Romans called it versipellis.
- Moderns call it boanthropy.
- 1st documented case in modernity occurred in 4th cent. Greece.
- British Dr. Raymond Harrison documented another case in 1946.

Case Observed by Harrison in 1946

"A great many doctors spend an entire, busy professional career without once in countering an instance of the kind of monomania described in the book of Daniel. The present writer, therefore, considers himself particularly fortunate to have actually observed a clinical case of boanthropy in a British mental institution in 1946. The patient was in his early 20s, who reportedly had been hospitalized for about five years. His symptoms were well developed on admission, and diagnosis was immediate & conclusive... His mental symptoms included pronounced antisocial tendencies, and because of this he spent the entire day from dawn to dusk outdoors, on the grounds of the institution... His daily routine consisted of wandering around the magnificent lawns... to pluck up and eat handfuls of grass as he went along. On observation he was seen to discriminate carefully between grass and weeds, and on inquiry from the attendant the writer was told the diet of this patient consisted exclusively of grass from hospital lawns. He never ate institutional food with the other inmates, and his only drink was water. The writer was able to examine him cursorily and the only physical abnormality noted

consisted of a lengthening of the hair and a coarse, thickened condition of the fingernails. Without institutional care, the patient would have manifested precisely the same physical conditions as those mentioned in Daniel 4:33."

Talmudic Tradition

- Talmud records that Daniel cared for Nebuchadnezzar during the years of his insanity.
- Truly remarkable by ancient standards, that the empire ran so smoothly during Nebuchadnezzar's absence, and no coups occurred.

Repentance & Restoration

- The confession in v. 34-35 & especially Daniels commentary in 5:20-21 may indicate genuine conversion.
- Genuine repentance is born out of a high view of God and a humble, realistic view of yourself (v. 34-35).
- Humility is not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of ourselves less!
- Nebuchadnezzar's humble repentance is followed by immediate restoration.

Points to Consider

1. God is not willing to tolerate incessant arrogance & pride.

- God can & will bring down proud leaders.
- God rules over ALL.
- God will not give His glory to another!

2. God is not reluctant to show tough love when necessary.

- Has God ever gotten rough with you?
- Has God ever had to humiliate you?
- Are you ignoring God now?
- How long do you think you can get away with it?

The Handwriting on the Wall (Daniel 5)

Flow of Chapter

1. Setting to the Story (v. 1-4)
2. Writing on the Wall (v. 5-9)
3. Recommending Daniel (v. 10-16)
4. Interpreting the Writing (v. 17-29)
5. Fulfilling God's Word (v. 30-31)

Compare & Contrast Chapters 4-5.

- Both portray God's humiliation of proud kings.
- Chapter 4 portrays the restoration of a repentant king.
- Chapter 5 portrays the destruction of an unrepentant king.
- "In either case, God shows himself to be more powerful than these hostile yet powerful kings, thus again giving comfort to his faithful, suffering people." (Longman)

Context

- Nearly 3 decades have passed once we turn the page from chapter 4 to chapter 5.
- Nebuchadnezzar is dead.
- The once powerful Babylonian empire is in shambles, and the Medo-Persian empire is knocking at the door.

Prophetic Background

- Fall of Babylon (Isaiah 13-14; Jer. 50-51)
- Duration of Babylon (Jer. 27:7)
- Rise of Cyrus & Persia (Is. 44-45; Dan. 8)

Fall of Babylon

- The Babylonian captivity of Judah is the single most prophesied event in the OT. It is predicted in 17 books & 608 verses.
- Yet another often prophesied event in the OT is the fall of Babylon.
- Isaiah 13-14 & 47 announce the fall of mighty Babylon before she is even a world player.
- Habakkuk learns God intends the ultimate destruction of Babylon.
- Jer. 27; 50-51 confirm the fall of mighty Babylon during her rise to power.
- Read Jeremiah 27:1-7. Nebuchadnezzar, His Son, His Son's son...

Rise of Cyrus

- The Medes & Babylonians formed an alliance to destroy Nineveh (612 B.C.)
- Nabonidus later supported the initial rise of a young Cyrus in 550 B.C.
- Yet Cyrus soon distinguished himself by uniting the Medes & Persians & then conquering the near legendary kingdom of Lydia, which was allied with Babylon.
- Cyrus faced off with the forces of Babylon winning a decisive victory at the battle of Opis (539 B.C.).
- King Nabonidus fled (or was captured), leaving the city of Babylon ripe for the picking.
- Herodotus reports "a battle was fought at a short distance from the city, in which the Babylonians were defeated by the Persian king, whereupon they withdrew within their defenses. Here they shut themselves up and made light of his siege, having laid in a store of provisions for many years in preparation against this attack."

God's Hand Clearly Evident: Read Isaiah 44:23-45:7. "Called by Name"

- Subject of the Prophecy:

- The rise of Cyrus, God's "anointed" (Is. 45:1, 3-4)
- Called by name 100 years before birth (cf. Josiah prophecy 1 Kg 13:21)

- Details of the Prophecy:

- "Loose the loins of kings"
- "Open the leaved gates... break gates of bronze..."
- "Give the treasures of darkness & hidden riches..."

- Object of the Prophecy:

- Raise up a deliverer to release the Jews from captivity (Is. 44:26)
- Demonstrate the power of God in order to invite the world to worship Him (Is. 45:20-23)

Identity of Belshazzar

- Not listed by ancient historians.
- Long the object of critical attack, yet later confirmed by archeology.
- Now among most persuasive arguments for authenticity of Daniel.
- Arrogant, Over-confident, Indulgent, & Blasphemous.
- Throws an elaborate feast for 1,000 nobles while the armies of Cyrus outside the walls. 10-15,000 people with entourages. Women not normally included.
- Purpose of the Feast? Building Morale? Last Hurrah? New Year Festival dedicated to moon god Sin (Oct. 11, 539 B.C.)? Overconfidence in Babylonian fortifications?

Blasphemy of Belshazzar

- Text clarifies Belshazzar is drunk, leading him to incredible blasphemy.

- Vessels of YHWH (cf. 1:1-2), dedicated to YHWH are here used to praise false gods.
- Why did Belshazzar do this? Act of drunken stupor? Act of propaganda to elevate himself above his famous grandfather Nebuchadnezzar? Act of defiance of YHWH's predictions concerning the fall of Babylon? Note vision of Dan. 8 already occurred...
- This sacrilege is especially brazen in light of the decrees of Nebuchadnezzar concerning this God of the Hebrews (cf. 2:46-49; 3:28-29; 4:34-37).
- Compare attitude of self-sufficiency and arrogance of Babylon portrayed by Is. 47.

Cure for Blasphemy

- Repentance: Acknowledge your sin. Admit your guilt
- Restoration: Receive forgiveness from God. Renew your awe of God

Finger of God

- Cf. Ex. 8:19 & 31:18.
- Cf. Isaiah 52:7-10

Plaster on the Wall

- Throne room excavated by Koldewey between 1899-1917.
- Discovered that the walls were covered with white gypsum, i.e. plaster!
- "Candlestick" unique detail... Tabernacle candlestick?

The King's Reaction (Isaiah 45:1)

- "Countenance changed..."
- "Thoughts troubled him..."
- "Joints of loins loosed..."

- "Knees smote one against another..."
- i.e. fastest sobering up in history!

Third in Kingdom

- Mystery for many years.
- Discovery of Babylonian Chronicles confirmed Belshazzar was second ruler.
- Thus third was the best he could grant.

Wise Men Confounded

- Cf. Isaiah 44:25.
- Written in Hebrew? Aramaic?
- Written without vowels?
- Written vertically & backwards (Talmud) or some other code?

Daniel in the Lion's Den (Daniel 6)

Elements of Chapter 6

1. Prominence of Daniel (v. 1-3)
2. Plot against Daniel (v. 4-9)
3. Prayer Life of Daniel (v. 10)
4. Punishment of Daniel (v. 11-17)
5. Preservation of Daniel (v. 18-24)
6. Proclamation of Darius (v. 25-27)
7. Prosperity of Daniel (v. 28)

Identity of Darius the Mede

- A hotly debated issue with two primary options: Might be an underling appointed by Cyrus over the city of Babylon (cf. General Ugbaru). "Darius" might be a dynastic title for king Cyrus (cf. alternate translation 6:28).

Prominence of Daniel in Persian Court

- History records many parallels where prominent men pass from one administration to another.
- Consider James A Baker III, who maintained prominent positions under Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, & George H. W. Bush. Baker's storied career spanned decades & several administrations.
- Capable men are hard to find.
- Moral men are even harder to find!
- Additionally, Daniel had an "excellent spirit." "Excellent" = that which remains...
- Daniel's prominence is perhaps supported by Josephus (Antiquities 11.2.5).
- According to Josephus, Cyrus released the Jews after he became aware of the Isaiah 44-45 prophecy concerning himself.
- Daniel may well have been involved in making Cyrus aware of this prophecy.

Plot Against Daniel

- The background of the Magi
- The nature of Persian Law
- The integrity of Daniel
- Daniel's peers envied him to the point of seeking his downfall by any means.
- "Envy hates that excellence it cannot reach" (J. Thompson).
- Yet understanding the background of the Magi may shed light on this situation.

Background of the Magi

- "Magi" refers to a religious sect of the Medes led by a hereditary priesthood.

- The leader of this group had the title Rab-Mag (Jer. 39:3, 13; Dan. 4:9; 5:11).
- Daniel's appointment over this hereditary priesthood best explains both the plot against him in Daniel 6 & Magi of Matt. 2.
- Later in Persian history the Magi were exalted to the state religion, wherein they consolidated great power & influence.
- This influence continued in the days of Parthia, & came to include choosing & appointing kings (cf. Matt. 2).

Nature of Persian Law

- The law of the "Medes & Persians." Historians consider Medo-Persian culture as sophisticated because of their recognition of the rule of law. Once passed, laws could not be altered or retracted. This becomes important to the plot.
- Excursus on Governance: Monarchy, Aristocracy, Democracy, Republic. Lex Rex, the Magna Carta, & American Constitution. Yet a system of Law will ONLY work if there is a consensus on Absolutes. American history worked because of the Puritans & Great Awakenings... "America is great because America is good. If America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great." (Alexis De Toqueville) America is falling apart, because we insist on relativism, which creates disorder.

Nature of Persian Religion

- Persian religion did not recognize kings as divine (cf. Egypt), yet they did view a king's rule as a divinely given right.
- Though uniquely Persian, this law was essentially a replay of bowing in chap. 3.

Nature of Daniel's Law

- "The Law of his God." These chiefs well knew of the monotheism of the Jews. Recall the showdown in chapter 3. So they decide to make Daniel's prayer life a threat to national security!

Integrity of Daniel

- "No error nor fault" (v. 4). No sin of Commission. No sin of Omission. Daniel was without scandals or slip-ups.
- Daniel possessed absolute moral integrity publicly, privately, & professionally.
- Integrity contains a potency, which allows one to make a genuine impact.

Prayer Life of Daniel

- Here we learn what made Daniel into the man he was.
- He was more willing to spend time with lions than neglect his time with God!
- His faithfulness in prayer led to his fearlessness in life!
- "When Daniel knew..." He was not ignorant of the king's decree.
- "His windows open toward Jerusalem..." He was not afraid of public nonconformity.
- "He kneeled upon his knees..." He ultimately bowed the knee to only ONE monarch.
- "As he did aforetime..." He was not a rebel for the sake of rebellion. He was a faithful Jew for the sake of faithfulness.

The Making of a Man of God

1. Consistent Communion with God...
2. Clear Convictions in the public square...
3. Careful Commitment even unto death...

Path to Political Persecution

- Read 2 Tim. 3:12.
- Recall the Path to Political Persecution. Identify Target Group, Marginalize & Vilify Target Group, Legislate against Target Group, Enforce Legislation
- Compare Exodus 1 & Esther 3

- History abounds with examples of official state persecution ranging from Nero persecuting Christianity to the Hitler and the Jews in the Holocaust.

Questions to Consider

- Are you aware of what is happening to Christians in this country?
- Are you naïve enough to think it won't in some way happen to us?
- Do you think Christianity will one day be considered an enemy of the state?
- What if meeting for prayer, praise, & preaching actually becomes considered a threat to national security?
- What will you do then? Will you maintain integrity like Daniel?
- If you are unwilling to stand now when it's easy, do you really believe you will be willing to stand then when it is much more costly?
- What are you doing now to prepare for such a time?
- What did Daniel do to maintain his integrity & resist assimilation into the pagan culture that surrounded him?
- Do you pray regularly? Do you feast upon the Scripture? Do you meet with other believers? How regularly? How fervently?

Punishment of Daniel:

- "Obviously Daniel could have chosen a less conspicuous place to pray, for he was quite confident that his enemies would be watching him. Yet he wanted to maintain his testimony before them; his love and worship of the true God were not something negotiable" (Paul Tanner).
- Having successfully laid their trap, Daniel's enemies now spring it.
- Verse 14 emphasizes Darius' genuine sorrow at being duped & endangering Daniel.

- Persian law dictated sentences for crimes were to be carried out on the day the crime was committed.
- So Darius labors till the going down of the sun, but is unable to find a loophole to deliver Daniel.
- Lions were commonly kept by Assyrian, Babylonian, and Medo-Persian monarchs for sporting purposes.

Thrown to the Lions

- Persians were notorious for inventing brutal & bizarre forms of execution (cf. Herodotus).
- It is worthy to note that fire was not used by the Persians, because they considered fire as sacred (cf. chap. 3).
- Bible scholar C.F. Keil describes a lion's den he observed in Morocco.
- It was underground, open to the sky, with a 4 ft. wall surrounding the top.
- The cavern was divided in half by a wall in which was a trap door accessible from the top.
- Lion keepers could throw meat into one side, lure the lions to it, and then clean the opposite side of the pit.
- Finally, they could be "sealed" on the top by various forms of lids.

Portrayal of Darius

- Contrast Nebuchadnezzar in 3:15, and Darius here in 6:16.
- Darius is portrayed as genuinely concerned, reluctant to punish Daniel, and even as hopeful in Daniel's God.
- Undoubtedly Darius had heard of the God of the Hebrews.

Preservation of Daniel

- Darius passes the night fasting. Concern for Daniel? Guilt for his part? Prayer to God? Irony: the lions wanted to eat, but couldn't; yet Darius could eat, but wouldn't!

- First thing in the morning Darius darts to the den to determine Daniel's fate: "Lamentable voice" = genuine concern. "Whom you serve continually" = Daniel's reputation. "Living God... able to deliver" = true knowledge of Daniel's God.
- Agent of Deliverance: "Angel of God" (cf. 3:28; Ps. 34:7)
- Reason for Deliverance: Daniel's Innocence (v. 22) (A.N.E. Ordeal). Daniel's Faith (v. 23 & Heb. 11:33). God's Glory (v. 25-28, Read 1 Kings 8:44-53).
- "Good thing those lions didn't try to eat Daniel. They would not have enjoyed him. He was one half grit, and the other half backbone!" - Spurgeon

Punishment of Daniel's Enemies

- LXX says two conspirators & families.
- Corporate punishment was common in Persia (cf. Esther 7:9-10)
- Daniel's enemies were immediately devoured by the lions, indicating the miraculous nature of Daniel's deliverance.
- Note Biblical parallel with punishment for false witnesses (Dt. 19:15-21).
- Cross-reference Psalm 9 & note how all of these ideas are intertwined.

Doxologies in Daniel

Structure of Daniel 1-7

- Daniel Chapters 1-7 are intricately designed and arranged.
- Yet central to these chapters stand frequent *doxologies* (2:46-49; 3:28-29; 4:34-37; 6:26-27).

Structure of Aramaic Section of Daniel 2-7

- Dan. 2, Dream of 4 world kingdoms
 - Dan. 3, Friends face death
 - Dan. 4-5, Proud Gentile kings judged by God.

- Dan. 6, Daniel faces death
- Dan. 7, Vision of 4 world kingdoms

Aramaic Section of Daniel

- Hebrew Section of Daniel (Chap. 1 & 8-12)
- Aramaic Section of Daniel (Chap. 2-7).
- Scholars have long conjectured as to why this arrangement.
- Suggestion: Many portions of these accounts were written in the form of "decrees" from the kings (2:46-49; 3:28-29; 4:34-37; 6:26-27).
- These "decrees" were written for the general gentile population of the world, and thus composed in Aramaic.
- Note how God's providence harnessed these historic events to declare Himself to the world.

Doxologies in Daniel

- Definition of a Doxology: "A word of glory," i.e. articulated praise to God, for His character or deeds.
- Purpose of a Doxology: To praise God with our lips. To elevate God in our minds. To reveal God to the world.

Three Big Ideas

1. Historic Situation that Demanded the Doxologies
2. Character of God Declared by the Doxologies
3. Extensive Dissemination of the Doxologies to the world

Demand for the Doxologies

- God is all about His glory.
- God's Glory is at stake during Babylonian Captivity.
- Therefore, God must defend His glory.
- Read Deut. 32:26-30.

Declaration of the Doxologies

- Daniel 2:46-49 YHWH is God of gods, ruler of kings, & revealer of secrets.
- Daniel 3:28-29 YHWH is the blessed God, who delivers.
- Daniel 4:34-37 YHWH is most high and eternal God, who possesses total and everlasting dominion, doing what He wills to do.
- Daniel 6:26-27 YHWH is the living God with an everlasting kingdom, who is able to deliver & work miraculously.

Dissemination of the Doxologies

- Extent of the Dissemination (cf. 3:29; 4:1-3; 6:25)
- Purpose of the Dissemination: (cf. Isaiah 45:21-23). Primarily, to vindicate God to men. Secondly, to invite men to God.

The Kingdom of Heaven

- The phrase "kingdom of heaven" becomes central to the life and ministry of Jesus, yet it is largely rooted in the book of Daniel.
- Jesus basically called His audience to confess the kingdom of God, yet what does this mean?
- Daniel 2-7 illustrates this idea.
- Daniel 2 God gives Nebuchadnezzar a dream, which outlines the flow of gentile kingdoms, and declares that God's kingdom will never end.
- Daniel 3 God delivers Jews who will bow to God alone as king, even if they are in defiance to a powerful earthly kingdom.
- Daniel 4 God humiliates Nebuchadnezzar until he recognizes that "the Most High rules over the kingdom of men."
- Daniel 5 God brings an end to the kingdom of Babylon, because blasphemous Belshazzar refuses to admit that "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men."

- Daniel 6 Darius rightly admits that God possesses a kingdom and dominion that will never end.
- Daniel 7 God once again reviews the gentile kingdoms of earth and declares that His kingdom will ultimately prevail.
- Jesus came declaring "the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
- Jesus proclaimed Himself as the ultimate fulfillment of the "Son of Man" vision of Daniel 7 in the future (cf. Matt. 26:64).
- Christianity's basic claim is that "Jesus is Lord" (Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:2-3).
- Christians are considered citizens & ambassadors of coming kingdom (Phil. 3:20; 2 Cor. 5:20).
- Jesus is the King, of whom we declare to the world that they must voluntarily bow now, or be forced to bow later (Phil. 2:5-11).

Practical Points to Consider

- If the Kingdom of Heaven is what will last for eternity, we MUST learn to live in light of that. By acknowledging our "kingdoms" are minimal & temporal. By surrendering our "kingdoms" to the service of God's kingdom!

Our Little Kingdoms: What is your "kingdom"? i.e. a realm of which you are a part, over which you rule, and from which you benefit.

- Your Time & Resources
- Your Education & Recreation
- Your Relationships & Goals
- Your Career & Accomplishments
- Your Reputation & Influence
- The typical human response is to use these things for personal benefit, exaltation, & enjoyment. We work hard only if it pays

off. We serve others only if it benefits us. We sacrifice for God only if He serves us.

Serving the Kingdom of Heaven: Yet if we truly live as citizens and ambassadors of the eternal Kingdom of Heaven, we can live:

- Selflessly, because God's glory is my goal, & an eternal inheritance my reward.
- Fearlessly, because my eternal home is my temporal security.
- Effectively, because of God can reveal Himself to us & through us to the world.

Introducing Daniel 7-12 & Apocalyptic Literature

- Apocalyptic literature was a common genre in antiquity, but not in modernity. Often found strange or bizarre by modern readers. Yet with a short introduction and a willingness to learn, it can become a fun and fascinating portion of Scripture.
 1. Consider the Content
 2. Consider the Characteristics
 3. Consider the Purpose
- Content of Apocalyptic Literature: Normally describes a key turning point in history, especially the cataclysmic end of history.
- Characteristics of Apocalyptic Literature: First, Spiritual Characters (angels, demons etc.), Secondly, Symbols that serve as a stand in for something else (animals, horns, numbers, colors etc.)
- We commonly use animal idioms even today: Hungry as a ____, Eats like a ____, Strong as a ____, Memory like an ____, Grouchy as a ____
- Purpose of Apocalyptic Literature:
 1. Comfort the Oppressed
 2. Confront the Oppressors
 3. Call the Undecided

“John Collins put forward the classic definition of apocalyptic in defining apocalypse as “a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human percipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial

insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.” Among the many features of apocalyptic, five are especially prevalent:

1. This present world is evil and without hope and can be remedied only by sovereign divine intervention.
2. The issue of the ages is essentially a spiritual battle between good and evil.
3. The Lord’s intervention will entail catastrophic events.
4. Following the time of God’s universal judgment, a final new age of peace, prosperity, and righteousness will be ushered in.

Apocalyptic literature customarily is presented via visions of the future and contains graphic images, fantastic other-worldly settings and scenes, and an abundant use of symbols, such as the use of numbers, colors, and animals...

We consider apocalyptic here because some have suggested that apocalyptic and apocalypses occur in the Old Testament. Frequently mentioned passages include Isaiah 24–27; Ezekiel 38–39; Daniel 7; Joel 2:28–32; 3:9–17, and Zechariah 1–6; 12–14.⁸ Even a casual glance at several of these texts confirms that they contain some of the features found in classic apocalyptic literature. Old Testament prophecies betray a gradually increasing use of such features, especially toward the end of the Old Testament canon (e.g., Ezekiel 38–39; Daniel 7; Zechariah 1–6; 14). It is safe to conclude, therefore, that the apocalyptic genre, which was based upon Old Testament precedents and came into full bloom subsequent to the Old Testament era, was largely of Hebrew origin. It had its beginning in Old Testament kingdom oracles. Thus David Aune concludes:

Prophecy appears to have gradually merged into apocalyptic. Most of the essential features of the kind of apocalyptic literature which flourished from 200 B.C. to A.D. 100 have roots in the prophetic literature of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. Apocalyptic is therefore an inner-Jewish development.⁹ (Kostenberger and Patterson)

A Snapshot of the Background & Thought-flow of Daniel 7

- Setting to Vision of Daniel 7. First year of king Belshazzar (Dan. 5). c. 553 B.C. (50 years after chap. 2). Chronologically between Daniel 4 & 5.
- Significance to the Setting:
 - Appropriate: It comes at the beginning of the reign of the arrogant & blasphemous king, who will preside over the fall of Babylon.
 - Ironic, Daniel 7 is profoundly prophetic, which dramatically contrasts the supposed fame of Babylon for forecasting the future (cf. Isaiah 47).
 - Practical: This chapter serves to confront proud Belshazzar with the reality that he will meet his doom. This chapter also serves to comfort exiled Israel with the reality that she has a glorious future.

Overview the Big Ideas of Daniel 7

- 1) Vision (v. 1-14)
 - a) Four Beasts Rising (v. 1-8)
 - b) Coming of the Son of Man (v. 9-14)
- 2) Interpretation (v. 15-28)
 - a) Daniel's Reaction & Request (v. 15-16)
 - b) Angel's Explanation (v. 17-28)

Comparing Daniel 2 & 7

- Most scholars view these chapters as Synonymous: i.e. the Vision of Daniel 7 reviews the same timeline as the dream of Daniel 2.
- Some scholars view these chapters as Sequential: i.e. the Vision of Daniel 7 adds 4 more kingdoms to the timeline of the dream of Daniel 2.

Probably Synonymous: Parallels between the two visions are too numerous and specific to be coincidental, therefore they are probably intentional.

- Both Survey 4 Kingdoms

- Both times the Final Kingdom consists of Iron and unfolds in two stages.
- Both times the final stage of the Final Kingdom is composed of 10 parts
- Both Climax with the Kingdom of God

Why Duplicates?

- Repeating the material twice makes it emphatic, i.e. important.
- Examining the material from two different angles highlights the difference between the human & divine perspectives.

Grasping the BIG Ideas: Recall the Purpose of Apocalyptic Literature:

- 1) Comfort the Oppressed: If you suffer from injustice, loss of religious freedom, or the undue scorn of others, take heart!
- 2) Confront the Oppressors: If you are an oppressor, beware! Your end will come swiftly & disastrously.
- 3) Call the Undecided: If you are undecided, listen up! Do not delay your decision. You do not know when the end will come.

Beasts Rising

1. Vision (v. 1-14)

- Four Beasts Rising (v. 1-8)
- Coming of the Son of Man (v. 9-14)

2. Interpretation (v. 15-28)

- Daniel's Reaction & Request (v. 15-16)
- Angel's Explanation (v. 17-28)

The Four Beasts

- The 4 Beasts are clearly identified as "kingdoms" in 7:17.
- A BEAST is an appropriate description of world kingdoms that possess raw power, but no conscience or reason!

Four Winds of Heaven

- "Four Winds... Strove upon the Sea," Wiping wind & waves describes chaos, which is almost always a precursor to tyranny.

- Parallel to Zech. 6:1-6 & Rev. 7:1-3. Possibly a reference to angels. Clearly a reference to God's providence over history.

The Great Sea

- Elsewhere a Title for the Mediterranean Sea (Numbers 34:6-7), which may indicate where these kingdoms will rule.
- ++Elsewhere an Idiom for Nations (Isaiah 17:12-13; Rev. 17:15), particularly the Gentile world (Jer. 46:7-8).

Four Beasts

Let's consider the identity of these 4 Beasts, but let's first consider whether these kingdoms are either... Sequential through history? Contemporary with each other at the 2nd Coming?

Probably parallel to the 4 Kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2.

1. Babylon
2. Medo-Persia
3. Greece
4. 4th Kingdom?

An Alternative View sees all 4 kingdoms contemporary with the 2nd Coming.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| - U.K. & U.S | - Iraq |
| - Germany | - Iran |
| - Russia | - Turkey |
| - Final Kingdom - Final Kingdom | |

This Alternative View primarily rests upon two questionable readings:

- Daniel 7:17 "shall arise..."
- Daniel 7:12 "their lives prolonged for a season..."

Probably best to view as parallel with the four kingdoms of Daniel 2.

- Babylon

- Medo-Persia
- Greece
- 4th Kingdom?

First Beast: Bold Babylon

- Scripture elsewhere compares Babylon with both Lions & Eagles (Jer. 4:7; 49:19-22). Lions are the king of beasts. Eagles are the king of birds.
- Winged Lions were even featured on the gates of Babylon.
- "Wings Plucked & Heart Given..." Picture of Domestication, Reduction of Range & Dominion, possibly reference to Daniel 4?

Second Beast: Ponderous Persia

- Clearly Identified Elsewhere as Medo-Persia: Daniel 8:3-4; Daniel 11:1-4; Isaiah 13:17-18; Jer. 51:11, 28
- Raised on one side: Unbalanced? Charging? Up on Hind Legs?
- Three Ribs in Mouth: Clearly a Picture of Ferociousness. Possibly an allusion to the primary conquests of Medo-Persia.
 1. Lydia (546 B.C.)
 2. Babylon (539 B.C.)
 3. Egypt (525 B.C.)

Third Beast: Swift Greece

- Clearly Identified Elsewhere as Greece: Daniel 8:8, 22
- Winged Leopard: Appropriate symbol for Alexander, who conquered farther and faster than all before him. Alexander conquered and ruled the world within 10 years.
- Four Heads: After Alexander died, he left his kingdom to his generals, who were descended from 4 primary ruling families.

Fourth Beast?

- The Identity of the Fourth Beast is the most hotly debated & most important interpretive issue of this chapter.
- Though many views exist, in my estimation only two views merit our attention & discussion.
 1. Revived Roman Empire?
 2. Coming Islamic Caliphate?

Points to Consider

- Read Acts 17:22-31, God has revealed Himself through creation, conscience, Scripture, and history. The fact that God has foretold the flow of historic events before they occur is meant to ground us in the reality that there is a God, and He presides over all!
- Where this gets personal is when we consider the history of the United States. God controls the destiny of ALL nations. The U.S. is not exempt! The U.S. is NOT the center of God's purposes; Israel is!
- God reserves the right to judge ANY nation, and His standards of judgment are clear. Do you pray for our nation? Do you participate in your civil duties? Don't idolize America, but do live as a responsible citizen, while you are able.

Fourth Beast?

- The book of Daniel nowhere decisively names the fourth kingdom.
- Thus, the Identity of the Fourth Beast is the most hotly debated interpretive issue of Daniel chapter 7.
- Whatever the Identity of the 4th kingdom, it is described as a ten-nation coalition, which forms to revive a former empire (v. 23-25).
- This revived empire is clearly the kingdom in place when Christ returns to set up the eternal kingdom of God (v. 26-27).
- Though many views exist, only two views in my estimation merit our attention & discussion.
 1. Revived Roman Empire?

2. Coming Islamic Caliphate?

Revived Rome?

Strengths:

- Sequentially, Rome follows Greece in History, & can indeed be characterized as ruthless (Dan. 7:7-8).
- Timeline of Daniel 9:24-27 fits well with the Roman period & destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
- Jewish interpretation from 1st century identified 4th Beast as Rome (2 Esdras 12:11-12).
- The historic "Roman context" in which Revelation was later written seemingly gives weight to this view.
- This view has enjoyed the most conservative adherents throughout history.

Weaknesses:

- While Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece are all clearly identified by the Scripture, Rome is never explicitly mentioned by name.
- Rome never fully controlled all the former territory of Babylon, Persia, & Greece as Dan. 2:40 may necessitate.
- Though indeed "crushing" in many respects, Rome also left a long-lasting legacy of roads, infrastructure, law, etc.
- Because of many similarities with Greece, Rome can hardly be described as "diverse from all beasts before it" (7:7).

Islamic Caliphate?

Strengths:

- The Islamic kingdom (600's-1900's A.D.) did gain control over the entire former territory of Babylon, Persia, and Greece as Dan. 2:40 may require, and thus far is the only kingdom to have done so in history.
- Easily characterized as crushing & ruthlessly devouring (v. 7-8)

- More easily described as "diverse from all kingdoms" than Rome can be (v. 7).
- Consulting the original Aramaic of Daniel 2:43, an alternate translation could read as follows: "As you saw iron *mixed* with clay, they will be *Arab*; and will thus not remain united, just as iron does not *mix* with clay." —Daniel 2:43

Weaknesses:

- Largely bypasses the significance of the Roman Empire to history.
- Though explainable as "Arab," Daniel 9:26 is more easily understood as "Roman."

Consequences

- How we identify the Fourth Beast has obvious consequences for how we anticipate the unfolding of End Times events.
 1. Revived Rome?
 2. Islamic Caliphate?
- If we identify the final kingdom as Revived Rome, then we ought to keep a close eye on things like... European politics, economy, & foreign policy. Possibly also the Vatican.
- If we identify the final kingdom as a Coming Caliphate, then we ought to keep a close eye on things like... Islamic religion, politics, and economy. Turkey's push to revive the old Ottoman Empire. The current "peace deals" going down in the Middle East.

Nature of Biblical Prophecy

- Read Daniel 12:4.
- Prophecy pictures the future to warn the world, encourage the believer, & authenticate God. Not meant to answer every question... Not meant to satisfy every curiosity... We must proceed with humility & see how things unfold...

Mysterious Nature of Prophecy

- The effect of studying prophecy is somewhat like speaking a parable (cf. Matt. 13:10-17)
- Prophecy veils truth from the lazy or arrogant, who write it off as unintelligible.
- Yet prophecy reveals truth to the humble, who study, watch, and wait.
- Recognize that Israel is the crux.
- So even though the Fourth Beast may be difficult to identify with certainty, we know it will center around Israel.

Vision of the Ancient of Days

1. Vision (v. 1-14)

- Four Beasts Rising (v. 1-8)
- Coming of the Son of Man (v. 9-14)

2. Interpretation (v. 15-28)

- Daniel's Reaction & Request (v. 15-16)
- Angel's Explanation (v. 17-28)

Flow of Chapter 7

- This Vision is the Climax of Daniel's Vision, as well as the climax to history.
- Though it is easy to get lost examining the 4th Beast & the Little Horn, we cannot miss the real climax.

The Ancient of Days (v. 9-10)

- The Ancient of Days is clearly a reference to God the Father:
- This title emphasizes the antiquity of God and implies that God existed even before time itself existed.
- Contrast the modern idolization of youth with the ancient's emphasis on age & experience.

- Cf. Isaiah 43:13 God is timeless, having existed before time itself!
- Note A.N.E. culture, and their respect for aged wisdom. Few were respected more than the SAGE.
- Isaiah 3 heralds leadership by youth as a sign of decay within a culture, and thus judgment upon that culture.
- Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel depicts God as a gray haired, muscled up old man, who like Moses or Caleb, possesses wisdom, while also retaining great strength.
- Note also how Micah 5:2 describes the Messiah as one "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." The vision of Jesus in Revelation 1 harkens back to this.
- Few images in antiquity would conger up more awe and respect than an omnipotent sage.

The Heavenly Entourage (v. 9-10)

- His Garment: Garments were also viewed as symbols of rank in antiquity. Cf. Isaiah 6 "His train filled the temple..."
- His Throne: Literal thrones were also symbols of power, thus typically ornate & elevated. Cf. Isaiah 6 "high & lifted up..." Yet God's throne is animated with fire! Fruchtenbaum points out that the Hebrew word that refers to the immediate presence of God (*hashmal*) is the word "electricity" in modern Hebrew.
- His Wheels: Think mobile throne, like a royal chariot throne. Also described in Ezekiel 1. Cf. Exodus 19-20 & Psalm 97 where fire accompanies God as He descends to earth.
- His Ministers: Myriads without number! Ministers are a flaming fire (Ps. 104:3-4). Referencing God's Heavenly Council (cf. 1 Kg. 22:19; Ps. 82; 89:5-7; Rev. 4-5).

The Destruction of the Beast (v. 10c-12)

- The Judgment was Set & Books Opened: Judgment seat ceremoniously set up. Records of the all-knowing, all-seeing God are opened and prepared.

- The Blasphemies of the Little Horn are Rehearsed (v. 11) & the Verdict is Given: The beast was slain... His body destroyed... Given to the burning flame... Cf. Rev. 19:19-21 & 2 Thess. 2:8.
- GREAT DESTRUCTION (v. 12): The other beasts lost their dominion, but continued to exist for a time... This final, blasphemous beast will be suddenly & completely destroyed without remedy!

The Son of Man (v. 13)

- THE Son of ADAM (v. 13): Harkens back to Genesis 3:15, and THE ruler who would conquer death by descending from Adam, via Abraham (Gen. 12, 15, 17), via Isaac, Jacob, & Judah (Gen 49), via David (Ruth 4 & 2 Sam. 7). The prophets foretold of His coming rule (Is. 9, 11; Jer. 23). Cf. Rom. 4:13.
- "Son of Man" Title forms the foundation for N.T. theology. Jesus identified as Son of Adam, Abraham, & David (Matt. 1 & Luke 3). Jesus' favorite title for Himself was "Son of Man."
 - "Christ" appears 49x.
 - "Son of God" appears 25x.
 - "Son of David" appears 14x.
 - "Son of Man" appears 85x!
- Clearly understood by His Jewish audience to be an appeal to Daniel 7 (cf. 1 Enoch 37-71 & 4 Ezra). Cf. Matt. 24:30 & 26:63-66; & Acts 7:56.

The Eternal Kingdom (v. 14)

- Read Daniel 7:14 & cf. Rev. 11:15-18. Christ will reign on the earth!

Vision of a Ram and a Goat (Daniel 8)

Telescoping of Daniel 7-12

1. Vision of the 4 Beasts (7)
2. Vision of the Ram & Goat (8)

3. Vision of the 70 Weeks (9)
4. Vision of the Kings of the North & South (10-12)

First Vision:

- The coming kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, & the fourth kingdom.

Second Vision:

- Elaborates about the rise of Persia, and her subsequent fall to Greece, and the career of Antiochus IV.

Third Vision:

- Elaborates regarding the timeline for Israel's restoration from Persia to the coming of Messiah.

Fourth Vision:

- Further elaboration on the era of Greek rule over Israel and how it parallels the end times.

1. Setting to the Vision (v. 1-2)

A. When

B. Where

2. Description of the Vision (v. 3-14)

A. Ram & Goat (v. 3-7)

B. A Little Horn (v. 8-14)

3. Explanation of the Vision (v. 15-27)

A. Encounter with Gabriel (v. 15-19)

B. Ram & the Goat (v. 20-22)

C. Elaborating on the Little Horn (v. 23-26)

Setting to the Vision

When:

- "Third year of Belshazzar..." circa 551-550 B.C.
- ++Two years after the vision of Dan. 7
- ++Significantly near when the Medes & Persians formed an alliance.

Where:

- "Shushan the Palace..." i.e. the Persian royal city of Susa 230 miles east of Babylon (Esther 1:2, 5; 2:3, 5; Neh. 1:1).
- Either Susa was beneath the control of Babylon at the time of Daniel's vision, and he was there on official business... OR Daniel was transported there within his visionary experience (cf. Ezek. 8:3; 40:1).
- Either way, it is significant that the setting for Daniel's vision is in the city, which was destined to become the new center of world power after Babylon's fall.

Vision of the Ram & Goat

Vision Reported: (v. 3-7)

- A mighty ram with two horns is crushed by a mightier goat with a notable horn.
- The goat's notable horn is broken and replaced by four horns.

Vision Interpreted" (v. 20-22)

- "The Ram" = "the kings of Media & Persia..."
- "The Goat" = "the king of Greece..."
- "Four Horns" = "four kingdoms out of Greece..."

The Rise of Persia

The Ram:

- Common Biblical symbol for royalty (Ezek. 34:17; 39:18).
- Specifically used by Persia on the prows of their ships, and garb of the king leading the army to battle.

Two Horns with One Higher:

- Probably referencing the alliance of Medes & Persians, with Persia being more dominant.

Pushing westward, northward, & southward: Probably referencing the three great Persian campaigns...

1. West to Babylon
2. North to Lydia
3. South to Egypt

Became Great:

- Persia had the most highly organized and effective army of her day.
- Persia became the largest land empire to this point in history.

The Rise of Greece

The Goat:

- A horned goat was an ancient symbol for Macedonia.

From the West:

- Greece is west of Persia and the middle east.

On the Face of the Whole Earth:

- Greece conquered Persia and took control of her vast territory across much of the known world.

Touched not the Ground:

- Probably a reference to the speed with which Greece conquered Persia.
- Corresponding to the leopard with 4-wings (7:6).

Notable Horn Between Eyes:

- Verse 21 makes clear this horn is a reference to the "first king" of Greece, a.k.a. Alexander the Great.

The Clash of the Ram & Goat

Note the Descriptions of the Goat (v. 6-7)

- "Ran in the fury of his power..."
- "Came close to the ram..."
- "Moved with choler (rage)..."
- "Smote the ram... cast him down to the ground... & stamped upon him..."

Snapshot of Alexander the Great

- A Brilliant and creative strategist, who never lost a battle.
- A cultured courtier, tutored by Aristotle, kicking off a cultural revolution that changed the world.
- Received his father's throne at 20 years old.
- Conquered Persia by 26 years of age.
- By age 30 he ruled the Mediterranean to the Indus River valley.
- Alexander had a personal hatred of Persia rooted in their invasion of Greece a few generations before (note "rage" v. 7).
- Alexander defeated Persia in three major conflicts (v. 7):
 1. Granicus River (334 B.C.)
 2. Issus (333 B.C.)
 3. Arbella (331 B.C.)

Contrasting Kings

Another Alexander Prophecy:

- Read Zech. 9:1-9.
- Given 30 years after the prophecy of Daniel 8, Zechariah grants us another prophetic insight into Alexander the Great.

Zechariah Prophecy:

- Verses 1-7 record Alexander's conquest of the Mediterranean seaboard nearly 200 years before it happens.

Zechariah Prophecy:

- Verse 8 foretells of a fascinating event, which is corroborated by Josephus.
- During his siege of Tyre, Alexander appealed to the Jews for provisions, yet the High Priest refused to break his oath of loyalty to Persia. So, Alexander swore revenge.
- After the fall of Tyre & Gaza, Alexander marched on Jerusalem. The High Priest led Jerusalem in prayer and fasting, put on his priestly garments, and then went to meet Alexander.
- The High Priest saluted Alexander and presented him with the prophecies of Daniel 8, whereupon Alexander worshiped God and offered sacrifices in the temple.
- Alexander not only spared the city of Jerusalem, but also treated the Jews with great kindness and deference, in not forcing them to Hellenize.

The King of the Jews:

- After predicting this event in the life of Alexander, Zechariah gives a Messianic prophecy in verse 9.
- This Messianic prophecy dramatically contrasts the historic portrayal of Alexander.
- Rather than being fierce and oppressive like Alexander, the Messiah will be "lowly."
- Rather than riding on His gallant, self-named steed (Bucephalus) like Alexander, the Messiah will ride on a humble donkey.
- In other words, Alexander is NOT God's ideal king.
- God's ideal king is a humble servant, who places others first.

Point?

What kind of king do you serve?

- An arrogant king of this world?
- The sacrificial king of the world to come.

What kind of king do you emulate?

- Do you arrogantly stomp on people?
- Do you sacrificially serve people?

Division of Greek Empire

The Goat (v. 8)

- Last week we examined the rise of the Goat of Greece.
- We also examined a snapshot of the career of Alexander the Great.

The Great Horn Broken (v. 8)

- Yet after Alexander's unprecedented conquests, he died at the early age of 32.

Four Notable Horns (v. 8)

- After Alexander's death, his empire disintegrated, ultimately coming beneath the control of four Greek ruling families.

Introducing Antiochus IV

A Little Horn (v. 9)

- Out of the Seleucid kingdom arose a notorious ruler, who persecuted the Jews, and "the pleasant land..."
- Antiochus was the 8th ruler of the Seleucid Dynasty, which ruled over huge swaths of land ranging from modern Turkey to Iran.

Career of Antiochus IV

- Antiochus ruled from 175-163 B.C., and is known as the first person in history to persecute the Jewish religion.

Career of Antiochus IV

1. Defeated the Saints (v. 10)
2. Defiled the Sanctuary (v. 11)
3. Destroyed the Scripture (v. 12)

Defeating the Saints (v. 10)

- Though competing accounts exist, after his return from a foiled invasion of Egypt, Antiochus swooped into Jerusalem.
- One account says the Jews revolted from the Seleucids after hearing a false report of Antiochus' death.
- Another account says Antiochus plundered the Jerusalem temple in order to pay tribute to Rome.
- Whatever the motive, Antiochus attacked the Jews slaughtering 80,000 and selling another 40,000 into slavery.

Defiling the Sanctuary (v. 11)

- Antiochus plundered the temple in Jerusalem in order to gain wealth, but also to enforce Hellenism.
- Antiochus outlawed Jewish sacrifices & feasts, installed an image of Zeus and stationed prostitutes in the Jewish temple.
- Further, Antiochus sacrificed a pig on the altar and force fed pork down the throats of the priests.

Destroyed the Scripture (v. 12)

- Antiochus not only outlawed Judaism, but also sought to eradicate all copies of the Scripture (i.e. "cast down the truth to the ground").

Deified Himself

- The evidence is strong that Antiochus IV not only encouraged the worship of Zeus, but he encouraged the worship of himself also. On many of the coins that survive from that day can be seen

the figure of Zeus whose features closely resemble those of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. One which has been seen in the British Museum, a silver tetradrachma, has the head of Antiochus IV as if he were Zeus, crowned with laurel. Its inscription reads: "Of King Antiochus, God Manifest, Victory-bearer." [Tan, P. L. (1996). Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times (p. 149). Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc.]

- *This is a coin issued by Antiochus IV, which features himself on one side, with this picture of Zeus on the reverse side.*

Restoration of the Temple

How Long? (v. 13)

- After witnessing the defiling of the temple, verse 13 records how one saint asked another, "how long?"
- The answer came in verse 14. The temple would be desolate for 2,300 Days.

The Maccabean Revolt:

- The persecution by Antiochus led to a Jewish revolt spearheaded by a Jewish family nicknamed the Maccabees.
- This now famous revolt occurred from 167-164 B.C. when the Jews were able to throw out their Seleucid overlords and rededicate the temple.
- This temple re-dedication is remembered to this day in the feast of Hanukkah (cf. John 10:22).

Two views on the 2,300 Days:

- From fall, 170 B.C. to December 14, 164 B.C. marks the entire time of oppression under Antiochus.
- Alternatively, some read as 2,300 "morning and evenings" i.e. daily sacrifices spanning 1150 days from temple defilement in 167 to re-dedication in 164.

Paralleling Antichrist

"Little Horn"

- Observe that both chapters 7 & now 8 use the imagery of "the little horn."
- Hosea 12:10 teaches that God often speaks with similitudes, pictures, comparisons, & contrasts.
- One of the most profound comparisons in Scripture is between the historic figure of Antiochus IV, and the prophetic figure of Antichrist. Read Daniel 8:20-26.

Comparing "Horns"

1. Chap. 7 Came from the 4th Kingdom (Rome)
 2. Chap. 8 Came from the 3rd kingdom (Greece)
 3. Chap. 7 Eleventh horn which rooted up 3 of the 10 horns
 4. Chap 8 Fifth horn which came out of one of the 4 horns
 5. Chap 7 Would persecute God's people for 3 ½ years (1260 days)
 6. Chap 8 Would persecute God's people for 2,300 days (over 6 years)
1. Dynamic Personality (Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:23; Rev. 13:5).
 2. Demonic Empowerment (Dan. 8:23-24; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:2).
 - "Dark Sentences" = Occult?
 - "Mighty, but not by his own power..."
 3. Destructive Persecution (Dan. 8:24; Rev. 13:7).
 4. Deceitful Practices (Dan. 8:25; 9:27).
 - Antiochus stole the throne from rightful heir by deceitful diplomacy.
 5. Defiant Posture (Dan. 8:25; 2 Thess. 2:3-4; Rev. 13).
 - Antiochus took the title "Epiphanes," i.e. "God Manifest..."
 6. Defeated & Punished (Dan. 8:25; 7:11; Rev. 19:21)

- Though we have not yet witnessed the destruction of Antichrist, note the pattern laid down by Antiochus.
- Hastening to Jerusalem in 164 B.C. after its re-dedication, Antiochus was suddenly struck by ulcers and worms (cf. Acts 12:23).
- Antiochus died not even being able to withstand his own smell (2 Macc. 9:5-9).

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy (Daniel 9)

Flow of Chapter

I. Setting (v. 1-3)

II. Prayer (v. 4-19)

A. Confession (v. 4-11a)

B. Reflection (v. 11b-15)

C. Petition (v. 16-19)

III. Answer (v. 20-27)

Setting (v. 1-3)

When Did Dan. 9 Occur?

- Though the identity of Darius the Mede is debated, 9:1-2 clearly signal that Babylon has fallen, yet the Jews are not yet released.
- These observations place the chapter in 539-538 B.C. It has been 66-67 years since the captivity began in 605 B.C.

What Does Daniel Do?

- As Daniel reflects on this reality, he searches the Scriptures to discover why the Jews have not yet been released.
- Daniel reviews the prophecies of Jeremiah 25 & 29. Read Jeremiah 29:8-14.
- Isaiah – Named Cyrus as the one who would permit Jews to return: Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:1
- “Other books” – Giving the condition of the establishment of the kingdom: Leviticus 26:40-43; Jeremiah 3:12-18; Hosea 5:15 – 6:3; I Kings 8:46-53

- Daniel realizes that a prayer of confession is required before the promise of release is to be fulfilled!

Daniel's Prayer

Prayer of Confession (v. 4-11a)

- Daniel's prayer begins with invoking God.
- Note that 9:4 is the only place in book of Daniel where the covenant name YHWH appears.
- Daniel then begins to methodically review and confess the sins of the nation of Israel.
- It has been estimated that 85% of Daniel's prayer consists of quotations of other OT passages.
- Note especially Deut. 4:25-31; 28:64-68; 30:1-3.

Prayer of Reflection (v. 11b-15)

- After confessing the specific sins of Israel, Daniel reflects upon the history of Israel.
- Daniel reflects especially upon the just faithfulness of God. Oath written in Law... (v. 11). Confirmed his words... (v. 12)
- In other words, Daniel acknowledges that God is not to be blamed for the exile. He was simply keeping His covenant.

Daniel evidences true repentance!

1. Acknowledgment of our sinfulness & culpability.
2. Acknowledgment of God's perfect justice & faithfulness.

Daniel's Petition (v. 16-19)

- After confessing sin & reflecting on God, Daniel now turns to his actual request.
- "Let your anger & fury be turned away..." (v. 16).
- "Hear the prayer & supplication of your servant..." (v. 17)
- "Cause your face to shine upon your sanctuary..." (v. 17)

- "Incline your ear... open your eyes... behold our desolations..." (v. 18)
- "Forgive..." (v. 19)
- "FOR YOUR OWN SAKE..." i.e. its all about God (V. 19)

A Model for Us

Daniel's Awareness of Scripture:

- Daniel was searching the prophesies of Jeremiah.
- Daniel quoted and alluded to over a dozen passages of Scripture as he prayed.

Daniel's Humility in Confession:

- Daniel was not personally guilty of many of the sins he confessed.
- Yet he understood corporate solidarity.

Daniel's Response to Prophecy:

- First, he was aware of it so that he could recognize it's fulfillment.
- Second, he participated in prophecy via prayer.

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

I. Setting (v. 1-3)

II. Prayer (v. 4-19)

III. Answer (v. 20-27)

A. Daniel's Encounter with Gabriel (v. 20-23)

B. Gabriel's Answer to Daniel (v. 24-27)

1. Scope of the Prophecy (v 24)
2. Coming of Messiah (v. 25)
3. Cutting off of Messiah (v. 26)
4. Consummation of all things (v. 27)

Daniel's Encounter with Gabriel

Gabriel the Messenger:

- Same messenger from chap. 8.
- "Gabriel" means "mighty one of God."
- Trace Gabriel through the Bible (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26).
- Especially interesting how Gabriel "bookends" the prophecies of Dan. 9 & Luke 1, concerning the coming of Messiah.
- Note the Hebrew behind "fly swiftly" in verse 21... literally, "being weary with weariness..." can angels grow tired? Is God the only one who cannot grow tired? cf. Is. 40:28-31.

The Time of the Evening Oblation:

- Highly significant phrase that appears half-a-dozen times in the Bible.
- Highlights the centrality of the temple in approaching God, the tragedy that the temple was desolate.

Greatly Beloved (v. 23)

- Daniel is thrice called "greatly beloved" (9:23; 10:11, 19).
- Daniel 9:23 connects Daniel's beloved status with the special revelation he receives.
- Jesus later makes the same sort of connection with His disciples (John 15:15).
- In other words, we too can enjoy the reception of illumination into spiritual truth (cf. Eph. 1:18).

Gabriel's Answer to Daniel

The 70 Weeks Prophecy:

- This prophecy is so important that it deserves its own introduction.
- The prophecy is prompted by Daniel's prayer and serves to answer Daniel's petition.
- In answering Daniel, Gabriel gives to us one of the most astonishing prophecies anywhere in the Bible.
- My goal today is to introduce the major concepts of this prophecy. Next week we will get deeper into the details.

70 Weeks Prophecy (V. 24-27)

Introduction:

- Daniel 9:24–27 with its “seventy weeks” prophecy is one of the most important prophetic passages in the Bible. This text has often been referred to as the “backbone of Bible prophecy” and rightfully so, since several New Testament prophetic passages rely heavily on its contents (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2; Revelation 11–13). Jesus, Paul, and John all refer to this section. (MacArthur/Mayhue)

Scope to the Prophecy (v. 24)

- Verse 24 informs us as to the who, where, and what of the prophecy.
- The prophecy concerns Israel & the Holy city of Jerusalem, in specific answer to Daniel's prayer (cf. 9:15-19).
- The verse then lists 6 things that together form God's answer both to Daniel's prayer, and to His ultimate purposes for Israel.

The first three things listed address the "sin" about which Daniel had just prayed:

1. "Finish the transgression," i.e. end Israel's rebellion (i.e. bring repentance as in Zechariah 12:10).
2. "Make an end of sins," i.e. eradicate the sins of daily life (Is. 27:9; Ezk. 36:24-27, 37:23; Rom. 11:27).
3. "Make reconciliation for iniquity," i.e. provide a means for atonement, i.e. the cross (Rom. 3-5).

The last three things listed in verse 24 deal with God's ultimate purposes for Israel:

4. "Bring in everlasting righteousness," i.e. establish righteousness in the earth via the Messianic Kingdom (Is. 1:26; 11:2-5; 32:17; 60:21; Jer. 23:5-6; 33:15-18).
5. "Seal up the vision & prophecy," i.e. complete everything God intends for Israel, with no need to new prophecy.
6. "Anoint the most Holy," i.e. re-inaugurate functioning temple. "Holy of Holies" normally refers to a place not person (Ezk. 45:3).

THE SCHOLARLY DIVIDE

- The HUGE interpretive issue among scholars is whether or not this prophecy was TOTALLY fulfilled in the 1st Coming of Christ, or if certain aspects of the prophecy await the 2nd Coming.
- I DO NOT believe every aspect of this prophecy was fulfilled in the 1st Coming.

But Why?

- Read Rom. 11:25-27
- Paul clearly sees a future for Israel. Paul looks forward to the removal of all her unrighteousness.
- In other words, in light of Romans 11, there is no way Daniel 9 was totally fulfilled by Christ in His 1st Coming.
- Therefore, the fulfillment of this entire passage must await the 2nd Coming.

THE POINT?

- In Romans 11:25 Paul points out the reason why these ideas are practical.
- "Lest you should be wise in your own conceits..."
- Ignorance or misunderstanding of God's purposes leads to an exaggerated view of our part in it all...
- God did not reject the Jews in order to accept us. In fact, the reverse is true.
- God accepted us in order to cause the Jews to come back to Himself!
- God's faithfulness to us is tied to His faithfulness to the Jews.
- History will display that God is faithful to ALL of His promises, whether to Jew or Gentile.

70 Time Increments

70 Weeks (Shabu'im) i.e. group of 7 time increments...

- 7 Days (Ex. 20:11)
- 7 Weeks (Lev. 23:15)
- 7 Months (Lev. 23:1-44)
- 7 Years (Lev. 25:1-7)

Context & Calculations indicate "years."

- Daniel was thinking in terms of years (v. 2), esp. Sabbatical years (2 Chron. 36:21).

- Also, a period of 490 days or 490 months would be far too short for the fulfillment of the six predictions in 9:24.

70 Weeks = 490 Years.

- Daniel stands in the midst of two periods of 490 years each.
- Daniel asked God about 490 past, but God answers Daniel about 490 years in the future.

The Coming of Messiah (v. 25)

Beginning the Countdown:

1. Decree of Cyrus (539/38 B.C.)? (2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:1-5)
2. Decree of Darius (521-18 B.C.)? (Ezra 6:6-12)
3. Decree of Artaxerxes to Ezra (458/57 B.C.)? (Ezra 7:11-26)
4. Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (444 B.C.)? (Neh. 2:1-8)

Preferred Option:

- Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (444 B.C.), because it involves building "Jerusalem," "the Street," & "Wall" (cf. Neh. 2:1-8).

From Commandment unto Messiah:

- 7 Weeks & 62 Weeks (i.e. 69 Weeks)
- Probably Divided because of the completion of the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.

Prophetic Year (360 days):

- Many ancient calendars, including the Bible, operated with a 360 day year instead of 365.242198 days. The reason for this is because the Jews used a lunar calendar. Yet for more precise calculations, when God wanted His people to be able to calculate longer periods, God would assume a 360 day year as demonstrated in both Genesis and Revelation.
- Cf. Gen. 7:11, 24; 8:3-4.
- Cf. Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5.

Time-line: (Hoehner)

- $69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$ days.
- From March 5, 444 B.C. - March 30, A.D. 33.
- March 30, A.D. 33 = Nissan 10 on the Hebrew calendar, i.e. Triumphal Entry (Psalm 118:26; Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:10; Luke 19:38; John 12:13).

Alternative View (Fruchtenbaum)

The Decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah

- 1) Sir Robertson Anderson – 32 A.D. crucifixion
- 2) Harold Horner – 33 A.D. crucifixion
- 3) Problems:
 - a) Nothing in the text requires the first 69 sevens to end at the Triumphal Entry
 - b) There is no real decree in Nehemiah 2:1-8 – Only permission to rebuild the wall
 - c) Rebuilding the wall is not the same as rebuilding the city

The Decree of Cyrus

- 1) This is a real decree
- 2) This is the one given the same year as the vision of the seventy-sevens comes to Daniel
- 3) This is the decree emphasized in Scripture
 - a) In prophecy: Isaiah 44:24-28; 45:1, 13
 - b) In fulfillment: II Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:1-5; 6:6-12
- 4) The decree did include the building of the city
 - a) Isaiah 44:28
 - b) Isaiah 45:13
- 5) It is clear that the Jews did rebuild the city before Nehemiah came to rebuild the wall
 - a) Haggai 1:2-4 – Seventy years before Nehemiah arrives the Jews are already living in homes
 - b) Ezra 4:7-16 – City was being built cf. also Ezra 5:3.
- 6) Problem is one of Persian chronology, but it is possible, even likely, that the Persian chronology as we have it is inaccurate.
- 7) I realize that when our own system of chronology is compared to the Persian system of chronology, it produces an apparent 52-year gap, but this has been explained by Dr David L. Cooper in his book *Messiah: His First Coming Scheduled*. The details of the explanation are complex and technical and will, therefore, not be discussed here. It can, be said that the Seventy Sevens began with the issuing of the decree of Cyrus, and the first 483 years, that is the first Sixty-nine Sevens, terminated with the birth of Jesus.
- 8) Termination would be the birth of Messiah (check out Fruchtenbaum's forthcoming Daniel commentary).

The Cutting Off of Messiah (v. 26)

- Not only does this prophecy detail the arrival of Messiah, but also His death and subsequent events.
- This is the closest OT passage that comes to an explicit reference to the SECOND COMING. In other words, this passage implies that the Kingdom would not come until after the initial appearance, and rejection of Messiah.

Cut off (Karet)

- Phrase can mean being executed for a capital crime...
- But not for Himself (cf. Is. 53).

Subsequent Events:

- Destruction of city & sanctuary
- Diaspora (i.e. "flood")
- Determined Wars

The Point

1. Consider Apologetic Value:

- Prophecy Authenticates God.
- Prophecy Identifies Messiah.

2. Consider Dire Warning:

- Israel missed Messiah the first time in spite of having a specific timeline.
- We do not know the day nor the hour of His return, yet we are warned against being unprepared.
- Read Luke 19:29-44.

The 70th Week of Daniel

- Up to our point in history, 69 out of the 70 Weeks prophecy have already been fulfilled.
- Daniel 9:27 details this "70th Week," when it says, "He shall confirm a covenant with many FOR ONE WEEK..."
- First let's consider the question as to why the 70 weeks are not sequential...

The Gap

Is there a Gap?

- Debated! Controversial!

- Yet seemingly clear in v. 26, "and after..." clearly states that the events of verse 26 will occur "after" the 69 weeks are complete, but before the events of the 70th week in verse 27.
- The concept of a gap of time between the fulfillment of different parts of a given prophecy is not unprecedented.
- In fact, "gaps" in prophecy are rather common, ESPECIALLY between the first & second comings of Christ... Cf. Luke 4:18 & Isaiah 61:1-2; cf. Isaiah 9:6; Rev. 12:5-6; Amos 9:10-11; Mic. 5:2-3; Zech. 9:9; Luke 1:31-32; 19:11-27; 21:24.
- *The six predictions of Daniel 9:24 have not yet all been fulfilled.*
- *What is described for the seventieth week of Daniel 9:27 has not yet been fulfilled.*
- *Jesus refers to the abomination of desolation of Daniel 9:27 as future after his first coming in Matthew 24:15.*
- *In the AD 50s Paul spoke of the events of Daniel 9:27 as future in 2 Thess. 2:3-4.*
- *Revelation 11:2; 12:6; 13:5 places the time frame of Daniel 9:27 in the future.*

How Long is the Gap?

- According to verse 26, the gap is at least 37 years (i.e. from the death of Messiah to the destruction of Jerusalem).
- Christ Himself correlates Daniel 9:27 with His Second Coming (cf. Matt. 24:15). He hasn't come back yet, so we are still in the gap...

Why is there a Gap?

- Luke 21:24 "till the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled..."

From Deut. 32:21 to Romans 9-11

- God predicted a day when He would exile the Jews, and make them jealous by using Gentiles.
- God has temporarily benched Israel, and is favoring the Gentiles in order to teach Israel a lesson.
- Recall our discussion from Daniel 2... cf. Matt. 21:33-46.
- God is in the process of preparing the world for a unique period of history (i.e. the 70th Week of Daniel), which will serve to humble proud Israel. Yet How will God do this???

The Coming Prince

- "HE shall confirm the covenant with many..." The nearest antecedent to "HE" is "The Prince that Shall Come" from v. 26.
- Many interpreters will argue this "Prince" is a reference to the "Messiah" from verse 26...
- However, our text has clearly identified the Messiah throughout by using the actual term "Messiah..." also, it seems natural to discuss another person in verse 27 after the Messiah is said to be "cut off" in verse 26.
- Further, this prince arises from the people who destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70--the Romans. Additionally, Jesus never made a seven-year covenant with any group.
- That this is an evil person and not Jesus the Messiah is affirmed by the descriptions in Daniel 9:27, in which he commits an abominable act in the temple and is destroyed for his desolations. (MacArthur/Mayhue)
- Thus, the description of "the Prince" in v. 27 better fits the character we have already met twice, who was identified as the "Little Horn" (7:7-8, 25; 8:23-25).
- The clearest correlation between the "Prince" of 9:26-27 & the "Little Horn" of 7:25 is the 3 1/2 year time reference.
 1. Half of 7 years (Dan. 9:27)
 2. 3 1/2 years (Dan. 7:25; 12:6-7)
 3. 42 Months (Rev. 11:2; 13:5)
 4. 1260 Days (Rev. 11:3; 12:6)

The Covenant for One Week

- According to Daniel 9:27, the 70th Week of Daniel commences with a COVENANT made between the Antichrist & the nation of Israel.
- Note that this covenant implies that Israel has returned from her exile, which was predicted in 9:26.
- This covenant will consist of a 7 year time period, yet the covenant will be violated halfway through (cf. Rev. 11:1-3; 12:1-17; 13:1-15).
- The violation of this covenant will result in causing "the sacrifice and oblation to cease."
- This observation has led many to conjecture that the covenant itself may involve allowing Israel to rebuild her temple and recommence sacrifices...

- This verse is why "peace deals" in the Middle East are of great interest to Bible students...

The Abomination of Desolation

- Verse 27 describes how the Antichrist's violation of the covenant will result in the desolation of the temple...
- This act has been dubbed the "Abomination of Desolation..."
- "And upon the wings of abomination shall come one..." 1) Upon the wing of abominations. i.e. The wing, a) Pinnacle of the Temple from which the Antichrist will stand to declare himself as God (2 Thess. 2:3-4). b) Overspreading influence. c) Worship of Antichrist – II Thessalonians 2:3-4. ii. Abominations. a) Image or idol. b) an Image of the Antichrist set up in Temple Compound: Daniel 12:11; Matthew 24:15; Revelation 13:14-15. (Fruchtenbaum)
- According to Jesus in Matt. 24:15 this act is the signal we are to be watching for to confirm that the final 3 1/2 years of human history are under way.
- Some scholars claim either Antiochus IV or the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) fulfilled this prophecy.
- However, the book of Revelation, which was written well after A.D. 70 still predicts this desolation (Rev. 11:1-3; 13:1-18).
- Therefore, it is logical to conclude that we still await the fulfillment of this prophecy.
- This passage and others have also led to the belief that we may see a modern temple rebuilt in Jerusalem.

The End of the Story

- The end of Daniel 9:27 gives us the end of the story.
- "That determined (i.e. Providence) shall be poured upon the Desolator (i.e. Justice)."
- "And that determined..." i.e. Decreed beforehand. ii. The events already decreed for the Tribulation. iii. The Tribulation will not go beyond its pre- determined duration even to the exact day – Matthew 24:22. (Fruchtenbaum)
- "Shall wrath be poured on the desolate..." This phrase can refer to one of two possible options, because it can be translated as either "desolate or desolator:" i. Desolate – The Jews during the second half of the Tribulation. ii. Desolator – His destruction at

the Second Coming at the very last day of the seventieth seven.
(Fruchtenbaum)

- I love stories with happy endings. I don't really care how bad a plot can get, as long as the bad guy loses, and the good guys win in the end.

Modern World Scene

- This End Times scenario has often been criticized or viewed as so improbable that it's laughable.
- However, within the last few years, and even months, we have seen some incredible things take place...
- First, we have seen and are witnessing the return of Israel from her exile.
- Second, while back in her land, many Israelis have prepared and are pushing to rebuild a new temple.
- Third, we have seen stunning advancements of "peace deals" in the Middle East, which may well serve as a groundwork for Daniel 9:27.
- Fourth, we have seen how an entire world economy can lock you out unless you follow certain mandates...
- Fifth, we have seen how a spirit of fear can control massive populations, even to follow godless leadership...

What Does this Mean?

1. Work HARD to interpret the Bible...
 2. Then believe what it says, no matter how bizarre it seems...
- The Bible has been vindicated over and over again...
 - You can trust the Bible, and the God who wrote it...
 - It is our lifeline to calm our fears, inform our doubts, and quicken our spirits...
 - Read it for yourself... allow it to wash over you, and transform you...

Final Prophecies (Daniel 10-12)

Glancing Ahead

- Chapter 10 introduces the final vision.
- Chapter 11 details the final vision.
- Chapter 12 reflects upon the final vision.
- These final chapters give a panoramic survey of the coming humiliation & ultimate restoration of Israel.
- This final vision parallels much of what we learned from chapter 8.
- This final vision will grant further information concerning the years of Seleucid rule over Israel.
- Yet the vision will elaborate on the parallels between the Seleucid period, and the final climactic period of Israel's history under Antichrist.

Importance Chapter 10

- "But the more I study Daniel, the more I believe chapter 10 provides the background necessary for understanding the entire prophetic message." (David Jeremiah)
- This chapter provides the backdrop of real spiritual conflict. David Jeremiah goes on to say,
- "When we read the now-fulfilled prophecies of chapter 11, we are reading the very truths that Michael and the demonic prince fought over."
- "Without Micheal's intervention, we wouldn't have this section of the Bible, for Daniel never would have received it."

Flow of Chapter 10

I. Setting (v. 1-4)

II. Angelic Visitation (v. 5-9)

III. Introduction to Vision (v. 10-21)

Setting (v. 1-4)

- They began work on the Temple, but were halted (Ezra 4:1-5).
- Thus the concerns Daniel expressed in 9:16-19 are still unfulfilled, he personally remains in exile (i.e. Belteshazzar)...
- Daniel is troubled, and so he goes to God via prayer and fasting...
- Daniel seeks the Lord for 3 whole weeks until the 24th day of the first month.
- In other words, it is Passover season, when Israel celebrated her deliverance from Egypt of old!
- By the 24th day of the month, the Passover festivities are over, and Daniel receives a dramatic vision!

Angelic Visitation

"Behold a man" (v. 4-9)

- Daniel's vision begins with an angelic appearance.
- Theophany of Christ? (cf. Rev. 1:13-15)
- Angelic appearance? (cf. v. 13 where the visitor needed help from Michael).
- Probably Gabriel, who visited Daniel earlier (8:16; 9:21). Cf. similar address (9:23 & 10:11).
- Here, the heavenly being was "a man clothed in linen" (v. [5](#)). This being is significant for our study because he is described as having a "face like the appearance of lightning" (v. [6](#)). This certainly suggests the imagery of Jesus in [Revelation 1:13-16](#). However, there are good reasons to understand this being as created or non-divine. On the one hand, Daniel's own appearance was changed in a similar fashion to Moses: "My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength" ([10:18](#)). This suggests that this being was divine. However, as Hamilton points out, Daniel makes no literary connections between the obvious encounter with the pre-incarnate Son of God in [Daniel 7](#) and this encounter in [Daniel 10](#). If Daniel wanted to make a connection between these two encounters, he

could have easily done so, but he does not. Thus, Hamilton concludes, “While it may be possible that Daniel describes the pre-incarnate Christ in [Daniel 10:5–6](#), I am unable to find evidence in the text that decisively confirms that reality and grants confidence in that conclusion.” Despite the fact that Hamilton does not engage with Daniel’s parallel physical characteristics of having a radiating body, our conclusions will remain tentative as well. (Wenkel)

Appearance:

- Robed in white, symbol for purity (cf. 11:35 & Is. 1:18).
- Beaming bright like beryl, lightning, & molted bronze (Rev. 1:15; 10:1).
- Voice boomed like a mighty multitude (cf. Rev. 10:3-4).

Reaction:

- Those with Daniel partially experience the appearance, but do not see the vision to follow.
- The overwhelming power of the appearance causes Daniel himself to go comatose (cf. "defense cascade").

Explanation for Delay

Angelic Appearance:

- The angel must reassure Daniel not to fear, so he informs Daniel of his mission.
- The angel was sent to answer Daniel's prayer (v. 12), however, he was delayed in his coming by three weeks.
- Note that delays do not mean denials!

Angelic Warfare:

- The explanation for the delay is given in v. 13.
- This angel was opposed by "the Prince of Persia," yet aided by "Michael the chief Prince."

- "Prince" = *Sar* in Hebrew, *Archonton* in Greek, & appears as "Principalities" in the NT (Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16).

Think Big Picture

Consideration:

- This chapter introduces us to the reality & power of the spiritual realm.
- Recommend "Excursus on Angels" (Hebrews study).
- Other heavenly visions record similar awesome displays & fear filled human responses (Ex. 19; Is. 6; Ezek. 1; Acts 9; Rev. 4-5; 10:1-2; 18:1-2).
- Yet the response of Daniel & his companions occurs with the appearance of a mere angel.
- What will it be like when we one day see God?!

Suggestion:

- Promote an attitude of worship, awe, and veneration of God.
- Use your God given imagination and meditate upon the divine appearances in the Scripture.
- Because where our imagination goes, there goes our affections (Col. 3:1-4).

Final Vision (Daniel 10-12)

- Chapter 10 introduces the final vision.
- Chapter 11 details the final vision.
- Chapter 12 reflects upon the final vision.

Flow of Chapter 10

I. Setting (v. 1-4)

II. Angelic Visitation (v. 5-9)

III. Introduction to Vision (v. 10-21)

Consider the Reality of Spiritual Realm

Spiritual Warfare:

- Though there is much we do not know, Dan. 10; Rev. 12; etc. clearly teach the reality of warfare in the spiritual realm.

Demonic Politics:

- Angels are ministers of God (Ps. 103:19-22; 104:4).
- Some angels are given national, political responsibilities of some sort (Deut. 32:8; Psalm 82; 89:6-8; Dan. 10).
- These angels report back to God for accountability and further responsibility (Job 1-2; Zech. 1:7-21).
- Yet not all these angels remained faithful to God. Some defected (Deut. 32:43; Ezek. 28; Rev. 12).
- Satan is "the Prince of this world" & "Prince of the powers of the air" (John 12:31; Eph. 2:2).
- Thus, Satan heads a highly organized system designed to oppose God & His people (Eph. 2:2; 6:12).
- This system includes political power over world governments (Luke 4:5-6; Rev. 13:1-2).
- This system is designed to strategize against, individually attack, and ultimately devour Christians (1 Peter 2:11; Eph. 6:12; 1 Peter 5:8).
- This Satanic system will one day succeed in uniting the world against God and His people (Rev. 13:1-10).
- Could it be that this backdrop helps explain much of world history? (cf. Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, etc.)

Our Participation in the Spiritual Realm

Compare Dan. 10 & Eph. 6.

- The angel seems to connect Daniel's prayer, with his own victory over the Prince of Persia.
- This parallels NT teaching and provides us with a profound insight.

Spiritual Warfare:

- We are involved in spiritual warfare whether we realize it or not.
- Scripture is clear that Satan's goals are to oppose God and obtain worship.
- In his opposition to God, Satan also opposes us. He wants to destroy our lives & sterilize our usefulness (1 Pet. 2:11).
- We can only resist Satan in the power of God & the putting on of Gospel armor (Eph. 6; 1 Thess. 5:8).
- Yet we "give place [*topos*] to the devil" anytime we have condoned evil (1 Cor. 4:2) or un-confessed sin in our lives (Eph. 4:27).
- Paul tells us not to be ignorant of Satan's schemes (2 Cor. 2:11).
- Peter tells us to be "sober & vigilant," because our adversary the devil stalks us like a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8).
- Jesus taught us by example that in order to "watch" we must "pray" (Matt. 26:41).
- Paul also urges us to prayer as the primary means by which we engage in this spiritual battle (Eph. 6:18; Col. 2:1-2; 4:2-6).

Participation by Prayer:

- Compare Rev. 8:1-6 & the altar in heaven.
- Rev. 8 forms the prelude to the 7 trumpet judgments.
- The sequence of 7, then a pause, seems to re-create the conquest of Josh. 6.
- Seven angels stand before God, each with a trumpet, which were used to assemble God's forces for either worship or war (Num. 10).
- Then an 8th angel steps forward to lay incense upon the altar in heaven...
- What does the incense represent according to v. 4???

- Note the incense ascends "before the throne... before God..."
- Then the angel takes some coals off the altar and casts them to the earth to begin the next stage of conquest!
- In some mysterious way our prayers form the battle ground of angels!
- Dan. 10 & Rev. 8 indicate that our prayers actually aid the good angels, and advance God's purposes on earth!
- A friend of mine recently sent me this saying, "When God's people get on their knees, the fight isn't over... it's just beginning!"

Outlining the 400 "Silent Years"

Introducing Chapter 11

Daniel 11 is going to take us on a whirlwind tour of nearly 400 years of human history.

Chapter 11 serves as an extensive elaboration on chapter 8. They share many similarities.

1. Fall of Persia
2. Rise of Greece
3. Rule of the Diadochi
4. Career of Antichus IV, which foreshadows the Antichrist

Most Bible students are familiar with what we call "the 400 silent years," which occur between the testaments.

This period of history is called "silent" in that no prophetic ministry occurred.

Yet this term is highly ironic because Daniel 11 details this period with 135 specific prophecies.

Daniel 11 exists as the densest portion of prophecy anywhere in the Bible!

Flow of Chapter 11

I. Reviewing Persia & Greece (v. 1-4)

II. Previewing the Diadochi (v. 5-35)

A. Back-story (v. 5-20)

B. Antiochus IV (v. 21-35)

III. The Coming Antichrist (v. 36-45)

Summarizing Persia (v. 1-2)

Setting of the Vision:

- Reign of Cyrus (10:1)...
- The "I" in 11:1 refers to the angel of Dan. 10, aided by Michael.

"Yet Three Kings in Persia"

1. Cambyses (530-522 B.C.)
2. Smerdis (522 B.C.)
3. Darius I (521-486 B.C.)

"The Fourth shall be far richer than they all..."

- Xerxes I (a.k.a. Ahasuerus) (485-465 B.C.)
- 480-479 B.C. Xerxes invaded Greece in order to avenge the defeat at Marathon his father suffered a generation earlier (490 B.C.)

"He shall stir up all against Greece..."

- Xerxes collected an army of 46 different ethnicities from across his empire.
- This invading army was the largest army ever assembled in antiquity.

Size of Army?

- 3 Mill. = Earliest Accounts
- 2.3 Mill. = Herodotus
- 500,000 = Modern estimates
- Herodotus says it took 7 full days for the army to cross the Hellespont.
- Xerxes traveled to Greece with an enormous entourage of drinking vessels, tables, chairs all of gold and silver.
- Recall our study of chapter 8. This enormous invading force was ultimately defeated after Thermopylae, Salamis Bay, and Plataea.

Summarizing Alexander (v. 3-4)

- A few generations after Persia's invasion of Greece, Greece led its own invasion into Persia.
- The "great king" (v. 3) refers to Alexander the Great, who would gain great "dominion, and do according to his will."
- Alexander will conquer Persia, and the rest of the known world within ten years.
- However, Alexander's success will be met by an untimely death at 32 years old.

Introducing the Diadochi

- The death of Alexander led to chaos within his ranks.
- Alexander left no clear successor, so his dominion eventually split between four ruling families, i.e. Diadochi.
- The following map illustrates how the territory of Alexander split into four major sections after a series of wars.
- The wars of the Diadochi, which followed Alexander, had a huge impact upon the nation of Israel.
- Israel was caught between the two most powerful of the Diadochi kingdoms: King of the South = Ptolomies. King of the North = Seleucids

- Next week we will begin our whirlwind tour of this fascinating era of history, but first, consider why this will be practical.

Why Study Daniel 11?

1. This Era of History Sets the Stage for MUCH of the NT.
2. Incredible Detail Authenticates God and Illustrates His Providence.
 - Basic knowledge of the Diadochi, the Maccabees, and beginnings of the Pharisees and Sadducees, all help us navigate the waters of the NT.
 - We will visit some of these historic aspects later.
 - Practically, however, one of the most important aspects of this chapter is the spectacular display of God's sovereign providence.
 - We are going to end today by singing two verses of a profound Christian hymn, which celebrates God's sovereign providence.
 - The text of "Be Still My Soul" emerged during the German Pietistic movement in the late 16 - early 1700's.
 - This movement was simultaneous to the Wesleyan Revival in England, both of which emphasized how true conversion would be followed with real emotion & devotion.

Detailing the Diadochi

I. Reviewing Persia & Greece (v. 1-4)

II. Previewing the Diadochi (v. 5-35)

A. Back-story (v. 5-20)

B. Antiochus IV (v. 21-35)

III. The Coming Antichrist (v. 36-45)

Introducing the Diadochi

- The untimely death of Alexander the Great led to chaos within his ranks.

- Alexander left no clear successor, so his dominion eventually split between four Greek ruling families, i.e. Diadochi.
- The following map illustrates how the territory of Alexander split into four major sections after a series of wars.

Impacting Israel

- The wars of the Diadochi, which followed Alexander, had a huge impact upon the nation of Israel.
- Israel was caught between the two most powerful of the Diadochi kingdoms:
- King of the South = Ptolomies
- King of the North = Seleucids

Let me Tell you a Story

Verse 5

- Ptolemy 1st (323-285 B.C.) king of Egypt, had a general (i.e. prince) named Seleucus Nicator, whom he stationed in Babylon.
- However, Seleucus Nicator defected from Ptolemy and founded his own dynasty of kings in Babylon, and thus a rivalry is born.

Verse 6

- Picks up the story several decades later in 250 B.C. when king Ptolemy 2nd (285-246 B.C.) makes an alliance with Antiochus 2nd (262-246 B.C.) by giving him his daughter Bernice.
- This alliance doesn't last long, because the spurned queen Laodice has both Bernice & Antiochus 2nd murdered, and then enthrones her son Seleucus 2nd (246-227 B.C.).

Verses 7-8

- Meanwhile, down in Egypt, the murdered Bernice's brother Ptolemy 3rd (246-221 B.C.) succeeds his father, raises an army, and invades Syria to avenge his sister.

- Ptolemy 3rd invades Syria, puts Laodice to death, and returns to Egypt with great spoil, humiliating young Seleucus 2nd.
- The Greek historian Polybius says the spoil included 4,000 talents of gold & 2,500 idols.
- This invasion granted fame to Ptolemy 3rd, who then outlived Seleucus 2nd by four years.

Verse 9-10

- The humiliated Seleucus 2nd would die before he could retaliate in any meaningful way, but he did have two sons.
- The two sons of Seleucus 2nd devoted themselves to the task of reviving Seleucid greatness.
- In 219 B.C. Antiochus 3rd (a.k.a. Antiochus the Great) invaded Egypt in order to restore Seleucid honor.

Verse 11

- Ptolemy 4th (221-204 B.C.) king of Egypt met this Seleucid invasion, and experienced initial victory over Antiochus 3rd at the Battle of Raphia (219 B.C.).

Verses 12-13

- Ptolemy 4th was very proud of his initial success. He even visited Jerusalem on his way home to attempt to enter the Jewish temple, but was not allowed.
- Yet Ptolemy 4th did not capitalize on his victory by pursuing Antiochus. This allowed Antiochus 3rd to come back later with a larger army.

Verse 14

- Antiochus 3rd gathered several allies from Macedon and even stole the allegiance of former vassals of Egypt.

Verse 15-17a

- Antiochus 3rd then achieved a great victory over Ptolemy, and established Seleucid dominance over Egypt.

- The dominance of Antiochus 3rd over Ptolemy 4th also included gaining control over Israel (i.e. the glorious land) (c. 199 B.C.)

Verse 17b

- Later, in 197 B.C., Antiochus 3rd tried to make peace with now Ptolemy 5th (204-181 B.C.) by giving his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy.
- Antiochus 3rd hoped his daughter Cleopatra would serve him as a spy, but rather she became loyal to Egypt instead, as well as Egypt's new ally, Rome.

Verse 18

- Antiochus 3rd then set his sights on Asia Minor & Greece, being encouraged to advance against Rome by a certain Carthaginian general named Hannibal.
- Yet a Roman "prince" (Cornelius Scipio "Africanus") defeated Antiochus 3rd, and turned him back after the battles of Thermopylae (191) & Smyrna (190).
- These defeats not only humiliated Antiochus 3rd, but also indebted him to Rome beneath the enormous sum of 15,000 talents.

Verse 19

- Desperate to pay Rome, Antiochus 3rd plundered the temple of Jupiter, but his own people rioted, murdered him, and his body was never found!

Verse 20

- Seleucus 4th (Philopater) succeeded his father Antiochus 3rd, and raised taxes severely in order to pay Rome.
- Yet the reign of Seleucus 4th was short-lived. His people poisoned him, and he died without a battle (2 Macc. 3:1-12).

Verse 21

- All this set the stage for the most infamous of Seleucid rulers, Antiochus 4th, Epiphanes.
- Though Seleucus 4th Philopater had heirs, his brother Antiochus 4th stole the throne by flattery, deception, and intrigue.

Verse 22

- The only reason Antiochus 4th held onto power was because he was able to repulse an invading army, and win favor with the nobles.
- Yet with the reins of power Antiochus 4th soon began his reign of terror.
- First, he deposed the High Priest of Jerusalem, Onias 3rd (cp. v. 22 with 2 Macc. 4:30-35).

Verses 23-24

- Because Antiochus 4th was an unpopular king, he attempted to pacify the people by redistributing wealth from the rich to the poor.

Verse 25

- After consolidating his position, Antiochus 4th came against Ptolemy 6th in Egypt in 170 B.C.
- Though victorious largely due to bad advice given to Ptolemy 6th, Antiochus 4th could not take control of all of Egypt.

Verse 27

- So, Antiochus 4th tried to make peace with Ptolemy 6th, but peace was never achieved because both sides were deceptive.

Verse 28-30

- Antiochus 4th returned to Syria with great wealth from his conquest. Yet he would return to invade Egypt again two years later in 168 B.C.

- Yet this attempted invasion of Egypt was unsuccessful, because Antiochus 4th was met by delegates from Rome (i.e. Cyprus = Kittim).
- The Senate of Rome had sent Popillius Laenus with a letter forbidding Antiochus 4th from invading Egypt.
- According to legend, Popillius drew a circle in the sand around Antiochus, and said that he must give his answer to Rome before leaving that circle.
- Needless to say, Antiochus begrudgingly complied to Rome, and returned to Syria.
- As Antiochus passed through Israel, he decided to vent some of his anger on the Jews, by enforcing Hellenism upon them.
- Some rogue Jews sided with Antiochus, but others resisted... here is where we will pick it up next week with the Maccabean Revolt!

Why do the Details Matter?

- Recall our introduction to the book of Daniel. This book is one of the most widely attacked books of the entire Bible.
- The reason for this attack is obvious... the book of Daniel is CLEARLY supernatural.
- Only God could foretell the future with such incredible detail and accuracy!
- Liberal scholars, who reject the inspiration of the Bible, cannot deal with the book of Daniel, so they try to discredit it, by calling it history posing as prophecy.
- Recall our defense of the date of the book of Daniel. Daniel was clearly written before these events transpired. Dan. 11 is prophecy!
- Daniel 11 serves as one of the strongest arguments for the authenticity of the Bible in apologetics.
- The details are important for us to know and understand, because they authenticate God and ought to ground our faith!

- Let's end today by singing the song, "The Bible Stands!"
- This song was written in 1917 by Haldor Lillenas, a prolific songwriter and pastor, from the Wesleyan tradition.
- In 1917 the battle between theological liberalism and theological fundamentalism was well underway.
- The primary thought dividing liberalism and fundamentalism was the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible.
- Our church takes a firm stand upon inspiration and inerrancy & Daniel 11 is one of the main reasons!

The Maccabean Revolt

- Last week we took a whirlwind tour examining the rule of the Diadochi (v. 5-30).
- Our storyline brought us up to the reign of Antiochus 4th, and his entry into Jerusalem in 168 B.C.
- Recall that Rome stopped Antiochus from invading Egypt in 168 B.C., and in his humiliation, Antiochus took it out on the Jews.

Introducing the Maccabean Revolt

Verse 30-31

- As Antiochus passed through Israel, he decided to vent some of his anger on the Jews, by enforcing Hellenism upon them.
- Antiochus sacrificed a pig on the altar of Jerusalem, force fed the pork to the priests, outlawed Torah & circumcision, and erected an idol of Zeus in the temple (cf. 2 Macc. 5:11-18).

Verse 32-34

- Some rogue Jews sided with Antiochus, and willingly submitted to Hellenization, but others resisted...
- Those who resisted suffered the terrible fates described in verse 33.

Yet "The people that know their God shall be strong and do exploits... they shall be helped..." i.e. God aids a Jewish resistance.

- This Jewish resistance became known as the Maccabean Revolt (cf. 1 Macc. 3-4).
- This period of Hebrew history is not only fun and fascinating to study, but also practical in our pursuit of understanding the NT.

Summarizing the Maccabean Revolt

- Seleucid officials came to the village of Modiin in order to enforce the Hellenization that Antiochus was promoting.
- Jews were expected to participate in a sacrifice to the Greek gods in order to demonstrate their loyalty to the Seleucid empire.
- Mattathias, a Jew of priestly descent, refused to participate, and even killed a fellow Jew who stepped up to offer a sacrifice.
- After a scuffle, Mattathias and his sons killed the Seleucid officials and ran for the hills.
- Traditionally minded Jews began to gather to Mattathias and his 5 sons, while Hellenistic Jews were attacked by them.
- This erupted into a mini civil war among the Jews, as they decided which was better, submit to the Seleucids, or side with Mattathias...
- After about a year, Mattathias died and his son Judas became leader of the band.
- The Greek governor of Samaria, Apollonius, gathered a large force to end the resistance, yet Judas proved a capable leader and defeats Apollonius.
- Judas recovers the sword of Apollonius and fought with it for the rest of his life. This stunning victory earned Judas the nickname Maccabee (i.e. "Hammer").
- A Greek army is mustered to deal with this growing threat. The army amasses at the Beth-Horon ridge route in central Israel.
- As the Greek army amasses, they suffer a surprise guerrilla attack from Jewish forces led by Judas Maccabeus.

- The Jews win the day, and the Greeks start realizing the situation merits being considered a full-scale revolt.
- Antiochus hears of the defeat at Beth-Horon, so he sends an army of 40,000 men & 7,000 cavalry.
- All bets were on the Greeks, and slave traders even showed up in anticipation of buying Jewish slaves.
- Judas gathered his forces at Mizpah, and the Greek forces begin a night march to outmaneuver the Jews.
- However, Judas had already ordered a night march of his own.
- In yet another surprise attack, Judas put to flight the unprepared Greek army on the march. The Greeks are humiliated once again!
- Now desperate, a high Greek commander named Lysias musters 60,000 men & 5,000 cavalry, even calling upon his Edomite allies.
- This Greek force marches up into the Judean hill country near Marisa. Yet the Jews use the steep terrain, and their guerrilla tactics to overcome the superior Greek numbers.

Temple Rededication

- With the Greek threat sufficiently checked, Judas gathers the Jews to Jerusalem.
- On the 25th of Chislev, 164 B.C. the Jews cleanse & rededicate the temple in Jerusalem.
- According to legend, they debate on whether or not to light the golden candlestick, which according to Torah law, were never to go out.
- They only had enough oil to burn for a single day, and it would require eight days to manufacture more.
- They decide to light the candlesticks, and the oil miraculously lasts for 8 days!

- This re-dedication became memorialized in the festival of Hanukah (i.e. "dedication").

Who are your Heroes? Read Hebrews 11:32-40

- Many scholars appropriately point out that some of the details of Hebrews 11 correlate well with the Maccabean Revolt.
- The stories of the Maccabees have inspired Jews & Christians for centuries.
- The accounts of these men and women served as the sort of "Foxes Book of Martyrs" for the first century church, until new stories of courage and martyrdom were forged.
- In Phil. 3:17 Paul tells us to *"mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example..."*

Heroes

1. Inspire Admiration & Emulation
2. Reveal your Values
3. Determine your future

Pop culture today exalts & idolizes lots of people, but it is rare to find among them a godly individual.

Do you read biographies of the great men and women of the Early Church, the Reformation, or the Missions Movement?

How about Jesus? Is He truly your Hero? How much do you read about Him and think about Him?

The Willful King

- I. Reviewing Persia & Greece (v. 1-4)
- II. Previewing the Diadochi (v. 5-35)
 - A. Back-story (v. 5-20)
 - B. Antiochus IV (v. 21-35)
- III. The Coming Antichrist (v. 36-45)

The Transition

Most scholars see a transition between verses 35 & 36 for three reasons...

1. Details don't fit Antiochus
2. 11:36-45 clearly connects to 12:1-4 & the resurrection
3. Familiar 3 1/2 year time marker

This transition is signaled by the phrase "The time of the End..." (11:35, 20; 12:1)

The reign of Antiochus 4th (11:21-35) serves as the closest historic parallel to events yet to be fulfilled (11:36-45).

Flow of Passage

1. A World Ruler (v. 36)
2. A World Religion (v. 36-39)
3. A World War (v. 40-45)

World Leader (v. 36)

The "king" of 11:36 seems to once again reference the same figure we have already met in chapters 7, 8, & 9.

Compare 11:36 with 7:8, 24-25 & 9:27. This King will...

- Do what he wants & prosper
- Exalt himself above God
- Speak Blasphemies
- Until the time determined

World Religion (v. 36-39)

Daniel 11; 2 Thess. 2, & Rev. 13 make clear that the Antichrist will attempt to enforce a world-wide religion in the end of days.

1. Revived Rome? Ecumenical Roman Catholicism???
2. Revived Caliphate? Islam???
3. Something else???

Note Descriptions of this Religion:

- Magnified above every god...
- Blasphemous toward the God of gods... & "the God of his fathers..." i.e. God of Israel.
- No regard for "the Desire of Women" homosexual? or is this a title for Messiah?
- No regard for other gods, except "the god of forces," i.e. "god of war..." Whatever the exact nature of this coming world religion, the Antichrist will exalt himself, and especially target Jews & Christians (cf. Rev. 12-13).

World War (v. 40-45)

The conflict described in v. 40-45 has brought incredible debate.

Yet due to the 3 1/2 yr. time marker given in 12:7 this conflict is most likely to be identified with one of two major end times conflicts...

1. The rise of the Antichrist over the 10 kings at the beginning of "the Great Tribulation" (7:24; 11:45; 12:7; Rev. 12-13)

2. The fall of the Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon at the end of "the Great Tribulation" (7:26; 11:45; Rev. 16-19; Ezek. 38-39)

- First, read v. 40-45 from the perspective of the rise of the Antichrist...
- Secondly, re-read v. 40-45 from the perspective of the fall of the Antichrist...

What will you do?

- In the event that we actually live through the world-wide enforcement of the Antichrist religion (v. 36-39), consider what you would do...
- Read Matthew 10:26-39... heavy words!
- If you are unwilling or uninterested in standing for Christ NOW, what makes you think you will stand for Christ THEN?

The Climax of History

Flow of Chapter 12

I. Prophecies of the End (12:1-4)

A. The Great Tribulation (v. 1)

B. The Coming Resurrection (v. 2-3)

C. The Final Instruction (v. 4)

II. The End of Prophecies (12:5-13)

The Great Tribulation (v. 1)

"At that time..." (v. 1)

- This phrase connects 12:1-4 with what preceded it in 11:36-45.

Human history culminates with...

- A World Ruler (11:36)
- A World Religion (11:36-39)
- A World War (11:40-45)

These events will lead Israel and the entire earth to the brink of annihilation, yet three things will occur: (v. 1).

- "Michael will stand up..." (cf. Rev. 12)
- "A Time of Trouble..." (cf. Matt. 24:15-22)
- "My people [*Israel*] will be delivered..." (cf. Matt. 24:29-31)

The Coming Resurrection (v. 2-3)

- "Them that sleep in the dust... shall awake..." (v. 2). After the world war, the war in heaven, and the rescue of Israel comes the Resurrection.
- Dan. 12:2 is the clearest OT reference to the Resurrection of the dead.
- Dan. 12:2 is also the first appearance of the term "everlasting life," which becomes a favorite NT term (55x).

- Dan. 12:2 coalesces the two resurrections of the righteous & unrighteous, yet we learn from Rev. 20 that 1,000 years occur in between.
- The unrighteous will be raised only to endure "shame and everlasting contempt..."
- Yet the righteous will "shine... as the stars..." (cf. Matt. 13:24-30, 34-43 & 1 Cor. 15:40-42).
- This assurance of the Coming Resurrection forms the foundation for the Christian's HOPE & COURAGE!

The Final Instruction (v. 4)

Interpreting v. 4.

- "Shut up the words, and seal the book..."
 1. Authenticate?
 2. Preserve?
 3. Keep Secret?

YES! All are actually true. Cf. v. 8-9.

Applying v. 4.

- The book of Daniel is uniquely mysterious... it will not be fully known until the end.
- Through careful reading "to and fro..." i.e. back and forth... we will begin to unlock its truth over time. Contrast Revelation 22:10.
- After the 1st coming of Christ & the completion of the NT, enough history has transpired to begin opening up "the prophecy of this book..."
- We live in an exciting time, because we are nearer the end!
- Let us heed the words of Paul in Romans 13:11-14.
- Wake Up!
- Stand Up!

- Suit Up!

The End of the Story (Daniel 12:5-13)

I. Prophecies of the End (12:1-4)

II. The End of Prophecies (12:5-13)

A Quick Q & A

Verses 5-7

- Daniel is privy to an angelic exchange, between two figures.
- This exchange asks and answers an important question, "how long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"
- Answering with an extra solemn two-handed oath the angel says, "a time, times, and an half..."
- Note once again a clear reference to the final 3 1/2 years of human history, which Jesus will later call "the Great Tribulation" (Matt. 24:21).
- This 3 1/2 year period of history is one of the most detailed periods in Biblical prophecy (Dan. 7:25; 9:27; 12:7, 11; Rev. 11:1-3; 12:5-6, 14; 13:5).

Verse 7 emphasizes new information, namely, the purpose of this 3 1/2 year period.

- Why is God allowing *"a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time"*?
- Answer: *"to scatter the power of the holy people..."* i.e. to humble proud Israel! Lev. 26:40-42; Matt. 23:27-39.

Verses 8-12

- In response to this dialogue, Daniel asks a logical question: *"What is going to happen after this?"*

The Answer involves three ideas:

1. *Mystery Abounds* (v. 9)
2. *Purity is Achieved* (v. 10)
3. *Blessedness Awaits* (v. 11-12)

Mystery Abounds:

- Recall our discussion on Dan. 12:4. We will not understand all of prophecy until it actually occurs... why? (Heb. 11:6)

- *Yet the farther we get in history, and the more faithfully we study, wisdom will be granted (v. 10c).*

Purity is Achieved:

- *The purpose of the Tribulation will be achieved, namely, to humble and purify proud Israel (11:35; 12:7).*
- *In other words, Daniel's prayer (9:16-19) & God's promises (9:24) will prevail!*

Blessedness Awaits:

- *Verses 11-12 announce the coming kingdom, i.e. paradise restored!*
- *Yet these verses add a new detail in the timeline that has puzzled many scholars.*

"From the time the daily sacrifice taken away..."

- *A clear reference to the abomination of desolation... yet the expected 1260 days is amended to 1,335...*
- *Complicating the matter further, the book of Revelation nowhere mentions these extra days... What are they???*

Best Answer: Several Biblical events need to occur between the 2nd Coming @ 1,260 days, and the commencement of the Kingdom @ 1,335 days.

1. *Clean up after Armageddon (Ezek. 39:11-16; Rev. 19:17-20) & Abomination of Desolation (Matt. 24:15)*
2. *Judgements of those who made it through the Tribulation such as the Sheep and Goat Judgement (Matt. 25).*
3. *Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:1-9; Matt. 8:11-13) & possibly the Behma Seat? (1 Cor. 3 & 2 Cor. 5)*
4. *Possibly also the resurrection and rewarding of tribulation and OT Saints.*
 - *Once these and other matters are settled, the Messianic age can begin. (Benware)*

Final Applications

Verse 13

- *This verse gives a simple end to a spectacular book.*
- *How would you end such a spectacular book filled with mysterious prophecies and breathtaking scenes?*

- Verse 13 gives us how both Daniel and we are to respond to the visions of Daniel 7-12.

First: Protect & Proclaim the Prophecy (v. 9).

- Don't let people pervert or ignore the Word of God!

Second: Proceed with your life.

- Don't freeze in fear, but rather keep living (v. 13).

Finally: Prepare for future reward.

- We will stand in our lot (i.e. allotted portion cf. Josh. 15:1) at the end of days (v. 13)... so lay up heavenly treasure!

