



# The Book Of Daniel

Daniel Proclaims the

Sovernity Of God

Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

# Daniel

## OVERVIEW:

Twenty-five centuries ago, Daniel could have despaired. He and thousands of his countrymen had been deported to a foreign land after Judah was conquered. Daniel found himself facing an egocentric despot and surrounded by idolaters. Instead of giving in or giving up, this courageous young man held fast to his faith in his God. Daniel knew that despite the circumstances, God was sovereign and was working out his plan for nations and individuals. The book of Daniel centers around this profound truth—the sovereignty of God.

After a brief account of Nebuchadnezzar's siege and defeat of Jerusalem, the scene quickly shifts to Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Misha-el, and Azariah (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego). These men held prominent positions within the Babylonian government. Daniel, in particular, held such a position because of his ability to interpret the king's dreams that tell of God's unfolding plan (Daniel 2 and Daniel 4). Sandwiched between the dreams is the fascinating account of Daniel's three friends and the furnace (Daniel 3). Because they refused to bow down to an image of gold, they were condemned to a fiery death. But God intervened and spared their lives.

Belshazzar ruled Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel 5 tells of his encounter with God's message written on a wall. Daniel, who was summoned to interpret the message, predicted Babylon's fall to the Medes and Persians. This prediction came true that very night, and Darius the Mede conquered the Babylonian kingdom.

Daniel became one of Darius's most trusted advisers. His privileged position angered other administrators, who plotted his death by convincing the king to outlaw prayer. In spite of the law, Daniel continued to pray to his sovereign Lord. As a result, he was condemned to die in a den of hungry lions. Again, God intervened and saved him, shutting the mouths of the lions (Daniel 6).

The book concludes with a series of visions that Daniel had during the reigns of Belshazzar (Daniel 7-8), Darius (Daniel 9), and Cyrus (Daniel 10-12). These dreams dramatically outline God's future plans, beginning with Babylon and continuing to the end of the age. They give a preview of God's redemption and have been called the key to all Biblical prophecy.

God is sovereign. He was in control in Babylon, and he has been moving in history, controlling the destinies of people ever since. And he is here now! Despite news reports or personal stress, we can be confident that God is in control. As you read Daniel, watch God work and find your security in his sovereignty.

## THE BLUEPRINT

### A. DANIEL'S LIFE (Daniel 1:1-6:28)

Daniel and his three friends chose not to eat the king's food. They did not bow down to the king's image, even under penalty of death. Daniel continued to pray even though he knew he might be noticed and sentenced to death. These men are inspiring examples for us of living a faithful life in a sinful world. When we face trials, we can expect God to remain present with us through our trials. May God grant us the same courage to remain faithful under pressure.

#### Daniel 1:1-6:28

During the third year of King Jehoiakim's reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it with his armies. [2] The Lord gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah. When Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, he took with him some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God and placed them in the treasure-house of his god in the land of Babylonia.

[3] Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, who was in charge of the palace officials, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah's royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives. [4] "Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men," he said. "Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good sense, and have the poise needed to serve in the royal palace. Teach these young men the language and literature of the Babylonians." [5] The king assigned them a daily ration of the best food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for a three-year period, and then some of them would be made his advisers in the royal court.

[6] Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah. [7] The chief official renamed them with these Babylonian names:

Daniel was called Belteshazzar.

Hananiah was called Shadrach.

Mishael was called Meshach.

Azariah was called Abednego.

[8] But Daniel made up his mind not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief official for permission to eat other things instead. [9] Now God had given the chief official great respect for Daniel. [10] But he was alarmed by Daniel's suggestion. "My lord the king has ordered that you eat this food and wine," he said. "If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded for neglecting my duties."

[11] Daniel talked it over with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief official to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. [12] "Test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said. [13] "At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's rich food. Then you can decide whether or not to let us continue eating our diet." [14] So the attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days.

[15] At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. [16] So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the rich foods and wines. [17] God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for learning the literature and science of the time. And God gave Daniel special ability in understanding the meanings of visions and dreams.

[18] When the three-year training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief official brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar. [19] The king talked with each of them, and none of them impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they were appointed to his regular staff of advisers. [20] In all matters requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, the king found the advice of these young men to be ten times better than that of all the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom.

[21] Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus's reign.

[2:1] One night during the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that disturbed him so much that he couldn't sleep. [2] He called in his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers, and he demanded that they tell him what he had dreamed. As they stood before the king, [3] he said, "I have had a dream that troubles me. Tell me what I dreamed, for I must know what it means."

[4] Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, "Long live the king! Tell us the dream, and we will tell you what it means."

[5] But the king said to the astrologers, "I am serious about this. If you don't tell me what my dream was and what it means, you will be torn limb from limb, and your houses will be demolished into heaps of rubble! [6] But if you tell me what I dreamed and what the dream means, I will give you many wonderful gifts and honors. Just tell me the dream and what it means!"

[7] They said again, "Please, Your Majesty. Tell us the dream, and we will tell you what it means."

[8] The king replied, "I can see through your trick! You are trying to stall for time because you know I am serious about what I said. [9] If you don't tell me the dream, you will be condemned. You have conspired to tell me lies in hopes that something will change. But tell me the dream, and then I will know that you can tell me what it means."

[10] The astrologers replied to the king, "There isn't a man alive who can tell Your Majesty his dream! And no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician, enchanter, or astrologer! [11] This is an impossible thing the king requires. No one except the gods can tell you your dream, and they do not live among people."

[12] The king was furious when he heard this, and he sent out orders to execute all the wise men of Babylon. [13] And because of the king's decree, men were sent to find and kill Daniel and his friends. [14] When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, came to kill them, Daniel handled the situation with wisdom and discretion. [15] He asked Arioch, "Why has the king issued such a harsh decree?" So Arioch told him all that had happened.

[16] Daniel went at once to see the king and requested more time so he could tell the king what the dream meant.

[17] Then Daniel went home and told his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah what had happened. [18] He urged them to ask the God of heaven to show them his mercy by telling them the secret, so they would not be executed along with the other wise men of Babylon. [19] That night the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven, [20] saying,

"Praise the name of God forever and ever,  
for he alone has all wisdom and power.  
[21] He determines the course of world events;  
he removes kings and sets others on the throne.  
He gives wisdom to the wise  
and knowledge to the scholars.  
[22] He reveals deep and mysterious things  
and knows what lies hidden in darkness,  
though he himself is surrounded by light.  
[23] I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors,  
for you have given me wisdom and strength.  
You have told me what we asked of you  
and revealed to us what the king demanded."

[24] Then Daniel went in to see Arioch, who had been ordered to execute the wise men of Babylon. Daniel said to him, "Don't kill the wise men. Take me to the king, and I will tell him the meaning of his dream."

[25] Then Arioch quickly took Daniel to the king and said, "I have found one of the captives from Judah who will tell Your Majesty the meaning of your dream!"

[26] The king said to Daniel (also known as Beltshazzar), "Is this true? Can you tell me what my dream was and what it means?"

[27] Daniel replied, "There are no wise men, enchanters, magicians, or fortune-tellers who can tell the king such things. [28] But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the future. Now I will tell you your dream and the visions you saw as you lay on your bed.

[29] "While Your Majesty was sleeping, you dreamed about coming events. The revealer of mysteries has shown you what is going to happen. [30] And it is not because I am wiser than any living person that I know the secret of your dream, but because God wanted you to understand what you were thinking about.

[31] "Your Majesty, in your vision you saw in front of you a huge and powerful statue of a man, shining brilliantly, frightening and awesome. [32] The head of the statue was made of fine gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs were of bronze, [33] its legs were of iron, and its feet were a combination of iron and clay. [34] But as you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain by supernatural means. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. [35] The whole statue collapsed into a heap of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. The pieces were crushed as small as chaff on a threshing floor, and the wind blew them all away without a trace. But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth.

[36] "That was the dream; now I will tell Your Majesty what it means. [37] Your Majesty, you are a king over many kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor. [38] He has made you the ruler over all the inhabited world and has put even the animals and birds under your control. You are the head of gold.

[39] "But after your kingdom comes to an end, another great kingdom, inferior to yours, will rise to take your place. After that kingdom has fallen, yet a third great kingdom, represented by the bronze belly and thighs, will rise to rule the world. [40] Following that kingdom, there will be a fourth great kingdom, as strong as iron. That kingdom will smash and crush all previous empires, just as iron smashes and crushes everything it strikes. [41] The feet and toes you saw that were a combination of iron and clay show that this kingdom will be divided. [42] Some parts of it will be as strong as iron, and others as weak as clay. [43] This mixture of iron and clay also shows that these kingdoms will try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each other through intermarriage. But this will not succeed, just as iron and clay do not mix.

[44] "During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed; no one will ever conquer it. It will shatter all these kingdoms into nothingness, but it will stand forever. [45] That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain by supernatural means, crushing to dust the statue of iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold.

"The great God has shown Your Majesty what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its meaning is certain."

[46] Then King Nebuchadnezzar bowed to the ground before Daniel and worshiped him, and he commanded his people to offer sacrifices and burn sweet incense before him. [47] The king said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is the God of gods, the Lord over kings, a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this secret."

[48] Then the king appointed Daniel to a high position and gave him many valuable gifts. He made Daniel ruler over the whole province of Babylon, as well as chief over all his wise men. [49] At Daniel's request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be in charge of all the affairs of the province of Babylon, while Daniel remained in the king's court.

[3:1] King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. [2] Then he sent messages to the princes, prefects, governors, advisers, counselors, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to come to the dedication of the statue he had set up. [3] When all these officials had arrived and were standing before the image King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, [4] a herald shouted out, "People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king's command! [5] When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue. [6] Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

[7] So at the sound of the musical instruments, all the people, whatever their race or nation or language, bowed to the ground and worshiped the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

[8] But some of the astrologers went to the king and informed on the Jews. [9] They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "Long live the king! [10] You issued a decree requiring all the people to bow down and worship the gold statue when they hear the sound of the musical instruments. [11] That decree also states that those who refuse to obey must be thrown into a blazing furnace. [12] But there are some Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—whom you have put in charge of the province of Babylon. They have defied Your Majesty by refusing to serve your gods or to worship the gold statue you have set up."

[13] Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought before him. When they were brought in, [14] Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up? [15] I will give you one more chance. If you bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments, all will be well. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. What god will be able to rescue you from my power then?"

[16] Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. [17] If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. [18] But even if he doesn't, Your Majesty can be sure that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."

[19] Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual. [20] Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. [21] So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully clothed. [22] And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in! [23] So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell down into the roaring flames.

[24] But suddenly, as he was watching, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, "Didn't we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?"

"Yes," they said, "we did indeed, Your Majesty."

[25] "Look!" Nebuchadnezzar shouted. "I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire. They aren't even hurt by the flames! And the fourth looks like a divine being!"

[26] Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire. [27] Then the princes, prefects, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn't even smell of smoke!

[28] Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. [29] Therefore, I make this decree: If any people, whatever their race or nation or language, speak a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they will be torn limb from limb, and their houses will be crushed into heaps of rubble. There is no other god who can rescue like this!" [30] Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in the province of Babylon.

[4:1] King Nebuchadnezzar sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world:

"Peace and prosperity to you!

[2] "I want you all to know about the miraculous signs and wonders the Most High God has performed for me.

[3] How great are his signs,  
how powerful his wonders!  
His kingdom will last forever,  
his rule through all generations.

[4] "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living in my palace in comfort and prosperity. [5] But one night I had a dream that greatly frightened me; I saw visions that terrified me as I lay in my bed. [6] So I issued an order calling in all the wise men of Babylon, so they could tell me what my dream meant. [7] When all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers came in, I told them the dream, but they could not tell me what it meant. [8] At last Daniel came in before me, and I told him the dream. (He was named Beltshazzar after my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.)

[9] "I said to him, 'O Beltshazzar, master magician, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too great for you to solve. Now tell me what my dream means.

[10] " 'While I was lying in my bed, this is what I dreamed. I saw a large tree in the middle of the earth. [11] The tree grew very tall and strong, reaching high into the heavens for all the world to see. [12] It had fresh green leaves, and it was loaded with fruit for all to eat. Wild animals lived in its shade, and birds nested in its branches. All the world was fed from this tree.

[13] "Then as I lay there dreaming, I saw a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven. [14] The messenger shouted, "Cut down the tree; lop off its branches! Shake off its leaves, and scatter its fruit! Chase the animals from its shade and the birds from its branches. [15] But leave the stump and the roots in the ground, bound with a band of iron and bronze and surrounded by tender grass. Now let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live like an animal among the plants of the fields. [16] For seven periods of time, let him have the mind of an animal instead of a human. [17] For this has been decreed by the messengers; it is commanded by the holy ones. The purpose of this decree is that the whole world may understand that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses—even to the lowliest of humans."

[18] "'O Belteshazzar that was the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now tell me what it means, for no one else can help me. All the wisest men of my kingdom have failed me. But you can tell me because the spirit of the holy gods is in you.'

[19] "Upon hearing this, Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) was overcome for a time, aghast at the meaning of the dream. Finally, the king said to him, 'Belteshazzar, don't be alarmed by the dream and what it means.'

"Belteshazzar replied, 'Oh, how I wish the events foreshadowed in this dream would happen to your enemies, my lord, and not to you! [20] You saw a tree growing very tall and strong, reaching high into the heavens for all the world to see. [21] It had fresh green leaves, and it was loaded with fruit for all to eat. Wild animals lived in its shade, and birds nested in its branches. [22] That tree, Your Majesty, is you. For you have grown strong and great; your greatness reaches up to heaven, and your rule to the ends of the earth.

[23] "Then you saw a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, "Cut down the tree and destroy it. But leave the stump and the roots in the ground, bound with a band of iron and bronze and surrounded by tender grass. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven. Let him eat grass with the animals of the field for seven periods of time."

[24] "'This is what the dream means, Your Majesty, and what the Most High has declared will happen to you. [25] You will be driven from human society, and you will live in the fields with the wild animals. You will eat grass like a cow, and you will be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses. [26] But the stump and the roots were left in the ground. This means that you will receive your kingdom back again when you have learned that heaven rules.

[27] "'O King Nebuchadnezzar, please listen to me. Stop sinning and do what is right. Break from your wicked past by being merciful to the poor. Perhaps then you will continue to prosper.'

[28] "But all these things did happen to King Nebuchadnezzar. [29] Twelve months later, he was taking a walk on the flat roof of the royal palace in Babylon. [30] As he looked out across the city, he said, 'Just look at this great city of Babylon! I, by my own mighty power, have built this beautiful city as my royal residence and as an expression of my royal splendor.'

[31] "While he was still speaking these words, a voice called down from heaven, 'O King Nebuchadnezzar, this message is for you! You are no longer ruler of this kingdom. [32] You will be driven from human society. You will live in the fields with the wild animals, and you will eat grass like a cow. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses.'

[33] "That very same hour the prophecy was fulfilled, and Nebuchadnezzar was driven from human society. He ate grass like a cow, and he was drenched with the dew of heaven. He lived this way until his hair was as long as eagles' feathers and his nails were like birds' claws.

[34] "After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever.

His rule is everlasting,

and his kingdom is eternal.

[35] All the people of the earth

are nothing compared to him.

He has the power to do as he pleases

among the angels of heaven

and with those who live on earth.

No one can stop him or challenge him,

saying, 'What do you mean by doing these things?'

[36] "When my sanity returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My advisers and officers sought me out, and I was reestablished as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before.

[37] "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of heaven. All his acts are just and true, and he is able to humble those who are proud."

[5:1] A number of years later, King Belshazzar gave a great feast for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. [2] While Belshazzar was drinking, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, so that he and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. [3] So they brought these gold cups taken from the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. [4] They drank toasts from them to honor their idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

[5] At that very moment they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster wall of the king's palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand as it wrote, [6] and his face turned pale with fear. Such terror gripped him that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way beneath him.

[7] The king shouted for the enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers to be brought before him. He said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read this writing and tell me what it means will be dressed in purple robes of royal honor and will wear a gold chain around his neck. He will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom!" [8] But when all the king's wise men came in, none of them could read the writing or tell him what it meant. [9] So the king grew even more alarmed, and his face turned ashen white. His nobles, too, were shaken.

[10] But when the queen mother heard what was happening, she hurried to the banquet hall. She said to Belshazzar, "Long live the king! Don't be so pale and afraid about this. [11] There is a man in your kingdom who has within him the spirit of the holy gods. During Nebuchadnezzar's reign, this man was found to have insight, understanding, and wisdom as though he himself were a god. Your predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him chief over all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers of Babylon. [12] This man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, has a sharp mind and is filled with divine knowledge and understanding. He can interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means."

[13] So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king asked him, "Are you Daniel, who was exiled from Judah by my predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar? [14] I have heard that you have the spirit of the gods within you and that you are filled with insight, understanding, and wisdom. [15] My wise men and enchanters have tried to read this writing on the wall, but they cannot. [16] I am told that you can give interpretations and solve difficult problems. If you can read these words and tell me their meaning, you will be clothed in purple robes of royal honor, and you will wear a gold chain around your neck. You will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

[17] Daniel answered the king, "Keep your gifts or give them to someone else, but I will tell you what the writing means."

[18] Your Majesty, the Most High God gave sovereignty, majesty, glory, and honor to your predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar. [19] He made him so great that people of all races and nations and languages trembled before him in fear. He killed those he wanted to kill and spared those he wanted to spare. He honored those he wanted to honor and disgraced those he wanted to disgrace. [20] But when his heart and mind were hardened with pride, he was brought down from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. [21] He was driven from human society. He was given the mind of an animal, and he lived among the wild donkeys. He ate grass like a cow, and he was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God rules the kingdoms of the world and appoints anyone he desires to rule over them.

[22] "You are his successor, O Belshazzar, and you knew all this, yet you have not humbled yourself. [23] For you have defied the Lord of heaven and have had these cups from his Temple brought before you. You and your nobles and your wives and concubines have been drinking wine from them while praising gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone—gods that neither see nor hear nor know anything at all. But you have not honored the God who gives you the breath of life and controls your destiny! [24] So God has sent this hand to write a message.

[25] "This is the message that was written: Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin. [26] This is what these words mean:

Mene means 'numbered'—God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end.

[27] Tekel means 'weighed'—you have been weighed on the balances and have failed the test.

[28] Parsin means 'divided'—your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

[29] Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was dressed in purple robes, a gold chain was hung around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom.

[30] That very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed. [31] And Darius the Mede took over the kingdom at the age of sixty-two.

[6:1] Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a prince to rule over each province. [2] The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the princes and to watch out for the king's interests. [3] Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and princes. Because of his great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire. [4] Then the other administrators and princes began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling his affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize. He was faithful and honest and always responsible. [5] So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the requirements of his religion."

[6] So the administrators and princes went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius! [7] We administrators, prefects, princes, advisers, and other officials have unanimously agreed that Your Majesty should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to Your Majesty—will be thrown to the lions. [8] And let Your Majesty issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." [9] So King Darius signed the law.

[10] But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God. [11] The officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help. [12] So they went back to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to Your Majesty—will be thrown to the lions?"

"Yes," the king replied, "that decision stands; it is a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked."

[13] Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is paying no attention to you or your law. He still prays to his God three times a day."

[14] Hearing this, the king was very angry with himself for signing the law, and he tried to find a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament. [15] In the evening the men went together to the king and said, "Your Majesty knows that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed."

[16] So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you worship continually, rescue you." [17] A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel from the lions. [18] Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night.

[19] Very early the next morning, the king hurried out to the lions' den. [20] When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you worship continually, able to rescue you from the lions?"

[21] Daniel answered, "Long live the king! [22] My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."

[23] The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him because he had trusted in his God. [24] Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them and tore them apart before they even hit the floor of the den.

[25] Then King Darius sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world:

"Peace and prosperity to you!

[26] "I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel.

For he is the living God,  
and he will endure forever.  
His kingdom will never be destroyed,  
and his rule will never end.  
[27] He rescues and saves his people;  
he performs miraculous signs and wonders  
in the heavens and on earth.  
He has rescued Daniel  
from the power of the lions."

[28] So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

## **B. DANIEL'S VISIONS (Daniel 7:1-12:13)**

These visions gave the captives added confidence that God is in control of history. They were to wait patiently and in faith and not to worship the gods of Babylon or accept their way of life. God still rules over human activities. Evil will be overcome, so we should wait patiently and not give in to the temptations and pressures of the sinful way of life around us.

### **Daniel 7:1-12:13**

Earlier, during the first year of King Belshazzar's reign in Babylon, Daniel had a dream and saw visions as he lay in his bed. He wrote the dream down, and this is what he saw.

[2] In my vision that night, I, Daniel, saw a great storm churning the surface of a great sea, with strong winds blowing from every direction. [3] Then four huge beasts came up out of the water, each different from the others.

[4] The first beast was like a lion with eagles' wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off, and it was left standing with its two hind feet on the ground, like a human being. And a human mind was given to it.

[5] Then I saw a second beast, and it looked like a bear. It was rearing up on one side, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And I heard a voice saying to it, "Get up! Devour many people!"

[6] Then the third of these strange beasts appeared, and it looked like a leopard. It had four wings like birds' wings on its back, and it had four heads. Great authority was given to this beast.

[7] Then in my vision that night, I saw a fourth beast, terrifying, dreadful, and very strong. It devoured and crushed its victims with huge iron teeth and trampled what was left beneath its feet. It was different from any of the other beasts, and it had ten horns. [8] As I was looking at the horns, suddenly another small horn appeared among them. Three of the first horns were wrenched out, roots and all, to make room for it. This little horn had eyes like human eyes and a mouth that was boasting arrogantly.

[9] I watched as thrones were put in place and the Ancient One sat down to judge. His clothing was as white as snow, his hair like whitest wool. He sat on a fiery throne with wheels of blazing fire, [10] and a river of fire flowed from his presence. Millions of angels ministered to him, and a hundred million stood to attend him. Then the court began its session, and the books were opened.

[11] I continued to watch because I could hear the little horn's boastful speech. I kept watching until the fourth beast was killed and its body was destroyed by fire. [12] As for the other three beasts, their authority was taken from them, but they were allowed to live for a while longer.

[13] As my vision continued that night, I saw someone who looked like a man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence. [14] He was given authority, honor, and royal power over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed.

[15] I, Daniel, was troubled by all I had seen, and my visions terrified me. [16] So I approached one of those standing beside the throne and asked him what it all meant. He explained it to me like this: [17] "These four huge beasts represent four kingdoms that will arise from the earth. [18] But in the end, the holy people of the Most High will be given the kingdom, and they will rule forever and ever."

[19] Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, the one so different from the others and so terrifying. It devoured and crushed its victims with iron teeth and bronze claws, and it trampled what was left beneath its feet. [20] I also asked about the ten horns on the fourth beast's head and the little horn that came up afterward and destroyed three of the other horns. This was the horn that seemed greater than the others and had human eyes and a mouth that was boasting arrogantly. [21] As I watched, this horn was waging war against the holy people and was defeating them,

[22] Until the Ancient One came and judged in favor of the holy people of the Most High. Then the time arrived for the holy people to take over the kingdom.

[23] Then he said to me, "This fourth beast is the fourth world power that will rule the earth. It will be different from all the others. It will devour the whole world, trampling everything in its path. [24] Its ten horns are ten kings that will rule that empire. Then another king will arise, different from the other ten, who will subdue three of them. [25] He will defy the Most High and wear down the holy people of the Most High. He will try to change their sacred festivals and laws, and they will be placed under his control for a time, times, and half a time.

[26] "But then the court will pass judgment, and all his power will be taken away and completely destroyed. [27] Then the sovereignty, power, and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be given to the holy people of the Most High. They will rule forever, and all rulers will serve and obey them."

[28] That was the end of the vision. I, Daniel, was terrified by my thoughts and my face was pale with fear, but I kept these things to myself.

[8:1] During the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, saw another vision, following the one that had already appeared to me. [2] This time I was at the fortress of Susa, in the province of Elam, standing beside the Ulai River.

[3] As I looked up, I saw in front of me a ram with two long horns standing beside the river. One of the horns was longer than the other, even though it had begun to grow later than the shorter one. [4] The ram butted everything out of its way to the west, to the north, and to the south, and no one could stand against it or help its victims. It did as it pleased and became very great.

[5] While I was watching, suddenly a male goat appeared from the west, crossing the land so swiftly that it didn't even touch the ground. This goat, which had one very large horn between its eyes, [6] headed toward the two-horned ram that I had seen standing beside the river. [7] The goat charged furiously at the ram and struck it, breaking off both its horns. Now the ram was helpless, and the goat knocked it down and trampled it. There was no one who could rescue the ram from the goat's power.

[8] The goat became very powerful. But at the height of its power, its large horn was broken off. In the large horn's place grew four prominent horns pointing in the four directions of the earth. [9] From one of the prominent horns came a small horn whose power grew very great. It extended toward the south and the east and toward the glorious land of Israel. [10] His power reached to the heavens where it attacked the heavenly armies, throwing some of the heavenly beings and stars to the ground and trampling them. [11] He even challenged the Commander of heaven's armies by canceling the daily sacrifices offered to him and by destroying his Temple. [12] But the army of heaven was restrained from destroying him for this sin. As a result, sacrilege was committed against the Temple ceremonies, and truth was overthrown. The horn succeeded in everything it did.

[13] Then I heard two of the holy ones talking to each other. One of them said, "How long will the events of this vision last? How long will the rebellion that causes desecration stop the daily sacrifices? How long will the Temple and heaven's armies be trampled on?"

[14] The other replied, "It will take twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings; then the Temple will be restored."

[15] As I, Daniel, was trying to understand the meaning of this vision, someone who looked like a man suddenly stood in front of me. [16] And I heard a human voice calling out from the Ulai River, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of his vision."

[17] As Gabriel approached the place where I was standing, I became so terrified that I fell to the ground. "Son of man," he said, "you must understand that the events you have seen in your vision relate to the time of the end."

[18] While he was speaking, I fainted and lay there with my face to the ground. But Gabriel roused me with a touch and helped me to my feet. [19] Then he said, "I am here to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath. What you have seen pertains to the very end of time. [20] The two-horned ram represents the kings of Media and Persia. [21] The shaggy male goat represents the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes represents the first king of the Greek Empire. [22] The four prominent horns that replaced the one large horn show that the Greek Empire will break into four sections with four kings, none of them as great as the first.

[23] "At the end of their rule, when their sin is at its height, a fierce king, a master of intrigue, will rise to power. [24] He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause a shocking amount of destruction and succeed in everything he does. He will destroy powerful leaders and devastate the holy people. [25] He will be a master of deception, defeating many by catching them off guard. Without warning he will destroy them. He will even take on the Prince of princes in battle, but he will be broken, though not by human power.

[26] "This vision about the twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings is true. But none of these things will happen for a long time, so do not tell anyone about them yet."

[27] Then I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for several days. Afterward I got up and performed my duties for the king, but I was greatly troubled by the vision and could not understand it.

[9:1] It was the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, the son of Ahasuerus, who became king of the Babylonians. [2] During the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, was studying the writings of the prophets. I learned from the word of the Lord, as recorded by Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years. [3] So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and fasting. I wore rough sackcloth and sprinkled myself with ashes.

[4] I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: "O Lord, you are a great and awesome God! You always fulfill your promises of unfailing love to those who love you and keep your commands. [5] But we have sinned and done wrong. We have rebelled against you and scorned your commands and regulations.

[6] We have refused to listen to your servants the prophets, who spoke your messages to our kings and princes and ancestors and to all the people of the land.

[7] "Lord, you are in the right; but our faces are covered with shame, just as you see us now. This is true of us all, including the people of Judah and Jerusalem and all Israel, scattered near and far, wherever you have driven us because of our disloyalty to you. [8] O Lord, we and our kings, princes, and ancestors are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. [9] But the Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him. [10] We have not obeyed the Lord our God, for we have not followed the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets. [11] All Israel has disobeyed your law and turned away, refusing to listen to your voice.

"So now the solemn curses and judgments written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out against us because of our sin. [12] You have done exactly what you warned you would do against us and our rulers. Never in all history has there been a disaster like the one that happened in Jerusalem. [13] Every curse written against us in the law of Moses has come true. All the troubles he predicted have taken place. But we have refused to seek mercy from the Lord our God by turning from our sins and recognizing his truth. [14] The Lord has brought against us the disaster he prepared, for we did not obey him, and the Lord our God is just in everything he does.

[15] "O Lord our God, you brought lasting honor to your name by rescuing your people from Egypt in a great display of power. But we have sinned and are full of wickedness. [16] In view of all your faithful mercies, Lord, please turn your furious anger away from your city of Jerusalem, your holy mountain. All the neighboring nations mock Jerusalem and your people because of our sins and the sins of our ancestors.

[17] "O our God, hear your servant's prayer! Listen as I plead. For your own sake, Lord, smile again on your desolate sanctuary.

[18] "O my God, listen to me and hear my request. Open your eyes and see our wretchedness. See how your city lies in ruins—for everyone knows that it is yours. We do not ask because we deserve help, but because you are so merciful.

[19] "O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, listen and act! For your own sake, O my God, do not delay, for your people and your city bear your name."

[20] I went on praying and confessing my sin and the sins of my people, pleading with the Lord my God for Jerusalem, his holy mountain. [21] As I was praying, Gabriel, whom I had seen in the earlier vision, came swiftly to me at the time of the evening sacrifice. [22] He explained to me, "Daniel, I have come here to give you insight and understanding. [23] The moment you began praying, a command was given. I am here to tell you what it was, for God loves you very much. Now listen, so you can understand the meaning of your vision.

[24] "A period of seventy sets of seven has been decreed for your people and your holy city to put down rebellion, to bring an end to sin, to atone for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to confirm the prophetic vision, and to anoint the Most Holy Place. [25] Now listen and understand! Seven sets of seven plus sixty-two sets of seven will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and strong defenses, despite the perilous times.

[26] "After this period of sixty-two sets of seven, the Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished nothing, and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple. The end will come with a flood, and war and its miseries are decreed from that time to the very end. [27] He will make a treaty with the people for a period of one set of seven, but after half this time, he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings. Then as a climax to all his terrible deeds, he will set up a sacrilegious object that causes desecration, until the end that has been decreed is poured out on this defiler."

[10:1] In the third year of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) had another vision. It concerned events certain to happen in the future—times of war and great hardship—and Daniel understood what the vision meant.

[2] When this vision came to me, I, Daniel, had been in mourning for three weeks. [3] All that time I had eaten no rich food or meat, had drunk no wine, and had used no fragrant oils. [4] On April 23, as I was standing beside the great Tigris River, [5] I looked up and saw a man dressed in linen clothing, with a belt of pure gold around his waist. [6] His body looked like a dazzling gem. From his face came flashes like lightning, and his eyes were like flaming torches. His arms and feet shone like polished bronze, and his voice was like the roaring of a vast multitude of people.

[7] I, Daniel, am the only one who saw this vision. The men with me saw nothing, but they were suddenly terrified and ran away to hide. [8] So I was left there all alone to watch this amazing vision. My strength left me, my face grew deathly pale, and I felt very weak. [9] When I heard him speak, I fainted and lay there with my face to the ground.

[10] Just then a hand touched me and lifted me, still trembling, to my hands and knees. [11] And the man said to me, "O Daniel, greatly loved of God, listen carefully to what I have to say to you. Stand up, for I have been sent to you." When he said this to me, I stood up, still trembling with fear.

[12] Then he said, "Don't be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. [13] But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia. [14] Now I am here to explain what will happen to your people in the future, for this vision concerns a time yet to come."

[15] While he was speaking to me, I looked down at the ground, unable to say a word. [16] Then the one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing in front of me, "I am terrified by the vision I have seen, my lord, and I am very weak. [17] How can someone like me, your servant, talk to you, my lord? My strength is gone, and I can hardly breathe."

[18] Then the one who looked like a man touched me again, and I felt my strength returning. [19] "Don't be afraid," he said, "for you are deeply loved by God. Be at peace; take heart and be strong!"

As he spoke these words, I suddenly felt stronger and said to him, "Now you may speak, my lord, for you have strengthened me."

[20] He replied, "Do you know why I have come? Soon I must return to fight against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia, and then against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Greece. [21] But before I do that, I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (There is no one to help me against these spirit princes except Michael, your spirit prince. [11:1] I have been standing beside Michael as his support and defense since the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede.)

[2] "Now then, I will reveal the truth to you. Three more Persian kings will reign, to be succeeded by a fourth, far richer than the others. Using his wealth for political advantage, he will stir up everyone to war against the kingdom of Greece.

[3] "Then a mighty king will rise to power who will rule a vast kingdom and accomplish everything he sets out to do. [4] But at the height of his power, his kingdom will be broken apart and divided into four parts. It will not be ruled by the king's descendants, nor will the kingdom hold the authority it once had. For his empire will be uprooted and given to others.

[5] "The king of the south will increase in power, but one of this king's own officials will become more powerful than he and will rule his kingdom with great strength.

[6] "Some years later, an alliance will be formed between the king of the north and the king of the south. The daughter of the king of the south will be given in marriage to the king of the north to secure the alliance, but she will lose her influence over him, and so will her father. She will be given up along with her supporters. [7] But when one of her relatives becomes king of the south,

he will raise an army and enter the fortress of the king of the north and defeat him. [8] When he returns again to Egypt, he will carry back their idols with him, along with priceless gold and silver dishes. For some years afterward he will leave the king of the north alone.

[9] "Later the king of the north will invade the realm of the king of the south but will soon return to his own land. [10] However, the sons of the king of the north will assemble a mighty army that will advance like a flood and carry the battle as far as the enemy's fortress. [11] Then the king of the south, in great anger, will rally against the vast forces assembled by the king of the north and will defeat them. [12] After the enemy army is swept away, the king of the south will be filled with pride and will have many thousands of his enemies killed. But his success will be short lived.

[13] "A few years later, the king of the north will return with a fully equipped army far greater than the one he lost. [14] At that time there will be a general uprising against the king of the south. Lawless ones among your own people will join them in order to fulfill the vision, but they will not succeed. [15] Then the king of the north will come and lay siege to a fortified city and capture it. The best troops of the south will not be able to stand in the face of the onslaught.

[16] "The king of the north will march onward unopposed; none will be able to stop him. He will pause in the glorious land of Israel, intent on destroying it. [17] He will make plans to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will form an alliance with the king of the south. He will give him a daughter in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom from within, but his plan will fail.

[18] "After this, he will turn his attention to the coastal cities and conquer many. But a commander from another land will put an end to his insolence and will cause him to retreat in shame. [19] He will take refuge in his own fortresses but will stumble and fall, and he will be seen no more.

[20] "His successor will be remembered as the king who sent a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor, but after a very brief reign, he will die, though neither in battle nor open conflict.

[21] "The next to come to power will be a despicable man who is not directly in line for royal succession. But he will slip in when least expected and take over the kingdom by flattery and intrigue. [22] Before him great armies will be swept away, including a covenant prince. [23] By making deceitful promises, he will make various alliances. With a mere handful of followers, he will become strong. [24] Without warning he will enter the richest areas of the land and do something that none of his predecessors ever did—distribute among his followers the plunder and wealth of the rich. He will plot the overthrow of strongholds, but this will last for only a short while.

[25] "Then he will stir up his courage and raise a great army against the king of the south. The king of the south will go to battle with a mighty army, but to no avail, for plots against him will succeed. [26] Those of his own household will bring his downfall. His army will be swept away, and many will be killed. [27] Seeking nothing but each other's harm, these kings will plot against each other at the conference table, attempting to deceive each other. But it will make no difference, for an end will still come at the appointed time.

[28] "The king of the north will then return home with great riches. On the way he will set himself against the people of the holy covenant, doing much damage before continuing his journey.

[29] "Then at the appointed time he will once again invade the south, but this time the result will be different. [30] For warships from western coastlands will scare him off, and he will withdraw and return home. But he will vent his anger against the people of the holy covenant and reward those who forsake the covenant. [31] His army will take over the Temple fortress, polluting the sanctuary, putting a stop to the daily sacrifices, and setting up the sacrilegious object that causes desecration. [32] He will flatter those who have violated the covenant and win them over to his side. But the people who know their God will be strong and will resist him.

[33] "Those who are wise will give instruction to many. But for a time many of these teachers will die by fire and sword, or they will be jailed and robbed.

[34] While all these persecutions are going on, a little help will arrive, though many who join them will not be sincere. [35] And some who are wise will fall victim to persecution. In this way, they will be refined and cleansed and made pure until the time of the end, for the appointed time is still to come.

[36] "The king will do as he pleases, exalting himself and claiming to be greater than every god there is, even blaspheming the God of gods. He will succeed—until the time of wrath is completed. For what has been determined will surely take place. [37] He will have no regard for the gods of his ancestors, or for the god beloved of women, or for any other god, for he will boast that he is greater than them all. [38] Instead of these, he will worship the god of fortresses—a god his ancestors never knew—and lavish on him gold, silver, precious stones, and costly gifts. [39] Claiming this foreign god's help, he will attack the strongest fortresses. He will honor those who submit to him, appointing them to positions of authority and dividing the land among them as their reward.

[40] "Then at the time of the end, the king of the south will attack him, and the king of the north will storm out against him with chariots, cavalry, and a vast navy. He will invade various lands and sweep through them like a flood. [41] He will enter the glorious land of Israel, and many nations will fall, but Moab, Edom, and the best part of Ammon will escape. [42] He will conquer many countries, and Egypt will not escape. [43] He will gain control over the gold, silver, and treasures of Egypt, and the Libyans and Ethiopians will be his servants.

[44] "But then news from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in great anger to destroy many as he goes. [45] He will halt between the glorious holy mountain and the sea and will pitch his royal tents there, but while he is there, his time will suddenly run out, and there will be no one to help him.

[12:1] "At that time Michael, the archangel who stands guard over your nation, will arise. Then there will be a time of anguish greater than any since nations first came into existence. But at that time every one of your people whose name is written in the book will be rescued. [2] Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt. [3] Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who turn many to righteousness will shine like stars forever.

[4] But you, Daniel, keep this prophecy a secret; seal up the book until the time of the end. Many will rush here and there, and knowledge will increase."

[5] Then I, Daniel, looked and saw two others standing on opposite banks of the river. [6] One of them asked the man dressed in linen, who was now standing above the river, "How long will it be until these shocking events happen?"

[7] The man dressed in linen, who was standing above the river, raised both his hands toward heaven and took this solemn oath by the one who lives forever: "It will go on for a time, times, and half a time. When the shattering of the holy people has finally come to an end, all these things will have happened."

[8] I heard what he said, but I did not understand what he meant. So I asked, "How will all this finally end, my lord?"

[9] But he said, "Go now, Daniel, for what I have said is for the time of the end. [10] Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined by these trials. But the wicked will continue in their wickedness, and none of them will understand. Only those who are wise will know what it means.

[11] "From the time the daily sacrifice is taken away and the sacrilegious object that causes desecration is set up to be worshiped, there will be 1,290 days. [12] And blessed are those who wait and remain until the end of the 1,335 days!

[13] "As for you, go your way until the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days, you will rise again to receive the inheritance set aside for you."

## **MEGATHEMES**

### **THEME: God is in control**

#### **EXPLANATION:**

God is all-knowing, and he is in charge of world events. God overrules and removes rebellious leaders who defy him. God will overcome evil; no one is exempt. But he will deliver the faithful who follow him.

#### **IMPORTANCE:**

Although nations vie for world control now, one day Christ's kingdom will replace and surpass the kingdoms of this world. Our faith is sure because our future is secure in Christ. We must have courage and put our faith in God who controls everything.

### **THEME: Purpose in life**

#### **EXPLANATION:**

Daniel and his three friends are examples of dedication and commitment. They determined to serve God regardless of the consequences. They did not give in to pressures from an ungodly society because they had a clear purpose in life.

#### **IMPORTANCE:**

It is wise to make trusting and obeying God alone our true purpose in life. This will give us direction and peace in spite of the circumstances or consequences. We should disobey anyone who asks us to disobey God. Our first allegiance must be to God.

## **THEME: Perseverance**

### **EXPLANATION:**

Daniel served for 70 years in a foreign land that was hostile to God, yet he did not compromise his faith in God. He was truthful, persistent in prayer, and disinterested in power for personal glory.

### **IMPORTANCE:**

In order to fulfill your life's purpose, you need staying power. Don't let your Christian distinctives become blurred. Be relentless in your prayers, stay firm in your integrity, and be content to serve God wherever he puts you.

## **THEME: God's faithfulness**

### **EXPLANATION:**

God was faithful in Daniel's life. He delivered him from prison, from a den of lions, and from enemies who hated him. God cares for his people and deals patiently with them.

### **IMPORTANCE:**

We can trust God to be with us through any trial because he promises to be there. Because he has been faithful to us, we should remain faithful to him.

### **TIMELINE**

Daniel taken captive to Babylon 605

Ezekiel becomes a prophet to exiles 593

Judah falls; Jerusalem is destroyed; Jeremiah's ministry ends 586

Daniel's first vision 553

Babylon overthrown; Daniel thrown to lions 539

First exiles return to Judah 538

Daniel's ministry ends 536

**An invitation is given to open your heart's door.**

**Rev. 3:20**

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

**To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:**

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print