

“DANIEL: THE MAN OF GOD”
Introduction to the Book of Daniel
Pastor Keith E. Gephart

INTRODUCTION

The favorite place of Daniel among both adults and children

- “The apocalypse of the OT
- Great stories of godly character

A book of Great **Revelations**, Great **Characters**, and a Great **God**.

This is a God who not only explains the past, and reveals the future, but also controls the Present, and provides for and protects His people.

In this book we do see a great man, but an even greater God.

I. THE TIME

- This book covers a period of 70 years from 605 BC until 536 BC; that is the first Babylonian captivity in which Daniel was taken until the last event in the third year of Cyrus of Persia. [Two other captivities occurred in 597 and 586.]
- Daniel gives us the **third** of 4 great periods of miracles.

II. THE BOOK

A. Its Place

- Of the three sections of the Hebrew Bible—*Law, Prophets, and Writings*, Daniel was placed in **the Writings**.
- Daniel’s official position was that of a government official—he did not function as a Hebrew Prophet.

B. Its Purposes

1. Illustration of true dedication to God.
2. Evidence of God’s continued care of His people.
3. Comfort to Israel which languished in captivity—esp. the later returning exiles.
4. Provision of information concerning the Last Days—for both Israel and the nations [and **us!**]

C. Its Languages

- Hebrew: 1:1-2:3; 8:1-12:13.
- Aramaic: 2:4-7:28 [cf. Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Jer. 10:11; Gen. 31:47]

D. Its Additions in the Apocrypha

- Prayer of Azarias & Song of the Three Hebrew Children
- Susanna
- Bel and the Dragon

E. Its Outline

1. I. Historical (1-6) II. Predictive (7-12)
2. I. Introduction (1) II. Times of the Gentiles (2-7) III. Israel in Relation to Gentiles (8-12).

F. It's Genuineness

1. Testimony of other Scriptural authors
 - a. Ezekiel (14:14, 20; 28:3)
 - b. Hebrews (11:33-34—fire and lions)
2. Testimony of Jesus Christ
 - Mt. 24:15 & Mk. 13:14 with Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11—“Abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet”
 - Mt. 24:21 with Dan. 12:1—“Great tribulation”
 - Mt. 24:30; 26:64 with Dan. 7:13—Sign of the Son of Man in the Heavens
 - Mt. 13:43 with Dan. 12:3—the righteous shine forth as the sun.
 - Jn. 5:28-29 with Dan. 12:2—the resurrection of life and judgment
 - Also, the Book of Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:1—much relationship with Daniel.

Daniel is the **most maligned and attacked of all Old Testament books**—Yet, Jesus Christ accepted it. If you accept Christ, you will too!

III. THE MAN

A. His Name

- Hebrew: Daniel= “God is judge” or “God is my judge.”
- Babylonian: Belteshazzar= “Protect his life” or “Belti, protect the king”

B. His Background

1. Royal descent (1:3)
2. Jerusalem likely his home
3. Godly parents—likely
4. Fifteen years of age—approximately

C. His time in Babylon

1. Education—The finest training available for a period of three years (1:5)
2. Administration
 - a. Under Babylon—Ruler of the province of Babylon (2:48); Leader of wise men (2:48); 3rd ruler of the kingdom (5:29)
 - b. Under Persia—One of the three commissioners (6:2); made chief commissioner (6:3 with 6:24). See 6:28.

To have such high honor under different administrations and even different kingdoms is phenomenal!

3. Main events of his life

- Refusal to eat the king's meat (ch. 1)
- Revelation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (ch. 2)
- Revelation of Nebuchadnezzar's second dream (ch. 4)
- The Handwriting on the wall (ch. 5)
- The lion's den (ch. 6)

D. Divine revelations given to him

- Chapter 7: In the 1st year of Belshazzar's reign (64 years old)
- Chapter 8: in the 3rd year of Belshazzar's reign (66 years old)
- Chapter 9: 1st year of Cyrus' reign (81 years old).
- Chapters 10-12: 3rd year of Cyrus' reign (83 years old)

E. His Character

1. Great faith in God
2. Consistent devotion (ch 6)
3. Uncompromising conviction (ch. 1; ch 6)

*He upheld God's honor in a pagan land. Pagan gods were generally evaluated by the size of the country, its degree of prosperity, and the size and success of its army.

Note even the adoration receive by God from the lips of pagan kings:

- Nebuchadnezzar—2:46-49; 3:28-30; 4:1-3, 34-37
- Belshazzar—5:29
- Darius—6:25-27

**He enhanced the welfare of Judeans in captivity

- They received fairly easy treatment—farming; homes; freedom of movement; their own institutions—elders, priests, prophets; employment opportunities; correspondence with the homeland.

**He influenced the return of the captives to the Homeland.

CONCLUSION

Dare to be a Daniel! AND Dare to stand in awe of your Great God!