

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Bud Morris

The book of Daniel is more than just a collection of spiritual stories. The Lord himself referred to "Daniel the prophet" (Mt.24:15), establishing that it is prophetic in nature. It is concerned with the Gentile domination of the world resulting from Jewish disobedience to God. Chapters one and eight through twelve were originally written in Hebrew, but chapters two through seven were written in Aramaic. Thus, part of the book appears addressed to the Jews, while the other part may be primarily directed to the Gentiles. Every chapter of the book seems to have a typical or prophetic reference to the "End Times". Thus even the more narrative portions of the book are really prophetic.

Chapter One introduces Daniel and his company refusing to defile themselves with foods unlawful for Jews to eat, despite their suppression by the Gentiles. They probably typify the godly remnant of the Jewish nation who maintain themselves "Blameless" (Rev 14:4,5) during the tribulation that is to come on the world, and especially the Jews. Concurrent with their faithfulness, God gave them special wisdom and understanding.

Chapter Two (Nebuchadnezzar's Dream) switches the focus to the four successive Gentile governments that are to dominate the world when the Jews are temporarily set aside. Nebuchadnezzar's Vision was an image of four parts:

Head of Gold: Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian monarchy.

Chest & Arms of Silver: The Medo-Persian kingdom.

Abdomen & Thighs of Brass: The Grecian dominion.

Legs & Feet of Iron: The Roman Empire.

(The unstable clay & iron being its final coalition.)

The entire image will eventually be toppled by the Rock, Christ

Chapter Three (Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego) is prophetic of a Gentile ruler trying to force the worship of the image of a beast on the godly Jews. It corresponds to the placing of the Abomination of Desolation in the temple in the end times. Though they will be forced to walk through fiery tribulation, the truly godly Jewish remnant cannot be forced into this unfaithfulness.

Chapter Four (Nebuchadnezzar's Humbling) typifies the Gentile nations that will be allowed to continue in the Millennium in subjection to Christ, the Jewish Messiah. They cannot survive without acknowledging the sovereignty of God.

Chapter Five (The Handwriting on the Wall) typifies the Gentile nations that will be annihilated because of their history of wickedness when Christ sets up His millennial kingdom.

Chapter Six (Daniel in the Lion's Den) is prophetic of the coming time when the Antichrist will try to force all men to worship himself in place of God. Again, God will preserve the faithful remnant of godly Jews who refuse to worship the Antichrist.

Chapter Seven (Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts) reiterates the succession of the four Gentile governments predestined for earth.

The **Lion** with eagle's wings: **Babylonian**.

The **Bear** with three ribs in it's mouth: **Medo-Persian**.
(Raised up on one side = its Persian dominance)

The winged **Leopard** with four heads: **Grecian**
(Four heads = the four divisions to Alexander the Great's four generals after his early demise.)

The terrifying **Different Beast** with ten horns: **Roman Empire**.
(The boastful little horn is the "Beast" of Revelation that controls of the revived Roman Empire in the end times and subjugates the whole western world.)

Chapter Eight (Daniel's Vision of the {Medo-Persian} Ram & the {Grecian} Billy-Goat) describes the development of the King of the North (The Syrian division of the Grecian dominion) and the King of the South (The Egyptian division of the Grecian dominion). The little horn that prospered corresponds first to Antiochus Epiphanes, but may find its final prophetic fulfillment in a Syrian occupation of Palestine in the end times.

Chapter Nine (Daniel's Seventy Weeks) puts the whole prophetic scheme of Scripture in its proper time perspective. It may be called the Key to Prophecy. The first sixty-nine weeks (of years of punishment of Israel) were to terminate in the Messiah being "Cut off." Prophetic time then hangs suspended during the church "Mystery" period. **Events in the Church period are NOT generally found in prophecy.*** After the church is raptured, prophetic time will resume to finish off the seventieth week of Israel's punishment. This seven-year tribulation period will end in Christ's millennial kingdom when the Gentiles will finally be forced to acknowledge Jewish dominion again. (*We see the world shaping up for the resumption of the prophetic clock more and more today.)

Chapter Ten (Daniel's Heavenly Vision) relates the angelic battle against Satan's emissaries ("War in Heaven--Rev:12?") to the earthly events being prophesied. Events on earth are the result of spiritual struggles in the heavens. A sovereign God is over all!

Chapter Eleven (What the Angel Told Daniel) confirms the identity of the Kings of the North and the Kings of the South in detailed predictions of the conflicts between them. Those familiar with ancient history easily verify how unerringly the facts of the struggles and intrigue between the Seleucidae and Ptolemies were prophesied. The prophecy bridges the church period to dictate the roles these kingdoms will play with Israel in the end time.

Chapter Twelve (The Time of Distress in the "End Time") describes the seventieth week of chapter nine in more detail. During this time of tribulation unrepentant Israel will be shattered while the godly remnant will distinguish themselves before God and gain insight and wisdom, as Daniel and his friends were doing in their time of tribulation.