

DANIEL

The faithful ultimately triumph!

Ralph Porter

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**A LOOK AT THE BOOK
DANIEL
THEY SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD!**

Ralph Porter

AUTHOR

Daniel's ministry was long—essentially the entire length of the Babylonian Empire + the beginning of the Persian Empire

Assume he was 20 years old when taken captive to Babylon

605–3rd year of Jehoiakim

536–3rd year of Cyrus

+ 69 years of service

= 89 years old (at least)—These weren't the days of Abraham and Moses,
when people lived over a 100 years!

Contemporary of Jeremiah and Ezekiel

Jeremiah—in the land

Ezekiel—in Babylonia (among the people)

Daniel—in the court (in Babylonia and then in Persia)

Daniel was NOT a clergyman.

Daniel was NOT a prophet.

He was a POLITICIAN! 1:3-5

A politician willing to obey God "at the office".

High risk

BACKGROUND

Time of sorrow and captivity

Daniel loved God, His law, and His people.

Daniel wanted to see the salvation and restoration of God's people.

He does reveal this—but it's going to be a long-term project.

He is called on to reveal a program which will place Israel under subjection to gentile
(pagan) nations for a long time (2500 years so far!)

PURPOSE AND MESSAGE

Daniel had four main purposes for writing:

1. To reveal God's program for His people.
2. To encourage His people in the midst of affliction.
3. To demonstrate God's control of history—even over the pagan nations of the world.
4. To motivate Israel to trust God and to be faithful to Him.
 - Keeps their eyes on the right place in difficult times.
 - We will never lack distractions
 - Satan wants to get our eyes off the Author of history and onto the problems of history.

SUMMARY

God's plan for Israel will take them through **four major periods of domination by pagan nations**.

That time is short beside the eternal kingdom of the saints.

God is in control, even in times of affliction.

THE FAITHFUL WILL ULTIMATELY TRIUMPH!

HISTORICAL

1-6

Historical evidence of God's control in history and the triumph of the faithful.

PROPHETICAL

7-12

Prophetical evidence of God's control in history and the triumph of the faithful.

HISTORY 1-6

Because of the sorrow, affliction and uncertainty of the future, Daniel begins with some historical reminders.

6 examples demonstrate that God is able to control even the pagan governments of this world.

- He uses them according to *His* plan.
- He uses them to reward the faithful.

Each example has certain characteristics:

1. *Conflict*—for the faithful.
 - Greatness, power and pride of a human leader confronted.
 - Creates a conflict for God's servant.
 - He must make a choice, or do something.
2. *Faithfulness* of God's servant.
 - Faced with the conflict, he makes the right choice.

3. *Triumph*

- God's control over pagan governments demonstrated.
- The faithful ultimately triumphs.

4. *God is glorified.*

5. *Faithful is exalted.*

- Does not promise "human success" always (Compare Heb. 11:32-39).
Some do die by the sword and the flame, but not this time!
- God is always in control (even over pagan governments).
- Faithful always triumph in the end.
Revelation demonstrates that "the end" is sometimes after death (compare the martyrs of Heb. 11 and of Rev.)

Daniel is *not* affirming that there will always be success by human standards.

Daniel *is* affirming that God is in control and is able to use even cruel pagan governments as His instruments.

Dan. 1–Daniel's personal history–Daniel's special diet.

Dan. 2–Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Dan. 3–The Fiery Furnace

Dan. 4–Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation and restoration

Dan. 5–Belshazzar's Feast and downfall

Dan. 6–Daniel in the Lion's den.

DANIEL'S PERSONAL HISTORY 1

The book begins with Daniel's own story.

Captivity of Jerusalem 1:1-2

He describes the attack on Jerusalem.

Daniel immediately asserts that God gave Jerusalem and its possessions into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

God was not defeated at Jerusalem.

The attack was part of His plan.

Preparation of the young men 1:3-7

Nebuchadnezzar wanted to take some of the best and brightest of the young men from Jerusalem to Babylon for training.

They would be trained in all areas of Babylonian culture.

Only four representatives from Judah are specifically named.

These include Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

The latter three are better known by their Babylonian names: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. These names were given to them after the gods of Babylon.

Daniel also was renamed Belteshazzar.

These young men were to be trained for three years and then to receive official appointments in the government.

Abstinence of Daniel and his friends 1:8-16

Because Daniel recognized that the foods they were being served were contrary to those laws which God had demanded of Israel, he requested that a diet be served to them in accordance with the Mosaic law. 8-10

The man who was in charge was afraid to allow his request lest they not satisfy the king's demands and he be killed.

Daniel proposed a test for ten days to prove whether they would be acceptable to the king. 10-14

At the end of the test, their appearance was better than that of those who ate from the king's table. 15-16

Exaltation of Daniel and his friends 1:17-21

God rewarded them for obedience to His commands and gave them knowledge and wisdom above that of any of their fellow trainees.

When they stood before the king, he found them ten times wiser than any of his astrologers and magicians.

Daniel thus demonstrates that even in the adverse conditions of captivity, God blesses those who are obedient to His commands.

***God blesses the obedient,
even under adverse circumstances!***

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM 2

What's the problem Daniel faces in this chapter?

The prophet then tells of a dream which Nebuchadnezzar has.

The king's demand 2:1-16

While its content and interpretation are significant in that it reveals God's program for Gentiles, the emphasis of the story is on the king's demand and Daniel's ability to meet that demand because of God's intervention.

The emphasis is on the miracle itself–NOT on the content of the vision.

No king had ever asked such a thing 2:4, 7, 9, 10-11

No king had ever asked under penalty of death that his wise men tell him what the dream was, as well as interpret it.

No one can do what the king demands.

"*Only the gods*" can do it–and they aren't talking!

The king was prepared to kill all the magicians and astrologers if they could not tell it to him.

The decree is firmly fixed–there's no getting out of it.

Maybe he wants to get rid of them, at least some of them.

These were his father's loyal supporters.

He may not be sure he can trust their loyalty.

This is in the year 604 B.C.–Daniel is still "in school".

How does he solve the problem?

Dream revealed to Daniel 2:17-23

Daniel and his friends take their petition to the Lord 17-18

God reveals it to him 19

Daniel praises God for what He has done 20-23

Dream revealed to the king 2:24-45

The approach to the king 2:24-30

- His wisdom is different than that of others
- His wisdom is from God. 27-28
- The dream has to do with a great image that represents the history of the Gentile nations from that time up to the establishing of the millennium. 2:29-30

The dream described 2:31-35

The dream interpreted 2:36-45

- Began with Nebuchadnezzar, representative of Babylon 37-38

- After him would come a weaker empire => Media-Persia 39a
- After that another empire would come that would rule the whole earth => Greece 39b
- The last empire will be stronger, like iron => Rome 40
- Nevertheless, it will be divided. It will remain strong, but not as strong 41-42
- In the end, there will be alliances of other powers, but not union 43
- Finally, the entire image and its power will be wounded by another, eternal kingdom that will be established—the kingdom of Messiah 44-45

What is the final result of the interpretation of the dream?

Daniel and his God honored 2:46-49

God is glorified 2:46-47

God's faithful servant is promoted 2:48-49

Daniel is given an exalted position of honor

- God honors Daniel because of his faith.
- Nebuchadnezzar worshiped before Daniel and honored him
 - NOT because of the content of the dream.
 - Rather, because he had done that which was impossible.
- God must be with Daniel for him to do that.

What is the main message of this chapter?

***God will answer prayer and do the impossible,
even when Israel is under Gentile dominion.***

Points to ponder:

What Daniel 2 Teaches Us about Our God:

- 1) God controls the future.
- 2) God controls the times in which we live.
- 3) God answers prayer.
- 4) God does the impossible
- 5) God reveals mysteries

How should we face impossible tasks?

- 1) Don't panic.
- 2) Trust God.
- 3) Take the concern to him in prayer.
- 4) Do whatever he tells you to do.
- 5) Give God all the credit.

FAITH UNDER FIRE 3

The third historical illustration is the record of the fiery furnace.

The king's decree 1-7

Nebuchadnezzar erects a huge golden image which all are required to worship at designated times.

Report of disobedience 8-12

It is discovered that Shadrach, Meshech and Abed-nego are not worshipping the image.

Their disobedience is reported back to the king.

Three accusations:

- 1) They don't pay attention to you.
- 2) They don't serve your gods.
- 3) They don't worship your image.

Their trial 13-18

The king is enraged that those whom he has elevated to important offices refuse to worship his image.

He gives them a second opportunity but they refuse.

The king's question: *"What God will be able to rescue you?"* 15

Their question: Whether God will rescue them—*they don't know!* 17-18

Their decision: *"We won't serve your gods, nor worship your image!"* 18

These young men would not yield, whether anyone else did or not!

Their punishment 19-23

Nebuchadnezzar becomes so angry that he has them thrown into the fiery furnace which has been made so hot that it kills the strong men who throw them into it.

Their deliverance 24-27

When God delivers them, they are so preserved that they don't even smell like smoke.

A fourth Person, like a "son of the gods" is seen in the fire with them.

Their exaltation 28-30

The result of this deliverance is worship by Nebuchadnezzar for the God who is able to accomplish such a miraculous deliverance, and a promotion for the men who are faithful to Him.

God is glorified 28-29

Faithful are promoted 30

What is the specific lesson we learn from this chapter?

God protects His people in the midst of persecution.

What lessons do WE need to learn from their experience in the furnace?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S HUMILIATION 4

Another assuring historical message is delivered by the testimony of Nebuchadnezzar concerning God's work in his life.

God sets up earthly rulers and removes those who refuse to acknowledge Him.

He will deal with the proud who think they can get along without Him.

King's address 4:1-3

Nebuchadnezzar addresses the nations to tell them what God has done.

Vision of the Cut Tree 4:4-18

Daniel was called in to interpret the dream for him. 4-9

A great tree gave protection to the multitudes, but was later cut down. 10-18

Interpretation 4:19-27

Daniel was hesitant to interpret the dream because of its message, but he finally told the king that he was about to be humbled and to have his kingdom taken away from him for a time.

Its eventual restoration was promised, once he acknowledged that God was the ruler of human governments and that God could give the kingdom to whomever He chose.

Fulfillment 4:28-33

The fulfillment of the vision and Nebuchadnezzar's restoration to office is described.

Pride 28-30

Judgment 31-32a

Purpose 32b

Fact 33

King's restoration 4:34-36

Result of the judgment 34-35

His restoration 36

God's exaltation 4:37

The story concludes with Nebuchadnezzar's testimony of praise to God.

God appoints rulers and removes those who fail to acknowledge Him.

What lessons should we apply to our lives from this testimony?

Two major lessons:

(1) God's sovereignty

What difference should this make in my life?

(2) Danger of pride

What difference should this make in my life?

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST AND DOWNFALL 5

The fifth historical report shows what happens to a king who rebels against what he knows to be God's will, and who desecrates things which God has declared to be sacred.

The king's revelry 5:1-4

The king's party is described.

What would God do about this confrontation?

Could the king insult the God of the universe and still come out unharmed?

Revelation to the king 5:5-12

The king's party is cut short because of the handwriting on the wall 5:5

None of his wisemen can interpret the revelation 5:6-9

Daniel is called in because of his ability to interpret dreams 5:10-12

Request of the king 5:13-16

Cause of the revelation 5:17-24

Daniel rejects the offer because it's useless 17

Belshazzar should have learned from Nebuchadnezzar's example to humble himself and acknowledge God's sovereignty 18-21

Belshazzar has fallen in the same trap 22

He has deliberately challenged Yahweh 23-24

Interpretation of the revelation 5:25-28

Daniel reveals the downfall of the Babylonian empire and of Belshazzar, its king.

"Mene" => "numbered"

"Tekel" => "weighed"

"Upharsin" => "divided"

Daniel's "reward" 5:29 (6:3)

Because Daniel is faithful to His God and God has revealed the future to him, he is rewarded.

Fulfillment of revelation 5:30-31

The king and his empire are destroyed.

God is in control, even when it doesn't look that way!

He will destroy those who rebel against Him and desecrate His sacred things.

God will triumph in the end and those who are faithful will triumph with Him!

What's this world coming to? What can we expect in the future?

Some principles to learn and meditate on:

- * It still doesn't pay to rebel against God, nor to look down on what He has set apart for Himself!
- * You still can't play games with God and walk away unharmed!
- * God still controls history, even in pagan lands!

DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN 6

The final encouragement comes from the story of Daniel in the lions' den.

6th example of God's control over history, even in the midst of pagan lands.

What problem does Daniel face in this chapter?

Daniel's prominence 6:1-3

Daniel has been promoted to an important position in the empire.

The leaders' plot 6:4-9

Many are jealous of him.

They want to destroy him but, because of his righteous conduct, they can find no fault with him to accuse him before the king.

What did they do first?

What was their conclusion?

What areas of our lives would have to change for our observers to conclude that?

How did they resolve to get Daniel?

Finally they devise a scheme.

They will get Darius to fall into their trap.

They will get him to decree that none can ask anything of any god or man for thirty days, except him.

Daniel's prayer 6:10-11

What decision did Daniel make when he found out about the decree?

What was the result of his decision?

When Daniel continues to pray, they accuse him, and Darius is trapped.

Daniel must be thrown into the lion's den.

How would such a decree change your life?

Daniel's prosecution 6:12-19

Daniel's preservation 6:20-24

God is faithful to deliver Daniel, and Darius rejoices.

The jealous accusers and their families are cast into the lions' den.

The king's pronouncement 6:25-28

What is the ultimate result of Daniel's faithfulness?

What does the king recognize about Yahweh?

Daniel and his God receive honor.

Daniel's exaltation 6:28

GOD PROTECTS HIS SERVANTS WHEN WE ARE FAITHFUL TO HIM

What lessons should WE learn from this incident?

PROPHETIC REVELATION 7-12

After describing the six historical examples which demonstrate God's control over political events, even under pagan governments, Daniel moves on to present the program for the future.

Chapters 7-12 are prophetic in nature.

They describe future events among the Gentile nations and their results for Israel.

They describe the affliction Israel will suffer under Gentile dominion.

7-8 Emphasize God's plan as it relates to the Gentile nations

9-12 Emphasize God's plan as it relates to Israel.

Both subjects are seen in both parts.

But, the focus changes--the center of attention is different.

Each section begins with a general overview--a summary of the future.

Following the overview, each presents specific details relating to God's program for the group considered.

PROPHECY CONCERNING GENTILE NATIONS 7-8

Chapters 7-8--God's prophetic program for the Gentile nations.

OVERVIEW: VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS 7

A summary of the future program for Gentiles.

Summary of the period from the Babylonian Empire until the establishment of the millennial kingdom.

Chronologically this passage backs up.
The vision was given before chapter 5.
During 1st year of Belshazzar
553 B.C.-14 years before the Persian victory over Babylon.

Vision revealed 7:1-14

Four beasts 1-8

1st year of Belshazzar = 3rd year of Nabonidus = 556+3 = 553 B.C. 1

Daniel saw "*the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea.*" 2

"Four winds" indicates movement from all four directions.

The winds were "stirring up" ("*churning up*" (NIV)) the great sea.

Great sea = 1) Gentile nations, or
2) Mediterranean-central to the four empires.

The beasts came up out of the sea 3
that is, either from the pagan nations,
or, from that geographical area.

1st Beast = Lion with eagles' wings = Babylonia FIERCE 4

Lion = Power-strength among the other beasts.

Eagles' wings = speed and efficiency

His wings were clipped

He was made like a man.

Is this a good change or a bad one? Why?

Here we're tempted by our humanistic (man-centered) view.

The significance of this change depends on whether you see it from man's view,
or from the lion's view.

If you were caught alone in the jungle, which would you rather be? Lion or man?

He lost the characteristics of the lion and the eagle.

He received the characteristics of a man.

Therefore, he was weaker than before.

The lion with wings was actually a symbol of the Babylonian empire which has
been found among the ruins.

Also it's recorded that the wise men of Nebuchadnezzar's court referred to him:
sometimes, as lion
other times, as eagle.

So the description in this case was not a new one.

The transformation to a man is a new sign.
Daniel sees three other beasts besides.

2nd Beast = Bear, raised on one side = Medo-Persia STRENGTH 5

This empire always had a stronger side:

First, MEDIA-Persia

Later, Media-PERSIA (after Cyrus overthrew Astyages)

It devoured much meat => has three ribs between its teeth:

Part of what has been devoured becomes part of the empire.

Three nations united to oppose Cyrus:

In 546, Cyrus attacked LYDIA—took control of Asia Minor.

In 539, Cyrus conquered BABYLONIA.

In 525, Cambyses II conquered EGYPT.

3rd Beast = Leopard = Greece SWIFT, SPEED 6

Four bird wings on its back

Could refer to 4 generals supporting Alexander's movements.

Could refer to double speed and effectiveness of normal flying beast.

Wings = what carries the beast forward.

Four heads => Four descendants (generals) who took control of the empire soon after Alexander's premature death.

331-23—Initial attack by Alexander

323-01—Internal competition for control

301-(198)—Ptolemy— Egypt and Palestine

(198-143)—Seleucus—Syria and Mesopotamia

Lysimachus—Thrace and Bithynia (NW of Asia Minor).

Cassander—Macedonia and Greece

4th Beast = Incomparable, TERRIFYING beast = Rome 7-8

Strong—It crushed and trampled the others

It had 10 horns = 10 kings

A little horn came out from among the 10, pulling up 3 of the others as it came
(Compare report on the Antichrist in Rev. 17)

Human eyes = intelligence (perhaps exceptional, but human)

Mouth--speaks boastfully.

Ancient of Days 7:9-12

Daniel also foresees the judgment by the Ancient of Days, which resulted in the destruction of the last horn.

God sits down to judge 9-10

The beast is killed 11

It's *the beast* that's killed.

Both the horn, its final manifestation, *and* the system, which he represents.

The other beasts lose their authority, but continue to exist. 12

The *empires* are removed but not *the nation* itself.

Nations were "stripped of their authority," *not* destroyed. (NIV)

Son of Man 7:13-14

The kingdom of the Son of Man is established.

His kingdom and His authority are international and eternal.

Vision interpreted 7:15-18

Daniel asks for the interpretation of the vision.

The four human kingdoms will come and they will fall, but God's people possess an eternal kingdom.

SUMMARY: There will be a period of control by pagan kings, but, God is in control.

In the end there will be an eternal kingdom which will conquer.

The faithful will ultimately triumph.

Problem of the fourth beast 7:19-22

The interpretation of the vision satisfies Daniel, but one thing continues to bother him:

The fourth beast is much worse than the others.

What does it represent?

He is especially concerned about the little horn.

The horn wages war against the saints and overpowers them (NIV--*he's defeating them!*) 21-22

Even though this is only temporary--it bothers Daniel.

Explanation to Daniel 7:23-28

Although this empire afflicts God's people for a while, this condition is temporary.

Afterwards the saints will receive an eternal kingdom.

10 horns => 3 horns => 1 horn = kings
(as representatives of their kingdoms). 24

Authority of the little horn only lasts "time, times and $\frac{1}{2}$ a time." 25

Time = some period of time. *What does it represent?*

1. Hebrew has a third category for number: single, plural, & dual (for pairs).
Only some words use this number (e.g., pants, socks, etc.)
Here that form is not used.
2. Sometimes the plural is used to express the dual idea (with other words).
3. In Aramaic version of Old Testament, some manuscripts use the dual form here.
2:4-7:28 was originally written in Aramaic, even in Hebrew version of the Old Testament.
The Aramaic version uses the same consonants, but different vowels (vowels were added later).
One of the main Hebrew MSS uses the dual form.
4. Logically the context demands it here (time + ? + $\frac{1}{2}$ time).
It has to be a specific designation of some time period.
5. 12:11 speaks of approximately the same time period and describes it as 1290 days (1260 = 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years). (12:6 & 12:11)
6. The parallel passage in Rev. 12:14 & 12:6 also supports this idea.
7. The time described equals the $\frac{1}{2}$ week of Dan. 9:26-27.

After this period of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years (which equals the last $\frac{1}{2}$ of the tribulation) the Antichrist will be judged and the eternal kingdom established. 7:26-27

The vision views a period of affliction for Israel.

BUT God controls everything.

The saints will ultimately triumph.

How does Daniel respond to this vision? 7:28 WHY?

What clues might that give us about the proper response for us?

***While men's kingdoms are replaced by others,
God's people possess an eternal kingdom.***

DETAILED VIEW: VISION OF THE RAM AND THE GOAT 8

The details of the period are then expanded in another vision which was received in the concluding years of the Babylonian empire.

The details Daniel deals with in the vision of chapter 8 don't deal with Rome, but with the next immediate conflict of empires, that is, the conflict between Persia and Greece.

Introduction 8:1-2

The vision 8:3-14

This vision pictures a ram with uneven horns (Medo-Persia) being defeated by a goat with one horn (Greece).

The Ram 8:3-4 Persia

*The great pagan king does whatever he pleases!
No one can oppose him!*

The Victorious Goat 8:5-8 Greece

The goat defeated the ram and became great.

While the goat was strong, it was broken into four horns.

The vision thus far depicts Greece's overthrow of the Medo-Persian empire under Alexander the Great, and its subsequent division into four powers after his death.

The Little Horn 8:9-14 Antiochus IV Epiphanes

The next event is the appearance of a little horn from out of the four divisions.

The description of the vision seems to apply to Antiochus Epiphanes, a Seleucid

He conquers Jerusalem, stops the sacrifices, and desecrates the temple.

His destruction was accomplished in slightly over three years.

*The great pagan king does whatever he pleases!
No one can oppose him!*

The interpretation 8:15-27

Revelation introduced 8:15-19

Identification of the ram 8:20

Identification of the goat 8:21-22

Identification of the little horn 8:23-27

Antiochus is a type of the one represented by the little horn of Daniel 7, who will reign in the last days.

Because of the typology involved, the interpretation moves from Antiochus to this ruler, whom he prefigures, without reference to the intervening fourth kingdom.

In the end the reference must be eschatological because there are things that Antiochus could not have done, such as, stand up to the Prince of princes, since there was no king in Israel at the time.

When the true little horn comes, he will oppose Christ, and be cut off at the second advent.

How does Daniel respond to this vision (8:27)?

**God controls the details of history and the raging of the heathen
in order to accomplish His purposes.**

How does this message apply to our lives today?

PROPHECY CONCERNING ISRAEL 9-12

God directs Daniel's attention to His program for Israel in the future.

How does God's program for Israel relate to this frightening program for the pagan Gentile nations?

Will they survive? How?

Chapters 9-12 answer these questions.

GOD'S PROGRAM FOR ISRAEL IN THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Gentiles are still involved but the focus changes.

Daniel 9 = Overview

Daniel 10-12 = Specific details

OVERVIEW: VISION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS 9

The occasion of the vision 9:1-3

Historical context 9:1

As far as Daniel himself is concerned, the vision answers the questions he had at the fall of Babylon.

As far as the book is concerned, it answers the questions raised in chapter 8.

Fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy 9:2-3

Daniel read Jeremiah's prophecy which promised that the captivity would last seventy years (Jer. 25:11-12).

He began to calculate the years and realized that the end was near.

In fact, the fall of Babylon was a sign of the end (Jer. 25:12)

Therefore, Daniel began to pray for the nation (9:4-19)

How do you suppose he would pray? (based on Deut. 28-30?)

Daniel's confession and prayer 9:4-19

He prays concerning the covenants and the confession of sin of the people.

He prays on the basis of Deuteronomy 28-30.

He recognizes that they have come under the judgment God had promised (28:1-14, 15-68).

They have not yet repented, in accordance with 30:1-3 (9:13).

Therefore, they continue under judgment and haven't been forgiven.

Daniel asks that on the basis of God's grace, God would forgive them and fulfill the covenants He had made with Israel.

Apparently he tries to do for the people that which God's people should have done for themselves, according to Deuteronomy 30.

He was hoping to introduce God's blessings for Israel.

Summary

1st part of chapter: 1-19

Recognizes the cause of their suffering (Deut. 28-30)

- They haven't obeyed
- They must repent and turn back to God

2nd part of chapter: 20-27

God's plan to restore them and to establish the Kingdom

God's answer to Daniel 9:20-27

The revelation introduced 9:20-23

In response to Daniel's prayer, the Lord sent Gabriel with the message that his prayer had been heard and he was to receive special understanding of God's plan for Israel.

Revelation and promise given to Daniel by Gabriel.

God's plan to accomplish Daniel's petition revealed 9:24-27

Daniel is informed that His desire won't come yet—*but it will come!*

So God gives Daniel a revelation of His plan for His people.

THE VISION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS 9:24-27

Announcement of the seventy weeks 9:24

The fulfillment of God's promise to restore Israel would be accomplished during a period of seventy "weeks"-*seventy "sets of seven" (years)*.

At the conclusion of this period six things will have been accomplished:

(Either all at the end, or 3 at 1st coming and 3 at 2nd coming
-Daniel saw them as one united result of God's program)

Three purposes related to God's redemption of His people:

These purposes were accomplished (or at least provision was made to accomplish them) at Christ's 1st coming.

They are related to God's provision for the removal of sin

1. To finish the transgression-stop the violation of the law.
 - > assures the conclusion of their rebellion.
2. To put an end to sin.
 - > general reference to sin itself
 - > provision for its removal
3. To make atonement for wickedness
 - > payment of sin's penalty

Three purposes related to the Kingdom of Christ

These purposes will be accomplished at Christ's second coming:

1. To bring in everlasting righteousness
2. To "seal up" vision and prophecy.

"Seal up" can have two senses:

- to close it up-to limit access to it-as in Daniel 12

- to ratify, confirm, assure it, as in Daniel 9

Note how it's used in Ezekiel 28:12 "*Thou sealest up the sum*" ("*You were the model of perfection,*" NIV)-the epitome of something.

This purpose assures the climax of all that the prophets have promised for God's people.

3. To anoint the most holy

Could refer to the most holy *place* = "Holy of Holies" => Reestablish the temple.

Could refer to the Most Holy *One* = Christ (Messiah)

This vision reveals God's program for Israel from the time of Daniel until the establishment of the millennial kingdom when the Christ comes– a reference to the second coming of Christ .

Summary of the program 9:25-27

9:25

From the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah arrived there would be a period of 7 + 62 "weeks" (= sets of seven [years])

The subdivision is not explained.

Basically it carries through to about the end of the century and the end of the construction period (around 400 B.C.)

No significant event is related to the exact date.

Another period of degeneration and divine silence follows.

9:26

At the end of the 69 weeks,

- Messiah will be cut off.
- Jerusalem will be destroyed.

Don't miss the prophetic evidence from the Old Testament for Messiah's rejection and divine judgement!

How else can the city be destroyed after His coming?!!!

9:27

During the last week a covenant will be made.

"He" refers to the prince who will come—a descendant of the people who would destroy the city.

He makes the covenant for one "week".

He breaks the covenant at mid-week.

He will then stop the sacrifices and cause abomination, until the completion of the seventy week period.

One who causes desolation will come with abominations ("*detestable things*").

- He will be motivated by them
- Or, he will bring them into "*a wing of*" the temple.

The end will come and the desolator will be judged.

Interpretive problems in this chapter

[For a complete discussion of these issues, consult Harold Hoehner's
Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ]

When does the period begin?

Daniel seems to indicate that the period is about to begin.

Therefore, the logical decree would appear to be that of Cyrus.

1. Decree of Cyrus Oct. 29, 539 B.C.

- Return to the land
- Rebuilding of the temple

But, this decree has problems:

- City was not rebuilt then. It was neither mentioned in it nor was it accomplished as a result.
- Mathematically it doesn't work out. Nothing happens 483 years later.

2. Decree of Artaxerxes to Ezra 457 B.C.

- Second return to the land
- Refers to restoration of worship and to spiritual/moral reformation
- No reference to the reconstruction of the city
- Nothing happens 483 years later.

3. Decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah Mar. 5, 444 B.C.

- Refers to reconstruction of the walls
- Notice the reference to the city in 9:25
Rebuild Jerusalem
Build the plaza (streets) and trench (moat) around it (walls?)
"In times of distress" fits times of Nehemiah
- Date comes out exactly right.

How do these time periods work out historically?

Mar. 5, 444 B.C. + 69 weeks (= years of 360 days) = Mar. 30, A.D. 33
(10 of Nisan, A.D. 33)

$69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$ days

(Compare Daniel's reference to $3 \frac{1}{2}$ years = 1260 days)

Mar. 5, 444 B.C. + 173,880 days = Mar. 30, A.D. 33

Confirmation:

444 B.C. - A.D. 33 = 476 years

$$476 \times 365.24219879 = 173,855 \text{ days}$$

$$+ \text{ days between Mar 5-30} = \frac{25 \text{ days}}{173,880 \text{ days}}$$

On the basis of this calculation,
 10th of Nisan, A.D. 33 = Triumphant Entry
 14th of Nisan, A.D. 33 = Passover = Day of Crucifixion

10th of Nisan = Monday = Palm Monday = Ruins tradition; fits Scripture.
 Starting the week on Monday eliminates the problem of the "missing day" in the chronological accounts of Holy Week.

How do we explain the parenthesis between weeks 69-70?

Doesn't this parenthesis ruin the seventy week schedule?

Some contend that we invented the parenthesis in the middle of the seventy weeks to fit our interpretation of the passage.

But, notice that Dan. 9 itself requires the break. 9:26

After the 62 weeks ($7 + 62 = 69$)

- Messiah is cut off = A.D. 33
- The city and the temple are destroyed = A.D. 70
- Devastations follow-until the end there will be war (= A.D. 70, 135, or the end of the tribulation).

9:27 "*And*" = "*Then*" for another week the prince makes a covenant.

Therefore, Daniel 9 itself *requires* the parenthesis here.

DETAILED VIEW: PROPHETIC HISTORY OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS 10-12

Specific Details concerning God's Program for Israel

The preparation of the prophet 10:1-19

The things Daniel had seen caused him great concern-He was worried!

His fast 10:1-3

Because of what he had seen.

- Another revelation not recorded.
- Caused same reaction as 9:24-27
 Dual reaction: Good news/bad news.

Fasted for three weeks because of his concern.

Vision of the Messenger 10:4-8

A heavenly messenger arrived.

Delay of the messenger 10:9-15

Explains that he left the first day of the three weeks in answer to Daniel's prayer 10:12

He had to struggle against Satan's forces.

Therefore, he was delayed 3 weeks 10:13

Satan's purpose was to prevent the messenger's arrival.

Finally Michael, who ministers in the affairs of Israel, came to help him so that he was able to get through.

The messenger was sent to reveal the things which would occur in the last days. 10:14

Strengthening of Daniel 10:16-19

He receives a special revelation.

His Spirit is strengthened and revived.

Afterwards, the messenger returns to the struggle.

- Against the Prince of Persia
- Afterwards, against the Prince of Greece 10:20

What does this episode teach us about events in the times of the Gentiles?

What does it teach us concerning our own life and ministry?

The sixty-nine weeks 10:20-11:35

Details concerning the events which transpire during the sixty-nine weeks are revealed.

Preservation of Israel 10:20-11:1

God protects Israel before their enemies.

The angel reveals how God has been involved, and used His angelic representatives, to preserve Israel from their enemies.

This divine preservation of God's people will continue throughout the difficult period to follow.

The messenger helps Darius accomplish God's purposes.

Detailed History 11:2-35

History of the second and third empires = Medo-Persia & Greece

Persia 11:2

At the time the vision was received, Persia dominated the region.

Since Daniel is more interested in the events to come during the time of the Greek empire, he briefly describes the remainder of the Persian period and moves on.

Persia was still led by Cyrus (539-530) at the time this prophecy was made.

Following Cyrus, Persia was ruled by Cambyses (530-22), Cyrus's son, Pseudo-Smerdis (522), Darius I (522-486), Xerxes (486-465), Artaxerxes (465-423), and four lesser kings during the final days of decline (423-331).

The prophecy only refers to four additional kings that would yet reign.

This leaves out Artaxerxes, and the last four minor kings of Persia.

The account ends with Xerxes, because he stirs up the final confrontation with Greece. This ultimately leads to Persia's ruin.

This is the first step of the irreversible process, which continues until Alexander conquers Persia in 331 B.C.

They never recover from their loss.

Greece 11:3-35

After a brief explanation of how the downfall of Persia begins to take place, Daniel presents the Greek empire and its descendants.

Alexander 11:3

Alexander the great struggled against the Persians, finally conquering Darius III at Gaugamela in 331 B.C.

Conflict 11:4-20

In 323 B.C., Alexander died under circumstances which are not clearly defined.

His four generals and their descendants struggle to establish themselves.

Division of empire 11:4

A struggle for control resulted, which continued for centuries.

Due to its location in the middle, Israel was most affected by the conflict between the Ptolemies (Egypt) and the Seleucids (Syria).

Conflict between descendants 11:5-17 301-198 B.C.

Ptolemy vs. Seleucus 11:5 301-260 B.C.

The conflict between these two families is first summarized (5), and then described in greater detail (6-20).

In the beginning, Ptolemy was strong.

He controlled Palestine and protected Seleucus.

As time progressed, the conflict between their descendants grew.

They fought a series of wars which lasted over one hundred years.

In the end, the Seleucids became much stronger.

2nd Syrian War 11:6-8

260-55 B.C.

At the end of the second of the wars between the two families, Antiochus II, a descendant of Seleucus, marries the daughter of Ptolemy II, in order to protect their alliance.

When Antiochus died, his heirs did not honor the conditions of their treaty. 6

This action caused Ptolemy III to try to rescue his sister and her son.

He arrives too late.

A previous wife of Antiochus II had her and her son killed, so that she could place her own son on the throne.

Ptolemy III attacked Syria, killed the former wife, and conquered territory far into the Seleucid empire. 7

Ptolemy III took a large quantity of spoils from the battle and returned home. 8

Seleucus immediately took control of most of Syria again.

Some time passed before any further developments occurred.

3rd Syrian War 11:9

246-41 B.C.

The third war involved Seleucus III and Ptolemy III.

Seleucus took control of the rest of Syria and part of northern Palestine.

He was unable to do any more and returned home.

4th Syrian War 11:10-12

219-17 B.C.

The fourth war occurred when Antiochus III attacked the kingdom of Ptolemy IV.

He was successful in arriving as far as Gaza, but then returned home. 10

Ptolemy IV returned to avenge Antiochus' attack.

Ptolemy won a great victory. 11

He killed 10,000 soldiers and 300 cavalry.

He also took 4,000 prisoners.

He was unable to take advantage of his victory.

He returned home to enjoy the luxurious life he had there. 12

Battle of Paneas 11:13-17

202-198 B.C.

The fifth war was conclusive.

When Ptolemy IV died, he left a small child to become king of Egypt.

Antiochus III, who had been occupied in fighting on the other side of his empire, saw the opportunity and decided to attack. 13

He was assisted by Philip V of Macedonia and by many from Israel.
14

It appears that those from Israel thought they could win their independence from Egypt.

Actually they had it pretty good under Egypt.

The consequences of submission to Syria were far more serious.

In 198 B.C., at the Battle of Paneas, Antiochus III defeated Ptolemy. 15

Following their defeat, Egypt left the area and surrendered Palestine to Antiochus.

Thus Antiochus took control of Palestine and was able to do whatever he pleased with them. 16

Antiochus decided to continue on to take Egypt.

Since he was fighting on two fronts, against Egypt and against Rome, in alliance with Hannibal of Carthage, he decided to make an alliance with Egypt.

He gave his daughter, Cleopatra, as a wife to Ptolemy VI.

His plan was to assimilate Egypt into Syria by marriage.

The marriage was made, but the plan was not successful. 17

Conflict with Rome 11:18-20

198-75 B.C.

Antiochus then headed to Greece to fight against Rome.

In the beginning his efforts were successful.

He conquered Macedonia, part of Thracia, and part of Greece.

However, Scipio came to fight for Rome and defeated Antiochus. 18

He chased him back into Macedonia. 19

The final battle was at Magnesia in 190 B.C.

A treaty was signed at Apamea in 189 B.C.

In essence, the treaty was an unconditional surrender by Antiochus.

He had to give up much of his land and fighting equipment.

He had to pay a strong indemnization to Rome for twelve years and send twenty prisoners to guaranty the payment.

Antiochus IV was one of the prisoners sent.

The result of this battle was that when Antiochus III died in 187 B.C., and Seleucus IV took over the throne (187-175 B.C.), he had a peaceful reign.

All his efforts were dedicated to collecting taxes throughout the kingdom, including in Israel. 20

Seleucus IV was poisoned by one of his chief aids.

When Antiochus IV heard about it, he left Athens for home.

He had gone to Athens following his release by Rome shortly before.

Antiochus killed Heliodorus who had killed Seleucus to take the throne.

21

Antiochus IV 11:21-35

175-63 B.C.

A new epoch in Syria's history began under Antiochus IV.

His importance is suggested by the emphasis given his reign in Daniel.

Antiochus IV was victorious over armies that opposed him, as well as over the priesthood of Israel.

He named those he wanted to serve as priests. 21-24

He controlled his kingdom by power and by deceit.

After taking control of his own kingdom again, Antiochus returned to oppose Egypt.

In 170 B.C., Ptolemy VI decided to try to take back Palestine.

When Antiochus heard of his plan, he invaded Egypt and conquered Ptolemy. 25

Ptolemy was defeated, in part, because his own officials betrayed him. 26

When Antiochus conquered Egypt, he pronounced himself king of Egypt.

He then created internal competition by naming Ptolemy VII as king of Memphis, and Ptolemy VIII as king of Alexandria.

As long as these two were in competition, they were no threat to Antiochus. 27

Antiochus returned from Egypt to discover that Jason, the former priest, had returned to Jerusalem.

The people were supporting Jason in an attempt to stop Menelaus from being High Priest.

Menelaus hid in the Acra, in the center of Jerusalem.

The Jews were protesting against Menelaus because he had robbed the temple.

Antiochus interpreted their move as a rebellion against him.

Therefore, he decided to attack Jerusalem. 28

He robbed the temple and took plunder also.

He left Philip of Phrygia, one of his generals, there to maintain order.

After about a year of competition, Ptolemy VII and VIII decided to unite their efforts and oppose Antiochus.

He returned and defeated them again in 168 B.C. 29

This time, however, something different happened.

He was met there by the Roman general, Popileus Lenus, who insisted that he leave at once.

Under threat from Rome, Antiochus decided he had better go. 30

As he returned from Egypt, Antiochus was depressed and angry.

He decided to take out his frustration against Jerusalem.

He decided that the only way to protect his empire was to unify it.

Therefore, he would have to destroy Judaism, in order to establish cultural unity.

The result of this effort was a period of persecution for the faithful in Israel.
31-33

Antiochus attacks and persecutes the faithful in Jerusalem. (1 Macc.
1:38-64)

Under the leadership of the Maccabees, the people of Israel were freed temporarily from their suffering.

They were helped somewhat by groups of people whose motives weren't necessarily right, and who weren't totally committed to their cause, but who did bring them relief for a time. 34-35

This could describe small resistance groups, or the Maccabees.

Many help them, but with false motives.

They join the cause, but they aren't there because of personal conviction and desire to help.

While there appears to be purification and repentance, it is temporary because the right time for permanent relief still hasn't come. (1 Macc. 2:15-27)

Antiochus' purposes weren't going to be fulfilled because it wasn't time yet.

In the end God will deliver His people from this great affliction.

But it won't be completed until the end time that God has established.

Transition from Antiochus to Antichrist 11:35b leads into 11:36
". . . it is still to come at the appointed time."

"Then the king (of that time) will do as he pleases . . ."

Another king who does as he pleases will come, and this one will take them to the end of the time God has appointed.

Some scholars say there isn't enough basis to change persons at this point; they think it looks like the author is referring to the same person throughout this section.

However, it seems likely that the author changes persons in this passage, for the following reasons:

1. The transitional emphasis on the end of his days, and of another time period yet to come, implies a change 35b-36.
2. The descriptions of this king's character go beyond those known to have been true of Antiochus and include some that were definitely not true of him:

11:36-37 *"He will exalt himself above every god."*

Antiochus insisted that they worship the Greek gods.
(2 Thess. 2:4)

11:37 He isn't interested in women.

Antiochus was known for his relations with women.

11:38-39 He worships a god that his fathers didn't know
– a god of fortresses.

Antiochus' gods were those of his fathers.

3. 11:36-39 describes the king's policies.

If this were still Antiochus, there would be no reason to describe his policies, because they have already been described.

It appears he's starting from the beginning again because this is a new king.

4. Numerous historical details are given in verses 40-45.

These details don't fit what is known about the life of Antiochus.

It seems strange that suddenly Daniel starts making so many "mistakes" when he was so accurate before.

The description fits what we know about the Antichrist.

5. There is no reason to continue the discussion of Antiochus since his story reaches its climax in verses 30-35.

6. His presentation as "the king" suggests a change in the person described:

Antiochus isn't called "king" in chapter 11.

He is "a despicable person" on whom the honor of kingship is never conferred.

Earlier kings were always called "the king of the north."
That title is not used here either.

7. 12:1 – *"Now at that time . . ."* affirms that this king rules during the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21; Jer. 30:4-9)

70th week 11:36-12:3

Daniel uses the pause at the conclusion of 11:35 to introduce another transition.

The transition jumps from Antiochus to the one whom he represents, Antichrist.

When "the appointed time" comes, then the king at that time will do as he pleases.

This one who does as he pleases will bring on the final scenes of God's plan for His people.

Irresistible King described 11:36-39

The subject shifts dramatically to view the events of the seventieth week, and particularly to those related to the king who does as he pleases.

Description of the king who does as he pleases—a proud king

Compare the parallel descriptions given in other passages:

Little horn (Dan. 7)

Prince who was to come (Dan. 9)

Man of sin (2 Thess. 2)

The beast (Rev. 13)

He exalts and magnifies himself (11:36; 2 Thess. 2:3-4)

He speaks against God; that is, he denies God's right to rule.

"Until the indignation is finished"

—refers to the end of the seventieth week.

—refers to the end of the period of divine indignation against Israel and unbelievers.

He institutes his own religion—focused on himself. 11:37

He doesn't accept any other previous god.

He denies the god (s) of his fathers.

The term for god (s) used in this verse is "Elohim," as in Genesis.

Therefore some say that they must be Jews.

But, the use of the plural, in contrast to the singular uses in the context, implies that he is talking about pagan gods.

Therefore, verse 36—describes his denial of the true God

verse 37—describes his denial of all other gods.

He establishes *himself* as god (37b; 2 Thess. 2:3-4)

He honors a "*god of fortresses*" 11:38

This could be a figurative reference—that is, a reference to power.

He spends vast sums of money in "sacrifices" for military activity in order to establish additional fortresses and to demonstrate his own great power.

The strongest of fortresses will be conquered by this "strange god." 11:39

The people of the conquered towns that honor him will be repaid for their submission to his authority.

He will distribute the land to those who "pay the price," that is, who submit to him and worship before him.

Irresistible King attacked 11:40-45

Description of the military movement:

Two possible interpretations:

- 1) Two powers are involved in the conflict: the king of the south vs. the king of the north.

Compare the description of the forces in the rest of chapter 11.

- 2) Three powers are involved in the conflict: the king of the south and the king of the north unite to fight against the king who does as he pleases described in verses 36-39.

This king would then be the descendant of Rome mentioned in Chapter 9.

They oppose him because he is identified with Israel and helps them (Ezek. 38-39).

It's hard to be sure which of these alternatives is more likely.

The two power view is more consistent with the rest of the chapter.

However, no one fits that description today with the same kind of power over the rest of the region Seleucus had.

Rome is viewed as a western power, not a northern power.

Also, in modern history (except for the Iraq conflict), instead of a conflict between north and south, both powers have been allied together against Israel.

It is easier to imagine a modern united effort of northern and southern powers to get Israel.

A parallel guarantee of protection made by a western power, or alliance, to Israel would set up the context for the events Daniel and Ezekiel foresaw.

At the end of this period, the king would be able to establish his throne in Jerusalem as his international seat.

He establishes his palace between the seas
That is, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea
by the beautiful holy mountain, that is, Zion.

In the end he will be destroyed.

Israel delivered 12:1-3

The Great Tribulation comes at that time, after he establishes his palace in Jerusalem.
12:1a

He breaks his treaty with them and sets himself up as dictator.

He demands that all worship him.

That's the way the Great Tribulation (the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation) is launched. (Matt. 24:21-22; Jer. 30:4-9)

Then comes the salvation of God's people at the end. 12:1b-3

Revelation indicates that 144,000 will be sealed to protect them from the judgments of the tribulation period.

Although they will suffer tremendously, they won't die.

God will protect them and in the end they will be saved.

The resurrection and the judgment 12:2-3

Now, at last, they see what the people in the midst of their suffering couldn't see: the final result, the climax of the great drama, the end of the times of Gentile dominion over them.

Some will be resurrected to receive eternal life; others for future punishment. 2

In reality there will be a pause between the two parts of the resurrection seen here.

However, the author isn't nearly as interested in the chronology of the events as in the reality of their occurrence.

He's interested in how the conflict ends.

Now the conclusion, that couldn't be seen before, is finally seen.

In Daniel 11 it wasn't time to receive the prize yet.

That victory wasn't final; it was partial and temporary.

They were still going to face additional affliction.

In 12:3, we come to the final victory.

Those who have insight (the wise ones) mentioned earlier finally receive the promised exaltation (Cp. 11:33 with 12:3).

In the end the faithful really do triumph.

This victory is permanent.

God's people may have lost a lot of intermediate battles, but they eventually win the war that really counts.

Conclusion 12:4-13

On this victorious note, the book is brought to a conclusion.

Sealing of book 12:4

The book is sealed, since its contents were not for those of that time.

They could see the basic message of God's protection, but much could not be understood until the end, when its details would be fulfilled, and thus truly understood.

God will open the book for His people to understand it in His time.

Appendix: Length of days 12:5-13

An appendix is attached in which the length of the days of the tribulation is sought.

The duration is described as three and a half years.

From the time when the sacrifice is cut off, there will be three and a half years, plus thirty days.

The extra days allow for a transition period during which those who know the Word of God escape to the wilderness.

Also, 1335 days are established until the time of blessing which follows the tribulation.

That allows a forty-five day interval between the sign of the Son of man in the heavens and the second coming itself.

That also allows a period of transition to prepare for the events which occur at His coming.

With these time indications, the book closes.

Daniel gives the encouraging message to God's people that though troublesome times lie before them, the One who controls human affairs will watch over them.

No one will harm them apart from His will.

God will protect those who are faithful to Him.

In the midst of God's program for Israel, which includes times of suffering, God's faithful ones will ultimately triumph!