

BOT 360
DANIEL

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BOT 360 DANIEL

Content and Purpose:

BOT 360 is an undergraduate study of the Book of Daniel. Critical problems connected with Daniel will be introduced and surveyed as they come to bear upon portions of the text under consideration. The course will be introduced by a discussion of the historical background of the book and its importance to biblical studies. In this course, Daniel will be studied chronologically, rather than by chapters as they appear in the text. Because BOT 360 is a two-hour course, much of the subject matter, and especially introductory and critical problems, must be handled in survey fashion. In the course of the discussion, emphasis will be given to an understanding of basic hermeneutical principles that apply to apocalyptic material. When you have finished this course, you will be able to discuss the basic character, content, and relative importance of the Book of Daniel. You will also be able to discuss the material in Daniel as it applies, or allegedly applies, to modern views of futuristic prophecy. Finally, you will have gained an appreciation for the ancient people of God, their fidelity to Him in difficult circumstances, and the example they furnish for our own discipleship.

Text: Edward J. Young, The Prophecy of Daniel. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1970.

Structure of the Course:

BOT 360 consists of eighteen (18) discussion with a reading assignment for each discussion. No more than two class days will be given to major examinations. The student should expect quizzes as announced. Take-home examinations will possibly be used for major examinations. BOT 360 is divided into three (3) sections, with a major examination planned for each section. Class procedure will be lecture with visual aids. No term papers or essays are required in this course.

Grading Standard:

75% Examinations over major sections
25% Quizzes

After the final grade has been computed in terms of the above standard, it is subject to adjustment of as much as 15% at thy discretion of the teacher. This factor may reflect such considerations as classroom participation, attendance, attitude, degree of progress, and written grammatical expertise. THE STUDENT WHO DOES NOT REGULARLY COMPLETE THE READING ASSIGNMENTS ON TIME SHOULD NOT EXPECT TO PASS THIS COURSE.

Teacher: Dr. Roger R. Chambers

Discussion #1: An introduction to the Book of Daniel; **Historical background**

BOT 360 DANIEL

Introduction

- A. The name Daniel
 1. Hebrew: דָּנִיֵּאל
 2. Greek: ΔΑΝΙΕΛ
 3. Meaning: "God is my Judge"
- B. Biblical references to Daniel
 1. Ezekiel 4:14, 20; 28:3
 2. Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14
- C. Daniel in the Hebrew Canon
 1. The divisions of the Hebrew Canon and "degrees of inspiration"
 - a. Law
 - b. Prophets
 - c. Writings (Daniel)
 2. The critical view
 - a. Law became "scripture" in 400 B.C.
 - b. Prophets became "scripture" in 200 B.C. (Daniel put at 168 B.C.)
 - c. Writings became "scripture" in A.D. 90.
 3. Critical methodology
 - a. A priori dating of the authorship of Daniel at 168 B.C.
 - b. Insist that the canon was closed in 200 B.C. in order to exclude Daniel.
 - c. Argue that Daniel is not among the prophets because he is not listed.
 4. The evidence
 - a. The tripartate divisions of the Masoretic Text are based on the Talmud; A.D. 400. (Tractate Baba Bathra) See Addendum A.
 - b. Josephus lists Daniel among the prophets between Ezekiel and the Twelve. See Addendum A. (Contra Apion 1. 8.)
 - c. Daniel is with the prophets according to Jesus (Matt. 24:15).
 - d. Daniel is with the prophets in the LXX (@250 B.C.)
 - e. Daniel is with the prophets according to Josephus. Addendum A.
 - f. Daniel is cited in the Sibylline Oracles, supposed prophetic utterances by women in Greece and Rome. Regardless of their origin, they date to 140 B.C. A forgery needs more time than 28 years to be recognized as a holy book.
 - g. I Macc. 2:59 alludes to the narratives of chapters 3 & 6.
 - h. The defective translation of Daniel in the LXX.
 - i. In a contested passage, Josephus has Alexander the Great reading the Book of Daniel in 332 (165 years before Daniel was supposed to have been written). (AJ 11. 8. 5)
 - j. Internal evidence. The historical context of Daniel is the Babylonian and Persian empires, not the Hellenistic world. For a study on this subject, see E. Yamauchi, Greece and Babylon. Baker.
 - k. Tradition. With the exception of the 3rd-century Neo-Platonist Porphyry, the genuineness of Daniel was questioned by no one until the rise of the deistic movement in the 17th century.

1. Daniel is cited by Ezekiel, and contemporary critics do not attack the traditional date and authorship of Ezekiel.
5. The reason for the critical attack on the 6th-century date for the authorship of Daniel: Daniel is frankly and specifically prophetic.

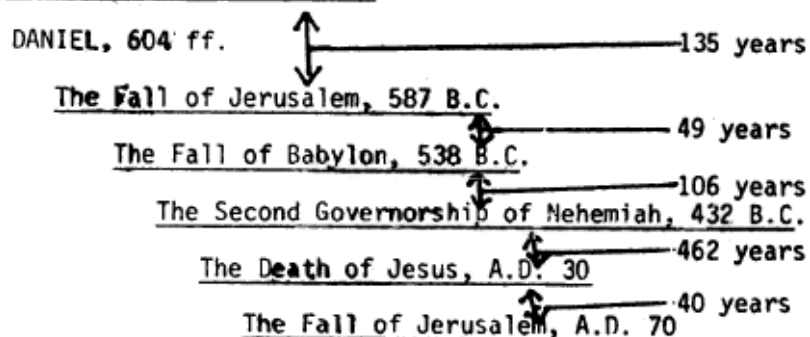
E. B. Pusey, Daniel the Prophet, p. 75:

"The book of Daniel is especially fitted to be a battlefield between faith and unbelief. It admits of no half-measure. It is either divine or an imposture."

6. The reason for the date of 168 B.C. assigned by the negative critics: Daniel is so specific in his prophecy of the activities of Antiochus Epiphanes in that year, that he either demonstrates miraculous foreknowledge or the book represents a forgery; history written after the event and offered as prophecy.
 7. The reason for the shift of Daniel in the Hebrew Canon: Jews of the first 3 centuries A.D. probably demoted Daniel because the Christians were using it so effectively in their evangelism of the Jewish community. Jerome (A.D. 375) reserves the attack by Porphyry (A.D. 232) on Daniel, demonstrating that opposition to Daniel was heavy.
- D. The bi-lingual character of Daniel
1. Hebrew-1:1-2:4a
 2. Aramaic-2:4b-7:28
 3. Hebrew-8:1-12:13
 4. The probable explanation: Daniel was written to a bi-lingual world. Aramaic is used in those portions of direct concern to worldly empires, and Hebrew in those sections of special meaning to the Hebrews.
- E. Additions to Daniel in the Greek text. See Addendum D.
1. The Song of the Three Holy Children (between 3:23 & 24)
 2. The History of Susanna (chap. 13 in the Vulgate; at the beginning of Daniel in the LXX)
 3. Bel and the Dragon (chap. 14 in the Vulgate; after 12:13 in the LXX)
- F. The literary form of Daniel
1. The poetic element
 2. The apocalyptic element. Daniel furnished the model for later non-canonical apocalyptic writings, but these are qualitatively inferior to Daniel. Only the Book of Revelation can be compared with Daniel. (For examples of apocryphal apocalyptic, see discussions of the Pseudopigrapha.)
 3. The symbolic element
 - a. Symbolic language was "at home" in the ancient Near Eastern literary context in a way that it is not in ours.
 - b. Prophecy is not history written in advance. There is a element of obscurity, perhaps even ambiguity, "built in." (Num. 12:1-8)

- G. The miraculous element. The four periods of miracles in the history of redemption.
1. The time of the Exodus
 2. The age of Elijah
 3. The Exile (Daniel)
 4. The Apostolic age
- H. The aim of the ~~Book of~~ Daniel
1. Polemic. God vs. the Babylonian and Persian gods.
 2. Didactic. God rules the rulers and history is ultimately at His mercy.
 3. Consolatory. The people of God are defended by their Creator and they are promised ultimate, if not immediate, victory.
 4. Predictive. God knows the course of world events; He is never surprised. Crucial periods of persecution often anticipate special redemptive acts of God.
- I The general historical setting of Daniel

The Fall of Samaria, 722 B.C.



- J The chronology of the Book of Daniel See Addendum B.
- K. The city of Babylon. See Addendum C.



Discussion #2: Daniel and his friends win positions of power and influence

Reading: Addenda C & D; Young, pp. 15-29.

Section One The Reign of Nebuchadnezzar

I. Daniel and His Friends Win Positions of Power and Influence (1:1-21)

1:1 Nebuchadnezzar

1. Nebuchadnezzar probably more accurate. Jeremiah uses both equally, and he was contemporary.
2. Probable meaning: "Nebo protect the boundary"

1:2 Jehoiakim and the capture of the vessels from the Temple

1. Date: 605 B.C.
2. Problem: II Chron. 36:6: "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against him to take him to Babylon."
 - a. There is no evidence that Jehoiakim was taken to Babylon.
 - b. Jehoiakim died in 598 B.C., before Nebuchadnezzar could arrive and punish him.
 - c. Probable solution: In 605 Jehoiakim was made a vassal. He opened the gates of the city and offered some of the vessels to Neb. to ransom Jerusalem from destruction. (The text says nothing of the complete destruction of the city at this time.) Perhaps II Chron. 36:6 gives the added information that Jehoiakim was originally to be sent to Babylon but he struck a bargain and was allowed to remain on the throne as a vassal.
3. The vessels from the Temple into the house of a pagan god
 - a. The religious significance of the vessels
 - (1) Not merely a matter of claiming "loot," but symbolic of the superiority or victory of one city-god over another.
 - (2) "The Lord gave Jehoiakim. . . into his hand," indicating a judgment of God upon Judah's king who later (601) rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar.
 - (3) Other vessels taken: 597 B.C. (Ezekiel taken) II Kings 24:13; 587 B.C.--last of the vessels taken and the city destroyed, II Kings 25:6ff.
 - (4) The blasphemous use of the vessels at Belshazzar's feast (Da. 5).
 - (5) The return of the vessels
 - (a) Cyrus (Ezra 1:7)
 - (b) Darius (Ezra 6:5)
 - b. "his god" = Marduk (Neb. credited Marduk, not Bel, with his success.)
4. Shinar = Babylon (Gen 10:10; 11:2; Zech. 5:11) Since the Tower of Babel episode, the term "Shinar" carried the connotation "center of wickedness."

1:3-7 The royal hostages

1. Ashpenaz, chief of eunuchs/officials
 - a. Probably should read "nobles." Earlier such courtesans were made eunuch because the absence of passion rendered them more dependable. Later it became a title of office, not necessarily

- indicating men who had undergone surgery. (Acts 8)
- b. Asphenaz had probably been put in charge of the hostages when Nebuchadnezzar hurried across the desert to claim his throne.
- 2. "children of Israel. . . royal family"
 - a. Josephus claims they were made eunuch. Again, the term may have lost its original force and come to mean "official" or "noble"
 - b. Of the descendants of David.
- 3. Those of physical and intellectual superiority.
- 4. ". . . the literature and language of the Chaldeans"
 - a. Not trained as soothsayers, but as upper-level civil servants; administrators.
 - b. Subject matter available: language, astronomy, mathematics, natural history, mythological literature (such as the Gilgamesh Epic), agriculture, architecture.



DANIEL TAKEN CAPTIVE

5. "daily rations" vs. 5
 - a. Ancient kings regularly fed large numbers of servants at their personal expense.
 - b. Three years = standard training period in the Persian Empire.
6. The names of the Hebrew youths:

Hebrew name	Meaning	Babylonian name	Meaning
Hananiah	"The Lord is Gracious"	Shadrach	"Command of Aku (moon god)"
Misael	"Who is What God is?"	Meshach	"Who is what Aku is?"
Azariah	"The Lord has helped"	Abnego	"Servant of Nebo" ??
Daniel	"God is my Judge"	Belteshazzar	"May Balak (planet Saturn) Protect"??

1:8-16 The Hebrew youths take a stand for their faith and are justified

1. "Daniel made up his mind. . . ."
 - a. They changed his name but they could not change his character.
 - b. It appears that Daniel led and the others followed.
2. The source of the unacceptable pollution:
 - a. Food that had been offered to idols?
 - b. Food unclean by Levitical standards?
3. The refusal by D. seems to be on spiritual, not on physical grounds.
4. Vs. 9: Prompted by God, the commander of the officials grant permission and favor.

Vs. 10: What was at stake if their health failed, the job? life? of the commander of the officials?
5. The ten-day experiment. (vs. 12,13)
 - a. Questions:
 - (1) If the distinction was physical, how could ten days make a noticeable difference?
 - (2) How could Daniel know? (Divine revelation?)
 - b. A "water of faith?" (Montgomery) It seems to be a miraculous testimony of the ability of Daniel's God to bless them in a spectacular way for their refusal to break the Law of Moses.
6. "vegetables/pulse"
 - a. "things that are sown"
 - b. Why choose a vegetarian diet? Possibly because it was impossible to obtain and prepare meat that would conform to the Mosaic code.
7. The success of the trial (vss. 14-16)

1:17-21 The Hebrew youths enter government service

1. The skill and learning of the Hebrew youths
 - a. All four give divine insight, sophisticated discernment.
 - b. Daniel given the supernatural gift of interpreting dreams and visions. This was important to the ancients, God often used this method of communication, and someone such as Daniel or Joseph

- could claim respect and wield much power by virtue of their ability to accurately interpret dreams and visions. Part of the gift was to distinguish between natural and supernatural dreams.
2. Daniel and his friends were of the same class as the pagan sooth-sayers, but were generically superior to them all.
 3. vs. 21: the first year of Cyrus = 538 B.C. This does speak of Daniel's life-span. Rather it means that Daniel functioned in this capacity until the end of Babylonian rule. He then received another officer under Cyrus.



STANDING FOR PRINCIPLE

Discussion #3: Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image

Reading: Young, pp. 35-82.

II. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Great Image (2:1-49)

2:1-10

1. The second year of Nebuchadnezzar = 603 B.C.?
2. The Chaldeans
 - a. Not in the ethnic sense, but rather wise men, soothsayers, astrologers, counsellors.
 - b. The Aramaic beings here. KJV "Syriac" should read "Aramaic." Note Young's theory that this is a scribal gloss (2:4) to warn the reader of the transition in language.
3. 2:5 "The word is gone forth from me (KJV) means that he had made a firm command, not that he had forgotten the dream.
4. 2:5-10 The stern requirements by Nebuchadnezzar of his counsellors and their response; stalling for time.

2:11-13 The decree to exterminate the counsellors

2:14-16

1. Daniel not present for the original consultation.
 - a. Suggests that he was not of the common herd.
 - b. Possibly his responsibilities or assignments kept him away from Babylon.
2. Daniel's asks for an audience with the king and for a delay in the executions.

2:17-24

1. Daniel calls for prayer (17-18).
2. God answers (19).
3. Daniel's great prayer of thanksgiving and praise (20-23).
4. Daniel presents himself and promises to interpret the king's dream.

2:25-30

1. Arioch claims credit for finding Daniel (25).
2. Daniel disavows human agency or native ability (27-28).
3. "Latter days" (28) = that period of time beginning with the coming of Messiah. This statement reflects the fact that the principal element of the vision is the stone representing the Messianic Kingdom; the stone overshadows the image. (For the New Testament view of "Last Days," see Acts 2:16,17; Hebrews 1:1; I Tim. 4:1; I John 2:18.)
4. The king had been contemplating the future of his kingdom (29).

2:31-33

1. The image
 - a. Head of fine gold
 - b. Breast and arms of silver
 - c. Mid-section and thighs of bronze
 - d. Legs of iron
 - e. Feet of iron mixed with clay



2. A statue, not an idol. Probably a human form of extraordinary splendor. Perhaps the metal reflected the rays of the sun.

2:36-45 The interpretation of the image-dream

1. The head (gold) (37-38)



- a. Does not necessarily mean Nebuchadnezzar personally.
- b. The idea of world empire originated with the Babylonians
- c. God had given dominion to Babylon (Jer. 27:6-28:14).
- d. The possible significance of the decreasing value of the metals in the image.

2. The breast and arms (silver) (39a)
 - a. Two arms = Medes and Persians?
 - b. Inferior in what way?
 - (1) Duration? The Mesopotamian Empire was basically uninterrupted down to the time of Sargon III; i.e., 2,000 years. The Persian Empire lasted 200 years.
 - (2) Influence and wealth?
3. Mid-section and thighs (bronze) (39b)
 - a. Greco-Macedonian
 - b. The possible significance of bronze as the primary metal in instruments of war.
4. Legs (iron) (40)
 - a. Iron = "the iron might of Rome?"
 - b. The complete domination of the word by Rome
5. Feet (iron mixed with clay) (41-43)
 - a. The decline of Rome as it absorbed Germanic tribes and became a decadent dictatorship. Rome did not fall as much as it crumbled from within. No rival empire conquered Rome and it was replaced by no world empire.
 - b. The toes
 - (1) Ten? No number is given. It is an assumption that it is a human form.
 - (2) Ten lesser kingdoms
 - (a) Contemporary kingdoms, all of which gradually disappeared with the disintegration of the Roman Empire??



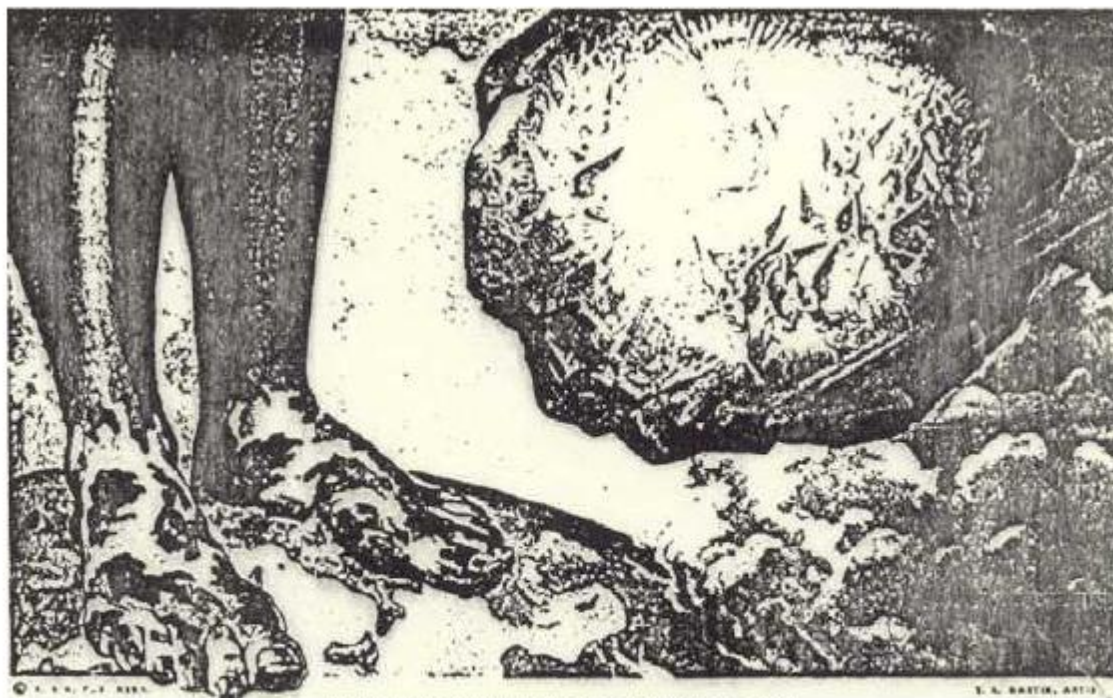
- (b) Consecutive kingdoms, extending ancient Rome into the present?
- (c) Modern contemporary kingdoms constituting a "Revived Roman Empire."

Scofield: "It will be 'in the days of these kings,' i.e., the days of the ten kings (cf. Daniel 7.24-27) symbolized by the toes of the image. That condition did not exist at the advent of Messiah, nor was it even possible until the dissolution of the Roman empire, and the rise of the present national world-system."

Lindsay, Late Great Planet Earth, p. 94

"We believe that the Common Market and the trend toward unification of Europe may well be the beginning of the ten-nation confederacy predicted by Daniel and the Book of Revelation

2:34-35; 44-45 The destruction of the image



"A STONE SMOTE THE IMAGE UPON HIS FEET"

1. The divine origin (34)--"without hands"
2. Four basic interpretations

<u>Feet and Toes</u>	<u>Messianic Kingdom</u>	<u>The Destruction of the Image</u>
a. Historic Rome	Church	Historic destruction of pagan Rome by the influence of the Gospel
b. Revived Roman Empire	Church	Second Coming
c. Revived Roman Empire	The Millennial Reign of Jesus on Earth	Second Coming
d. Consecutive Kingdoms as Extensions of the Historic Roman Empire	Church	The Progressive Destruction of the Extended Roman Empire, Culminating in the Second Coming

Parenthetical Study: Is the Church the Messianic Kingdom?

1. Christ claimed the promises for Himself when He came (Luke 1:31-33; Matt. 11:2-6).
2. During the public ministry of Jesus, the Kingdom was spoken of as being at hand (Matt. 3:1,2; 4:17; Mark 1:14,15).
3. Kingdom preaching characterized the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:14; Acts 8:12; 15:13-18; 28:23).
4. Jesus promised that some of His generation would witness the coming of the Kingdom (Mark 9:1; Matt. 16:28).
5. Christ declared that His Kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36; Romans 14:17; I Cor. 15:50).
6. A figurative application of prophecy is normal (Luke 22:29,30; I Cor. 10:21).
7. The Church and the Kingdom are synonymous (Matt. 16:15ff).
8. The Kingdom of Christ, the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven are all the same Kingdom. Parallel passages in the Gospels use both terms Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God (Eph. 5:5; Matt. 11:12; Luke 16:16; Matt. 4:17; Mark 1:14,15; Matt. 5:3; Luke 6:20; Matt. 10:7; Luke 9:2, et al.).
9. Christians are said to have inherited and to be in the Kingdom of God (Col. 1:13,14; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9).

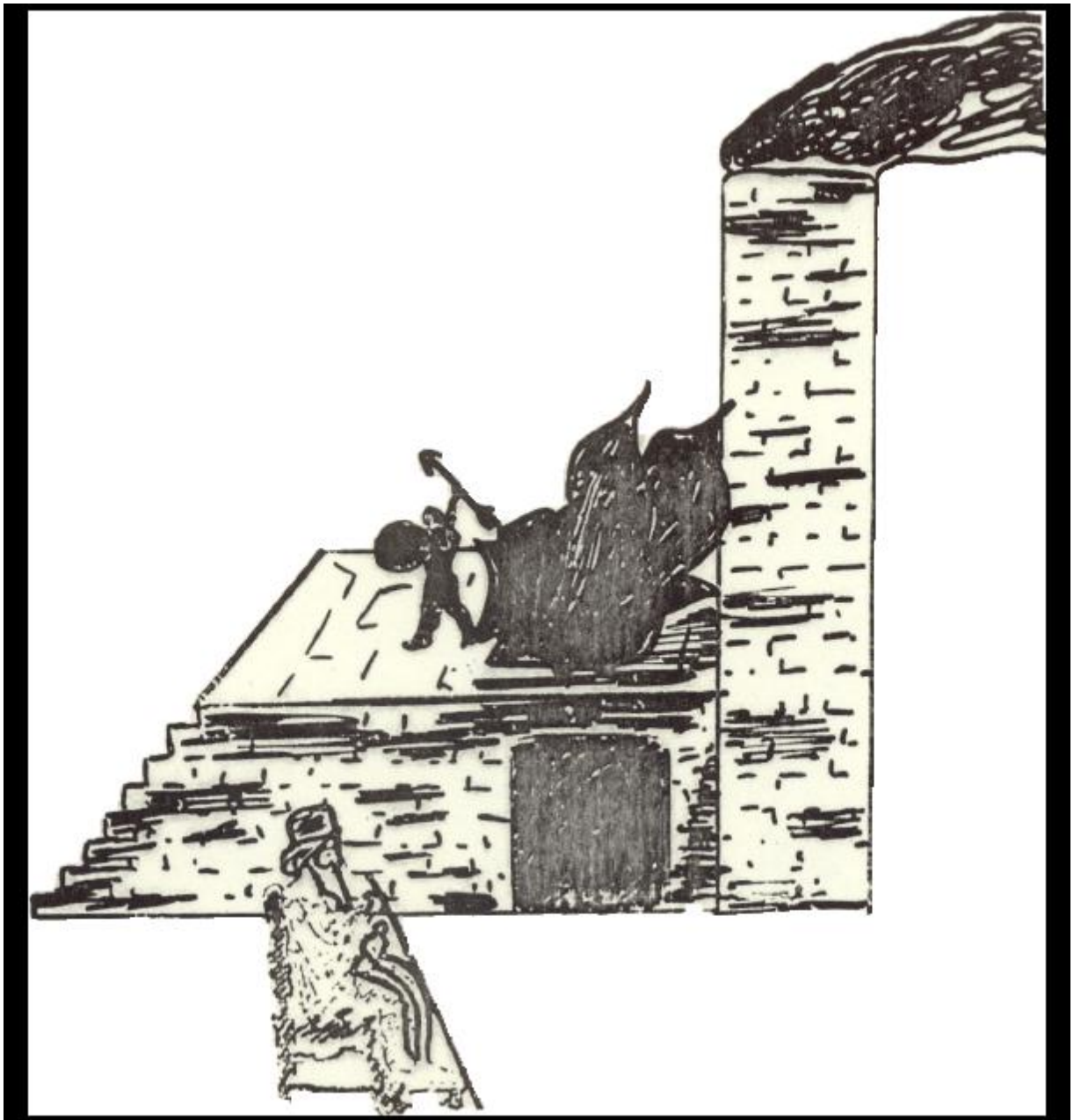
2:46-49 Nebuchadnezzar honors Daniel and his God.

Discussion #4: The fiery furnace episode

Reading: Young, pp. 83-96

III. The Fiery Furnace Episode 3:1-30)

- 3:1-7 Nebuchadnezzar erects a golden image
1. One of the Babylonian gods?
 2. Of himself, with laudatory inscriptions?
 3. A non-human symbol of his world empire?
 4. The image of his dream?
 5. The size
 - a. 60 cubits high = 90'
 - b. The proportions, 60 to 1 (Probably includes a large pedestal.)
 6. Young's suggestion (p. 85) that the pedestal has been discovered at Tolul Dura.
 7. Satraps a Persian term. Perhaps Daniel uses the Persian designation for this office since he was writing during the Persian period.
 8. The musical instruments and their names reflect ancient Greek influence. (See Yamauchi, Greece and Babylon.)
 9. The purpose of the commandment: The purpose of the homage to the image was probably more political than religious. Homage to Babylonian gods was the same as homage to Babylonian rule. Perhaps the empire was beginning to crumble already. (The date of this decree is unknown.) and Nebuchadnezzar needed to solidify the rule of his throne. The refusal by important government functionaries such as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego was a serious threat to his authority.
- 3:8-12 The friends of Daniel are accused of disobedience.
- 3:13-18 " " " " refuse to obey or apologize.
1. Reflects the spiritual implications of the command and the stern faith of the three Hebrew men.
 2. The ability of God (17) is probably ethical ability, i.e., if it fits into His plans.
- 3:19-23 The three put in the furnace. (See page 15 for schematic drawing.)
- 3:24-27 The deliverance by an angel.
1. The four loosed, the ropes burned off to emphasize the miracle
 2. The fourth figure in the fire: בר אלהין
 - a. KJV the Son of God
 - b. NAS a son of the gods
- 3:28-30 The confession and decree of Nebuchadnezzar.



Discussion #5: Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree

Reading: Young, pp. 97-114.

IV. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Great Tree 4:1-37)

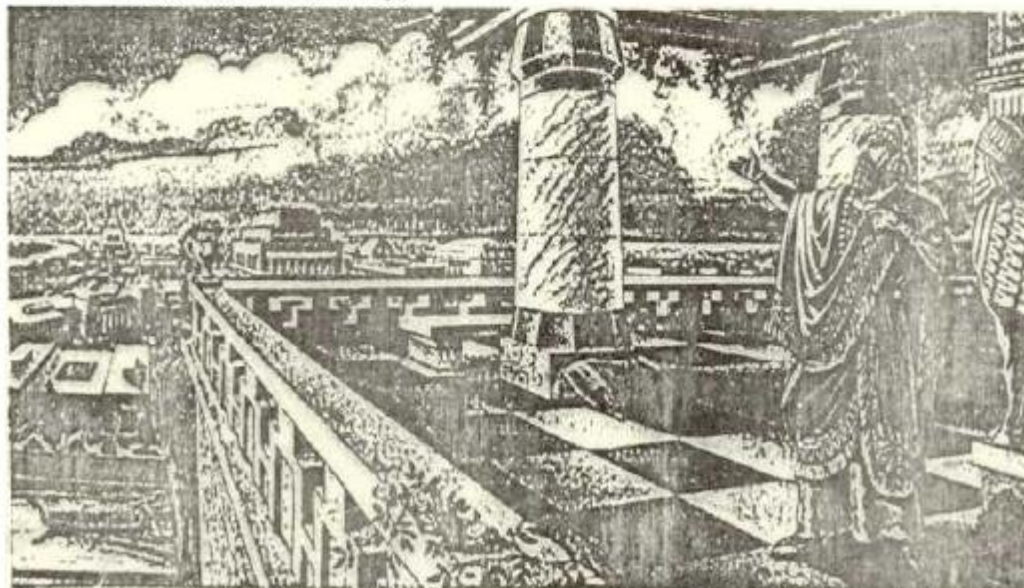
4:1-3 The proclamation of Nebuchadnezzar

1. The claim to universal dominion (vs. 1)
2. The question of biblical language being used by a pagan ruler. Perhaps Daniel worded the proclamation, reflecting the sentiments of the king.

4:4-18 The dream of Nebuchadnezzar

1. Why was Daniel not summoned initially.
 - a. Possibly not the same "Nebuchadnezzar," but a successor using a throne name.
 - A Dead Sea Scroll prayer attributed to Nabonidus describes a sickness similar to the one described in this chapter.
 - Twenty years from Nebuchadnezzar to Belshazzar are not mentioned by Daniel if this is the Nebuchadnezzar who had the dream of the great image.
 - Nabonidus was the last full-crowned king of Babylon. He was off in the desert for a while. The possibility is raised that he suffered lycanthropy and Belshazzar reigned in his place. THERE IS NOT GOOD EVIDENCE FOR THE ABOVE CONTENTION.
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar, assuming this is the original king, does not appear as one who learns valuable lessons from experience or warnings. He indulged his pride after the warning of the vision.
 - c. Daniel may have held back, waiting for "center stage."
 - d. Daniel may have had responsibilities that kept him away from the city of Babylon. He was absent when the decree was given to the wise men because of their failure to describe the image in the dream. Daniel was not with his friends in the fiery furnace episode.
2. Nebuchadnezzar recounts his dream, not asking Daniel to reproduce it (vs. 8).
3. The symbolic significance of the tree
 - a. Tree in the middle of the earth. . . Babylon was regarded as the center of the earth (vs. 10).
 - b. Contemporary literature commonly referred Mesopotamian rulers as trees. The lack of large trees in that part of the world made the welcomed blessing of such a giant tree a natural metaphor for a king (vss. 11-12).
4. Watcher and holy one = angel? vs. 13)
5. The command to cut down the tree (vs. 14)
 - a. To whom the commandment given?
 - b. An impersonal verb in the Aramaic, i.e., "Let the tree be cut down!"

6. The stump left (15a), indicating that the kingship of Nebuchadnezzar was not eradicated.
 7. The band of iron (15b), probably symbolically connected with the madness.
 8. Nebuchadnezzar (15c) descends to the level of an animal
 9. The nature of his madness (16a), dehumanization.
 - a. Lycanthropy or boanthropy, recurring form of madness throughout history.
 - b. The consummate humiliation of the particular form of insanity.
 10. The seven periods of time (16b)
 - a. Seven years? (Could Nebuchadnezzar have retained his throne that long while insane?)
 - b. Astrological periods, less than a year?
 - c. A long indefinite period of time?
 - d. A symbolic number indicating divine intervention or completeness.
 11. The lesson to be learned (17): God is the ruler, not man.
A council in Heaven? (I Kings 22:19ff; Job. 1)
- 4:19-27 Daniel interprets the dream
1. Daniel is overwhelmed by the implications of the dream (19).
 2. The interpretation (20-26)
 3. The warning (27)
- 4:28-33 The dream fulfilled

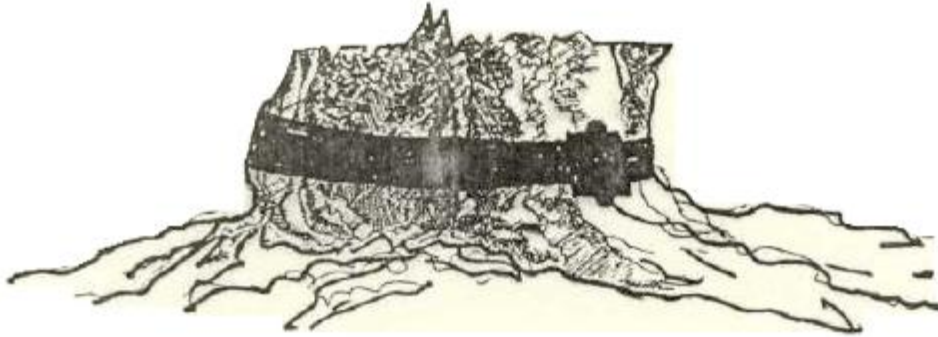


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NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S PRIDE

"Vain pride, Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed: 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built . . . by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?' Daniel 4: 30.

1. Nebuchadnezzar a great builder (30) (Suggests the original Neb.)
 2. The sentence pronounced and carried out (31-33)
- 4:34-37 The restoration of Nebuchadnezzar; the question of the character and extent of Nebuchadnezzar's conversion.



"Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground,
But with a band of iron and bronze around it. . .
4:15

Discussion #6: The four beasts and the little horn, part

Reading: Young, pp. 141-156.

Section Two: The Reign of Belshazzar

I. The Four Beasts and the Little Horn 7:1-28)

Introduction

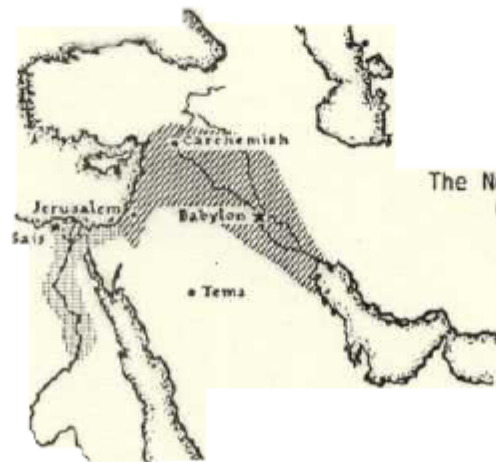
1. The relationship to chapter 2; 4 metals of the image, 4 animals
2. Chronology: First year of Belshazzar c. 556 B.C.
3. Historical setting: The glory of Babylon is fading, the empire is crumbling.

7:1-8 The four beasts and the little horn

1. The wind stirs the great sea (2) = The winds of time and changing events stir humanity or mankind (Isa. 7:12; Rev. 17:1, 15, 16).
2. The eagle winged-lion that becomes a man (4)



- a. Regal, Jer. 49:19
- b. Swift, " 48:40
- c. Winged-lions are common in the statuary of Babylon.
- d. Assumes human form
 - (1) Ancient Near Eastern imagery commonly pictured animal-human composites.
 - (2) Perhaps suggest that, in its later period, the Neo-Babylonian Empire was less aggressive, more humane.



3. The ravenous, lop-sided bear (5)



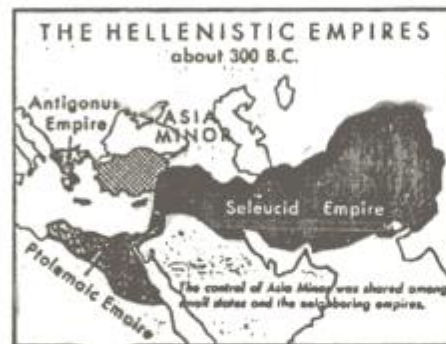
The Persian Empire
538-335 B.C.

- a. The bear "raised on one side"
 - (1) Persian domination of Media in the uneven alliance?
 - (2) Persia, crouching to spring, as it was in 556 B.C.?
 - (3) It may have no significance other than the contribution it makes to the imagery.
- b. The ribs in its mouth
 - (1) Nations to be conquered and absorbed by Persia; Lydia, Babylon, Egypt?
 - (2) A nation now in the process of devouring?
- c. "devour much meat" = the broad range of Persian conquests?

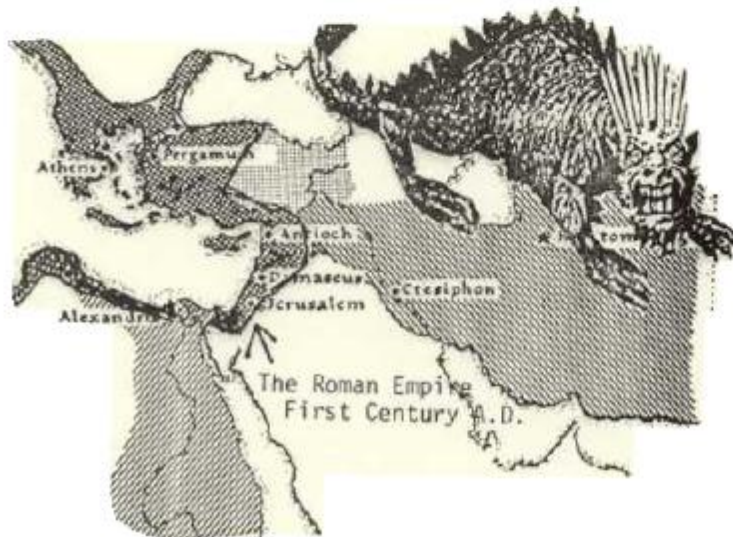
4. The leopard with four wings and four heads (6)



- a. The four wings probably suggest the extreme swiftness with which Alexander moved in his eastward campaign.
- b. The four heads
 - (1) The four directions of the compass, indicating the range of Alexander's empire.
 - (2) The four major territories of his empire; Greece, Western Asia, Persia, Egypt.
 - (3) The four Hellenistic monarchies (the Didachoi) that succeeded Alexander as the outgrowths of the Macedonian Empire:
 - (a) Lysimachus...Thrace and Asia Minor
 - (b) Antigonius and Cassander...Macedonia
 - (c) Ptolemy...Egypt
 - (d) Seleucius...Syria and Palestine



5. The dreadful fourth beast (7



Discussion #7: The four beasts and the little horn, part 2

Reading; Young, pp. 156-164.

7:9-12 The judgment by the Ancient of Days

1. Thrones brought into the court room (9)
2. The Ancient of Days takes his seat (9)
3. The wheeled-throne (Ezekial 10)
4. The books opened (Rev. 20:11-15) (10)
5. The fourth beast is judged, destroyed, and consigned to the fire. (11)
6. The other beasts (strict chronology not observed here) are also judged, but not so drastically or dramatically. Perhaps because they did not make such bitter war against the people of God. (12)

7:13-15 The Messianic Kingdom of the Son of Man

- The Son of Man comes on the clouds up to the Ancient of Days and receives His kingdom--the universal Messianic Kingdom (13)
 - a. Second Coming?
 - b. Ascension (Acts 1)
 - c. Compare to Matt. 24:30)
2. The eternal Kingdom 14)
3. Representative views compared:

Beast	Ten horns	Little horn	Judgment	Kingdom
historical Rome	contemporary historical kingdoms	historical persecutor	Destruction of historical Rome	Victory of the Church over Roman paganism
historical Rome	Successive historical kingdoms	eschatological persecutor	Second Coming	Millennial reign of Christ on earth
historical Rome	"	"	"	New Heavens and New Earth
historical Rome	"Revived Roman Empire"	"	"	Millennial reign of Christ on earth
historical Rome	"	"	"	New Heavens and New Earth

7:15-18 The interpretation of the vision in summary

1. Daniel's request and the response (15-16)
2. Summary (17-18)
 - a. Four successive kingdoms (17)
 - b. The Messianic Kingdom (18)

7:19-27 The detailed interpretation of the fourth beast and the little horn

1. Daniel's question (19-22)
2. The angel responds (23-27)
 - a. The fourth beast and the little horn (23-24)
 - b. The arrogant campaign of the little horn against God and the saints (25)
 - (1) The little horn is still speaking during the judgment (11)
 - (2) Alterations in time and law, indicating the power he has or claims to have, suggesting divine power for himself.
 - (3) The period of his campaign against the saints, time, times and half a time.
 - (a) $3\frac{1}{2}$ literal years?
 - (b) symbolic time in terms of the year-day theory? ($3\frac{1}{2}$ days = $3\frac{1}{2}$ years = 1260 days = 42 months)
 - (c) $3\frac{1}{2}$ is half of seven; not a complete time
 - (d) A short indefinite period of time (Rev. 12:14)
 - c. Heaven finds him guilty and condemns him to death (26).
 - d. Whereas the kingdom of the little horn is destroyed, the everlasting Messianic Kingdom becomes universal and prospers (27).

7:28 The end of the episode

1. Daniel is deeply alarmed
2. Daniel keeps the vision to himself.

Discussion #8 The ram, the he-goat, and another little horn, part

Reading Young, pp 165-175

II. The Ram, the He-goat, and Another little Horn (8:1-27)

8:1-14 The vision itself

- 1 The third year of Belshazzar (1) = 554 B.C. (Two years after the vision of the four beasts and the little horn)
2. Susa (2)
 - a. Little is known about the province of Elam. Susa was the capital of the Persian Empire.
 - b. Was Daniel there in person or only in the vision?
- 3 The ram (3-4) Persia
 - a. The ram was significant in Persian statuary and symbolism.
 - b. One horn longer or higher, and coming up fast, indicating the supremacy of Persia over Media and the present threat of Persia.
 - c. Pushing west, north, and south. In the early days of the Persian Empire, it did not move east.



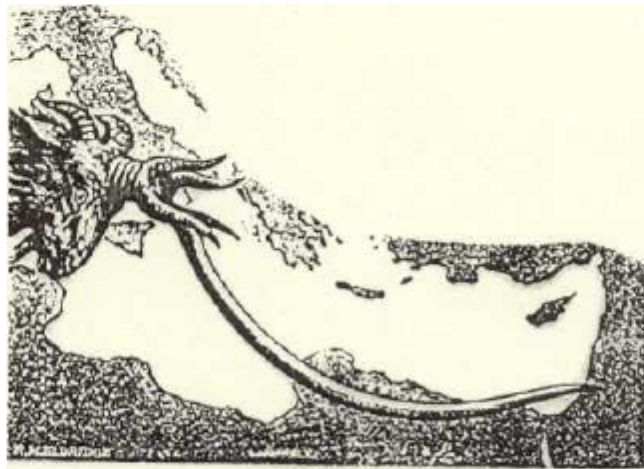
4. The he-goat (5-7) Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Empire
 - a. The direction, from the west. (5)
 - b. The remarkable speed of his conquest (5)
 - c. The conspicuous horn = Alexander himself (5)
 - d. The he-goat kills the ram (6-7)



5. The large horn of the he-goat broken, four take its place (8)



- a. Cf. the four heads on the leopard (7:6)
 - b. The four hellenistic empires growing out the imperial dream of Alexander (see page 21).
6. The little horn grows out of one of the four horns, expands, and turns its malevolent attention to the "Beautiful land" (9-14) (Ezekiel 20:6)



- a. Not to be confused with the little horn of Daniel 7.
- b. From the Seleucid horn came Antiochus Epiphanes. This by general agreement. The liberal critics of Daniel have no problem with the obvious interpretation since their date of Daniel permits the vision to come after the fact (168/167 B.C.).
- c. Josephus, AJ 10. 11. 7:

7. When, therefore, those that had intended thus to destroy Daniel by treachery were themselves destroyed, king Darius sent [letters] over all the country, and praised that God whom Daniel worshipped, and said that he was the only true God, and had all power. He had also Daniel in very great esteem, and made him the principal of his friends. Now when Daniel was become so illustrious and famous, on account of the opinion men had that he was beloved of God, he built a tower at Ecbatana, in Media: it was a most elegant building, and wonderfully made, and it is still remaining, and preserved to this day; and to such as see it, it appears to have been lately built, and to have been no older than that very day when any one looks upon it, it is so fresh, & flourishing, and beautiful, and no way grown old in so long a time; for buildings suffer the same as men do, they grow old as well as they, and by numbers of years their strength is dissolved, and their beauty withered. Now they bury the kings of Media, of Persia, and Parthia, in this tower, to this day; and he who was intrusted with the care of it, was a Jewish priest; which thing is also observed to this day. But it is fit to give an account of what this man did, which is most admirable to hear; for he was so happy as to have strange revelations made to him, and those as to one of the greatest of the prophets, inasmuch that while he was alive he had the esteem and applause both of the kings and of the multitude; and now he is dead, he retains a remembrance that will never fail, for the several books that he wrote and left behind him are still read by us till this time; and from them we believe that Daniel conversed with God; for he did not only prophecy of future events, as did the other prophets, but he also determined the time of their accomplishment; and while the prophets used to foretell misfortunes, and on that account were disagreeable both to the kings and to the multitude, Daniel was to them a prophet of good things, and this to such a degree, that, by the agreeable nature of his predictions, he

procured the good-will of all men; and by the accomplishment of them, he procured the belief of their truth, and the opinion of [a sort of] divinity for himself, among the multitude. He also wrote and left behind him what made manifest the accuracy and undoubted veracity of his predictions; for he saith, that when he was in Susa, the metropolis of Persia, and went out into the field with his companions, there was, on the sudden, a motion and concussion of the earth, and that he was left alone by himself, his friends flying away from him, and that he was disturbed, and fell on his face, and on his two hands, and that a certain person touched him, and at the same time bade him rise, and see what would befall his countrymen after many generations. He also related, that when he stood up, he was shewn a great ram, with many horns growing out of his head, and that the last was higher than the rest: that after this he looked to the west, and saw a he-goat carried through the air from that quarter; that he rushed upon the ram with violence, and smote him twice with his horns, and overthrew him to the ground, and trampled upon him: that afterwards he saw a very great horn growing out of the head of the he-goat; and that when it was broken off, four horns grew up that were exposed to each of the four winds, and he wrote that out of them arose another lesser horn, which, as he said, waxed great; and that God shewed to him, that it should fight against his nation, and take their city by force, and bring the temple-worship to confusion, and forbid the sacrifices to be offered for one thousand two hundred and ninety-six days. Daniel wrote that he saw these visions in the plain of Susa; and he hath informed us that God interpreted the appearance of this vision

after the following manner:—He said that the ram signified the kingdoms of the Medes and Persians, and the horns those kings that were to reign in them; and that the last horn signified the last king, and that he should exceed all the kings in riches and glory; that the he-goat signified that one should come and reign from the Greeks, who should twice fight with the Persian, and overcome him in battle, and should receive his entire dominion; that by the great horn which sprang out of the forehead of the he-goat was meant the first king; and that the springing up of four horns upon its falling off, and the conversion of every one of them to the four quarters of the earth, signified the successors that should arise after the death of the first king, and the partition of the kingdom among them, and that they should be neither his children nor of his kindred that should reign over the habitable earth for many years; and that from among them there should arise a certain king that should overcome our nation and their laws, and should take away our political government, and should spoil the temple, and forbid the sacrifices to be offered for three years' time." And indeed it so came to pass, that our nation suffered those things under Antiochus Epiphanes, according to Daniel's vision, and what he wrote many years before they came to pass. In the very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them. All these things did this man leave in writing, as God had shewed them to him, inasmuch that such as read his prophecies, and see how they have been fulfilled, would wonder at the honour wherewith God honoured Daniel; and may thence discover how the Epicureans are in an error, who cast providence out of human life, and do not believe that God takes care of the affairs of the world, nor

that the universe is governed and continued in being by that blessed and immortal nature, but say that the world is carried along of its own accord, without a ruler and a curator; which, were it destitute of a guide to conduct, as they imagine, it would be like ships without pilots, which we see drowned by the winds, or like chariots without drivers, which are overturned; so would the world be dashed to pieces by its being carried without a Providence, and so perish and come to nought. So that, by the forementioned

predictions of Daniel, those men seem to me very much to err from the truth, who determine that God exercises no providence over human affairs; for if that were the case, that the world went on by mechanical necessity, we should not see that all things would come to pass according to his prophecy. Now, as to myself, I have so described these matters as I have found them and read them; but if any one is inclined to another opinion about them, let him enjoy his different sentiments without any blame from me.

- d "hosts of heaven" (10) = stars = the people of God (Da. 12:3; Rev. 12:1) Antiochus the consummate persecutor, the first to practice genuine religious persecution.

1 Macc 1.41ff

The king then issued a decree throughout his empire: his subjects were all to become one people and abandon their own laws and religion. The nations everywhere complied with the royal command, and many in Israel accepted the foreign worship, sacrificing to idols and profaning the sabbath. Moreover, the king sent agents with written orders to Jerusalem and the towns of Judaea. Ways and customs foreign to the country were to be introduced. Burnt-offerings, sacrifices, and libations in the temple were forbidden; sabbaths and feast-days were to be profaned; the temple and its ministers to be defiled. Altars, idols, and sacred precincts were to be established; swine and other unclean beasts to be offered in sacrifice. They must leave their sons uncircumcised; they must make themselves in every way abominable, unclean, and profane, and so forget the law and change all their statutes. The penalty for disobedience was death.

Such was the decree which the king issued to all his subjects. He appointed superintendents over all the people, and instructed the towns of Judaea to offer sacrifice, town by town. People thronged to their side in large numbers, every one of them a traitor to the law. Their wicked conduct throughout the land drove Israel into hiding in every possible place of refuge.

On the fifteenth day of the month Kislev⁴¹ in the year 145, 'the abomination of desolation' was set up on the altar. Pagan altars were built throughout the towns of Judaea; incense was offered at the doors of houses and in the streets. All scrolls of the law which were found were torn up and burnt. Anyone discovered in possession of a Book of the Covenant, or conforming to the law, was put to death by the king's sentence. Thus month after month these wicked men used their power against the Israelites whom they found in their towns.

On the twenty-fifth day of the month they offered sacrifice on the pagan altar which was on top of the altar of the Lord. In accordance with the royal decree, they put to death women who had had their children circumcised. Their babies, their families, and those who had circumcised them, they hanged by the neck. Yet many in Israel found strength to resist, taking a determined stand against eating any unclean food. They welcomed death rather than defile themselves and profane the holy covenant, and so they died. The divine wrath raged against Israel.⁴²

e. Antiochus magnifies himself as God 11)

2 Macc. 9.4ff. the sickness of Antiochus):

But riding with him was the divine judgement! For in his arrogance he said: 'When I reach Jerusalem, I will make it a common
 5 graveyard for the Jews.' But the all-seeing Lord, the God of Israel, struck him a fatal and invisible blow. As soon as he had said the words, he was seized with incurable pain in his bowels and with
 6 sharp internal torments—a punishment entirely fitting for one who had inflicted many unheard-of torments on the bowels of others.
 7 Still he did not in the least abate his insolence; more arrogant than ever, he breathed fiery threats against the Jews. After he had given
 orders to speed up the journey, it happened that he fell out of his chariot as it hurtled along, and so violent was his fall that every joint
 8 in his body was dislocated. He, who in his pretension to be more than man had just been thinking that he could command the waves of
 the sea and weigh high mountains on the scales, was brought to the ground and had to be carried in a litter, thus making God's power
 9 manifest to all. Worms swarmed even from the eyes of this godless man and, while he was still alive and in agony, his flesh rotted off,
 10 and the whole army was disgusted by the stench of his decay. It was so unbearably offensive that nobody could escort the man who only a short time before had seemed to touch the stars in the sky.
 11 In this broken state, Antiochus began to abate his great arrogance. Under God's lash, and racked with continual pain, he began to see
 12 things in their true light. He could not endure his own stench and said, 'It is right to submit oneself to God and, being mortal, not to
 13 think oneself equal to him.' Then the villain made a solemn promise to the Lord, who had no intention of sparing him any longer, and it
 14 was to this effect: Jerusalem the holy city, which he had been hurrying to level to the ground and to transform into a graveyard, he would
 15 now declare a free city; to all the Jews, whom he had not considered worthy of burial but only fit to be thrown out with their children as
 prey for birds and beasts, he would give privileges equal to those
 16 enjoyed by the citizens of Athens. The holy temple which he had earlier plundered he would adorn with the most splendid gifts; he
 would replace all the sacred utensils on a much more lavish scale; he
 17 would meet the cost of the sacrifices from his own revenues. In

Discussion #9: The ram, the he-goat, and another little horn, part 2

Reading: Young, pp. 175-182.

7. The duration of the abomination (13-14)
 - a. The Holy Place defiled and sacrifice suspended. (The Temple was not actually destroyed.)

Josephus, AJ 12. 5. 2-4:

4. Now it came to pass, after two years, in the hundred and forty-fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of that month which is by us called Chisleu, and by the Macedonians Appellus, in the hundred and fifty-third olympiad, that the king came up to Jerusalem, and, pretending peace, he got possession of the city by treachery: at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple; but, led by his covetous inclination, (for he saw there was in it a great deal of gold, and many ornaments that had been dedicated to it of very great value,) and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made. So he left the temple bare, and took away the golden candlesticks, and the golden altar [of incense,] and table [of shew-bread,] and the altar [of burnt-offering;] and did not abstain from even the veils, which were made of fine linen and scarlet. He also emptied it of its secret treasures, and left nothing at all remaining; and by this means cast the Jews into great lamentation, for he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used to offer to God, according to the law. And when he had pillaged the whole city, some of the inhabitants he slew, and some he carried captive, together with their wives and children, so that the multitude of those captives that were taken alive amounted to about ten thousand. He also burnt down the finest buildings; and when he had overthrown the city walls, he built a citadel in the lower part of the city,† for the place was high, and overlooked the temple, on which account he fortified it with high walls and towers, and put into it a garrison of Macedonians. However, in this citadel dwelt the impious and wicked part of the [Jewish] multitude, from whom it proved that the citizens suffered many and sore calamities. And when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country.

- b. The cause: the sin of Israel (12).
- c. The holy one (an angel) stands by to answer Daniel's question.
- d. The 2300 morning and evenings (14). KJV="days"
 6 years and 3 months +
 - (1) Young's view: 365)2300
 There was roughly 6 years between the time when Antiochus began to desecrate the temple to his death in 164.
 - (2) 2300 @ 2 sacrifices (morning and evening) per day = 1150 days.

@3½ years
365)1150 days

The subject under discussion is the regular sacrifices (vs. 13) in the Temple. Antiochus Epiphanes captured and desecrated the Temple in the summer of 168 B.C. About 6 months later he set up a statue of Zeus (Kislev 25, 168 B.C.) On Kislev 25, 165 B.C., 3 years later to the day, the Temple was rededicated under Judas Maccabees. (Thus the feast of Dedication or Hanukkah is in December.)

Josephus, AJ 12. 7. 6-7

6. When, therefore, the generals of Antiochus's armies had been beaten so often, Judas assembled the people together, and told them, that after these many victories which God had given them, they ought to go up to Jerusalem,

and purify the temple, and offer the appointed sacrifices. But as soon as he, with the whole multitude, was come to Jerusalem, and found the temple deserted, and its gates burnt down, and plants growing in the temple of their own accord, on account of its desolation, he and those that were with him began to lament, and were quite confounded at the sight of the temple; so he chose out some of his soldiers, and gave them order to fight against those guards that were in the citadel, until he should have purified the temple. When, therefore, he had carefully purged it, and had brought in new vessels, the candlestick, the table [of show-bread,] and the altar [of incense,] which were made of gold, he hung up the veils at the gates, and added doors to them. He also took down the altar [of burnt-offering,] and built a new one of stones that he gathered together, and not of such as were hewn with iron tools. So on the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, which the Macedonians call Appelleus, they lighted the lamps that were on the candlestick, and offered incense upon the altar [of incense,] and laid the loaves upon the table [of showbread,] and offered burnt-offerings upon the new altar [of burnt-offering.] Now it so fell out, that these things were done on the very same day on which their divine worship had fallen off, and was reduced to a profane and common use, after three years' time; for so it was, that the temple was made desolate by Antiochus, and so continued for three years. This desolation happened to the temple in the hundred forty and fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Appelleus, and on the hundred and fifty-third olympiad; but it was dedicated anew, on the same day, the twenty-fifth of the month Appelleus, in the hundred and forty-eighth year, and on the hundred and fifty-fourth olympiad. And this desolation came to pass according to the prophecy of Daniel, which was given four hundred and eight years before; for he declared that the Macedonians would dissolve that worship [for some] time.

7. Now Judas celebrated the festival of the restoration of the sacrifices of the temple for eight days; and omitted no sort of pleasures thereon; but he feasted them upon very rich and splendid sacrifices; and he honoured God, and delighted them, by hymns and psalms. Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they made it law for their posterity, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, for eight days. And from that time to this we celebrate this festival, and call it Lights. I suppose the reason was, because this liberty beyond our hopes appeared to us; and that thence was the name given to that festival. Judas also rebuilt the walls round about the city, and reared towers of great height against the incursions of enemies, and set guards therein. He also fortified the city Bethsura, that it might serve as a citadel against any distresses that might come from our enemies.

I Macc. 4 36-58:

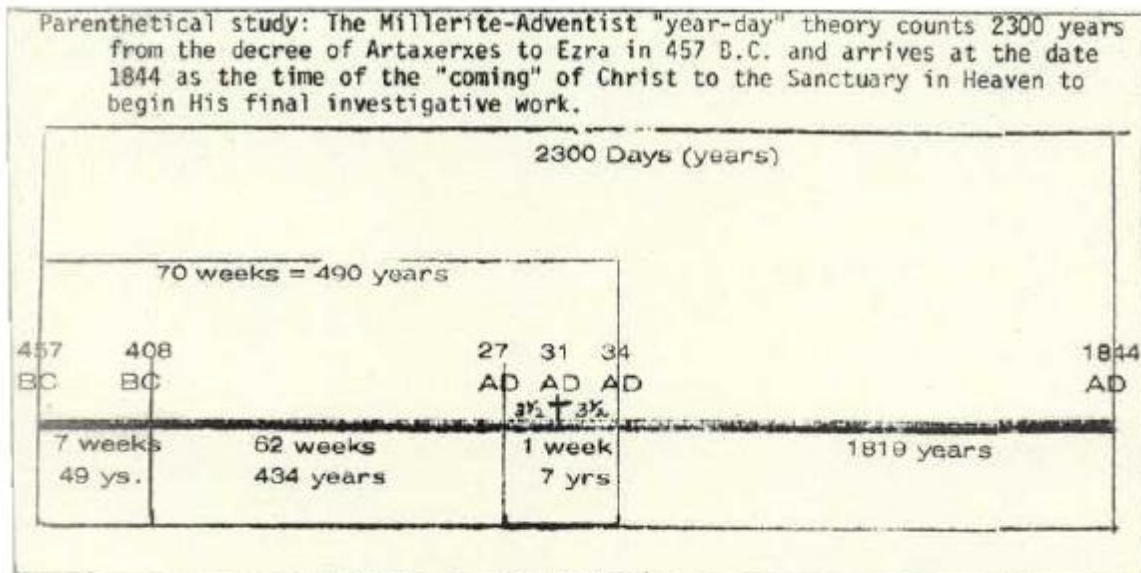
36 But Judas and his brothers said: 'Now that our enemies have been
crushed, let us go up to Jerusalem to cleanse the temple and re-
37 dedicate it.' So the whole army was assembled and went up to
38 Mount Zion. There they found the temple laid waste, the altar
profaned, the gates burnt down, the courts overgrown like a thicket
39 or wooded hill-side, and the priests' rooms in ruin. They tore their
40 garments, wailed loudly, put ashes on their heads, and fell on their
faces to the ground. They sounded the ceremonial trumpets, and
cried aloud to Heaven.

41 Then Judas detailed troops to engage the garrison of the citadel
while he cleansed the temple. He selected priests without blemish, 42
devoted to the law, and they purified the temple, removing to an 43
unclean place the stones which defiled it. They discussed what to do 44
with the altar of burnt-offering, which was profaned, and rightly 45
decided to demolish it, for fear it might become a standing reproach
to them because it had been defiled by the Gentiles. They therefore
pulled down the altar, and stored away the stones in a fitting place on 46
the temple hill, until a prophet should arise who could be consulted
about them. They took unhewn stones, as the law commands, and 47
built a new altar on the model of the previous one. They rebuilt the 48
temple and restored its interior, and consecrated the temple courts.
They renewed the sacred vessels and the lamp-stand, and brought 49
the altar of incense and the table into the temple. They burnt incense 50
on the altar and lit the lamps on the lamp-stand to shine within the
temple. When they had put the Bread of the Presence on the table 51
and hung the curtains, all their work was completed.

Then, early on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, the month 52
Kislev, in the year 148,^a sacrifice was offered as the law commands 53
on the newly made altar of burnt-offering. On the anniversary of the 54
day when the Gentiles had profaned it, on that very day, it was re-
dedicated, with hymns of thanksgiving, to the music of harps and
lutes and cymbals. All the people glorified themselves, with 55
56 singing and praising Heaven that their cause had prospered.

They celebrated the rededication of the altar for eight days; there 56
was great rejoicing as they brought burnt-offerings and sacrificed
peace-offerings and thank-offerings. They decorated the front of the 57
temple with golden wreaths and ornamental shields. They renewed
the gates and the priests' rooms, and fitted them with doors. There 58
was great merry-making among the people, and the disgrace brought
on them by the Gentiles was removed.

According to Talmudic tradition, only one cruse of pure olive oil, blessed by the high priest and necessary for the ritual, could be found. It miraculously burned for 8 days. In the traditional Festival of Lights, one candle of a special 8-branch candlestick is lit each night for 8 successive nights.



8:15-26 The interpretation of the vision

1. The appearance of Gabriel between the banks of the Ulai (15-16)
 - a. Daniel is the only book in the Old Testament in which angels are given their personal names.
 - b. The hovering voice of God presides over the event.
2. The time of the end (17)
 - a. The end of Old Testament time, not all time?
 - b. The end of "indignation?" It began with Babylonian rule and shall end with Antiochus. (See vs. 19.)
3. The ram and the he-goat interpreted (20-22)
4. Antiochus described (23-26)
 - a. vs. 23: transgressions run their course = the apostasy of the Jews to Hellenism before and under Antiochus.
 - b. vs. 24: not by his own power: God granted power to punish his people.
 - c. vs. 24: Cruel oppression and military conquests.
 - d. vs. 25: his shrewdness = the use of intrigue, false treaties, lies, etc. by Antiochus to gain his ends.
 - e. vs. 25: oppose the Prince of Princes, i.e., God.
 - f. vs. 25: without human agency = judgement of God.
 - g. vs. 26: shut up or keep the vision, in the sense of preserve it, rather than keep it secret.

8:27 The experience drains Daniel of his strength for a time

Discussion #10 Belshazzar's feast and the fall of Babylon, part 1

Reading: Young, pp. 115-129

III. Belshazzar's Feast and the Fall of Babylon (5:1-30)

5:1 The chronology and the identity of Belshazzar

- a. This was his last year, 539 B.C.
- b. The problem of the identity of Belshazzar
 - (1) Prior to the discovery and translation of relevant cuneiform material, the existence of Belshazzar was denied by critics of Daniel. According to Josephus and the Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon, Nabonidus was the last king of Babylon. Belshazzar was not mentioned.
 - (2) The cuneiform records constitute remarkable vindication of the historicity of Daniel. (These are contemporary with Daniel!)
 - a. According to the Persian Verse Account of Nabonidus, Nabonidus "entrusted the kingship to his son Belshazzar." Nabonidus then moved to Tema, a shrine in the middle of the Arabian desert. Belshazzar performed some royal functions. His name is used in oaths and prayers. Belshazzar, that is, was acting king in the absence of his father Nabonidus.
 - b. The Harran Inscription clears up the mystery of why Nabonidus was absent from Babylon for 10 years. It pictures Nabonidus as a devotee of the moon god Sin (He was taught this by his mother.) who charged that the elevation of Marduk was responsible for the troubles Babylon was experiencing. He refused to grace the city with his presence until it repented of its neglect of Sin.

5:2-4 Belshazzar's "revival"

- a. The troubles of Babylon
 - (1) Drought and famine (known from the Greek records as well as from the cuneiform documents).
 - (2) The invading Persian armies of Cyrus.
- b. The significance of Belshazzar's feast: To placate the offended gods of Babylon, perhaps with emphasis on Marduk, and to encourage the gods that had made Babylon great to now rescue her from the impending calamity.

The use of the vessels from the Temple to insult the God of Israel (2-4) (See 1:2)

5:5-9 The handwriting on the wall

- a. The occasion and setting: The God of Israel being insulted in behalf of the pagan gods of Babylon (4)
- b. The royal palace

Sources of information Berossus, Herodotus, Ctesias, Strabo, Quintus Curtius; Archaeologists Layard and Koldewey



- c. A hand appears and writes (5).
- d. The king is terrified (6).
- e. The king calls for his counselors and promises that he who can interpret the writing will be made "one of three rulers" (not third in succession).
- f. Why could they not read the writing (8)?

- (1) Possibly they knew the words, but did not know the expanded meaning. If the words were written in Hebrew, they would appear (in modern script): מֶנָּה מֶלֶךְ וְפֶרֶס.
- (2) Possibly the words were written in a Babylonian "shorthand" and needed a context for interpretation. (Some kind of cunieforn figures.)
- (3) Possibly the message was written in ideagrams.

5:10-12 The queen advises that Daniel be summoned

1. The queen, probably the mother of Belshazzar, not his wife. (Belshazzar was not the direct son of Nabonidus.)(10)
2. Daniel has either lost his office, become obscure, or has been engaged in business that kept him out of the attention of Belshazzar (11-12).

5:13-16 Daniel is promised wealth and power if he can interpret the handwriting on the wall.

5:17-23 Daniel refuses the offer of gifts and warns the king.

5:24-28 The interpretation of the writing on the wall

MENE (26) numbered and finished

Repeated for emphasis

TEKEL (27) weighed and found lacking, short, too light

PHARSIN (25) PERES (5:28) divided

5:29 The reward of Daniel



Discussion #11 Belshazzar's feast and the fall of Babylon, part 2

No reading assignment

5:30 The fall of Babylon

a. Extra-biblical accounts of the fall of Babylon

1) Herodotus (5th century B.C.)

The Babylonians had taken the field and were awaiting his approach. When he arrived near the city they attacked him, but were defeated and forced to retire inside their defences; they already knew of Cyrus' restless ambition and had watched his successive acts of aggression against one nation after another, and as they had taken the precaution of accumulating in Babylon a stock of provisions sufficient to last many years, they were able to regard the prospect of a siege with indifference. The siege dragged on, no progress was made, and Cyrus was beginning to despair of success. Then somebody suggested or he himself thought up the following plan: he stationed part of his force at the point where the Euphrates flows into the city and another contingent at the opposite end where it flows out, with orders to both to force an entrance along the riverbed as soon as they saw the water shallow enough. Then, taking with him all his non-combatant troops, he withdrew to the spot where Nitocris had excavated the lake, and proceeded to repeat the operation which the queen had previously performed: by means of cutting he diverted the river into the lake (which was then a marsh) and in this way so greatly reduced the depth of water in the actual bed of the river that it became fordable, and the Persian army, which had been left at Babylon for the purpose, entered the river, now only deep enough to reach about the middle of a man's thigh, and, making their way along it, got into the town. If the Babylonians had learned what Cyrus was doing or had seen it for themselves in time, they could have let the Persians enter and then, by shutting all the gates which led to the waterside and manning the walls on either side of the river, they could have caught them in a trap and wiped them out. But as it was they were taken by surprise. The Babylonians themselves say that owing to the great size of the city the outskirts were captured without the people in the centre knowing anything about it: there was a festival going on, and they continued to dance and enjoy themselves until they learned the news the hard way. That, then, is the story of the first capture of Babylon.

1. 190-191

- (2) Xenophon (early 4th century B.C.): (The Greek writer Xenophon offers essentially the same version of the capture of Babylon as Herodotus except that he goes into more detail. He describes the maneuvers of Cyrus' army when it first encompassed the city. Cyrus immediately realized that direct assault would never secure the prize. He therefore developed his plan to divert the course of the river. Cyrus waited until a festival was in progress within Babylon, knowing that this would be the best time for the ingenious venture he had planned. Xenophon states that once the troops entered the city, they went straight to the palace. Once outside the gates they began to make a great clamour. Xenophon dramatically describes the fight in the palace that occurred when the gates were opened and also the fight in the city streets.)

. . .as soon as the noise and clamour began, they that were within preceiving the disturbance, and the king commanding them to examine what the matter was, ran out, throwing open the gates (of the palace, not the city). They that were with Gadates, as soon as they saw the gates loose, broke in, pressing forward on the runways, and dealing their blows among them, they came up to the king, and found him now in a standing posture, with his sword drawn. They that were with Gadates and Gobryas, being many in number, mastered him; they likewise that were with him were killed; one holding up something before him, another flying, and another defending himself with any thing that he could meet with. Cyrus sent a body of horses up and down through the streets, bidding them kill those that they found abroad, and ordering some who understood the Syrian language to proclaim it to those that were in the houses to remain within, and if they were found they should be killed.

Cyropaedia 7. 5.

3) The Nabonidus Chronicle

- a) The purpose of the chronicle
 -To record the events in the 17th year of Nabonidus.
 -To trace the rise of Cyrus and prove that his conquest of Babylon was due to the impiety of Nabonidus.
- (b) According to the Chronicle, Cyrus entered the city in peace reorganized it, and restored religious observances. The text reads:

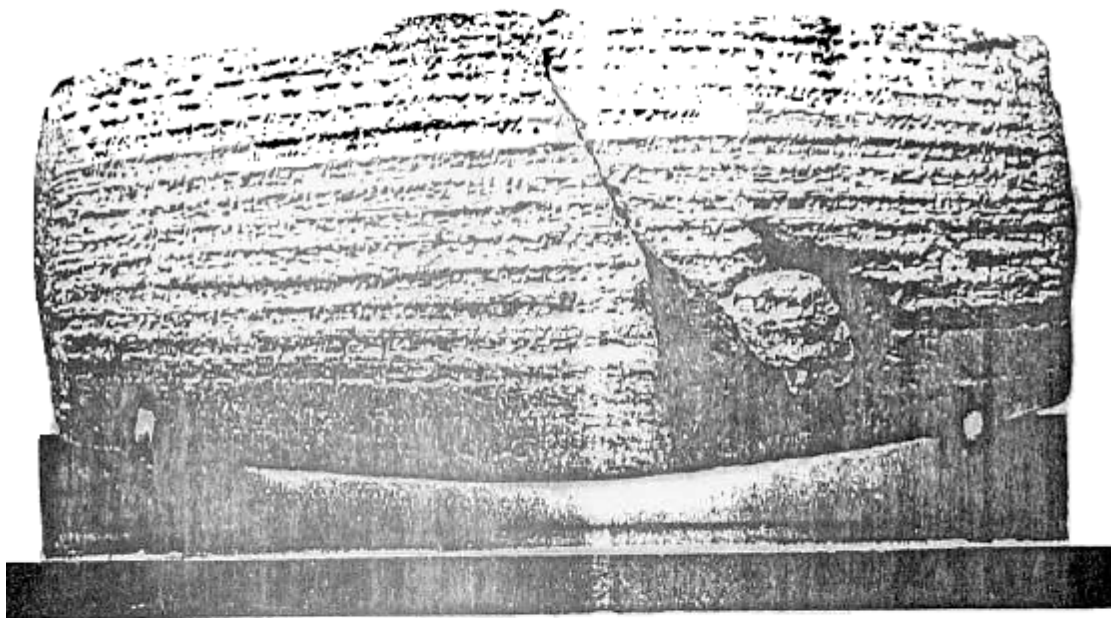
. . . on the 14th, Sippar was taken without battle. (15) Nabonidus fled. On the 16th, Ugbaru the governor of Gutium and the troops of Cyrus (16) entered Babylon without battle. Afterwards Nabonidus, when he returned to Babylon, was taken prisoner. . .

Smith, Babylonian Historical Texts Relating to the Downfall of Babylon, pp. 117-118.

- 3) The Persian Verse Account of Nabonidus. The Persian Verse Account is a piece of propaganda written as history. The last king of Babylon is pictured as a villain who interfered with commerce, illegally confiscated lands, allowed the irrigation system to fall into neglect, imprisoned prominent men, etc. He deserted Babylon in favor of Harran where he built a sanctuary for the moon god Sin. He ordered the Babylonian New Year festival cancelled until he had completed his project at Harran. His changing of prescribed rituals brought shame made him a heretic. Cyrus, in contrast, is described in glowing terms. Upon entering Babylon peacefully, he established an era of well-being.

ANET, p 306

4 The Cyrus Cylinder



The Cyrus C:

Discovered by Rassam in 1879, this now famous terracotta cylinder was published in 1880 by Sir Henry Rawlinson. The purpose of the document was to justify Persian intervention into the affairs of Babylonia. The inscription is a model of propaganda. Relevant lines read:

Marduk the great lord, compassionate to his people, looked with gladness on (Cyrus') good deeds and his upright intentions. He gave orders that he go against his city Babylon.

He made him take the road to Babylon and he went at his side like a friend and comrade. His vast army, whose number like the waters of a river cannot be determined, with their armour held close, moved forward beside him. He got him into his city Babylon without fighting or battle. He averted hardship to Babylon. He put an end to the power of Nabonidus the king who did not show him reverence.

.....

The gods of Sumer and Akkad whom Nabonidus had, to the anger of the lord of the gods, brought to Babylon, I at the bidding of Marduk, the great lord, made to dwell in peace in their habitations, delightful abodes.

DOTT, pp. 92-93.

b Difficulties in harmonizing the accounts

- (1) There is some difficulty in harmonizing the accounts of Herodotus and Xenophon with the cuneiform accounts in terms of the time and sequence of the events leading up to and including the taking of Babylon by the forces of Cyrus. There is a question of the existence or length of the siege described by Herodotus.

c The essential harmony of the extra-biblical accounts with Daniel

- (1) Babylon was being pressured by the armies of Cyrus.
- (2) A festival was taking place the night the armies of Cyrus entered Babylon.
- (3) The kind of battle that would have been expected in such a military project did not take place with the fall of Babylon



5:31 The problem of identifying Darius the Mede

- 1 The problem: The silence of the cunieform records. There is no record of a "King Darius" between Nabonidus and Cyrus or contemporary with Cyrus.
2. Alternatives:
 - a. The scribes of Babylon and Persia knew nothing of Darius the Mede.
 - b. They knew him, but not by that name.
3. Possible solutions
 - a. Darius the Mede is an alternate or official name for Gubaru/ Gobryas, the provincial governor of Babylon. John C. Whitcomb, Darius the Mede (Grand Rapids: Wm. D. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959).
 - b. That Daniel 6:28 be translated, "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius even the reign of Cyrus the Persian," i.e., taking the former name as a throne name. D. J. Wiseman, et al., Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel (London: Tyndale Press, 1965).

Parentetical summary: Neo-Babylonian and Persian Kings

Nabopolassar	626-605	
Nebuchadnezzar	605-562	
Evil Merodach	562-560	(Also called Amel-Marduk)
Neriglissar	560-556	
Laborosoarched	556	Lubashi Marduk
Nabonidus	556-539	Belshazzar
Cyrus the Great	539-530	
Cambyses	530-522	
Gautama	522	
Darius I Hystaspes	521-486	
Xerxes	486-465	(Ahazuarus of Esther)
Artaxerxes I Longimanus	464-423	
Darius II Ochus	423-404	
Artaxerxes II Mennon	404-359	
Artaxerxes III Ochus	359-338	
Ares	338-335	
Darius III	335-331	

Discussion 12 The Seventy Sevens, part 1

Reading: Young, pp. 183-201

Section Three The Reign of Darius and Cyrus

I The Seventy Sevens (9:1-27)

9:1-3 The introduction to the vision

1. The first year of Darius=537 B.C.
2. Daniel reads Jeremiah (25:11 "And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.") and prays for the fulfillment of the promise.

Chronology:

- 605 B.C. the beginning of Babylonian rule over Jerusalem.
- 537 B.C. Daniel's prayer
- 68 years

9:4-19 Daniel's prayer of repentance on behalf of the nation.

1. The sin of God's people despite His patience and His warnings.
2. Ours the shame, Yours the righteousness (7-8).
3. An appeal to pure grace (18)

9:20-23 God answers

1. Gabriel makes a second visit (21)
2. At the time of the evening offering (21).
 - a. Da. 8:14 and the 2300 mornings and evenings.
 - b. Time: 3-4 p.m.
 - c. Faithful Jews could not sacrifice on foreign soil
3. The answer was already on the way (22-23)

9:24-27 The seventy sevens

1. Daniel is granted a favor for which he did not ask. He had prayed for national liberation in fulfillment of Jeremiah's seventy-year prophecy; he is promised spiritual liberation in terms of seven seventies (24).
2. The comprehensive statement given first (24); this will happen within the approximately 500 years.
 - a. "finish the transgression"
 - b. "make and end of sin"

- c. "make atonement for iniquity"
- d. "bring in everlasting righteousness"
- e. "seal up vision and prophecy"
- f. "anoint the most holy place"

3. The events of the 500 years broken down (25-27)

- a Sixty-nine weeks, the time from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to Messiah.
- b After the sixty-ninth week:
 - (1) Messiah cut off (26)
 - (2) The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the temple again (26). It will be a time of war and terrible desolation.
 - (3) During the 70th week, "he" will make a covenant for one week (27).
 - (4) "he" will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offerings.
 - (5) One will come bringing desolation and will. A superior translation of the last part of verse 27 is: ". . . and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate."

4 Principal interpretations

- a Traditional Messianic (Wilson, Young, Mauro, Pusey, Wright, et al.): From an edict to restore Jerusalem to the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem.

1) Possible ways to compute the time of the fulfillment:

- (a) Using the Decree of Cyrus:

537 B.C.	
-483 (69 x 7 = 483)	
54 B.C.	
- (b) Using the Decree of Artaxerxes to Ezra (458 B.C.):

483	
-458 B.C.	
25/24 A.D.	
- (c) Using the Decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (445 B.C.):

483	
-445 B.C.	
38/37 A.D.	

(2) Problem? Too many or too few years

- b Maccabean (Driver, Montgomery, Zoeckler): seven weeks = from 587/86 to Cyrus; sixty-two weeks = from Cyrus (538/37) to the rise of Cyrus; the seventieth week = the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. This is the liberal-critical view. The problem is that not enough years can be worked in to come close to 500.

- c. Church-Age (Keil; Kliefoth, et al.): The seventy sevens is a symbolic period extending from the time of Cyrus to the end of the world. The sixty-ninth week = the period of Gospel proclamation until opposing forces all but silence it; the seventieth week is the reign of an eschatological Antichrist at the end of the church age.
- d. Parenthesis (Ironsides, Lindsey, Valvoord, Scofield, et al.) seven weeks = from the edict of Artaxerxes in 445 to 396, the complete restoration of Jerusalem; the sixty-two weeks = the time from 396 to the death of Christ; GOD'S "PROPHETIC CLOCK," WHICH RUNS ONLY IN RELATION TO NATIONAL ISRAEL, STOPS BETWEEN THE 69TH AND 70TH WEEK. IN THE PARENTHESIS IS THE CHURCH AGE; the seventieth week begins with the emergence of the eschatological Antichrist.

The parenthesis interpretation is in basic agreement with the traditional messianic until the end of the 69th week. Then the "clock stops."

Richard W. De Haan, Israel and the Nations in Prophecy, Zondervan, 1968, pp. 86-87:

THE TIMECLOCK STOPS

According to verse 26 there was to be an interruption in the "seventy weeks" of God's dealings with Israel. . . A "gap" exists between the sixty-ninth and seventieth "weeks." Some who do not accept the premillennial view of the return of Christ have accused us of importing this "gap" to bolster our position. However, both the declaration of verse 26 and history itself make it obvious that the seventieth week does not directly follow the sixty-ninth. There is a "break" in God's dealings with Israel. God's timeclock that had been ticking off the 69 weeks of Daniel's prophecy stopped, and will not commence again until the Lord takes out the Church.

Discussion #13 The Seventy Sevens, part 2

Reading: Young, pp 201-221

- 5 An evaluation of the Parenthesis/dispensational interpretation of Daniel 9.
 - a. There is no indication in the text that a gap exists between the 69th and 70th period of sevens.
 - b. To insert such a gap destroys the essential character of the prophecy, i.e., time.
 - c. The parenthesis puts the "church age" between the people (historic Romans) who destroy the Temple and city and the eschatological prince.

vs. 26 "... and the people (insert church age) of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary."
- 6 Question who is the 'he' in verse 27?
 - a Parenthesis/dispensational: an eschatological Roman tyrant functioning under the protection of the Antichrist.

Lindsey, Late Great Planet Earth, pp 151-152

According to the Bible, the Middle East crisis will continue to escalate until it threatens the peace of the whole world. The focus of all nations will be upon this unsolvable and complex problem which keeps bringing the world to the precipice of a thermonuclear holocaust. This is apparently the first major problem that the incredible Roman leader will solve after taking over the ten-nation confederacy of European nations.

Some 2500 years ago the prophet Daniel said that a prince would come to power from the people who would destroy the city of Jerusalem and the second Temple (Daniel 9:27). The Romans under Titus did the destroying, so the coming prince would have to be someone out of the Roman culture. This Roman prince, as we described in "The Future Fuehrer," will come to power just before the return of Christ. He will make a "strong covenant" with the Israelis, guaranteeing their safety and protection. The word translated "strong covenant" had the idea of a treaty or mutual protection pact. The Israelis will then be permitted to reinstitute the sacrifice and offering aspect of the law of Moses. This demands that the Temple be rebuilt, because according to the law of Moses, sacrifices can be offered only in the Temple at Jerusalem. Apparently all this will be done under the protection of the Antichrist at Rome.

b. A Traditional Messianic interpretation the Messiah Himself.

- (1) According to this view, the last part of vs. 26 is a parenthesis, as is the last part of vs. 27, inserted to demonstrate the connection between the cutting off of the Messiah and the judgmental destruction of Jerusalem.

vs. 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing (and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.)

vs. 27 And He will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offerings (and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.)

- (2) A harmony of this interpretation with the summary in vs. 24.

vss. 26, 27

- (a) Messiah is killed, constituting the ultimate and final national sin of the nation of Israel, for which they finally destroyed (by Rome).
- (b) He makes a new (firm) covenant, the New Covenant in His blood.
- (c) His death invalidates future sacrifice and grain offerings and the judgmental destruction of the city and the Temple puts an end to the practice of offering them.

vs. 24:

- (a) "finish the transgression" = Israel, in the murder of Messiah, commits the ultimate national sin (Matt. 23:32).
- (b) "make an end of sin" = The national sin of Israel is "sealed up," i.e., held in the record and reserved for judgment and punishment.
- (c) "make atonement for iniquity" = salvation in His blood as the ultimate atonement (vs. Temple offerings).
- (d) "bring in everlasting righteousness" = Righteousness through faith in Christ.
- (e) "seal up vision and prophecy" = Authenticate and fulfill; abrogate through fulfillment (Heb. 1:1f).
- (f) "anoint the most holy place" = Messiah enters the Heavens to make the one and everlastingly efficient act of redemption.

7 Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15

- a. Traditional Messianic: The fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
- b. Parenthesis/dispensational: Sign of the immediate return of Jesus.

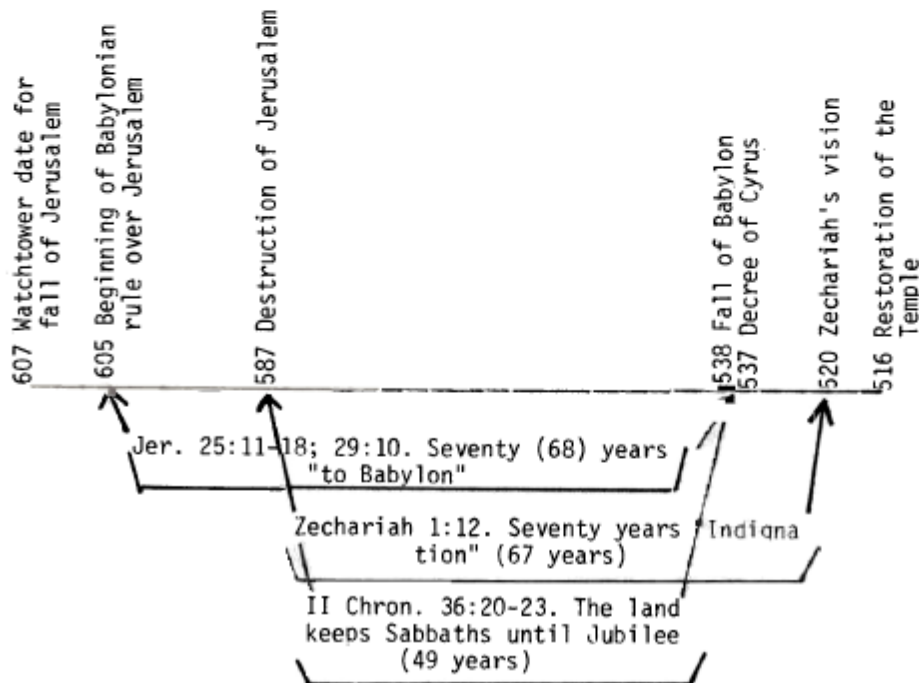
Parenthetica study Daniel Mine and Watchtower Chronology

The foundation of Watchtower (Jehovah's Witnesses) prophetic chronology, leading to the date of 1914 for the invisible coming of Jesus to establish the Kingdom, is Daniel 9. They add 70 years (Jer. 25: 11f) to 538 B.C., and date the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar at 607 B.C.

Seven periods of time (Da. 4:25) = age of Gentile rule over Jerusalem
 7×360 (a "prophetic year") = 2520
 $- 607$ fall of Jerusalem
1913
 $+ 1$ transitional year, B.C. to A.D.
1914

Basic errors in the Watchtower position:

1. Misunderstands the significance of Jeremiah's 70 years "to Babylon." The (approximately) 70 years was the time Jerusalem was given to Babylon. Babylon ruled many years before Jehoiakim's rebellion forced Nebuchadnezzar to attack the city. All reputable Bible scholars date the destruction of Jerusalem at 587/586 B.C.
2. This view cannot account for II Chron. 36:20-23.
3. This view cannot account for Zechariah's 70 years.
 $520 + 70 = 590$ B.C. vs. $607 - 590 = 17$ year discrepancy



Discussion #14: Daniel in the lions' den

Reading: Young, pp. 131-140.

II. Daniel in the Lions' Den (6:1-28)

6:1-3 Daniel's position in the realm of Darius

1. "Satraps" = "Kingdom Protectors"
2. It does not say that there were 120 satrapies. There were probably satraps of various rank.
3. "that the king should suffer no damage" (2)= Darius was making sure that his superior, Cyrus, was not dissatisfied with the administration of that part of his empire.
4. "this Daniel began distinguishing himself" = Daniel writing in the third person.

6:4-9 The jealousy of the other satraps and the plot against Daniel

1. Their inability to uncover corruption (vs. 4)
2. They realized that Daniel's faith was the only point in which he might be open to their attack (vs. 5).
3. The plot calling for exclusive worship of Darius for 30 days (vss. 6-7).
4. The law of the Medes and Persians vss. 8-9).

6:10-15 Daniel is accused and condemned

1. Daniel prayed three times a day toward Jerusalem (vs. 10).
 - a. Indicates the centrality of the Temple.
 - b. The custom of prayers offered 3 times a day goes back to very early times. The Didache called for Christians to pray 3 times a day.
 - c. The custom of looking toward Jerusalem dates back to Solomon (I Kings 8:48,49).
2. His enemies spy on Daniel (vs. 11)
3. Daniel is accused before Darius (vss. 12-13).
4. The reluctance of the king to carry out the sentence (vs. 14) and his inability to get Daniel "off the hook" (vs. 15).

6:16-18 The sentence is imposed on Daniel

1. "Your God. . . will Himself deliver you." (vs. 16)

- a. Did Darius know about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?
- b. Darius may have been expressing hope, i.e., "May your God. .

2. Darius seals the den (vs. 17)

- a. Indicates the official nature of the proceedings.
- b. Darius understands that the other satraps hate Daniel and he takes steps to protect him from unnecessary danger.

3. Darius spends the night in fasting (vs. 18)

- a. This is an indication of how Darius usually spent his evenings
- b. This is an indication of the high regard in which Daniel was held.

6:19-23 Daniel is delivered and the king is highly pleased

- 1. The innocence of Daniel (vs. 22). Daniel was not innocent of the charge of praying to another God, but was innocent of disloyalty to Darius.
- 2. Daniel is removed from the den (vs. 23).

6:24-25 The vengeance of Darius

- 1. The families of Daniel's enemies are destroyed with them (vs. 24) This was Persian custom, probably reflecting the conviction that the tendency to crime was hereditary. Also it intensified the deterring effect of this form of capital punishment.
- 2. The ravenous appetites of the lions underscored the miracle of Daniel's deliverance. (Josephus records the tradition that the enemies of Daniel scoffed at the deliverance, charging that the king had fed the lions before throwing Daniel into the den.

6:25-27 The decree of Darius

6:28 The continuing success of Daniel

Discussion #15: The final vision, part 1

Reading: Young, pp. 223-229

III. The Final Vision; Detailed Predictions

10:1-11:1 Introduction to the vision

1. The occasion of the vision (10:1-4)

- a. The third year of Cyrus (vs. 1) = 536 B.C.
- b. The reason(s) for Daniel's grief (vs. 3)
 - (1) The sins of his people?
 - (2) The plight of his people back in Judah? This were not going well. In response to the decree of Cyrus, few had returned. They were suffering opposition from the Samaritans and the weather was against them.
- c. The character of that which was being prophesied set forth (vs. 1), i.e., "great conflict."
- d. The date of the vision (vs. 4) = the 14th of Nisan, the day of the Passover Feast.
- e. Daniel at the Tigris, away from Babylon
 - (1) The pattern in the book of his being away from the center of action and being called in?
 - (2) Was he there urging Jews to return to the homeland?

10:5-9 The central figure of the vision and his effect on Daniel

1. The magnificent appearance of the "certain man" (vss. 5-6)

- a. His identity
 - (1) Preincarnate manifestation of Christ? See Rev. 1:13-15.
 - (2) Michael or another angel? If this is another appearance of an angel, why are the details of his appearance given?
- b. The symbolism of his appearance
 - (1) white (linen) = purity (as in the priestly garments)
 - (2) gold = high rank or authority

2. The effect on those with Daniel (vs. 7)

- a. Daniel alone saw the man, as with Paul on the road to Damascus.
- b. What, then, caused those with him to run away and hide?
 - (1) A change in the surroundings?
 - (2) An undefined anxiety impressed upon their minds?

3. The effect of the vision on Daniel (vss. 8-9). The impact of the vision added to the weakness created by three weeks of fasting left Daniel unconscious.

10:10-14 The supernatural being introduces the prophecy

1. The man revives Daniel (vs. 10-11)
2. Daniel is encouraged. From the first day (of his three-week fast) his prayers had been heard (cf. 9:23). (vs. 12)
3. The hindering conflict with the prince of the Kingdom of Persia (13)
 - a. Ephesians 6:12. The suggestion that Satan or a demon spirit of high rank was waging war against God, with the mind of Cyrus as the primary battlefield.
 - b. The suggestion of a worldwide hierarchy of demon spirits. A satanic kingdom in opposition to the Kingdom of God.
4. The prophecy introduced (vs. 14)
 - a. The conflicts (vs. 1) involving Daniel's people.
 - b. Portions of the vision extend into the Messianic Age.

10:15-11:1 Daniel is encouraged and prepared to receive the revelation

1. Daniel shrinks away from the man and falters (vss. 15-17).
2. Strength is again imparted to Daniel (vss. 18-19).
3. Conditions and situations in the Hellenistic world forbode evil for the Persian Empire (vs. 20).
4. The man must return to the struggle from which he came (vss. 10:20-11:1).
 - a. Michael (vs. 21) "your prince," i.e., the angel with the responsibility of watching over Israel. (Cf. Jude's account of the struggle over the body of Moses.)
 - b. Only Michael is of sufficient rank and power to carry on the high-level warfare in which the man is engaged (vss. 10:21-11:1) It was through divine help that Michael was able to bring about the fall of Babylon (11:1) and the edict of emancipation for the people of God. (This is an unfortunate chapter division.)
5. The book of truth (vs. 21) indicates biblical predetermination

Discussion #16 The final vision, part 2

Reading: Young, pp. 231-253

11:2-12:3 Specific prophecies concerning the future of God's people

1. A revelation concerning the near future 11:2-20)
 - a. Three kings to arise in Persia vs. 2)
 - 1 This revelation was given in 536 B.C., the third year of Cyrus (10:1). Cyrus ruled from 539-530 B.C. His three immediate successors were:
 - (a) Cambyases, 530-522
 - (b) Gautama, 522 (Also called Smerdis.)
 - (c) Darius Hystaspis, 521-486
 - (2) There were more than four kings after Cyrus. The emphasis in Daniel's revelation seems to be upon the four kings whose policies lead up to a confrontation with Macedonia and Greece.
 - b. The fourth king who is powerful and who creates a confrontation with Macedonia and Greece: Xerxes (Ahazuarus of Esther), 486-465.
 - (1) In 490 Darius I (Hystaspis) invaded Macedonia and Greece. They were turned back at the famous battle of Marathon.
 - (2) In 480 Xerxes invaded Macedonia and Greece. He was delayed by the Trojans at Thermopylae and finally defeated at the battles of Salamis and Plataea.
 - (3) THE OPPRESSION OF THE GREEK COLONIES ON THE MAINLAND OF ASIA MINOR AND THE INVASION OF THE HELLENISTIC HOMELANDS WAS THE PRETEXT OF ALEXANDER'S INVASION OF PERSIA IN THE 4TH CENTURY.
2. The invasion by Alexander and the ultimate partitioning of his empire (vss. 3-4). See 7:6 and 8:8. Sovereignty did not remain in Alexander's bloodline.
3. The kings of the North and the kings of the South (11:5-35)
 - a. The king of the South (vs. 5) will grow strong. Ptolemy Soter, one of Alexander's generals, obtained Egypt and ruled there from 322-305.
 - b. One of his princes grows stronger than he (vs. 5). Seleucus was also one of Alexander's officers. He claimed the satrapy of Babylonia but was forced out of it by Antigonus, one of the competing didachoi. With the help of Ptolemy Soter, he reclaimed Babylonia in 312. The Seleucid dynasty was thus established and came to excel that of the Ptolemies.

- c. The ill-fated alliance between North and South (vs. 6). Ptolemy Philadelphus and Antiochus II, 35 years after the death of Seleucus, were trying to work out an agreement that would keep the peace. Bernice (the daughter of the king of the South), daughter of Ptolemy, was to marry Antiochus II to seal the treaty. Antiochus (also called Theos), was already married to Laodice, and by her had two sons; Seleucus Callinicus and Antiochus. Antiochus was forced to divorce her and marry Bernice. Two years later, when Ptolemy died, Antiochus divorced Bernice and remarried Laodice. Laodice, determined to secure the throne for one of her sons (Seleucus), had Antiochus poisoned and encouraged Seleucus to murder Bernice and her infant son. This secured the throne for Seleucus. (Sources: Appian, Syrian Wars, 65; Jerome, Com. on Dan. 11:6; Justin 27.)
- d. One of her relatives avenges Bernice (vss. 7-8). Ptolemy Eurgetes, brother of Bernice, carried out a military expedition against Seleucus (II, Callinicus) and put the murderers of his sister to death, including Laodice. The taking of the paraphernalia connected with the Syrian gods indicates the completeness of the victory. It was some years before he would attack the enemy to the north again.
- e. The unsuccessful attempt (c. 240) of Seleucus Callinicus to avenge the invasion. He regained control of the Syrian empire and marched on Ptolemy, but was thoroughly defeated.
- f. The sons of the king of the North assert themselves against the Ptolemies (vs. 10). Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great are the sons spoken of here. Seleucus Ceraunus died in battle in Asia Minor, but Antiochus the Great had great military success. He took Phoenicia and Palestine and established himself at Gaza ("his fortress").
- g. Continuing war between North and South (vss. 11-13). Antiochus the Great (king of the North) raised an army of 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry, and 73 elephants in preparation for war against Ptolemy Philopator (IV). At the battle of Raphia, Ptolemy defeated Antiochus. According to Polybius (5. 86), Antiochus lost 10,000 foot soldiers, 300 cavalry, and 5 elephants. He also suffered 4,000 prisoners taken.

He did not benefit from his victory, however ("... he will not prevail"). Ptolemy was more interested in his vices, in self-indulgence, and he failed to press his advantage. Thirteen years later (vs. 13) Antiochus, largely due to military successes in the East, was once again ready to bring a powerful force against the Ptolemies. Philopator was dead and his only child was only four years old.

h. The final defeat and humiliation of Antiochus the Great (vss 14-19).

- 1 Jews in league with Antiochus the Great (vs. 14). Ptolemy Philopator had regained Palestine. Many Jews, thinking that they were fulfilling prophecy, worked from within to overthrow Ptolemaic rule.
- (2) The siege and capture of Sidon (vs. 15). Sources: Polybius 16; Josephus, Ant. 12. Scopas, chief lieutenant of Ptolemy, was defeated by Antiochus at Sidon.
- (3) Antiochus (vs. 16) and his prideful domination of Palestine
- (4) The attempt of Antiochus to gain the South by political means (vs. 17). Antiochus worked out a treaty with Ptolemy that called for the marriage of his daughter Cleopatra to the young king. Since the king of Egypt was only 7 years old when the treaty was arranged, the wedding could not take place for 5 years. Antiochus was not able to accomplish his ends, however, by this arrangement. Cleopatra constantly took the side of her young husband against her father.
- 5) Antiochus campaigns against the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean Sea (vs. 18), but is defeated. Antiochus had a very haughty attitude toward the Romans. When Hannibal, the Carthaginian, was defeated by the Romans at Zama (202 B.C.), bringing an end to the Second Punic War, he fled east to the court of Antiochus the Great. Hannibal persuaded Antiochus to invade Greece. Rome, who considered Greece their territory, thereupon declared war on Antiochus. Roman forces moved into Greece, defeated Antiochus, and forced him to retreat to Asia Minor. There at Magnesia, between Sardis and Smyrna, the Romans, led by Cornelius Scipio, defeated Antiochus again (190). Antiochus was forced to pay a huge indemnity as well as surrender his navy and elephants. To insure the payment of the indemnity, the Romans took hostage the younger son of Antiochus, Antiochus IV (later known as Antiochus Epiphanes). The younger Seleucid spent 12 years in Rome and there learned to appreciate and respect the Roman system and Roman military power.
- (6) Antiochus, in the last days of his reign, can no longer proudly think of expansion. The best he can do is maintain his own territory (vs. 19), and his end is ignominious.
- i The immediate successor of Antiochus the Great and his unhappy reign (vs. 20). Antiochus the Great was killed in the year 187 by fierce tribesmen in Elamais where he had gone to seize the treasury of silver and gold (he needed money to pay the Roman indemnity). Antiochus IV was in Rome. He, along with Seleucus IV (Philopator), was joint-king legally. From this time the Seleucid kingdom ceased to be a great empire, as it had been before the war with Rome.

The oppressor or exactor of tribute (vs. 20) was Heliodorus, the prime minister. He became thoroughly hated when he tried to appropriate a part of the temple treasury in Jerusalem. The mysterious death to which vs. 20 alludes is historically verified (Polybius). Seleucus died mysteriously. Poisoning is suspected, possibly at the hand of Heliodorus.

j. The revelation concerning Antiochus Epiphanes (vss. 21-35)

(1) The rise of Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) vss. 21-24)

Antiochus was not born to the throne (21)

He was a "despicable person." Young: "He was both avaricious and prodigal, excessive in his indulgences and prone to violent passions, a compound of the veriest folly and weakness in some respects, and of great cunning and dexterity in some others, especially in regard to flattery." His enemies gave him the nickname "Epimanes" (madman).

He assumed the throne by intrigue, not by warfare or acclamation.

The "overflowing forces flooded away before him" has reference to the route of the forces of Egypt between Pelusium and the Casian mountain (22)

"Prince of the covenant" (22). This was some prince with whom Antiochus had entered into a covenant relationship:

- (a) Ptolemy Philometer?
- (b) The High Priest Onias III whom Antiochus deposed?
- (c) A notable betrayal about which we have no record?
- (d) A high official in the Syrian government?

"Gain power with a small force of people" (23):

- (a) A reference to the comparative small size of Syria?
- (b) A reference to the small number of partisans that helped Antiochus gain control of the Syrian government?

Antiochus lulled the people into a false sense of security and then he, in various ways, seized personal and national wealth to finance his extravagant way of living (vs. 24).

Antiochus makes plans to invade Egypt (vs. 24)

(2) The first Egyptian campaign (vss. 25-28)

Antiochus moved on Egypt, and the king of Egypt could not successfully defend his country because many who claimed to support him did not (vs. 25-26). Those who "ate at his table" betrayed him. His army was swept away and suffered heavy casualties. The Egyptian forces were routed at Pelusium and then Egypt was invaded in two factions (Sources: I Macc. 1:16-19; Diodorus 31.1; the year was 170).

Verse 27 prophesies the attempts of Antiochus and Ptolemy Philometer to deceive one another in the attempt to take over Egypt. They could not succeed because it was not the God-appointed time for it to take place.

Antiochus (vs. 28) returned from Egypt with much spoil and proceeded to loote the temple. I Macc. 1:20-24:

On his return from the conquest of Egypt, in the year 143, Antiochus marched with a strong force against Israel and Jerusalem. In his arrogance he entered the temple and carried off the golden altar, the lamp-stand with all its equipment, the table for the Bread of the Presence, the sacred cups and bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, and the crowns. He stripped off all the gold plating from the temple front. He seized the silver, gold and precious vessels, and whatever secret treasures he found, and took them all with him when he left for his own country. He had caused much bloodshed, and he gloated over all he had done.

Discussion #17: The final vision, part 2

No reading assignment.

The next Egyptian campaign (vs. 29). This was the unsuccessful campaign against Egypt in 168 B.C.

The oppression of Israel (vss. 30-35)

Antiochus' frustration at the Romans (vs. 30) is directed toward the Jews. He finds Jews who will make common cause with him. I Macc. 1:11-15:

At that time there appeared in Israel a group of renegade Jews who incited the people. "Let us enter into a covenant with the Gentiles round about," they said, "because disaster upon disaster has overtaken us since we segregated ourselves from them." The people thought this a good argument, and some of them in their enthusiasm went to the king and received authority to introduce non-Jewish laws and customs. They built a sports-stadium in the gentile style in Jerusalem. They removed their marks of circumcision and repudiated the holy covenant. They intermarried with Gentiles, and abandoned themselves to evil ways.

The abomination of desolation (vs. 31). See pp. 28f.

Antiochus persuades some, but others resist him (vs. 32). I Macc. 1:62:

Yet many in Israel found strength to resist, taking a determined stand against eating any unclean food. They welcomed death rather than defile themselves and profane the holy covenant, and so they died.

Leaders emerge in Israel to teach and preserve the true faith (vs. 33). I Macc. 2:42: "It was then that they were joined by a company of Hasidæans, stalwarts of Israel, every one of them a volunteer in the cause of the law; and all who were refugees from the troubles came to swell their numbers, and so add to their strength.

They receive a measure of help (vss. 33-34). This is apparently a prophecy concerning Judas Maccabeus. Judas was able to relieve some of the pressure, but was never able to completely rescue his people, deliver them from their troubles, and turn away completely the rising tide of paganism.

Judah will suffer a continuing time of testing, preparing many for the events leading to the Messianic Age (vs. 35).

4. Judah is troubled by the eastern surge of the Roman Empire
(11:36-12:3)

a. The question of a transition and major interpretations

- (1) Does the language of vs. 35 indicate a transition in time
This terminology is used in 11:27 where no transition appears.
- (2) The events prophesied do not fit Antiochus Epiphanes.
- (3) Major interpretations or views
 - (a) Antiochus
 - (b) An eschatological figure, possibly prefigured by Antiochus Epiphanes. (Young)
 - An Antichrist fighting a literal battle against Palestine?
 - An " " " " spiritual battle against the Church in the "last days?"
 - (c) Herod the Great

b. The view favored in this study: Herod the Great (Mauro).
Basic reasons:

- (1) There is no parenthesis or transition evident or implicit in the text.
- (2) The details fit Herod rather than Antiochus. Their fulfillment in the activities of an eschatological antichrist is a matter of speculation.

c. The interpretation

A king will emerge who will repeat or continue the indignation visited upon Israel by Antiochus (vs. 36).

He rejects the traditional religion of his fathers and is conspicuous in his cruelty (vs. 37). Disregard of women:

- (a) Ruthless, devoid of the more tender emotions.
- (b) Celibate
- (c) An allusion to the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem?

His only god is war (vs. 38), and he builds great fortresses (Cf. the tower of Antonia and Masada.)

Herod allied himself with the Romans and, with their support, grew ambitious in his plans (vs. 39). He uses money to bribe and repays those who support him.

At the "end time," i.e., the last period of Jewish national history, the king of the South (Cleopatra) will push with (rather than collide with) Herod, aided by Mark Antony, against Syria. This was a Roman province and this action was the beginning of the Actian War.

Source Plutarch's Life of Mark Antony.

Plutarch:

Antony, being informed of these things (that is, of certain disputes between Augustus and others in the Senate at Rome) immediately sent Canidus to the seacoast with sixteen legions. In the meantime he went to Ephesus attended by Cleopatra. There he assembled his fleet, which consisted of 800 ships of burden, whereof Cleopatra furnished 200 besides 20,000 talents, and provisions for the army.

The Senate declared war on Antony alone (not on Cleopatra).

Plutarch:

When Caesar was informed of the celerity and magnificence of Antony's preparations, he was afraid of being forced into war that summer. This would have been most inconvenient for him, for he was in want of almost everything. . . The auxiliary kings who fought under his (Antony) banner were Bocchus of Africa (etc., a list is given). . . Those who did not attend in person, but sent supplies were Polemo of Pontus, Malchus of Arabia, Herod of Judea, and Amyntas of Lycaonia and Galatia.

In 31 B.C. Augustus defeated the combined navies of Antony and Cleopatra at Actium. Antony retreated to Egypt and Augustus (the king of the North) set about to destroy him there.

Augustus stormed against Egypt and entered Judah in the process, threatening Herod (vss. 40-41). Augustus overran many lands, among them regions of Africa, Upper Cilicia, Paphlagonia, Thrace, Pontus, Galatia, and other provinces from Illyria to Armenia. He chose to invade Egypt through Palestine. Herod, wisely, chose to make his peace with Augustus early. He was allowed to change sides and he rendered Augustus much assistance.

Josephus, Wars 1. 20. 3:

Caesar went for Egypt through Syria when Herod received him with royal and rich entertainments; and then did he first of all ride along with Caesar, as he was reviewing his army about Ptolemais, and feasted him with all his friends, and then distributed among the rest of his army what was necessary to feast then withal.

Edom and Moab escape the vengeance of Augustus vs. 41).

- (a) These names would have no geographical significance in any period after "Bible times."
- (b) According to Josephus, Pliny, Strabo, and Dio Cassius, Augustus sent an expedition against Edom and Moab. Their failure was so complete that he made no further serious attempts to overrun these countries.

The king of the North lays hold on the treasures of northern Africa (vss. 42-43). At this period, in contrast to later times, Egypt was the repository of unbelievable wealth, and Augustus needed it to refinance the bankrupt Empire. Libya and Ethiopia were "open to the steps" (rather than "follow at his heels"), although he does not invade them. He left Africa and returned to Rome.

Tidings from the East and North trouble him (vs. 44). There has probably been a parenthesis from vs. 40 through vs. 43, discussing the king of the North. Now the text returns to the main subject, Herod the Great. Herod is disturbed by rumors of a competing king (Matt. 2:1-3) and he sets out to destroy and annihilate many in order to protect himself (vs. 44). This is a probable reference to the slaughter of the innocents at Bethlehem. Tidings from the north also troubled Herod. Antipater, his oldest son, then at Rome, conspired to have letters written to his father giving information that two other of his sons, whom Herod had decided to make his successors, had given Caesar a bad report on their father. Herod broke out in fury against his sons (Ant. 17. 4. 7; Wars 1. 30-33). Herod did not confine his demented wrath to the infants of Bethlehem or to his family. He burned alive Matthias and 40 young men with him who had pulled down the golden image of the Roman eagle from the gate of the Temple.

His royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain (vs. 45). Between which seas? This verse is difficult. Herod had two palaces in Jerusalem, one in the temple area and the other in the upper city. They were between the Mediterranean and Dead Seas.

The horrible death of Herod (vs. 45). See Ant. 17. 6. 5 for the terrible death of Herod and his tragic isolation as he came to his end. He rotted away, suffered convulsions, and decreed that the leaders of the Jewish nation should be executed upon news of his death in order that there by mourning at the time of his funeral.

Discussion #18 The final vision, part 4

Reading, Young, pp. 255-264

(Judah troubled by the eastern surge of the Roman Empire, 11:36-12:3 continued.)

In this period (vs. 12:1) there will be a consummating national struggle involving Judah, calling for the intervening activity of Michael.

Time of distress = the fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70 (Matt. 24:21).

Those written in the book rescued = the Church and its escape for the tribulation of that event.

Vss. 12:2-3: The ethical resurrection produced by the preaching of the Gospel:

- a. Compare Ezekiel's Dry Bones (Also Isa. 26:19; Job 19:25-27.)
- b. Compare the Gospel awakening spoken of by Jesus (Jo. 5:25).
- c. Eph. 5:14

Question: Is the concept of eternal life in the Old Testament?

See Gen 5:22-24; II Ki. 2:11f; I Sam. 2:6; 28:7-20; II Sam. 12:23; Job 14:14; Ecc. 12:7; Psalm 23; 30:3; 16:9-11; 17:15; 49:15; 73:24; Isa. 25:8; 26:19; Malachi 5; Ezekiel 37:1-10.

Question Is the language in the Old Testament concerning life after death vague or does it reflect the general assumption of life after death?

The Dispensational school of eschatology moves this to the future and interprets it as the "Great Tribulation" that takes place immediately after the "Rapture of the Church." (Some hold that the church is raptured during, some after the Great Tribulation.) On the basis of Jer. 30:7, this is sometimes called "Jacob's Trouble."

5. The conclusion of Daniel's prophecy 12:4-13)

12:4 The book is to be sealed because the time of fulfillment is beyond Daniel's time.

- a. See Rev. 22:10 for a contrasting admonition.
- b. Question: Does this admonition cover just this vision or the whole Book of Daniel?
- c. The going to and fro and the spreading of knowledge: Is this vain worldly knowledge or the Gospel?

12:5-13 Daniel hears one angel ask the other about how long until the "end of these wonders."

- a. The question and the answer (vss. 5-7). Not, "How long until the end, but "how long will this terrible tribulation last?"

- b. Times, time, and half a time = a short indefinite period roughly $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. See Rev. 12:6;13-14; 13:5; 11:2. 42 months = $3\frac{1}{2}$ years = 1260 days. A short, indefinite period of time, ending in A.D. 70.
- c. Daniel asks for an explanation (vs. 8)
- d. He is told that it does not concern him directly (vs. 9).
- e. The events foretold will be a purging and cleansing for Daniel's people (vs. 10).
- f. The time of difficulty = 1290 days = 3 years, 6½ months. According to Josephus (Wars 6. 2. 1), in Nov. A.D. 66, the daily sacrifice ceased to be performed at the Temple during the siege. From Nov. A.D. 66 to July A.D. 70 when the city and Temple were finally destroyed, was about 3 years and 8 months (the 1335 days of vs. 12). Within this time was 1290 days (vs. 11) of intense suffering.
 - 1290 days = severe suffering
 - 1335 days = the complete time of persecùtion
- g. The one who endures this vs. 12) will not have long to wait for a happy event.
 - (1) Matt. 24:13
 - (2) The preaching of the Gospel of the Messiah will bring redemption and glory to the true Israel of God.
- h. Daniel is promised future glory (vs. 13). Although he is to die before what he has seen will take place, Daniel will not be left out of Messianic glory.

Addendum A. The arrangement of books in the modern Hebrew Bible and a reconstruction of the tripartite arrangement in Josephus.

	LAW	PROPHETS	WRITINGS
Modern Hebrew Bible:	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	A. Former Prophets Joshua Judges Samuel Kings B. Latter Prophets Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel The Twelve	A. Poetry Psalms Proverbs Job B. Megilloth Song of S. Ruth Lamentations Esther Ecclesiastes C. Historical DANIEL Ezra-Nehemiah Chronicles
The arrangement in Josephus:	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua Judges Samuel Kings Chronicles Ezra-Nehemiah Esther Job Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel DANIEL The Twelve	Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of S.

Addendum B. Chronology of the Book of Daniel

I. The reign of Nebuchadnezzar

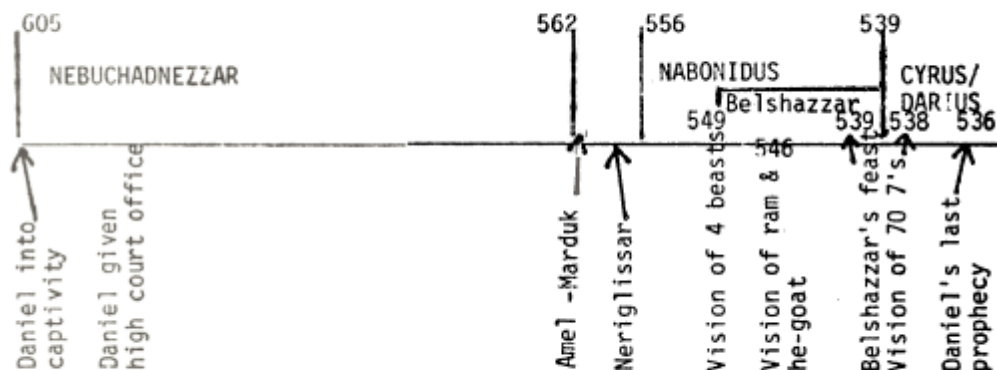
- A. Chapter 1, Daniel raised to power
- B. Chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image
- C. Chapter 3, The three Hebrew young men in the furnace
- D. Chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree

II. The reign of Belshazzar

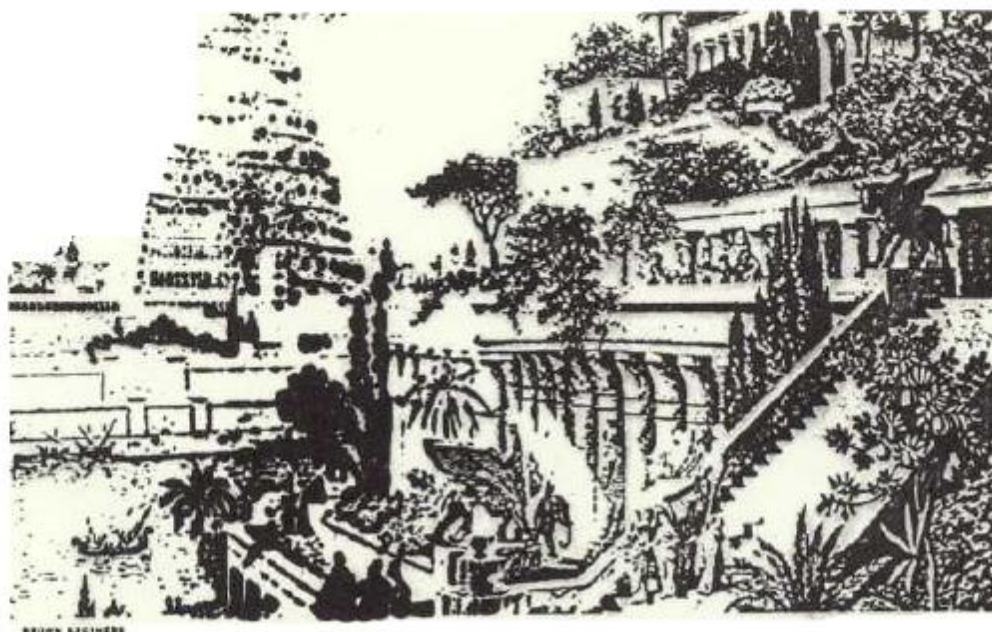
- A. Chapter 7, the first year of his reign (@ 556 B.C.): The four beasts and the little horn
- B. Chapter 8, the third year of his reign (@ 554 B.C.): The vision of the ram, he-goat, and the little horn
- C. Chapter 5, the last year of his reign (539 B.C.): Belshazzar's banquet with the handwriting on the wall and the fall of Babylon

III. The reign of Darius and Cyrus

- A. Chapter 9, the first year of Darius (538 B.C.): The vision of the seventy sevens
 - B. Chapter 6, early in the reign of Darius (@537 B.C.): Daniel in the lions' den
- Chapters 10-12, in the third year of Cyrus (536 B.C.): detailed predictions concerning the near and distant future



Addendum C. The City of Babylon



THE GLORY OF BABYLON

The greatest of ancient cities was Babylon, with its great wall, hanging gardens, and lofty temples.

C. Geikie, *Hours With the Bible: Ezekiel to Malachi* (New York: John Alden Press, 1887), pp. 153-157:

The city in which Daniel thus found himself, was the greatest in the ancient world. Herodotus, who visited it about B.C. 450, within a century after the departure of the Hebrews, while its walls and buildings were still perfect, describes it as forming a square of nearly fourteen miles on each side.¹ Others give a different measurement, but the smallest leaves a space of over ten miles square within the walls, which is four times more than that covered by Intramural Paris, and fully twice as great as the size of London within the bills of mortality.

The greatness of Babylon was largely due to its position. Built

on a broad and level shelf of tertiary rock, which spread out from under the rich soil of the wide plains, the last trace of the northern hill system, it enjoyed a healthy and secure site, even amidst the periodical inundations around. Defended on the south by the broad waters of the united Euphrates and Tigris, which ere long widened into those of the Persian Gulf, then reaching much farther north than at present, the wide stretches of the desert protected it on all other sides. High prosperity, also, was secured by its position, for it stood on the great line of trade between the Mediterranean and the East, at the point where the Euphrates contracts, from a broad expanse, to the full current of a deep and magnificent stream, bearing down to the shores of the great city the wealth of the north, as the waters on the south bore from the ocean that of India, and Africa. There was no stone for its mansions and houses, but the deep clay of the plains was easily made into sun-dried bricks, and the bitumen of the north, brought down the river, supplied cement.

The walls of this gigantic hive of men were in keeping with the vast limits they enclosed. Rising out of great moats on every side, they towered, in the opinion of Herodotus and others, three hundred feet into the air,² while their breadth was such that chariots with four horses could pass each other on the wide top,³ which was said to have been fully eighty feet across. Such a wondrous girdle of defence from the tribes of the desert or more civilized enemies, must have involved an almost inconceivable amount of labor. Constructed of burnt bricks, alternating with layers of reeds to bind them together, and cemented with bitumen, the walls contained, without including 250 towers which rose above them, not less than 5,560,000,000 square feet, and were built up of at least three times that number of the largest bricks used by the Babylonians.⁴ A hundred gates with their great posts, leaves, and sills, of brass, and their bars of iron, permitted entrance to the city.⁵ There were also inner walls on each side of the river, with huge gates at the end of each of the broad and wide streets which ran towards the stream, alongside which handsome quays stretched out for trade and embellishment. [See Plate 10, Fig. 18.] A ferry-boat plied across the river from each gate; and a drawbridge, raised at night, offered further accommodation to the citizens. Inside this space the ordinary houses of the inhabitants rose, in many cases, three or four stories high; but they sank into insignificance when compared with the great palace-quarter of the kings, which itself was a city seven miles round. Three or four vast buildings stood within its enclosure,⁶ the wall of which Herodotus tells us was "very little inferior in strength" to that of the city itself.⁷ The size of the

royal dwellings may be judged from the fact that the mound from which one of them towered up covers thirty-seven acres,²² while another, still known as the Kasr, or "Palace," is 800 yards long by 600 yards broad.²³ Near the centre of this gigantic platform, which, though seventy feet high, was only the artificial terrace on which the vast fabric stood, a fragment of the palace itself still rises. Walls, piers, and buttresses of brick masonry, wonderfully preserved, and in some parts adorned with pilasters, still help to bring before us perhaps the very building in which Daniel spent his best years; but the ruins are too fragmentary to yield any clue to the plan of the structure as a whole. It doubtless, however, contained a labyrinth of courts, great halls, galleries and smaller chambers, gorgeous with colors, or lined with sculptures or paintings, of scenes of war and of the chase.²⁴ Even the outside walls, indeed, were resplendent with the brightest colors, countless fragments of their bricks still remaining covered with a thick enamel, over brilliant blue, red, yellow, and black.²⁵

The palace gardens were one of the wonders of the world. Nebuchadnezzar had married a Median princess, and thinking that she sighed for her native mountains when looking out on the dull level of the Babylonian plains, resolved to beguile her of her longing for home, and at the same time show how much he loved her, by commanding that wooded hills should be created in the "paradise" of her palace. Arch upon arch of masonry forthwith rose like a pyramid to the height of 400 feet, over a square of equal size each way, as the frame-work of a vast accumulation of artificial mounds and hills of earth, on which waved forest trees of huge diameter, transplanted in their full glory, and thickets of flowering shrubs, interspersed with cool chambers, royally furnished, at successive heights. To make the charm complete, flowing streams gilded along each terrace and sparkled down every slope, amongst the groves and woods; the water for them being raised to the summits by hydraulic machinery.²⁶

But most amazing of all the wonders of Babylon was the great temple of Bel, described already in the first volume of these "Hours."²⁷ No religious structure, of ancient or modern times, has ever rivalled the grandeur of this primal sanctuary, which rose like a mountain from the level of the country round. In its treasures the spoils of the temple of Jerusalem, and much besides, had been laid up by Nebuchadnezzar, as an offering of gratitude to his chief god, for victory over his enemies. He little thought that he was unconsciously preserving the sacred vessels of Israel in a safe and inviolable stronghold, till the day when Jehovah would bring about their restoration to His people.

In his mighty city Nebuchadnezzar boasted to have virtually created. It was the "great Babylon which he had built."²⁸ Nor was he without good grounds for the haughty vaunt. Proofs of its substantial truth still abound. The great new palace, he tells us,²⁹ was entirely built by him, and so also, ancient writers inform us, were the famous "hanging gardens;"³⁰ and the bricks of the Kasr are all stamped with his name. He relates that he carefully repaired the old palace, and enlarged and thoroughly renewed the vast ancient reservoir of the city. Inscribed bricks confirm his own statement that he, in effect, rebuilt the great temple of Bel,³¹ and he names eight other temples which he either built or restored. But his greatest work was the reconstruction of the gigantic walls of the city, which were in ruins when he ascended the throne. "Ingur-Bel and Nimti-Bel, the great double wali of Babylon," says he, "I built. I completed buttresses, to embank its moat, and I made two long embankments of brick and cement along the sides of the river, joining them with the one made by my father. I strengthened the city, and built the wall on the west side of the river with brick."³² "I raised the walls of the fortress of Babylon, its defence in war and skilfully strengthened the circuit of the city."³³

Nor was Nebuchadnezzar's amazing energy, as the restorer of Babylon, confined to the city. He excavated two broad and deep canals, one of them uniting the Tigris with the Euphrates, and threw a great bridge over the latter, to connect the two halves of the city. At Sippara he dug a huge reservoir, said to have been a hundred and forty miles in circumference and a hundred and eighty feet deep, providing floodgates by which its waters might be drawn off at will for irrigation. A great canal, of which traces are still visible, was dug by him from Ilit, on the Euphrates, to the Persian Gulf, a distance of 400 miles, and quays and breakwaters rose at its mouth, at his command, to receive the commerce of distant lands. A city was founded by him on the coast, to repel the Arabs. At Borsippa, besides building five other temples, he restored the temple of Nebo—identified by some with the Tower of Babel—and now the mightiest ruin in Mesopotamia. Bricks bearing his name are found over the whole country; at least a hundred sites in the district immediately round Babylon thus showing that they owed their chief glory to him. Indeed, nine-tenths of the bricks brought from Mesopotamia bear his name. The creator of the later empire of Babylon, he was also the author of its architectural splendor. He must be regarded as the greatest builder of ancient or modern times.³⁴

In the magnificence of Babylon and its palaces Daniel and his companions passed their days—amidst lofty pyramid temples reflect-

ing every color from their ascending stages; houses, far and near, painted in bright tints at the pleasure of their owners, surrounded by groves of gigantic palms and many other trees; [See Plate 8, Fig. 13.] the soft green of open parks, and the verdure of gardens. Outside the walls, countless silvery canals, shaded with trees, threaded the landscape amidst broad plains waving with corn, or teeming with the richness of varied crops.³⁵

The pomp and splendor of such a city and such a monarchy must have amazed the Hebrew exiles. We know from the prophets the wealth of its commerce, which implies the luxury and magnificence of its merchant princes. Its "chariots like whirlwinds," its "horses swifter than eagles," its horsemen and charioteers, its infantry with spear and helmet and shining armor, made its army the finest in the world. At Nebuchadnezzar's receptions Daniel must often have gazed with wonder on the state and glory of the crowd of satraps, captains, pachas, chief judges, treasurers, counsellors, and rulers of provinces,³⁶ in gorgeous uniforms and magnificent robes—worthy of the greatness of the State they served.

THE SONG OF THE THREE

AN ADDITION IN THE GREEK
VERSION OF DANIEL
BETWEEN 3.23 AND 3.24

THEY WALKED in the heart of the fire, praising God and blessing the Lord. Azariah stood still among the flames and began to pray aloud: 'Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, thy name is worthy of praise and glorious for ever: thou art just in all thy deeds and true in all thy works; straight are thy paths, and all thy judgements just. Just sentence hast thou passed in all that thou hast brought upon us and upon Jerusalem the holy city of our fathers: yes, just sentence thou hast passed upon our sins. For indeed we sinned and broke thy law in rebellion against thee, in all we did we sinned; we did not heed thy commandments, we did not keep them, we did not do what thou hadst commanded us for our good. In all the punishments thou hast sent upon us thy judgements have been just. Thou hast handed us over to our bitterest enemies, rebels against thy law, and to a wicked king, the vilest in the world. And so now we are speechless for shame: contempt has fallen on thy servants and thy worshippers. For thy honour's sake do not abandon us for ever; do not annul thy covenant. Do not withdraw thy mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham, thy beloved, for the sake of Isaac, thy servant, and Israel, thy holy one. Thou didst promise to multiply their descendants as the stars in the sky and the sand on the sea-shore. But now, Lord, we have been made the smallest of all nations; for our sins we are today the most abject in the world. We have no ruler, no prophet, no leader now; there is no burnt-offering, no sacrifice, no oblation, no incense, no place to make an offering before thee and find mercy. But because we come with contrite heart and humbled spirit, accept us. As though we came with burnt-offerings of rams and bullocks and with thousands of fat lambs, so let our sacrifice be made before thee this day. Accept our pledge of loyalty to thee,* for no shame shall come to those who put their trust in thee. Now we will follow thee with our whole heart and fear thee. We seek thy presence; do not put us to shame, but deal with us in thy forbearance and in the greatness of thy mercy. Grant us again thy marvellous deliverance, and win glory for thy name, O Lord. Let all who do thy servants harm be humbled; may they be put to shame and stripped of all their power, and may their strength be crushed; let them know that thou alone art the Lord God, and glorious over all the world.'

23 The servants of the king who threw them in kept on feeding the
 24 furnace with naphtha, pitch, tow, and faggots, and the flames poured
 25 out above it to a height of seventy-five feet.^b They spread out and
 26 burnt those Chaldeans who were caught near the furnace. But the
 angel of the Lord came down into the furnace to join Azariah and his
 27 companions; he scattered the flames out of the furnace and made the
 heart of it as if a moist wind were whistling through. The fire did not
 touch them at all and neither hurt nor distressed them.

The praises of creation

28 **T**HEN THE THREE with one voice praised and glorified and
 blessed God in the furnace:

- 29 'Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers;
 worthy of praise, highly exalted for ever.
- 30 Blessed is thy holy and glorious name;
 highly to be praised, highly exalted for ever.
- 31 Blessed art thou in thy holy and glorious temple;
 most worthy to be hymned and glorified for ever.
- 32 Blessed art thou who dost behold the depths from thy seat upon
 the cherubim;
 worthy of praise, highly exalted for ever.
- 33 Blessed art thou on thy royal throne;
 most worthy to be hymned, highly exalted for ever.
- 34 Blessed art thou in the dome of heaven;
 worthy to be hymned and glorified for ever.

ETC.

SUSANNA

THERE ONCE LIVED in Babylon a man named Joakim. ¹
 He married Susanna daughter of Hilkiah, a very beautiful ²
 and devout woman. Her parents, religious people, had ³
 brought up their daughter according to the law of Moses. Joakim ⁴
 was very rich and his house had a fine garden adjoining it, which was
 a regular meeting-place for the Jews, because he was the man of
 greatest distinction among them.

Now two elders of the community were appointed that year as ⁵
 judges. It was of them that the Lord had said, 'Wickedness came
 forth from Babylon from elders who were judges and were supposed
 to govern my people.' These men were constantly at Joakim's house, ⁶
 and everyone who had a case to be tried came to them there.

When the people went away at noon, Susanna used to go and walk ⁷
 in her husband's garden. Every day the two elders saw her entering ⁸
 the garden and taking her walk, and they were obsessed with lust for
 her. They no longer prayed to God, but let their thoughts stray from ⁹
 him and forgot the claims of morality. They were both infatuated ¹⁰
 with her; but they did not tell each other what pangs they suffered,
 because they were ashamed to confess that they wanted to seduce ¹¹
 her. Day after day they watched eagerly to see her. ¹²

One day they said, 'Let us go home; it is time for lunch.' So they 13, 14
went off in different directions, but soon retraced their steps and
found themselves face to face. When they questioned one another,
each confessed his passion. Then they agreed on a time when they
might find her alone.

And while they were watching for an opportune day, she went into 15
the garden as usual with only her two maids; it was very hot, and she
wished to bathe there. No one else was in the garden except the two 16
elders, who had hidden and were spying on her. She said to her 17
maids, 'Bring me soap and olive oil, and shut the garden doors so

18 that I can bathe.' They did as she told them: they closed the garden
doors and went out by the side door to fetch the things they had been
ordered to bring; they did not see the elders because they were
19 hiding. As soon as the maids had gone, the two elders started up and
20 ran to Susanna. 'Look!' they said, 'the garden doors are shut, and no
one can see us. We are burning with desire for you, so consent and
21 yield to us. If you refuse, we shall give evidence against you that
there was a young man with you and that was why you sent your
22 maids away.' Susanna groaned and said: 'I see no way out. If I do
this thing, the penalty is death; if I do not, you will have me at your
23 mercy. My choice is made: I will not do it.' It is better to be at
your mercy than to sin against the Lord.'

24 With that Susanna gave a loud shout, but the two elders shouted
25, 26 her down. One of them ran and opened the garden door. The
household, hearing the uproar in the garden, rushed in through the
27 side door to see what had happened to her. And when the elders had
told their story, the servants were deeply shocked, for no such allega-
tion had ever been made against Susanna.

28 Next day, when the people gathered at her husband Joakim's house,
the two elders came, full of their criminal design to put Susanna to
29 death. In the presence of the people they said, 'Send for Susanna
30 daughter of Hilkiah, Joakim's wife.' So they sent for her, and she
31 came with her parents and children and all her relatives. Now
32 Susanna was a woman of great beauty and delicate feeling. She was
closely veiled, but those scoundrels ordered her to be unveiled so
33 that they might feast their eyes on her beauty. Her family and all
34 who saw her were in tears. Then the two elders stood up before the
35 people and put their hands on her head. She looked up to heaven
36 through her tears, for she trusted in the Lord. The elders said: 'As
we were walking alone in the garden, this woman came in with two
37 maids. She shut the garden doors and dismissed her maids. Then a
38 young man, who had been in hiding, came and lay down with her. We
were in a corner of the garden, and when we saw this wickedness we
39 ran up to them. Though we saw them in the act, we could not hold the
man; he was too strong for us, and he opened the door and forced his
40 way out. We seized the woman and asked who the young man was,
but she would not tell us. That is our evidence.'

41 As they were elders of the people and judges, the assembly believed
42 them and condemned her to death. Then Susanna cried out loudly:

'Eternal God, who dost know all secrets and foresee all things, thou knowest that their evidence against me was false. And now I am to die, guiltless though I am of all the wicked things these men have said against me.'

The Lord heard her cry. Just as she was being led off to execution, God inspired a devout young man named Daniel to protest, and he shouted out, 'I will not have this woman's blood on my head.' All the people turned and asked him, 'What do you mean by that?' He came forward and said: 'Are you such fools, you Israelites, as to condemn a woman of Israel, without making careful inquiry and finding out the truth? Re-open the trial; the evidence these men have brought against her is false.'

So the people all hurried back, and the rest of the elders said to him, 'Come, take your place among us and state your case, for God has given you the standing of an elder.' Daniel said to them, 'Separate these men and keep them at a distance from each other, and I will examine them.' When they had been separated Daniel summoned one of them. 'You hardened sinner,' he said, 'the sins of your past have now come home to you. You gave unjust decisions, condemning the innocent, and acquitting the guilty, although the Lord has said, "You shall not put to death an innocent and guiltless man." Now then, if you saw this woman, tell us, under what tree did you see them together?' He answered, 'Under a clove-tree.'⁶¹ Then Daniel retorted, 'Very good: this lie has cost you your life, for already God's angel has received your sentence from God, and he will cleave^b you in two.' And he told him to stand aside, and ordered them to bring in the other.

He said to him: 'Spawn of Canaan, no son of Judah, beauty has been your undoing, and lust has corrupted your heart! Now we know how you have been treating the women of Israel, frightening them into consorting with you; but here is a woman of Judah who would not submit to your villainy. Now then, tell me, under what tree did you surprise them together?' 'Under a yew-tree',^c he replied. Daniel said to him, 'Very good: this lie has cost you your life, for the angel of God is waiting with his sword to hew^d you down and destroy you both.'

Then the whole assembly gave a great shout and praised God, the

- ⁶¹ saviour of those who trust in him. They turned on the two elders, for out of their own mouths Daniel had convicted them of giving false
⁶² evidence; they dealt with them according to the law of Moses, and put them to death, as they in their wickedness had tried to do to their
⁶³ neighbour. And so an innocent life was saved that day. Then Hilkiah and his wife gave praise for their daughter Susanna, because she was found innocent of a shameful deed, and so did her husband
⁶⁴ Joakim and all her relatives. And from that day forward Daniel was a great man among his people.

BEL AND THE SNAKE

1 **W**HEN KING ASTYAGES was gathered to his
 2 fathers he was succeeded on the throne by Cyrus the
 3 Persian. Daniel was a confidant of the king, the most
 4 honoured of all the King's Friends.

5 Now the Babylonians had an idol called Bel, for which they pro-
 6 vided every day twelve bushels of fine flour, forty sheep, and fifty
 7 gallons of wine. The king held it to be divine and went daily to
 8 worship it, but Daniel worshipped his God. So the king said to him,
 9 'Why do you not worship Bel?' He replied, 'Because I do not
 10 believe in man-made idols, but in the living God who created heaven
 11 and earth and is sovereign over all mankind.' The king said, 'Do you
 12 think that Bel is not a living god? Do you not see how much he eats
 13 and drinks each day?' Daniel laughed and said, 'Do not be deceived,
 14 your majesty; this Bel of yours is only clay inside and bronze outside,
 15 and has never eaten anything.'

16 Then the king was angry, and summoned the priests of Bel and
 17 said to them, 'If you cannot tell me who it is that eats up all these
 18 provisions, you shall die; but if you can show that it is Bel that eats
 19 them, then Daniel shall die for blasphemy against Bel.' Daniel said
 20 to the king, 'Let it be as you command.' (There were seventy priests
 21 of Bel, not counting their wives and children.) Then the king went
 22 with Daniel into the temple of Bel. The priests said, 'We are now
 23 going outside; set out the food yourself, your majesty, and mix the
 24 wine; then shut the door and seal it with your signet. When you
 25 come back in the morning, if you do not find that Bel has eaten it all,
 26 let us be put to death; but if Daniel's charges against us turn out to
 27 be false, then he shall die.' They treated the whole affair with con-
 28 tempt, because they had made a hidden entrance under the table,
 29 and they regularly went in by it and ate everything up.

30 So when the priests had gone, the king set out the food for Bel;
 31 and Daniel ordered his servants to bring ashes and sift them over the
 32 whole temple in the presence of the king alone. Then they left the
 33 temple, closed the door, sealed it with the king's signet, and went
 34 away. During the night the priests, with their wives and children,
 35 came as usual and ate and drank everything. Early in the morning
 36 the king came, and Daniel with him. The king said, 'Are the seals
 37 intact, Daniel?' He answered, 'They are intact, your majesty.' As
 38 soon as he opened the door, the king looked at the table and cried
 39 aloud, 'Great art thou, O Bel! In thee there is no deceit at all.' But
 40 Daniel laughed and held back the king from going in. 'Just look at
 41 the floor,' he said, 'and judge whose footprints these are.' The king
 42 said, 'I see the footprints of men, women, and children.' In a rage he
 43 put the priests under arrest, with their wives and children. Then they
 44 showed him the secret doors through which they used to go in and
 45 consume what was on the table. So the king put them to death, and
 46 handed Bel over to Daniel, who destroyed the idol and its temple.

NOW THERE WAS a huge snake, which the Babylonians held to
 be divine. The king said to Daniel, 'You cannot say that this is
 not a living god; so worship him.' Daniel answered, 'I will worship
 the Lord my God, for he is the living God. But give me authority,
 your majesty, and without sword or staff I will kill the snake.'
 'I give it you', said the king. So Daniel took pitch and fat and hair,
 boiled them together, and made them into cakes, which he put into
 the mouth of the snake. When the snake ate them, it burst. Then
 Daniel said, 'See what things you worship!' When the Babylonians
 heard of this they gathered in an angry crowd to oppose the king.
 'The king has turned Jew!' they cried. 'He has pulled down Bel,
 killed the snake, and put the priests to the sword.' So they went to
 the king and said, 'Hand Daniel over to us, or else we will kill you
 and your family.' The king, finding himself hard pressed, was com-
 pelled to give Daniel up to them. They threw him into the lion-pit,
 and he was there for six days. There were seven lions in the pit, and
 every day two men and two sheep were fed to them; but now they
 were given nothing, to make sure that they would devour Daniel.
 Now the prophet Habakkuk was in Judaea; he had made a stew
 and crumbled bread into the bowl, and he was on the way to his field,
 carrying it to the reapers, when an angel of the Lord said, 'Habakkuk,
 carry the meal you have with you to Babylon, for Daniel, who is in
 the lion-pit.' Habakkuk said, 'My lord, I have never been to Baby-
 lon. I do not know where the lion-pit is.' Then the angel took the
 prophet by the crown of his head, and carrying him by his hair, he
 swept him to Babylon with the blast of his breath and put him down
 above the pit. Habakkuk called out, 'Daniel, Daniel, take the meal
 that God has sent you!' Daniel said, 'O God, thou dost indeed
 remember me; thou dost never forsake those who love thee.' Then
 he got up and ate; and God's angel returned Habakkuk at once to his
 home. On the seventh day the king went to mourn for Daniel, but
 when he arrived at the pit and looked in, there sat Daniel! Then the
 king cried aloud, 'Great art thou, O Lord, the God of Daniel, and
 there is no God but thou alone.' So the king drew Daniel up; and the
 men who had planned to destroy him he flung into the pit, and then
 and there they were eaten up before his eyes.