

# Daniel and Bible Prophecy

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These notes are based the in-depth work of a number of scholars. See the References section at the end of this book for the references shown in square brackets throughout this document [ ].

Most Scripture references in this document are taken from the popular NIV translation of the Bible (copyrights 1984 and 2011).

## An Outline of the Chapters: Key Events in the Book of Daniel

1. Daniel and His Friends Go to Babylon
  - The exile begins
  - No compromise
2. King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Giant Statue
  - The succession of world empires from Israel's exile to the world's final Gentile leader (i.e., Babylon to the Antichrist)
3. The Image of Gold and the Fiery Furnace
  - The succession of world empires
  - Analogy: Israel in the 7-year Tribulation
4. King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Giant Tree
  - His personal testimony
  - Analogy: The 7-year Tribulation
5. The Handwriting on the Wall
  - The fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians
6. Daniel in the Lion's Den
  - Analogy: Protection from the Tribulation (Daniel is a *type* of the Church)
7. Daniel's Dream/Vision of the 4 Beasts
  - The succession of world empires, revisited
8. Daniel's Second Vision: A Ram, a Goat, and a Little Horn
  - Medo-Persia and Greece
  - More about history before it happens
9. Daniel's Prayer and the 70 'Weeks' of Years
  - Perhaps the Bible's greatest end-time prophecy: Daniel 9:24-27
  - The first coming of the Messiah
  - The second coming of the Messiah
10. Heavenly Beings and the Invisible War
11. History Written Well in Advance: Details about the Succession of World Empires
  - Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Revived Rome, and the Antichrist
12. The Tribulation: The 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel
  - Events at the end of the Tribulation
  - Conclusion

## Background Information about the Book of Daniel

- **Time of Writing:** The book of Daniel was written circa 535-530 BC (the writing probably started around 586 BC). Thus, the book of Daniel is about 2,600 years old.
  - It lists every Gentile world power beginning with Babylon, hundreds of years before they ever took power.
  - It lists the final Gentile power: the revived Roman Empire.
  - In Matthew 24:15, Christ affirmed that Daniel was a *prophet*, not a historian.
  - Sir Isaac Newton: “To reject the book of Daniel as God’s Word, is to reject the Christian religion.”
- **Authors:** Daniel (Chapters 1-3 & 5-12) and King Nebuchadnezzar (Chapter 4). Note that Chapter 4 is King Nebuchadnezzar’s personal testimony.
- **Chronology of the Chapters** (i.e., ordering by time): 1-4, 7-8, 5, 9, 6, 10-12
- The books of the Bible were originally written in three languages:
  - The book of Daniel has some **Aramaic** in it. The book of Ezra does, too. The rest of the Old Testament was written in **Hebrew**.
  - All of the New Testament was written in **Greek**.
  - The Greek Empire starting with Alexander the Great helped to spread the Greek language, and led to the founding of the city of Alexandria in Egypt which is where the **Septuagint** was translated by about 70 scholars. This is the Greek translation of the Old Testament, dated about 280-250 BC. (It took 15 years to translate it.) The letters LXX sometimes refer to the Septuagint, because of the approximately 70 scholars who translated it. (LXX is “70” in Roman numerals.)
  - All of Daniel Chapters 1 & 8-12 were originally written in Hebrew.
  - Daniel 2:4–7:28 was written in Aramaic, which was the Gentile language in that part of the world, at that time.
  - Later Bible translations, of which there are thousands, were written in Latin, English, Spanish, etc., but the *autographs* (originals) were written in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek.
- **About one-third of the Bible was prophetic at the time of its writing.**
  - This includes prophecies that were fulfilled literally, and thus are verifiable. No other religion can make such a claim.
  - This includes prophecies that have not been fulfilled, but surely will be, based on God’s unblemished track record with previous fulfillments.

[John 13:19, NIV] "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am."

- Critics claim that the book of Daniel must have been written *after* many of the prophesied events took place (e.g., after Alexander the Great, after the building of the Roman Empire, after Antiochus Epiphanes, etc.)—since it is so accurate in its predictions.
  - Key prophecies:
    - The 4 empires of Chapters 2 & 7 are: (a) Babylon, (b) Media-Persia, (c) Greece, and (d) Rome.

- These are explained by the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
- The beasts described in the book of Daniel have a reverse order in Revelation.
  - The "70 weeks of Daniel" = the first 69 "weeks" (i.e., 69 consecutive blocks of 7-year periods) led up to the triumphal entry (and subsequent rejection) of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem.
  - The final (70<sup>th</sup>) "week" is still in the future. Its starting time has been put on hold. There are prophecies that will be fulfilled at the time of the end (Daniel 12).
- Circa 30 AD, Jesus called Daniel a *prophet* in Matthew 24:15. This should settle the argument about whether or not the book of Daniel was written after the fact.
  - The *Abomination of Desolation* is referenced in Matthew 24:15, Daniel 9:27, and Daniel 12:11.
- The Septuagint (i.e., the pre-Christian Greek translation of the Old Testament) already translated old/obsolete language structures in grammar, etc., in Daniel, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, circa 280 BC.
  - A comparison with writings from ancient Hebrew and Aramaic suggests that Daniel was written *hundreds of years prior to the Septuagint*.
- The Dead Sea Scrolls (3rd century BC to about 100 AD) also confirm the book of Daniel.
- St. Jerome wrote a commentary on the book of Daniel, and for over 1,000 years, it was the standard commentary on Daniel [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. Jerome defended the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC writing of the book of Daniel.
- Ancient cuneiform records from the Babylonian empire confirm:
  - The existence of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego [Cooper, 2012]
  - Some of the major events described in the book of Daniel
- For example, evidence of authenticity of the events comes from secular archaeological sources:
  - The Istanbul Prism (IM 7834 in the Istanbul Museum) refers to Daniel's 3 friends and the events in Daniel 3:2:
    - ... setting up of an image on the Plain of Dura, an area outside of Babylon, probably of the chief god Marduk, and Nebuchadnezzar's insistence that all his subjects, and especially these officials, bow to the image as a show of loyalty to both god and king" [Cooper, 2012, p. 25]
  - The Nebuchadnezzar Chronicle (BM 21946 in the British Museum) refers to: this insurrection or rebellion in 595/594 BC, the calling of western vassal kings (e.g., probably Judah's King Zedekiah, as per Jeremiah 51:59a) to the Plain of Dura, and the punishment of fire to all those who did not show obedience to the pagan god and to the king:
    - Babylonian kings never dwelt overlong in their records on the subject of rebellion. It put their kingship in a bad light. But the Prism *and* Daniel 3 between them tell us that these and many other officials were summoned to Babylon, in particular to the Plain of Dura outside Babylon, to make obeisance to an image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ... But the real point of the summons was that, after the rebellion had been put down, each official would thereby be required to renew his oath of loyalty to the god of Babylon, Marduk, and so to his

representative on earth, Nebuchadnezzar, the king. [Cooper, 2012, p. 29]

- The book of Daniel also states correctly that the Babylonian punishment for blaspheming the gods of Chaldea consisted of being burned alive.
  - ... a cuneiform inscription was later found ... which designated it [some ruins found between a synagogue in Babylon and the Palace of Nebuchadnezzar] as a place in which blasphemers of the gods were burned. [Cooper, 2012, pp. 30-31]
- o Alexander the Great had the book of Daniel read to him circa 332 BC, when AtG considered destroying Jerusalem [Cooper, 2012]. This clearly indicates that Daniel was written before that time.
- o The prophet Ezekiel was a contemporary of Daniel. Ezekiel came in the second wave during the exile from Judah, circa 597 BC. Ezekiel was written circa 593-573 BC, and confirms the existence of Daniel.
  - Ezekiel 14:14: even if these three men -- Noah, Daniel and Job -- were in it [Jerusalem], they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD.
- Isaiah mentions King Cyrus by name about *150 years ahead of time* (Isaiah 45:1,13).
- If you wanted to “prove” to someone that the Bible was real, and that God is real, you could turn to the book of Daniel. How could anyone predict the future, and especially in such great detail?
- Daniel and his 3 friends were uprooted from Israel, as teenagers, and taken to Babylon, to be schooled in the language, customs, etc. of the Babylonians. King Nebuchadnezzar took some of the best or most promising young men for service in Babylon. Daniel and his friends were probably eunuchs.
  - o These young men were faithful to God. Yet, it’s possible for the effect of sin to take place on even faithful people.
    - [De Haan, 1947, p. 21]: “You had no part in Adam’s sin but you are a sinner because of it and under the sentence of death. Daniel too had no part in the sins of his forefather King Hezekiah, but he suffered for them just the same.”
    - [De Haan, 1947, p. 27]: “Because Hezekiah many years before had desecrated the holy Temple and its holy vessels by exhibiting them to a Gentile king to gain his favor, God had pronounced judgment upon King Hezekiah’s seed.”
      - 2 Kings 20:12-19 and Isaiah 39:1-8 (parallel passages) speak of Hezekiah (because of his sins) about 100 years beforehand: All the Temple treasures will be taken to Babylon. Some of their sons will be taken away to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.
- Jesus, Daniel, and Joseph are the only 3 major Bible characters about whom the Bible does not record anything negative (unlike Saul, David, Solomon, Peter, Paul, etc.) [Missler, 2004].
- Timeline [Lindsted, 1984; Missler, 2004]:

- Israel became a nation of influence under kings Saul, David, and Solomon, circa 1050-950 BC. However, Israel had been drifting further and further away from the Lord. The 12-tribe nation of Israel then splits into 2 parts:
  - “Judah”: Under King Rehoboam (1 Kings 12), the land of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin
  - “Israel”: Under King Jeroboam: the other 10 nations, with a capital at Samaria
- Historical account: 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles
- Prophetic account: Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah prophesied to Israel during this time, prior to or during the deportations.

[Jeremiah 25:11-14, NIV] This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever [still future]. I will bring upon that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that are written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations. They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings; I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."

- Israel had not obeyed the sabbatical year, on 70 occasions. A sabbatical year occurred every 7 years. Israel had been in the land for  $7 \times 70 = 490$  years during which it did not observe the sabbatical year. Therefore, Israel was to be exiled for 70 years. Moses had been told about this by God, circa 1450 BC:

[Leviticus 25:1-5, NIV] The LORD said to Moses at Mount Sinai, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a sabbath to the LORD. For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops. **But in the seventh year the land is to have a year of sabbath rest**, a sabbath to the LORD. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land is to have a year of rest.'

[Leviticus 26:33-35, NIV] I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins. **Then the land will enjoy its sabbath years** all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. **All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not have during the sabbaths you lived in it.**

- There were 70 weeks of years (i.e.,  $70 \times 7 = 490$  years) from Abraham to Canaan, 490 years from Joshua (taking possession of the land) to setting up the kings/kingdom, and 490 years from the setting up of the kingdom to the captivity in Babylon, and finally there will be 490 years from the giving of the order to

rebuild the walls and streets of Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince sets up the Millennial Kingdom.

- Of the last 490 years, 483 took place between King Artaxerxes' decree and Christ's rejection at Jerusalem. Then, the clock was put on hold during the church age. At some future point, the final 7 years (i.e., the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel) begins, and the clock resumes. This will be the 7-year Tribulation period. More about this later.
- In 740 BC, the king of Assyria conquered Israel. "Israel" refers to the northern kingdom following the split of the originally united Israel, and Judah is the southern kingdom. Jerusalem is found in Judah.
- Babylon had conquered Assyria in 612 BC, and Egypt a few years later [MacArthur, 2006].
- In 606 BC (some say 605 BC), Judah was carried away—the first of 3 phases:

- **Phase 1:** 2 Kings 24:1-5 and Daniel 1: 606 BC, in the time of **King Jehoiakim** of Judah: God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to take the first group as captives. He also took some vessels of gold and silver from Solomon's Temple (i.e., the first Temple). Daniel and his friends were among those taken to Babylon during this first captivity. It is likely that Daniel was counting the 70 years of captivity from 606 BC.

- **Phase 2:** 2 Kings 24:6-16. This took place in 597 BC, in the time of **King Jehoiachin** of Judah:
  - During this time, the prophet Ezekiel was taken captive, as were about 10,000 others—primarily the upper class.
  - Jeremiah 25 gives a prophecy of 70 years' of desolation of Jerusalem (and this is different than the 70 years' of captivity that began in 606 BC:

[Jeremiah 25:8-12, NIV] "... Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them ... and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever."

- Daniel believed that those years were literal years—not symbolic of a long period of time.

[Daniel 9:1-2, NIV] "... I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish **seventy years** in the **desolations of Jerusalem**"

- Near the end, Daniel refused to be promoted in Babylon because he knew that the Medes and Persians were about to take over Babylon.
- “The desolations of Jerusalem” are 70 years long, but this is different than the 70-year exile in Babylon called “the servitude of the nations” [Missler, 2004].
  - o The “servitude of the nations” began in 606 BC, and it marked the start of the first siege, and ended when Cyrus the Persian conquered Babylon 70 years later [Missler, 2004]. Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to rebuild their Temple, in 536 BC.
    - The Jewish historian Josephus records that after Cyrus conquered Babylon, Daniel showed him the scroll of Isaiah where Cyrus is mentioned by name, about 150 years ahead of time.
      - In 1971, Iran celebrated the 2,500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cyrus’s monarchy [Missler, 2004].
    - When Cyrus released the Jews to go home, only a remnant returned.
  - o The “desolations of Jerusalem” began in 586 BC (although some authors claim it was in 587 BC) with the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem. This event took place during the third siege of King Nebuchadnezzar; and it ended with King Darius’ decree (circa 518 BC) to rebuild Jerusalem. The Second Temple was dedicated in 515 BC; so this lines up reasonably closely with the 70 years from 586 BC.
- Later, in Matthew 2: The Medes and Persians came looking for Christ’s birth based on what they knew from Daniel.
- Ezra and Nehemiah wrote of the return and the rebuilding.

[Luke 21:24, NIV] "... Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

- o Compare this to the “fullness of the Gentiles”: probably a count of everyone who has ever accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.
- o A synonym for “the times of the Gentiles” might be the times when Israel had control of the Temple Mount. That control went to the Gentiles in 586 BC, and has not returned [Hocking, 2011]. Although Israel regained the Temple Mount in 1967 during the Six Day War, the Israelis held on to it for about 10 days, and then transferred authority or custodianship over the Temple Mount to Jordan—specifically to an organization called the Waqf [Stewart, 2019].





## Chapter 1: Daniel and His Friends Go to Babylon

- The Babylonians liked to uproot people from their own homeland. Later, however, the Jewish people became comfortable there. For example, only about 50,000 people returned to Judah and Jerusalem with Nehemiah or Ezra later on. Daniel was not one of those people, possibly for one of the following reasons: (a) he was getting quite old, (b) his government position did not allow it, or (c) he could do more for the Jewish people by remaining in his government position [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012].
- Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus (539 BC). Since Daniel was about 15 years old when he was taken captive around 606 BC, and the captivity was 70 years long, this meant he was about 80-85 years old at the time King Cyrus captured Babylon.
- Here are the names of the 4 youths. Their names in Hebrew were changed to names in Aramaic to reflect the gods of the Babylonians:
  - Daniel = “God is my Judge” (or “God will judge”) → Belteshazzar “the treasures of Baal” or “prince of Baal” or “Bel protect his life”
  - Hananiah = “God is gracious” → Shadrach = “illuminated by the sun god” or “command of Aku (the moon god)”
  - Mishael = “Who is the Lord?” → Meshach = “Who is Venus?” or “Who is as Aku?”
  - Azariah = “The Lord is my help and my strength” → Abednego = “the servant of the fire god” or “slave of (the god) Nebo”
- The youths were probably made eunuchs because of the sins of their fathers and other ancestors.
- Daniel and his friends refused to “live it up” on food and beverages that had been offered up to idols.
  - They could have been angry.
  - Their attitudes, however, are a good example for youth!
  - Daniel 3:16-18—God is still looking for such people, today.
  - How do we gain God’s favour? [Lindsted, 1984]
    - Don’t compromise on God’s Word.
    - Totally commit yourself to Him.
    - Even if you’re in the absolute minority, God won’t forget you.
    - You cannot “figure things out” on your own, without God.
    - Partial obedience doesn’t impress God.
    - It doesn’t matter how dark it gets, there’s always a testimony for Christ.
  - God gave dietary laws to the Jews. Undoubtedly, some of the Babylonian food had been offered to idols, especially the meat.
    - Daniel and his friends could have used many excuses to compromise.
    - They could have rationalized: “Maybe back home, nobody will know.” “Maybe if I compromise, I’ll win the favour of the king, and maybe good things will happen as a result.”
- Daniel had wisdom. Solomon asked for that, too, many years before Daniel.
  - What’s the difference between wisdom and knowledge? Wisdom is knowing how, when, and if to apply that knowledge.
    - e.g., police officers, judges, lifeguards, teachers, etc.

- Gifts from God:
  - We should be thankful for attributes like good education, health, athletics, musical ability, appearance, wealth, entrepreneurial ability, relationships, people skills, families, and the privilege to be part of a society in the age in which we live.
    - We will be held accountable for the resources we have been given, what we did with those resources, how we treated others, how we served God, etc.
    - [Acts 17:26, NIV] From one man he [God] made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and **he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.**
- Win favour with your co-workers, neighbours, friends, etc. for the glory of God, and to provide a good testimony.
  - Be kind, work hard, treat people and customers with respect, have a servant-like attitude (like Christ had), don't go shopping on company time, don't call in sick when not, and don't steal time or objects from your employer (or vice-versa).
- Faithfulness does not necessarily produce rewards at that time.
  - Instead, you may be temporarily "rewarded" with opposition (e.g., Joseph).
  - Colossians 3:23-24: The rewards come later.
  - See also 1 Corinthians 15:58.
- Dreams and visions?
  - How does God speak to the persecuted church in faraway lands?
  - How does God speak to us, today?
    - Today, many of us have access to a lot of information that many Christians in the generations before us never had.
  - Does God use dreams and visions today? Yes, to some degree (especially in countries that are closed to the gospel); but, today, He largely speaks through His Word.
    - This includes the Internet and its many online resources; Bibles of all kinds and translations, including study notes; other Bible-study material; the ability to communicate with other Christians; and the ability to use wireless technology and encryption to access Bible materials behind closed doors (e.g., in persecuted areas of the world).

## Chapter 2: King Nebuchadnezzar and His Dream of a Giant Statue



Figure 1: Nebuchadnezzar's Statue, Source: "The Book of Daniel", Koinonia House [Missler, 2004]

- King Nebuchadnezzar's reign started around 606 BC. He ruled for 44 years. He elevated the city of Babylon, and made the Hanging Gardens sufficient to feed one million people.
- In the second year of his reign (technically it was his third year because the first year was his accession year and Babylonian culture didn't count that year) ... there came a night when King Nebuchadnezzar could not sleep. Before that, he had dreams, and one of those dreams troubled him. He wanted to know what that dream meant.
  - "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."—William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part II*
  - What are examples of other famous *dreams* mentioned in the Bible?
    - Jacob (Genesis 28), Joseph (Genesis 37), Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker (Genesis 40), Pharaoh (Genesis 41), Gideon's warrior (Judges 7), Solomon (1 Kings 3), Nebuchadnezzar again (Daniel 4), Daniel (Daniel 7), Joseph in the New Testament (twice in Matthew 2), and Pilate's wife (Matthew 27).
  - Who else, in the Bible, "could not sleep"?
    - King Xerxes (Esther 6), King Darius (Daniel 6)
- Magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers rely on the occult. Nebuchadnezzar used their services in the past, and was frustrated by their wishy-washy advice. He wanted the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers to tell him both what the dream was, and what the dream meant. If they didn't know, he would execute them all.
  - Important: Avoid horoscopes, psychic hot lines, tarot cards, Ouija boards, Pokémon, trolls, etc. Occult practices meant the death penalty in Old Testament times.
- Daniel and his friends prayed for a solution from God, to help interpret the King's dream, lest they all die.

- Do we pray at the first sign of trouble?
  - Pray immediately, even for small things—it’s a good habit to get into (e.g., car stalled, someone is late, weather turns bad). Better still, always think about prayer while doing your daily work: “pray without ceasing” (Colossians 4:2).
- Don’t just “request” things in prayer. Give credit to God. Mention His greatness.
- There are at least four kinds of prayers: intercession, thankfulness, adoration (praise/worship), and petition (requests).
- The dream’s interpretation concerned the future world powers from about 606 BC up to the Messiah’s Second Coming. The description of these world powers will be mentioned a total of 3 times in the book of Daniel.
  - Daniel 2:36-45 contains the interpretation of the dream.
  - The dream was about an enormous statue that represent successive Gentile world powers: “the times of the Gentiles”. It is the succession of “world empires” (from the perspective of Israel and the rest of the Mediterranean area and the Middle East), ending with the establishment of Christ’s millennial kingdom.
  - There’s an interesting phrase in the NASB and KJV translation of Daniel 2:43:
    - [Daniel 2:43, NASB] "And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another **in the seed of men**; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.
      - It’s not clear what “seed of men” means, but it might be related to the days of Noah and Genesis 6:1-4. The Revived Roman Empire will lead to the final form of world Gentile government (i.e., the Antichrist) before Christ’s return.
  - Note that the value of the components, from head to toes, went down over time; but most of the time, their strength increases. These empires are explained further in Daniel 7.
  - The statue contained:
    - **Head of gold:** This represents the Babylonian Empire (~626-538 BC).
      - King Nebuchadnezzar was that head of gold. He ruled from about 606-562 BC. Then, his son Evil-Merodach ruled (2 years), followed by Neriglissar (4 years), and Neriglissar’s child Laborosoarchod (9 months) [Walvoord, 1990]. Following that, Nabonidus ruled starting in 556 BC, and 3 years later, he and Belshazzar ruled as co-regents (with Belshazzar living elsewhere), from 553 BC to 539 BC.
      - By the way, ancient Babylon had many gold images.
    - **Arms and chest of silver:** This represents the Medo-Persian Empire (~538-330 BC).
      - [Daniel 8:20, NIV] "The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia."
      - The kings included Cyrus (539-530 BC), Cambyses, Bardiya (Pseudo-Smerdis), Darius the Great, Xerxes (Ahasuerus), Artaxerxes I, and Darius II.

- The national symbol of the Medo-Persian Empire was the ram [De Haan, 1947]. The symbol was carried on their banners during wars.
- Medo-Persia was known for its silver coins and the development of a postal system.
- A horn is a symbol of *strength*. It is used in various places in the Bible. The power of an animal is sometimes thought of in terms of the size of its horn(s).
- **Belly and thighs of bronze:** This represents the Greek Empire (~330-68 BC).
  - Greece reached its zenith under its first king: Alexander the Great, who was born in 356 BC. At age 33, Alexander the Great died. Then, Greece was divided into 4 parts, just like the Word of God said it would about 200 years ahead of time.
  - [Daniel 8:21, NIV] "The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king."
  - The Greeks used a lot of bronze or brass to make their armour.
  - Alexander the Great's father was Philip of Macedonia (or Philip II). He laid the groundwork for Alexander the Great.
- **Legs of iron:** This represents the Roman Empire (~68 BC to ~476 AD).
  - There are two legs, and there were two divisions of Rome: east and west.
  - Our judicial system today is based on the Roman system.
  - Note that this empire was never conquered; it simply fell apart. Today, there is evidence to suggest that a reunited or revived Roman Empire is forming (i.e., the European Union).
  - There would be no further empire until the ten toes are represented. Thus, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, etc. could not have formed a worldwide empire.
  - Caesar Augustus issued a worldwide census. By doing so, it forced Jesus to be born in Bethlehem, as per Micah 5:2. There are no "accidents" or coincidences in history. Christ would die by Roman crucifixion. If he would have been born 70 years earlier (under Greek rule) or 30 years later, He would not have been crucified.
- **Feet and toes, partly of iron, partly of clay:** This represents a revived Roman Empire.
  - 10 toes: Iron and clay don't mix well; so, this union will not be strong or united.
  - There will be 10 nations or kingdoms that make up the revived Roman Empire.
  - Revelation 17:10-12: This is the ten-nation federation. It will only have power for "one hour" and it will give that power to the Antichrist—the world's final Gentile leader.

- In the days of these (future) kings, God will set up an kingdom of his own (i.e., under the leadership of Christ) that will destroy the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream—and Christ's kingdom will never be destroyed. It is an eternal kingdom. Thus begins the Millennium.

[Daniel 2:42-44, NIV] As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay. **"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed,** nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

[Revelation 17:10, NIV] "There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time."

[Revelation 17:12, NIV] "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast [Antichrist]."

- Here is a list of Gentile world powers:
  1. Egypt
  2. Assyria
  3. Babylon
  4. Medo-Persia
  5. Greece
  6. Rome
  7. Revived Roman Empire (the EU covers almost the entire ancient Roman Empire)
  8. Antichrist (who comes out of the Revived Roman Empire)

### Chapter 3: The Image of Gold and the Fiery Furnace

- There are parallels between Daniel Chapter 3 and Revelation Chapter 13:
  - The former describes King Nebuchadnezzar's image, which he commanded the world to worship under the penalty of death. The latter describes the Antichrist's image, which he will command the world to worship under the penalty of death.
    - We say that Nebuchadnezzar's image is a *type* (i.e., pattern, foreshadowing, or preview) of the Antichrist's image.
  - There was a remnant of God's people that did not bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's image, were marked for death, but were supernaturally protected, and exalted by God. Similarly, there will be a remnant of God's people that will not bow down to the Antichrist's image, will be marked for death, but some of whom will be protected from death, and eventually be exalted by God. See Zechariah 13:8-9.
  - Revelation 7:1-8 speaks of 144,000 people who will go through the Tribulation but are supernaturally sealed and protected by God. They preach the gospel and serve as a witness for God in the end times.
  - Note that Daniel *is not present* in the events of Chapter 3. He may have been on business elsewhere. He does not go through the trial of the fiery furnace. Daniel is a *type* of the Church: he is not present in the fiery furnace. In words, we have a picture of the Church and the Rapture: unlike his brethren, Daniel does not go through the Tribulation.
- Circa 588 BC, about 18 years after the initial Babylonian conquest of Israel, Nebuchadnezzar set up a statue 90 feet high and 9 feet wide. Unlike the statue in his dream, it was covered entirely in gold—presumably to satisfy his ego, or to indicate that Babylon would never be conquered.
  - Everyone had to worship the image of gold, under penalty of death.
    - This is similar to the image of the beast (Antichrist) in Revelation.
    - The image was actually built; it's been documented by historical sources [Lindsted, 1984]. Was it solid gold—or gold plated? We don't know.
  - King Nebuchadnezzar must have had quite an ego. Or, perhaps he wanted to see who was loyal to him. The king seems to have created millions of bricks that were imprinted with a statement about his greatness. Some of these bricks have been found in archaeological sites.
  - Daniel's friends refused to worship the image of gold. They took a stand.

[Daniel 3:16-18, NIV] Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. **But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.**"

    - Does this apply to you?
    - God is still looking for people with these character qualities, that is, those who will not compromise on the principles of God.
  - Daniel's friends were thrown into the fire—shades of the Tribulation in the book of Revelation.

- Fire = testing and purification; it eliminates dross
    - “Refiner’s Fire”, “I will refine them like silver and test them like gold...” (Zechariah 13:8-9)
    - “It’s tough at times to stand for God. In tough times, God stands with you.” [Dennison, 2011]
  - The flames were real, but the 3 men were not burned up, harmed, or even had the smell of smoke on them.
  - Even though only 3 people were thrown into the fire, 4 people were spotted inside the flames. Was the 4<sup>th</sup> person the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ?
    - There is joy in the presence of God.
    - He doesn’t promise to keep us from the trials of the furnace, but he will stand with us through it.
    - These 3 are representative of the 144,000 Jewish people (12,000 from each original tribe) who will be saved and will be supernaturally protected during the Tribulation.
    - We did not hear from Daniel during this time of trial for the 3 friends. Daniel may be representative of the Rapture, since he’s not there; and he surely would not have bowed down.
    - Would you have stood up, and said, “I will not bow down to the image”?
    - God wants some of us to “take a stand” with someone we work with, go to school with, are neighbours with, etc. If you can’t take a stand with them, could you have taken a stand with King Nebuchadnezzar? Unlikely.
- There is historical or archaeological evidence of the existence of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. An ancient text was found (the Istanbul Prism—IM 7834), dated 595 BC. It listed about 50 of King Nebuchadnezzar’s court officials [Hitchcock, 2013]:
  - Shadrach: the chief of the royal merchants
  - Meshach: the overseer of the slave girls of the palace, with 3 other men
  - Abednego: the secretary of the Crown Prince
  - More specifically, the Istanbul Prism (IM 7834) has these lists inscribed:
    - 1) Court Officials (*meshannim*); 2) The *rabuti* of Akkad; 3) Town Officials; 4) District Officials; and 5) Western Vassal Kings. It is the first of these that interests us, because it names the following amongst the leading Court Officials – the *meshannim*—those closest to the king.
    - Twelfth in the list is *Mushallim-Marduk*, one of the overseers of the slave girls; fifteenth is, *Ardi-Nabu*, who was secretary (*sipiru*) to Amel-Marduk, the son of Nebuchadnezzar and Crown Prince; and eighteenth is *Hanunu*, chief of the royal merchants (*rab tamkari*). All of these were positions of the greatest trust, and it is interesting to note that *Mushallim* is the Babylonian form of the Hebrew name Mishael ... *Ardi-Nabu* means Servant of Nebo, and is the original Babylonian form of the Hebrew Abed-Nebo, which holds the same meaning, but which in this case was corrupted—as we have seen—by Daniel to the meaningless Abednego ... And lastly is *Hanunu*, chief of the royal merchants, which is a direct transposition into Babylonian of Shadrach’s Hebrew name, Hananiah. It is extraordinary authentication of the book of Daniel and its faithfulness to the historical record. ...
    - Daniel records Mishael’s Babylonian name as Meshach. This may be a deliberate contraction of *Mushallim-Marduk*, which is how his name is inscribed in the Istanbul Prism—i.e., **Mesha**[Ilim-Nardu]**k** = Meshak. Such a contraction would, of course, blot out the name of the ‘god’ Marduk. [Cooper, 2012, pp. 25-27]



- In Daniel 3, King Nebuchadnezzar had the world bow down to his image, and those who did not do so, would pay with their life. Could something like this happen again in the future? Absolutely. The book of Revelation says it will happen all over again—this time in a much more sinister context.
  - [Revelation 13:11-17, NIV] Then I saw another beast [the False Prophet], coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. He exercised all the authority of the first beast [Antichrist] on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up **an image in honor of the beast** who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, **so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.** He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.
  - [Revelation 14:9-11, NIV] A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "**If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.**"
  - [Revelation 20:4, NIV] I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. **They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**
- People will need to decide *who* they'll worship. An image of the Antichrist will set up, and whoever does not worship the image, will be killed—but their souls will be saved, and they will be resurrected in the future. Unfortunately, those who worship the Antichrist or his image, or decide to take his mark on their foreheads or hands will be sentenced to hell.

## Chapter 4: Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Giant Tree: His Personal Testimony

- This chapter describes an enormous tree with beautiful leaves, abundant fruit, food for all, and shelter for the beasts of the field and the birds of the air.
- Nebuchadnezzar's reign was from about 606 BC to 562 BC.
- This chapter was written around 575 BC. Daniel may have been about 45 years of age.

[Daniel 4:14-16, NIV] He [an angel] called in a loud voice: "Cut down the tree ... But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground ..."

- "Let **him** graze with the beasts on the grass of the earth."
  - "Let **his** heart be changed from that of a **man**, let **him** be given the heart of a beast, **and let seven times** [7 years] **pass over him.**"
- Daniel interpreted the dream with courage and compassion [Hitchcock, 2013]. For some reason, he seemed to be called in last. Maybe he was away.

- The tree referred to King Nebuchadnezzar:

[Daniel 4:22, NIV] "Your majesty, you are that tree! ..."

- King Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler of the known world (i.e., known to Israel and the Middle East).
  - Nebuchadnezzar would shortly suffer from a rare mental illness called *boanthropy* which is a rare medical condition in which someone eats grass, and acts like cattle.
- Nebuchadnezzar had a period of grace and he could have repented as per Daniel's advice (Daniel 4:27); but, 12 months later:

[Daniel 4:30, NIV] he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I **have built** as the royal residence, **by my mighty power** and for the glory of **my majesty**?"

[Matthew 23:12, NIV] "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted"

- God gives people warning of impending judgment. We see this throughout Scripture (e.g., Noah's Flood, Nineveh, the 10 plagues in Egypt, the kings of Israel and Judah, and the Tribulation).
- In this case, King Nebuchadnezzar had 12 months to repent. Maybe he ignored the message in the dream because everything carried on as before, and he didn't think God was serious.
- Are there any lessons for us?
  - Pride, selfishness, and "me, me, me" occurs from early childhood.
  - Pride is what brought Satan down (Isaiah 14:9-14).
  - Consider Jesus' servant-like attitude (Matthew 20:36; John 13:5-14; Philippians 2:3-5).

- Is there pride in *your* life? Often it takes a fall for God to wake us up and use us.
- Nebuchadnezzar went insane and lived with the animals for 7 years. History records this. Interestingly, ancient Babylonian chronicles show that there was nothing happening by Nebuchadnezzar during about a 5-year window of his reign.
  - Might Daniel, or someone else, have taken Nebuchadnezzar’s position on an interim basis?
  - Who took care of Nebuchadnezzar during these years? The Babylonian Talmud says that Daniel took care of him [Missler, 2004].
- This period of insanity is a *type* of the Tribulation in the end times, beginning with a major covenant or peace treaty involving Israel, but brokered by the Antichrist; and ending with the literal, physical return of Jesus Christ, known as His Second Coming.

[De Haan, 1947, p. 134] “[Jesus] will shout from the air and take His Church into heaven with Himself, and then will follow a period of seven years of tribulation which we may well call the folly, the insane madness of the nations of the earth. Nebuchadnezzar became mad for seven long years during which he was with the beasts of the field ...”

[De Haan, 1947, p. 135] “And so the voice that came from heaven and commanded that the tree representing Nebuchadnezzar, the king, be hewed down and cut to the ground, is a picture of the coming of the Lord who will cause the nations to become stark mad in their insane delusion of self-achievement and self-grandeur, and then will follow the seven years of greatest confusion the world has ever known.”

- Nebuchadnezzar subsequently acknowledged the Most High and His sovereignty over the nations.
  - He praised, glorified, and honoured God—saying that God’s ways are just, and that God is able to humble those who walk in pride.
  - Then, Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was restored.
  - Nebuchadnezzar’s testimony forms part of the Bible. In other words, he wrote part of the book of Daniel.
  - Some people believe that Nebuchadnezzar will be in Heaven.
- Secular sources confirming some of the events of Chapter 4 include:
  - Fragments of a clay tablet in the British Museum (BM 34113=sp 213), translated by Grayson:
    - Nebuchadnezzar pondered ... his life was of no value to him ... He does not have in mind (any concern) for son or daughter, for him there is no family and clan does not exist. ... His attention ... was not set to promoting the welfare of Esagil [the temple of Marduk] (and Babylon). ... he prays to the lord of lords, his hands raised (in supplication). He weeps bitterly to his god [*ilishu*] ... [Cooper, 2012, p. 34]
  - Cooper comments on:
    - Nebuchadnezzar’s otherwise inexplicable and complete loss of interest in the gods of Babylon. ... He shows no further interest in the ‘gods’ or their temples. And yet this is no sudden lapse into atheism. There in the second-to-last line is what is perhaps the most intriguing, not to say heartwarming, statement in the entire inscription, “He weeps bitterly to his god.” What is of interest here is the word that is used—*ilishu*. The first element, *il-*, is simply the Babylonian cognate of the Hebrew name for God, *El*. The second element is the third person possessive pronoun, his. This is not one of the gods of

Babylon, for then he would have been named and specified—Marduk, Bel, Nebo, or what have you. But no. This is specifically *his*, that is Nebuchadnezzar's, God—a God unknown to the reporter, but whom Nebuchadnezzar called El, and who had become person to the king himself. And who can this God be but the God of Daniel, the God of Israel?

... The tablet also speaks of Nebuchadnezzar pricking up his ears ... a phrase which was only ever used when referring to the behaviour and mannerisms of animals. And then there is his complete self-loathing ... his life being of no value to him. [Cooper, 2012, pp. 34-35]

○ Furthermore:

- The appearance of the name Amel-Marduk in tablet BM 34113=sp 213 is interesting. Amel-Marduk was the eldest son of Nebuchadnezzar and hence the Crown Prince. Undoubtedly, he took over the kingship—the *sharrutam*—during his father's inability to rule. ... Meanwhile, his appearance in history at this time explains a matter that had long puzzled historians. I mean the release from prison and the subsequent royal treatment of the captive king of Judah, Jehoiachin. [Cooper, 2012, p. 37]

2 Kings 25:27-30 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Awel-Marduk [Amel-Marduk] became king of Babylon, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. He did this on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month. He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat of honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king's table. Day by day the king gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived.

- This decision by Amel-Marduk to release the king of Judah was directly opposed to his late father's policies regarding the captive kings. It earned him the disdain of Babylon's historians, and possibly led directly to his murder in 560 BC. But what, we may ask, had led to this extraordinary departure from Nebuchadnezzar's policies? The answer lies in the person whom Amel-Marduk engaged as his private secretary. The Istanbul Prism tells us that this was none other than Ardi-Nabu, or as we know him from the Bible, Abednego.

As the Crown Prince of Babylon, Amel-Marduk had undoubtedly been present at the Convocation at Dura, and afterwards, when Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego were cast into the fiery furnace. ... he was sufficiently impressed by Abednego's faith and abilities to employ him as his private secretary. This was a post of the utmost confidence and was only ever given to the most trusted of men. This Ardi-Nabu and he had doubtless talked of many things, and Ardi-Nabu would surely have pleaded Jehoiachin's cause to his master. We know also from the Yale and Florence inscriptions that Daniel was Amel-Marduk's chief minister—*shaqu sharri*—who, sensing the difference between this present king and Nebuchadnezzar, doubtless also pleaded Jehoiachin's cause. Amel-Marduk knew both to be excellent men and specially blessed of their God. It is all a matter of record, of history, and of joining up the dots." [Cooper, 2012, p. 38]

## Chapter 5: The Handwriting on the Wall

- Kings Nabonidus and Belshazzar were co-regents in Babylon at this time (circa 556-539 BC).
- Secular history documents that the city of the Chaldeans, Babylon, was surrounded by the armies of the Medes and Persians for about 20 years, even though they had been taking one village or town at a time. But, for 17-20 years, they couldn't conquer Babylon.
- Belshazzar is the son of Nabonidus. He was in charge while Nabonidus was away. While his father was away, Belshazzar decided to throw a big party—a party that people would never forget. He wanted his servants to bring down the goblets of gold and silver that his ancestor King Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Jerusalem temple, and to drink to the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone (Daniel 5:1-5).
- Archaeology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century revealed that Nabonidus was king, but wasn't liked by the people and priests [Missler, 2004]. He left Belshazzar in charge.
- Archaeology confirms the fact that Daniel was an eyewitness to the events during those times. Before World War I, German archaeologists found the Babylonian banquet hall.
- Archaeologists found, in the ruins of Babylon, clay tablets that recorded the fact that Nabonidus' son Belshazzar had called for a tremendous feast, and that Daniel was among the rulers of the magicians, soothsayers, and Chaldeans in the time of Nabonidus and Belshazzar. This was featured in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, circa 1984 [Lindsted, 1984].
  - Note: Many archaeological artefacts from Babylon, Medo-Persia, and elsewhere in the Middle East are in European museums [Cooper, 2012; Hitchcock, 2013].
- Babylon was a magnificent city [Lindsted, 1984; Hitchcock, 2013]:
  - It was about 11-15 miles on each side, with walls 350 feet tall (equivalent to 35 stories) and 88 feet thick—and having a moat and drawbridges in strategic places.
    - There were 8 gates to get into the inner city.
    - There were 100 gates to get into the general part of the city.
  - They used to run chariot races—6 chariots abreast—on the top of the wall.
  - There were 260 towers stationed on the wall.
  - The city was divided into 2 parts by the Euphrates River which ran diagonally through the city.
  - The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were one of the *Seven Wonders of the Ancient World*: a terraced mountain that could be seen from a great distance. The Hanging Gardens were built for one of King Nebuchadnezzar's favourite wives. She was from Media, and missed the mountains [Lindsted, 1984].
    - Saddam Hussein offered a prize to whoever could figure out how the Hanging Gardens were built and watered [Missler, 2004].
  - Each of the 24 streets on one side was 150 feet wide, and there were 24 streets on the other side. The wall was not considered a wonder, but the Hanging Gardens (400 feet square) were. They were another 350 feet above the wall. It looked like a “mountain of green”. There was even a “tower of Babel” that extended further up, on the wall.
  - One million people could be fed and survive inside the wall. There was plenty of food and water.

- The banquet hall was 56 feet wide and 173 feet long, and it was rebuilt by Saddam Hussein [Missler, 2004].
- There were about 60 million bricks used to build Babylon, and each were stamped with various inscriptions about King Nebuchadnezzar, such as:
  - “I am Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, king of everything from sea to sea.” [Lindsted, 1984]
- The events of Daniel 5 happened to Babylonian King Belshazzar around 538 BC. (Nebuchadnezzar died around 562 BC, so these events took place about 25 years after Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the great tree, followed by his illness, followed by his testimony.) Belshazzar probably took the throne around 553 BC.
  - Belshazzar showed contempt for the God of the universe by taking the Temple goblets and by drinking wine from those goblets, while praising false gods. This is a clear act of blasphemy against God.
  - An armless hand wrote, on the wall: *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin* (Daniel 5:25).
    - This terrified the king, but he could not understand the message.
    - The king relied on wise men and enchanter for explanations. Daniel’s services were requested again.
    - By now, Daniel was about 85 years of age.
  - Daniel interpreted the writing on the wall.
    - *Mene*: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it.
    - *Tekel*: Your kingdom has been weighed on the scales and has been found wanting.
    - *Parsin*: Your kingdom has been divided and has been given to the Medes and the Persians.
  - That message may have taken a lot of courage from Daniel—not to mention Daniel turning down the rewards.
    - An offer was made to Daniel to make him the third highest ruler in the kingdom. That would mean: Nabonidus + Belshazzar + Daniel.
      - Daniel 5:17: "Then Daniel answered the king, 'You may keep you gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means.'"
    - Daniel knew from the writings of the book of Jeremiah the prophet that his people would only be exiled for 70 years—and the 70 years were about to end.
    - Whose rewards are *we* seeking? (John 12:42-43, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15) Do we want praise from others—or, praise from God?
      - Do your daily work, as working for the Lord, not for men (Colossians 3:23-24).
      - Do it for an “audience of one”.
      - Consider reading Max Lucado’s book: *The Applause of Heaven*.
  - The king was “weighed on the scales and found wanting”. The Medes and the Persians took over Babylon that very night by digging a channel (the work was a long time in progress) and then by diverting the flow of the Euphrates River (which passed through the city). Thus, the conquerors were able to get inside the city. Once inside, they were able to open the gates and lower the drawbridges.

The river flowed right by the palace, and the conquerors were able to slay the partygoers.

- The Greek historian Xenophon (431-355 BC) wrote that Belshazzar's feast was an annual feast—a night when many people in the city drank to excess [Cooper, 2012]. Xenophon argues that this is probably why the Persians chose to invade Babylon on that particular night—a night in early October when the moon is full. (Babylonians worshipped the moon god.)
- There is some debate about Darius the Mede. Secular sources (so far) have no indisputable record of someone by that name [Cooper, 2012]; but, given Daniel's track record whereby subsequent archaeological discoveries have confirmed Daniel's writings, we have every reason to believe that Darius the Mede refers to a real person.
  - For example, there was a coin circulating in King Cyrus' day called a *daric* (e.g., Ezra 2:69; 8:27), and it is believed by some that this coin of high value was connected to a predecessor of King Cyrus [Cooper, 2012]. The person who was ruler before King Cyrus was King Darius, according to the book of Daniel.
- Some Bible teachers claim that Cyrus was the king of the Persians, and Darius was the king of the Medes [Lindsted, 1984]. It is believed by some that the two (Cyrus, Darius) shared the reign in the form of a coregency or confederacy.
  - [Daniel 5:30-31 NIV] That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.
  - [Daniel 9:1, NIV] In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom--
  - [Daniel 6:28, NIV] So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.
    - A footnote in the NIV Bible states that this last verse could also be rendered as:  
[Daniel 6:28, NIV] So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, that is, the reign of Cyrus.
- Cyrus' mother was a Mede; but, Persians claimed ancestry through the father, which in Cyrus' case was Cambyses I [Israel My Glory, 2004]. Ahasuerus was Darius' father. As the following quotations indicate, some scholars and historians believe that Darius was Gubaru (aka Gobryas), who was Cyrus the Great's general [Wikipedia: "Gobryas", accessed April 21, 2019]. He was a Mede who was appointed by Cyrus to rule Babylon for 14 years [Israel My Glory, 2004]:
  - Bible scholar John C. Whitcomb believes Darius the Mede fits the historical records related to Gubaru. Gubaru's appointment also coincides with Daniel 5:31, which many scholars say is better translated "Darius received the kingdom," rather than "Darius . . . took the kingdom." Also, Daniel 9:1 states, Darius "was made king" (passive).
  - Interestingly, Gubaru is said to have been born in 601 B.C., which would have made him sixty-two, coinciding with Daniel 5:31. In addition, the ancient historian Flavius Josephus wrote,
    - *Babylon was taken by Darius, and when he, with his kinsman Cyrus, had put an end to the dominion of the Babylonians, he [Darius] was sixty-two*

*years old. He was the son of Astyages, and had another name among the Greeks.*

- Steven Anderson wrote his 2014 PhD dissertation on identifying Darius the Mede [Anderson, 2014]. He provides an alternate explanation. Anderson concluded that King Cyrus shared his rule with a Median king who was Cyaxares II, and he based this on some of the writings of the Greek historian Xenophon. This king took the throne name Darius. Darius died within two years after the Fall of Babylon.
- Some Bible teachers, however, think that Darius may be the same as Cyrus since it appears at times that the names were used interchangeably [Missler, 2004]. In ancient times, sometimes people were known by two names. An example would be King Ahasuerus and King Xerxes. Both names referred to the same person: Queen Esther's husband (circa 480 BC, but this was decades after Cyrus and Darius in the book of Daniel).
- John F. Walvoord, Charles Dyer, and Philip Rawley state that Darius was either another name for Cyrus, or King Cyrus had appointed Darius as viceroy or king of Babylon [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012].
- Archaeology and secular history (e.g., the Cyrus Cylinder—also known as BM.ME 90920 in the British Museum) record that these events occurred (e.g., the party, the fall of Babylon, and the fact that Daniel (Belteshazzar) was a key person in the time of the Babylonian Empire).
- Cyrus the ruler: This is history recorded about 150 years in advance (see Isaiah 44:28–45:4, where God mentions Cyrus by name):
  - [Isaiah 44:28, NIV] who says of **Cyrus**, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."'
  - [Isaiah 45:1-5, NIV] "This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to **Cyrus**, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: I will go before you and will level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron. I will give you hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who summons you by name. For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I summon you by name and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me,'
- Archaeology confirms that the two-leaved gates of Babylon used a copper alloy (i.e., “gates of bronze”) [Cooper, 2012].
- Josephus wrote that when King Cyrus entered Babylon, Daniel presented him with a scroll from Isaiah indicating that he (Cyrus) was called by name by the prophet Isaiah.
- Subsequently, Cyrus would give the decree to allow the Jews to return to Israel and rebuild the temple.
  - [Ezra 1:1-4, NIV] In the first year of **Cyrus king of Persia**, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by



Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of **Cyrus** king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing: "This is what **Cyrus** king of Persia says: "'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you may go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem, and may their God be with them. And in any locality where survivors may now be living, the people are to provide them with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem.'"

- The *fall* of Babylon is different than the *destruction* of Babylon mentioned in Isaiah 13-14, Jeremiah 50-51, and Revelation 17-18 [Missler, 2004].
  - Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians, but it was not destroyed by them. In fact, Alexander the Great, about 200 years later, made Babylon his capital. Alexander died there.
  - In 75 AD, we have records that merchants in Babylon were there.
  - In the 1800s, there were about 10,000 inhabitants there.
- The Bible contains “a tale of two cities”: Babylon and Jerusalem—the city of man and the city of God [Missler, 2004].
  - Babylon is mentioned over 300 times in the Bible.
  - It was the capital of Nimrod—the world’s first dictator.
  - Babylon may well be the capital of the Antichrist, although we cannot be dogmatic about that.
  - We know from Scripture that once Babylon is destroyed, it will never again be inhabited. However, Saddam Hussein was rebuilding Babylon. This suggests that the prophecy of Babylon’s permanent destruction has not yet been fulfilled. In other words, we can expect a future fulfillment.
  - What is “Mystery Babylon” in Revelation? Is it the same as literal Babylon? Possibly. Babylon has *not* been destroyed yet—in the sense described in Scripture:

[Isaiah 13:19, NIV] Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the pride and glory of the Babylonians, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; there no nomads will pitch their tents, there no shepherds will rest their flocks.

[Jeremiah 50:9, NIV] For I will stir up and bring against Babylon an alliance of great nations from the land of the north. They will take up their positions against her, and from the north she will be captured. Their arrows will be like skilled warriors who do not return empty-handed.

[Jeremiah 51:62, NIV] Then say, 'LORD, you have said you will destroy this place, so that neither people nor animals will live in it; it will be desolate forever.'

## Chapter 6: Daniel in the Lions' Den

Verses to note:

- 1-3: Daniel's work and integrity set him apart from many of the others. He was one of 3 administrators over the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. (Note that previous chapters dealt with Babylon.)
- 4-9: Others were jealous of Daniel, and conspired against him.
- 10: Daniel continued to pray despite some government officials ordering him not to do so.
- 11-17: King Darius's decree (formulated against his will) was official, and Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. Daniel was about 85 years old at the time.
- 18-20: Like King Nebuchadnezzar, King Darius could not sleep. He hoped that Daniel would still be alive.
- 21-24: The accusers and their wives and children were thrown into the lions' den instead, and were promptly overpowered by the lions.
- 25-28: King Darius wrote kind and appropriate words about "the God of Daniel".

The records of the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians place the name "Daniel" in their historical writings. Recall that the Medes and Persians are the silver part (i.e., chest and arms) of the statue about which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed.

Daniel prayed openly. Without prayer, there is little power; therefore, make prayer a central part of your life.

Is your life filled with integrity and are you working to the best of your ability in your job? Will others be able to "accuse" you? Note verse 4: "They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent." What change would you have made in your life because of the edict? A good, consistent testimony from a Christian (such as the life modeled by Daniel) has a strong impact on people around you.

King Darius agreed to some of his administrators' demands that no one could pray to, or petition, any god or man, other than the king himself—for 30 days. Daniel did not agree to this; the other administrators went behind his back.

[De Haan, 1947, p. 181] "Of course, in this signing of the decree that he was to be worshiped instead of Almighty God, Darius becomes a type of the coming Antichrist who also will command all men to receive his mark upon their hands and upon their foreheads, upon pain of death if they refuse."

[De Haan, 1947, p. 192] "Daniel was preserved by the intervention of Almighty God."

[De Haan, 1947, p. 195] "I want you to notice that while Daniel was supernaturally preserved, the enemies who caused him to be cast into the lions' den were miserably destroyed. This will all find its complete fulfillment when the Lord Jesus Christ comes back again from heaven."

Those who refuse to worship the Antichrist, but worship the Lord instead, will likely be persecuted. Daniel was not harmed by the lions, and this could be viewed as a picture of how

God will supernaturally protect the 144,000 Jewish believers, so that they cannot be harmed during the Tribulation; or, it could be a picture of how the Church (raptured believers) will not be harmed during the Tribulation.

## Chapter 7: Daniel's Dream/Vision of the 4 Beasts

- Chronologically, Daniel 7 comes at least 14 years before the Medes and Persians invaded, as recorded in Daniel Chapters 5 and 6, around 553 BC. More details about the events of Chapter 7 are also found in Chapter 8.
- Some of the ancient Jewish scribes who copied the Old Testament said that Daniel 7 was the greatest chapter of the Scriptures [Hitchcock, 2013].
- This dream or vision (or possibly both) happened during the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon—around 553-551 BC.
- Daniel was about 65-70 years old at this time. Recall that Daniel was about 85 years old when he was thrown into the lions' den.
- The *final* Gentile power will start as a 10-nation power; but an additional king would be added (Antichrist), and 3 of the previous 10 would be removed.
- Daniel 7 introduces the Antichrist ... and judgment.
- In Daniel 7, Daniel received a vision about 4 beasts coming out of the Great Sea (the Mediterranean). The 4 beasts parallel the Gentile world powers mentioned in Chapter 2 which described King Nebuchadnezzar's statue as being made up of 4 metals (gold, silver, bronze, and iron ... with the revived Roman Empire consisting of iron and clay). Chapter 8 also drills down on 2 of the 4 beasts. Let us revisit Chapter 2 briefly because it provides us with some background.

[Daniel 2:36-44, NIV] "This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king. **You, O king** [Nebuchadnezzar], are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; in your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. **You are that head of gold.** "After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron -- for iron breaks and smashes everything -- and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom ... the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay. "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

Daniel 7 verses 1-14 give the vision of the 4 beasts, and verses 15-27 give the explanation of the vision. Here is a summary:

- **Beast #1:** A lion. This represents **Babylon** and King Nebuchadnezzar. The description of the beast is like a lion (the king of beasts), with the wings of an eagle (the king of birds), but its wings were torn off, then the beast stood up and a heart was given it like a man. This refers to King Nebuchadnezzar, and includes a description of him after he spent 7 years among the animals.

- **Beast #2:** A bear. This represents **Medo-Persia**. The bear is raised up on one side (the Persians dominated—see also Daniel 8:3-4), with 3 ribs in its mouth (3 kingdoms tried to stop Medo-Persia: the triple alliance of Babylon, Egypt, and Lydia) [Lindsted, 1984].
- **Beast #3:** A leopard. This represents **Greece**. Like the swiftness of a leopard, Alexander the Great, conquered the world when he was in his 20s. He did so in less than 10 years. It's been said that he wept because there was nothing left for him to conquer. The leopard had 4 wings on its back, and 4 heads. The explanation is that when Alexander the Great died, 4 generals took over, and the kingdom was divided into 4 parts. Thus, the prophecy came true.

[Daniel 8:21-22, NIV] The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power.

- **Beast #4:** Unnamed; but it's a terrifying beast, powerful, with large iron teeth, and nails of brass. It crushed and devoured its victims. This refers to **Rome**.

[Daniel 7:7-8, NIV] After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast -- terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and **it had ten horns**. While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was **another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. ...**

- A horn is a symbol of strength.
- In Daniel 7:8, a “little horn” appears. This is actually about the Antichrist (still future to our day). The qualifier “little” suggests that the Antichrist will start out as being insignificant, and this would make it hard for anybody to identify the Antichrist before the Antichrist rises to power [Hitchcock, 2013].
  - Note: Daniel 8:9-14 is about Antiochus Epiphanes, a foreshadowing of the Antichrist, or “the Old Testament Antichrist” [Hitchcock, 2013]. He came out of the Syrian kingdom, which was one of the four divisions of Alexander the Great's empire.
  - However, Bible scholars are divided here, with some saying that the little horn in Daniel 8:9-14 actually refers to the Antichrist. Regardless, we have Antiochus Epiphanes as a *type* of the Antichrist, and we know that in the end times, Antichrist will come on the scene. So, in a way, the “little horn” refers to both.
- Now, back to Chapter 7. A little horn arises, and 3 of the original 10 horns were uprooted. Now there are 7 (plus the Antichrist). This is a picture of the future: the Antichrist is leading a revived form of the Roman Empire. Never in history were there 10 kings ruling over the Roman Empire. Never was there a “little horn” in the Roman Empire. This is why it is about the future, rather than Antiochus Epiphanes.
- It appears that the Antichrist is interested in globalism rather than nationalism.

- It is interesting to note that the European Economic Community (EEC) was formed in 1957 by the *Treaty of Rome*. At that time, 6 nations formed an economic alliance [Hitchcock, 2013]. In 2002, the Euro began acting as a single currency. By 2007, there were 27 nations in the EEC. As of the end of 2018, there were 28 nations in what is now more commonly called the European Union or EU. The EU may be a stage-setting form of the revived Roman Empire.
- If many of Daniel's prophecies have already been fulfilled literally (i.e., symbols that stand for something real), then we can expect the rest of Daniel to be fulfilled literally, as well.
- Daniel 7:9-12 describes a judgment of the nations—the same as that in Matthew 25, prior to the Millennium, but after Christ's Second Coming. Like Revelation 19:19-20, the judgment includes the beast being thrown into the Lake of Fire; consequently, we can determine the relative time of this judgment.
- Daniel 7:
  - Verses 17-18 explain the beasts (the kingdoms of the Earth).
  - Verses 19-25 interpret the kingdom of the Antichrist.
  - Verse 26 gives the judgment of the Antichrist.
  - Verse 27 explains the kingdom of Christ. It is not an invisible, spiritual kingdom; rather, it is a literal, Earthly kingdom, led by Christ that is still future to our day. We know it is in the future because Daniel 9:27 has not yet been fulfilled, that is, Christ's Second Coming has not occurred. Christ's kingdom follows the final Gentile kingdoms mentioned in Daniel Chapters 2 & 7.
  - According to Revelation 20, the Millennium will last for 1,000 years. It is only the first part of God's eternal kingdom. "I like to call the millennial reign or the Messianic age 'phase one' of God's eternal kingdom. It's been called by some people, 'The front porch of eternity.'" [Hitchcock, 2013]
- Let us compare parts of Daniel 7 with Revelation 13 & 17:

[Daniel 7:19-25, NIV] Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast [the Roman Empire], which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws -- the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. I also wanted to know about the **ten horns** on its head and about **the other horn** [Antichrist] that came up, **before which three of them fell** -- the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully. As I watched, **this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.** "He gave me this explanation: '**The fourth beast** is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. **The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.** He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time [3.5 years]."

[Revelation 13:1-2, NIV] The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast [Antichrist] coming out of the sea [Gentile nations]. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a **leopard**, but had feet like those of a **bear** and a mouth like that of a **lion**. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.

[Revelation 17:12, NIV] "**The ten horns you saw are ten kings** who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast."

We know that Israel had to be in their land; so, these prophecies could not have been fulfilled prior to 1948.

The following table summarizes the similarities between the books of Daniel and Revelation. Note from the table that Daniel sees the vision of the beasts going forward in time, and the Apostle John sees them looking backwards (i.e., in reverse order).

<b>Daniel 2: Nebuchad- nezzar's Statue</b>	<b>Identified as</b>	<b>Daniel 7: Daniel's Vision of Beasts</b>	<b>Daniel 8: Daniel's Second Vision</b>	<b>Revelation 17:10</b>	<b>Approximate Dates</b>
				Egypt	
				Assyria	
Head of Gold	<b>Babylon</b> Daniel 2:37-38	Lion		Rev. 13:2c: Lion	606-539 BC
Chest and Arms of Silver	<b>Medo-Persia</b> Daniel 8:20	Bear	Ram	Rev. 13:2b: Bear	539-330 BC
Belly and Thighs of Bronze	<b>Greece</b> Daniel 8:21	Leopard	Goat	Rev. 13:2a: Leopard	330-68 BC
Legs of Iron	<b>Rome</b>	Terrifying and Frightening Beast		Rome 13:1 Beast	68 BC- 476 AD
Feet and 10 Toes of Iron Mixed with Clay	<b>Revived Roman Empire</b>  <b>Antichrist</b>			Rev. 13:1: Beast with 7 heads, 10 horns, and 10 crowns  Rev. 7:12: 10 horns = 10 kings	Future

## Chapter 8: Daniel's Second Vision: A Ram, a Goat, and a Little Horn

- Chronologically, Chapters 7 & 8 come before Chapters 5 & 6.
- Daniel is about 65-70 years old at this time.
- This was written around 551 BC.
- Daniel was in Susa (modern-day Iran) when he had this series of visions in Chapter 8, occurring 2 years after the visions in Chapter 7: "in the third year of King Belshazzar".
- The Hebrew language was used from the start of Daniel Chapter 8 to the end of the book of Daniel: Chapter 12. Recall that Daniel 1:1–2:3 was originally written in Hebrew, Daniel 2:4–7:28 was in Aramaic, and finally Daniel 8:1–12:13 was in Hebrew.

[Daniel 8:1-8, NIV] In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me. In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in the vision I was beside the Ulai Canal. I looked up, and there before me was a ram with two horns, standing beside the canal, and the horns were long. One of the horns was longer than the other but grew up later. I watched the ram as it charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against it, and none could rescue from its power. It did as it pleased and became great.

As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. It came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal and charged at it in great rage. I saw it attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering its two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against it; the goat knocked it to the ground and trampled on it, and none could rescue the ram from its power. The goat became very great, but at the height of its power the large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven.

[Daniel 8:20-25, NIV] The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia. The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king [Alexander the Great]. The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power. "In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people. He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.

- The ram with the 2 horns represents the Medo-Persian Empire. The longer horn (i.e., the second horn) was the longer, more dominant one—it referred to the Persians.
  - This vision was given to Daniel about 14 years before the events occurred.
- The goat from the west refers to Greece.
  - The ram was Greece's official symbol (c.f., U.S. = eagle, England = lion).



- This describes Alexander the Great, at the height of his power:
  - The goat's horn was broken off. (Alexander the Great died at about age 33.)
  - 4 horns grew up in place of the first horn (i.e., the 4 generals of Alexander).
- From 1 of these 4 horns (i.e., the Seleucid Dynasty) came another horn (circa 168 BC) which started small but grew in power to the South and East, and in Israel. The fact that the horn starts out small means that he seems to be insignificant at the beginning.
  - The little horn in Daniel 7 is not the same as the little horn in Daniel 8.
    - Daniel 7 refers to the Antichrist who comes out of the revived Roman Empire.
      - This is still future to us.
    - Daniel 8 refers to Antiochus IV Epiphanes who is an Old Testament *type* of the future Antichrist.
      - This was fulfilled in history. Antiochus Epiphanes was the 8<sup>th</sup> king of the Seleucid Dynasty, and he ruled from 175-164 BC [Missler, 2004]. He took power by killing his brother.
      - There are also some passages that look like they fit well with the Antichrist, but they may also have applied to Antiochus Epiphanes (e.g., Daniel 8:23-25).
  - Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the altar and attempted to destroy the Jews—a foreshadowing of the Antichrist's future “abomination of desolation” in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel (i.e., at the middle of the Tribulation).
  - “Epiphanes” means “God manifest” or “little God”.
  - A hog or pig was sacrificed on the altar.
  - The Maccabean army led by Judas Maccabeus rebelled against the Syrian army (led by Antiochus Epiphanes), captured the Temple Mount, and cleansed and re-dedicated the sanctuary.
  - According to Jewish tradition: Miraculously, one day's supply of oil (for the lamps) lasted for 8 days. This event and the one in the preceding paragraph are celebrated as the Jewish feast of Hanukkah, occurring near our Christmas time.

[Daniel 8:13-14, NIV] Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled -- the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the LORD's people?" He said to me, "**It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated.**"

- What does “2,300 evenings and mornings” correspond to?
  - View #1: These are years. This was the view of Seventh Day Adventists. However, the years don't add up. They end in 1844

AD, but nothing biblically significant happened anytime around then.

- View #2: These are 1,150 days (i.e., 2,300 morning and evenings). This may be the best explanation since the desecration of the Temple occurred in 168 BC (according to most scholars) and the cleansing of the Temple occurred in 165 BC (on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish month Kislev—and that day would fall sometime in our month of December). 1,150 days is 3 years and about 1-2 months.
  - View #3: These are 2,300 literal days. Some scholars suggest that the Temple was cleansed on December 25, 165 BC. Then, we go back in time before the desecration, and this infers that something significant happened on (or about) September 6, 171 BC. This is possibly the time that Antiochus Epiphanes started persecuting the Jews [MacArthur, 2006]; or when the murder of the high priest, Onias III, took place [Fruchtenbaum, 2019]. Lastly, Arnold Fruchtenbaum points out the equivalent word for “and” is missing between “evenings and mornings” in the Hebrew; therefore, 2,300 literal days are likely the best meaning.
- [Daniel 8:17,19, NIV] ... "Son of man," he said to me [Daniell], "understand that the vision concerns the time of the end." ... He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end."
  - Verses 15-26: The angel Gabriel gave the explanation of Daniel's vision.
    - Two-horned ram = kings of Media and Greece
    - Shaggy goat = king of Greece
    - Goat's large horn = first king of Greece
    - 4 horns = 4 kingdoms that emerged from the first king of Greece
    - A stern-faced king (Antiochus IV Epiphanes) tried to destroy the holy people. He caused deceit to prosper.
    - Gabriel's name is the first mention of an angel by name in the Bible [MacArthur, 2006]; his name means “mighty one of God”.
  - Alexander the Great had a vision about some people who were dressed in white coming to meet him, in Israel. Later, in 332 AD, some priests dressed in white met him, and they read *from the book of Daniel* to Alexander [Hitchcock, 2013]. It had a huge impact on Alexander; he fell on his knees before the priests. God must have sent him that dream.
    - The Jewish historian Josephus wrote about this event concerning Alexander the Great.
  - There is more about the little horn. Verse 18 states, “the vision concerns the time of the end”, and verse 26 states that the vision “concerns the distant future”. Thus, there is a more important fulfillment to come.
  - A “master of intrigue” will become “very strong, but not by his own power” (i.e., by Satan) ... “he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.”

- Since the many past prophecies have been fulfilled literally, we have confidence that future prophecies will also be fulfilled literally.
- The following prophecy was written by Paul in the New Testament. Thus, the same prophecy in Daniel is still awaiting a future fulfillment.

[2 Thessalonians 2:4, NIV] "He [Antichrist] will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God."

## Chapter 9: Daniel's Prayer and the 70 'Weeks' of Years

- Chapter 9 was written around 539-538 BC. The first year of Darius was circa 539 BC. This was also the same year that Chapter 6 was written (e.g., Daniel in the lions' den). Note that in both chapters, prayer is a central point.
- Daniel was about 80-85 years of age.
- Babylon fell in 539 BC.
- Recall that, chronologically, the chapters in Daniel are in this order:
  - 1-4, 7, 8, 5, 9, 6, 10-12
- Mark Hitchcock calls Daniel 9:24-27 "the greatest prophecy in the Bible" [Hitchcock, 2013].
- Chapter 9 is divided into 2 major parts:
  - Verses 1-23: prayer
  - Verses 24-27: prophecy
- A large part of Chapter 9 is a prayer of confession and supplication by Daniel. Daniel often used the inclusive term "we" when saying how the Israelites have disobeyed God, refused to listen to Him, and fallen well short of His standards. The Lord is forgiving; but, bad behaviour has consequences.
- Daniel's prayer focused on God's attributes and confessed Israel's shortcomings: "we have not listened to your servants the prophets" and "we have not obeyed".
  - Israel's attributes: shameful, unfaithful, rebellious
  - God's attributes: covenant-keeping, merciful, forgiving
- Daniel studied the writings of the prophet **Jeremiah**. In particular, Daniel focused on a period of 70 years mentioned by Jeremiah. The 70 years apparently started in 606 BC, and were coming to an end. Daniel was looking forward to the end of the 70 years.

[Jeremiah 25:11-14, NIV] This whole country [Israel] will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. "But when the **seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation**, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever. I will bring upon that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that are written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations. They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings; I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."

### ***The 70 'Sevens' or 70 'Weeks': One of the Most Important Prophecies in the Bible—God's Timepiece***

[Daniel 9:24, NIV] "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city [Jerusalem] to finish [the] transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

- In this context, a "seven" or a "week" in Hebrew is a period of 7 years, and this is the intended measure in the book of Daniel. Thus, 70 weeks of years = 70 periods of 7 years

=  $70 \times 7$  years = **490 years in all**. In other words, the prophecy describes a total of 490 years.

- We base the year on a 360-day year, as per other Old Testament references (e.g., Genesis, Esther, and Revelation). All of the ancient calendars: Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian, Persian, Greek, Mayan, Chinese, etc. had 360-day years [Missler, 2004].
- Why should we think of these ‘weeks’ as years?
  - The context up to now has been “years”. For example, Daniel knew that Jeremiah’s prophecy about the exile would last 70 years.
  - Daniel had been prayer and mourning for 3 weeks (Daniel 10:2,13) and the scripture says that each week was a week of days because it was 21 days in all.
  - Note that Daniel’s prophecies that have been fulfilled cannot be squeezed into a period of 490 days (about 1.3 years).
  - Daniel 9:24-27 states that the covenant will be broken in the middle of the week (of years). Furthermore, related scriptures in Revelation speak of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years or 42 months or 1,260 days.
  - Daniel’s 490 years line up with the coming of Jesus Christ, on Palm Sunday (which accounted for 483 of the 490 years). In other words, the “years” fit. The final block of 7 years—called the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel—is still in the future.
- Have the 6 outcomes (“to finish [the] transgression”, “to put an end to sin”, etc.) in Daniel 9:24 been fulfilled in history? No.
  - The Hebrew translation includes the definite article “the” in front of “transgression” [Hitchcock, 2013]. So, “*the* transgression” refers to the rebellion of Israel, that is, the rejection of the Messiah, and the apostasy or turning away from God, by Israel [Hocking, 2011].
  - Has there been “an end to sin”? No, sin is actively taking place throughout the world.
  - Atonement has been made for the sins of Israel, but have the Jews accepted it? No.
  - Did Christ bring in “everlasting righteousness”? No. That won’t happen until Christ sets up the Millennium.
  - Vision and prophecy have not been sealed up, yet. There’s much more to be fulfilled.
  - “To anoint the most holy” always refers to the Temple except in one place in the Bible: 1 Chronicles. This looks to a future Temple when the holy place will be anointed.
- The 6 events mentioned in Daniel 9:24 have not been fulfilled, but they will be fulfilled in the future. This means the conclusion of the 70 weeks is still in the future.

[Daniel 9:25, NIV] "Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler [Jesus Christ], comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' [i.e.,  $69 \times 7$  years = 483 years]. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.

- 7 ‘weeks’ + 62 ‘weeks’ = 69 ‘weeks’. The first 7 ‘weeks’ may refer to the complete restoration of Jerusalem because there was some opposition during that time, and the next

62 'weeks' (to make a total of 69 weeks) refers to the time until the coming of the Messiah.

- There is a fair bit of disagreement among scholars as to the *exact starting date and the exact ending date* of the 69 'weeks' of years, but the principles are the same. The starting point is whenever King Artaxerxes issued the decree to rebuild the streets and trench (or streets and wall, in the KJV) of Jerusalem. The ending point is when Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem on a donkey allowing Himself to be declared Messiah (i.e., the Christ, the Anointed One, the Savior, the Redeemer, the Son of God). But what are these starting and ending dates, when mapped onto equivalent dates in our modern (Gregorian) calendar system?
  - There were four decrees concerning Jerusalem. The first three are "false starts" [Lindsted, 1984]:
    1. Circa 536 BC: Ezra 1:1-4 records the decree by King Cyrus of Persia to rebuild the house of God (i.e., the Temple). This is different than a decree to rebuild the streets and wall of Jerusalem.
      - See also Ezra 6:1-5 and 2 Chronicles 36:22-23.
      - Note that the Temple was destroyed 50 years ago prior to King Cyrus' decree.
      - In 536 BC, the returning Jews laid a foundation and built an altar, but then there was no further action until about 520-519 BC [Hitchcock, 2013].
    2. Circa 519 BC (17 years later): Ezra 6:6-12 documents the second decree. This was issued by King Darius of Persia. It was similar to the first decree; but, it was just a confirmation of King Cyrus's original decree, to eliminate any confusion among the king's orders.
    3. Circa 458 BC: Ezra 7:11-26 records the third decree. It was given by the new king: King Artaxerxes. He confirmed the earlier decrees, and gave Ezra whatever he needed to build the house of God. Again, it's just about the Temple.
    4. Circa 445 BC (some argue 454 BC): There was a fourth decree given in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus. Nehemiah 2 describes the fact that Jerusalem is in ruins, and it also records the permission given by King Artaxerxes to rebuild the streets and wall of Jerusalem, albeit in difficult times. It is the *only* decree to restore and build Jerusalem [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. **This is the starting point of Daniel's 70 weeks.**
  - The endpoint was not the birth of Christ, but rather the day that Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, called Palm Sunday in our calendar.

[Luke 19:44, NIV] As he [Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace -- but now it is hidden from your eyes. ... because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

There are several models or conjectures about the starting and ending dates. Here are 3 such models, taken from a summary in [Knorr, 2021]:

- **Model 1.** This one is due to Sir Robert Anderson [Anderson, 1984]. It uses Sunday, April 6, 32 AD as the date of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, on a donkey, on Palm Sunday. Floyd Nolan Jones [Jones, 2004] claims that, in Anderson's model (Model 2, below), Nisan 10 would not have been *Sunday*, April 6, 32 AD, but rather *Wednesday*, April 9, 32 AD. So, if we use Nisan 10, 32 AD for Christ's entry into Jerusalem, followed 4 days later by His death (Sunday) and 3 days after that by His resurrection (Wednesday), then we have a problem. We know that Christ rose from the dead very early on a Sunday morning—the first day of the week. Also, Christ could not have died on Nisan 14, which is when the Passover lambs were supposed to be slaughtered. It is generally accepted that Christ, our Passover Lamb: (a) entered Jerusalem on a donkey on Nisan 10 (analogous to the Nisan 10 sanctification of the Passover lamb in Egypt), (b) died on Nisan 14 (the start of Passover), and (c) rose from the dead on Nisan 17 (the Feast of Firstfruits). Thus, because of the Nisan 10 problem—and more arguments below—Jones says that the 32 AD date is unlikely, and that 30 AD (i.e., Model 2, below) makes more sense.
  - For comparison with the other two models, let us summarize Anderson's original calculations [Anderson, 1984, p. 128; McClain, 1969, p. 25] to see the fulfilment (to the day) of Daniel's 69 weeks of years, as per Daniel 9:24-27. Specifically, in terms of Biblical years vs. solar years, we have these calculations:
    - $69 \times 7 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days/Biblical year} = 173,880 \text{ days}$
    - March 14, 445 BC to April 6, 32 AD =
      - $(445 - 1)$  for the BC part; 1 for the 1 BC to 1 AD part; and  $(32 - 1)$  for the AD part =  $444 + 1 + 31 = 476$  solar years
      - $476 \text{ years} \times 365 \text{ days/year} = 173,740 \text{ days}$
      - Add 24 days for the period March 14 to April 6 (inclusive, argues Anderson) = 24 days
      - Add 116 days for leap years, with the rationale:  
To divide 476 by 4 would give 119 leap-years. But since century-years are not leap-years unless divisible by 400 and since 476 years involve four centuries, it follows that only one of the four century-years would be a true leap-year. Therefore, it is necessary to subtract 3 from 119 to get the exact number of extra leap-year days in 476 years. [McClain, 1969, p. 25]
      - $173,740 \text{ days} + 24 \text{ days} + 116 \text{ days} = 173,880 \text{ days}$
  - This model is perhaps the most well-known one, and is often referenced in prophecy books.
- **Model 2.** Instead, consider the following model that uses the date of Sunday, March 31, 30 AD for the triumphal entry into Jerusalem [Jones, 2004]. Some evidence suggests that Artaxerxes (the king who gave the order to rebuild the streets and wall (or streets and trench, in some translations) of Jerusalem) rose to power in 473 BC. The 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign would be 454 BC, which is the same year used by Archbishop Ussher (who, incidentally, wrote of a 4004 BC creation date). In Anderson's model (Model 1, above),

the years are “prophetic” years consisting of 360 days each. Jones writes that the 365.2422-day earth year began with Noah’s Flood, and therefore there is no need to override this with a prophetic year of 360 days (which possibly may be restored during the Millennium). Jones claims that Nisan 10, 30 AD fell on Sunday, March 31, 30 AD, which would be Palm Sunday. Christ would have died on Nisan 14, 30 AD, which is Thursday, April 4, 30 AD. More specifically, He died at 3 PM, and that is also when the Passover lambs are sacrificed. Friday would be a special Sabbath (the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) and Saturday would be a regular Sabbath. If Christ had died on Thursday afternoon, then He would have been in the grave for 3 days and 3 nights, similar to the biographical narrative of the prophet Jonah. Thus, Christ rose from the dead on Sunday, April 7, 30 AD.

Matthew 12:39-40 He [Jesus] answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. **For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

Lastly, the city of Jerusalem and its temple would be destroyed 40 years later on Av 9, 70 AD—that is, August 6, 70 AD. (The number “40” is often used in Scripture as a time of testing; so, this is interesting from the perspective of Model 2’s timeline.)

In summary, Jones’ extensive research argues that:

- Christ was probably born in either December 5 BC or January 4 BC.
- He began His ministry in either the summer or fall of 27 AD, which would make Him 30 years of age at the beginning of His ministry, and 33 years of age at the end of His ministry.
- His public ministry lasted about 2½ years.
- Christ died at Passover, 30 AD. Specifically:
  - Christ’s triumphal entry, with Him riding on a donkey into Jerusalem, was on Sunday, March 31 in 30 AD (Nisan 10).
  - The Last Supper was on Wednesday evening, April 3 (which would be the *start* of Nisan 14). Recall that the Jewish day goes from one sundown to the next sundown—meaning that Nisan 14 started on Wednesday evening, and went to sundown on Thursday.
  - Christ was crucified at 3 PM on Thursday, April 4 (Nisan 14 during the day).
  - Christ rose from the dead early in the morning on Sunday, April 7 (Nisan 17).
- If we simply assume that a Biblical year equates to a solar year, and ignore calculations involving numbers of days, we have these calculations [Jones, 2004, pp. 253-254]:
  - $69 \times 7 \text{ years} = 483 \text{ years}$
  - $454 \text{ BC to } 30 \text{ AD} =$ 
    - $(454 - 1)$  for the BC part; 1 for the 1 BC to 1 AD part; and  $(30 - 1)$  for the AD part =  $453 + 1 + 29 = 483 \text{ years}$
- [This bullet point is not part of Jones’ calculations.] *Suppose* we were to compare *days* and therefore differentiate between Biblical and solar years? *Suppose further*



that we use the same type of calculations as Hoehner (Model 3), *and* we reverse-engineer the days so that the start of King Artaxerxes' degree was the equivalent of March 6, 447 BC in our modern calendar system. Then, in terms of Biblical years vs. solar years, we have these calculations:

- $69 \times 7 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days/Biblical year} = 173,880 \text{ days}$
- March 6, 447 BC to March 31, 30 AD =
  - $(447 - 1)$  for the BC part; 1 for the 1 BC to 1 AD part; and  $(30 - 1)$  for the AD part =  $446 + 1 + 29 = 476$  solar years
  - $476 \text{ years} \times 365.24219879 \text{ days/year} = 173,855 \text{ days}$
  - Add 25 days for the period March 6 to March 31 = 25 days
  - $173,855 \text{ days} + 25 \text{ days} = 173,880 \text{ days}$

- **Model 3.** Dr. Harold Hoehner, who held 2 doctorates, came up with a calculation that uses March 5, 444 BC (Nisan 1) as the start of Artaxerxes' 20<sup>th</sup> year; Monday, March 30, 33 AD (Nisan 10) for Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem; and Friday, April 3, 33 AD (Nisan 14) for the crucifixion [Hoehner, 1977]. This puts Jesus' resurrection on Nisan 16. A number of prophecy experts (e.g., John Walvoord, Mark Hitchcock, and Thomas Ice) prefer this model. It uses the methodology of Model 1, but solves some problems associated with it. Like Model 1, this set of dates also claims to span 173,880 days, and ends with Jesus Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Hoehner's extensive research argues that:

- Christ was probably born in either December 5 BC or January 4 BC.
- He began His ministry in either the summer or fall of 29 AD, which would make Him 32 years of age at the beginning of His ministry, and 35 years of age at the end of His ministry.
- His ministry lasted about 3½ years.
- Christ died at Passover, 33 AD. Specifically:
  - Christ's triumphal entry while riding a donkey into Jerusalem was on Monday, March 30, 33 AD (Nisan 10).
  - The Last Supper was on Thursday evening, April 2 (which is the start of Nisan 14).
  - Christ was crucified at 3 PM on Friday, April 3 (Nisan 14 during the day).
  - Christ rose from the dead early in the morning on Sunday, April 5 (Nisan 16), 33 AD.
- In terms of Biblical years vs. solar years, we have these calculations [Hoehner, 1977, p. 138]:
  - $69 \times 7 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days/Biblical year} = 173,880 \text{ days}$
  - March 5, 444 BC to March 30, 33 AD =
    - $(444 - 1)$  for the BC part; 1 for the 1 BC to 1 AD part; and 32 for the AD part  $(33 - 1) = 443 + 1 + 32 = 476$  solar years
    - $476 \text{ years} \times 365.24219879 \text{ days/year} = 173,855 \text{ days}$
    - Add 25 days for the period March 5 to March 30 = 25 days
    - $173,855 \text{ days} + 25 \text{ days} = 173,880 \text{ days}$

Here are some additional notes about Model 3:

- In Jesus' day, for the Galileans and Pharisees, Nisan 14 ran from sunrise on Thursday through the whole day and evening—to early morning on Friday [Hoehner, 1977].
  - In Jesus' day, for the Judeans and Sadducees, Nisan 14 started on Thursday evening at sunset, and ran through to Friday just before sunset [Hoehner, 1977].
  - Jesus held the Last Supper on the night before He was crucified. This is also when He gave the Upper Room Discourse.
  - The Galileans and Pharisees ate the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread on Thursday evening, with the Passover lamb for the meal having been killed on Thursday afternoon between 3-5 PM [Hoehner, 1977, pp. 86-90]. So, all of this happened on Nisan 14. Thus, the Last Supper, which Christ ate with His disciples, was on Thursday evening. Christ was crucified on the next day (Nisan 15).
  - The Judeans and Sadducees, however, ate the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread on Friday evening (i.e., on Nisan 15), with the Passover lamb having been killed on Friday afternoon between 3-5 PM (i.e., during the latter part of Nisan 14).
  - Note that by combined the last two bullet points, we have a reference to Christ both eating the Passover supper and being the Passover lamb.
- 
- Each of Models 1, 2, and 3 makes some assumptions. *More research is needed* to confirm these starting and ending points in history. Two common themes are: a starting point of King Artaxerxes' decree to rebuild the walls and the streets of Jerusalem, as per Nehemiah 2:1-8; and an ending point of Jesus Christ riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, presenting Himself publicly as the Messiah for the first time, and this occurring just a few days before His crucifixion. There is also the assumption of matching the Biblical events of Nisan 10, 14, 15, and 17 to specific days of the Passion week.
  - In summary, we do not know which of the above models—or some other model—is the correct one. Things get complicated because different sources for Jewish holy days do not agree on which day of the week Nisan 14 fell in any given year around that time. Furthermore, the Judeans and the Sadducees used a sunset-to-sunset day, and the Galileans and Pharisees used a sunrise-to-sunrise day [Hoehner, 1977]. There are even debates about whether the Last Supper occurred on Passover—or before Passover (e.g., Nisan 13).

Let us continue with the remaining verses of Daniel 9:24-27.

[Daniel 9:26, NIV] After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One [Messiah] will be cut off [literally executed] and will have nothing. The people [Romans, under the leadership of General Titus] of the ruler who will come [Antichrist in the far future] will destroy the city and the sanctuary [the Romans did this in 70 AD]. The end will come like a

flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

- “The Anointed One” means: “Messiah” in Hebrew, and “Christ” in Greek.
- Note from the following two verses that the Messiah was to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey; however, the Messiah would also rule in government, but that part has been put on hold for almost 2000 years, so far.

[Zechariah 9:9-10, NIV] Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, **your king comes to you**, righteous and having salvation, gentle and **riding on a donkey**, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. **He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

[Luke 19:41-44, NIV] As he [Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known **on this day** what would bring you peace -- but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, **because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.**"

- Jesus was angry with the people of his day who did not recognize the time of His coming. According to Daniel's writings from Babylon, they should have been able to calculate the day when the Messiah was to appear. The wise men (Magi) came from the East (part of the old Babylonian kingdom) to look for the King of the Jews. Recall that Daniel was an administrator in Babylon. He ruled over the Magi, and he would have been well respected in their circles. Thus, they probably knew about the general time of the arrival of the Messiah from Daniel. Recall that Daniel was marking off time until the end of the 70 years of desolation prophesied by Jeremiah. So, Daniel would have had a keen interest in the 70 weeks of years.
- With respect to the Christmas tradition of the Magi following the Christmas “star”: the star was probably not a single star or an alignment of planets, but rather the *Shekinah Glory*. This light specifically referred to the location of Jesus, directing the Magi to Jesus’s home—something that stars or planets cannot do. The Shekinah Glory is a visible manifestation of the presence of the invisible God. Recall that in Exodus, God showed His presence via a burning bush; in the wilderness, it was via a cloud during the daytime, and a pillar of fire at night; on Mount Sinai, it was via thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud; and above the Ark of the Covenant, the Shekinah Glory was the light. The Shekinah Glory may also have been the source of light mentioned in Genesis 1:3-5 [Fruchtenbaum, 2004]. This light appeared *before* God created the sun, and it may be the eternal light for the New Heavens and the New Earth described in Revelation. Genesis also describes the Shekinah Glory in terms of a smoking furnace and a flaming torch—used to confirm the Abrahamic Covenant by God Himself.
  - Ezekiel 9-11 states that when the Shekinah Glory left Israel, it moved from the Holy of Holies (inside the Temple) to the threshold at the door; then, from the

threshold to the Eastern Gate; then, from the Eastern Gate to the Mount of Olives; and finally, it left Israel altogether. However, the Shekinah Glory will return to the Millennial Temple (still future), as described in Ezekiel 43:4.

- No one in Israel seemed to anticipate the Messiah's coming. Did the people not know? Did they not care? Upon encountering the Magi, Herod was upset and wanted to know where the King of the Jews was to be born. King Herod was currently the king, and his rule originated from Rome, and covered Israel. He did not like the idea that a rival king had arrived; therefore, he had all the boys age two and under, in Bethlehem, killed. This suggests that the boy Jesus was between 0.5 and 1.5 years of age at that time.
- The Messiah had to come before 70 AD because Daniel 9:26 said that Messiah would be cut off (executed) and that this event would happen *before* the city and the sanctuary are destroyed (which we know took place in 70 AD).
- "The people of the ruler who will come" refers to the Romans. They destroyed Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 AD. Upon burning down the Temple, they left not "one stone on another" because they pried apart the rocks to get at the melted gold between the rocks.

[Matthew 24:1-2, NIV] Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."

[Daniel 9:27, NIV] He [the ruler who will come, i.e., Antichrist] will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' [7 years] In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation [i.e., a vile image of some sort], until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

- Verse 27 focuses on the 70th 'week' of Daniel.
- The term "desolation" is defined by dictionaries as a state of emptiness or destruction, misery, or loneliness. The Antichrist's insulting act makes a mockery of the things that God and the Jewish people call holy.
- The word "He" in the first part of verse 27 refers to the Antichrist. He will confirm (or possibly strengthen) a 7-year treaty/covenant with Israel and many nations. This is what resumes the "70 weeks" clock that was stopped after 69 weeks of years. In other words, we now begin the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel. Dr. John Walvoord thinks the Antichrist will *force* the covenant on Israel [Hitchcock, 2013]. This covenant may give Israel the "peace" that they are looking for. It may even give Israel the right to build the third Temple.
- The Temple will be rebuilt at that time. Halfway through the 7-year Tribulation period, the Antichrist will *stop* the animal sacrifices in the rebuilt Temple, set up an image of himself in the Temple, and require the world to worship him as God (see also: Matthew 24:15 and 2 Thessalonians 2:4). This event is called "the abomination of desolation", which occurs at the midpoint of the Tribulation (i.e., at the 42-month mark, exactly 3½ years into this 70th 'week').

- “This is going to be one of the greatest double-crosses of all time” [Hitchcock, 2013].
- Note that animal sacrifices had to have been going on in the first half of the Tribulation. This ties in with Daniel 9:24-27.
- For those who argue that Jesus Christ stopped the sacrifices, note that the sacrifices did not stop upon Christ’s death, nor did they stop in any 7-year period around that time. In fact, the sacrifices did not stop until 70 AD; and even then, it was the Romans soldiers who stopped the sacrifices when they burned down the Temple [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012].
- Revelation 13:14-18 states that the False Prophet will put up an image of the Antichrist in the rebuilt Temple. People will need to worship the image of the Antichrist, or die—similar to the rules about worshipping the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar set up about 2,600 years ago. People will also be forced to take a mark on their right hand or their forehead, in order to buy or sell. In other words, there will likely be a cashless society dealing with marks and numbers.

[Revelation 13:14-18, NIV] And he [the False Prophet] performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast [Antichrist], he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.

## Chapter 10: Heavenly Beings and the Invisible War

Recall:

- Chronologically, the chapters of Daniel are: 1-4,7,8,5,9,6,10-12.
- Chapter 10 was written around 536 BC (“in the 3rd year of Cyrus” the king of Persia). Cyrus started reigning around 550 BC; but, it was about 539 BC that Cyrus became ruler over Babylon.
- How do we know it was (about) 539 BC? After all, calendars weren’t invented yet, and there was no “BC” or “AD”.
  - The ancients recorded time relative to the kings of their time, or in relation to an eclipse [Hitchcock, 2013].
- Recall that the Jewish people were taken into captivity in three groups: 606-605 BC (when Daniel was taken), 597 BC (e.g., Ezekiel was taken), and 586 BC when the Temple was destroyed.
- Daniel is now about 85 years old.

Chapter 10 took place about 6 years after Chapter 8. In Daniel 8:27, Daniel fainted and was sick for several days. The vision (for the distant future) was beyond his understanding. In Chapter 10, Daniel mourned for 3 weeks, and is now standing on a bank of the Tigris River. Now, he receives another vision, and this concerned a spiritual war in another dimension—a battle between angels and demons in the heavenly realms.

- Beside Daniel, three people were involved. Gabriel—an archangel—was one of them. Michael is another archangel; he was fighting behind the scenes. Was Christ the other?
- This vision was appointed for the “latter years”. (We will read about the details in Chapters 11 & 12).
- Daniel 10:1,14 – A vision for the future ... for Daniel’s people.

[Daniel 10:1-3, NIV] In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and **it concerned a great war**. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision. At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

[Daniel 10:12-14, NIV] Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

[Daniel 10:20-21, NIV] So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.

- Is Daniel 10:5-9 a vision of the pre-incarnate Christ? It's quite likely because:
  - Daniel "bows down". "Bows down" is Hebrew for "worship". Recall that we should not worship anyone other than Christ (God). We should not worship angels (e.g., Gabriel, Michael; also note the apostle John's writing in Revelation 22:8-9 after John fell down to worship at the feet of the angel: "Don't do it", said the angel. Compare this to Isaiah 6:5 where Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips", and to Revelation 1:17: "I fell at his [Jesus's] feet").
  - Revelation 1:13-16 has a description of Christ; compare it with the description in Daniel 7:9-12 and Daniel 10:
    - Dressed in white, very bright appearance (like the sun)

- As noted, some of the things happening in Daniel 10 concern the spirit world. *There is a spiritual battle going on behind the scenes of our world:*

[Ephesians 6:12, NIV] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

- For the interested reader: Some of Christian author Frank Peretti's novels are about the "spiritual forces of evil" (e.g., *This Present Darkness*).

[2 Kings 6:15-17, NIV] When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

- 2 Kings 6:15-17: An analogy is the "Show Codes" feature (or "Reveal Codes" or equivalent) in a word processing program to show the markup tags that are used to specify the font, font size, bold, italics, etc. Similarly, you can select "View Source" to see the HTML for a Web page using a Web browser like Firefox (e.g., Web Developer → Page Source feature), Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari, etc. Usually, users just want the clean abstraction: they just want to see the text and images without seeing any of the distracting markup tags and programming behind the scenes.
- Note the persistent prayer (Daniel prayed for 3 weeks). This is a lesson for us.
- Time is sometimes needed to answer prayer, and to show the people results, even if the prayer's answer started taking place right away (e.g., "the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me 21 days").
- Angels are wise, but not all-knowing. Angels cannot be everywhere at once.

## **Chapter 11: History Written Well in Advance – Details about the Succession of World Empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Revived Rome, and Antichrist**

**Scene:** Daniel is about 85 years of age, near the end of his life, circa 536 BC, living in Babylon. He was in captivity for 70 years, but was possibly around 15 years old when he first came to Babylon.

- Mark Hitchcock calls Daniel 9:24-27 “the greatest prophecy in the Bible”. He adds that *Daniel 11* is the “greatest chapter of prophecy ever given”. Daniel 11:1-35 contains 135 prophecies that have been fulfilled and can be verified [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. However, Daniel 11:36-45 and Daniel 12:4 have not been fulfilled yet.
  - Verse 2 focuses on Israel under the rule of Persia.
  - Verses 3-35 focus on Israel under the rule of Greece.
  - Rome is omitted.
  - Israel in the church age is omitted.
  - Verses 36-45 focus on Israel under the rule of Antichrist.
- Chapters 10-12 form one continuous sequence or vision about “the pre-written history of Israel among the nations”:
  - Daniel 10:1–11:1 is the introduction to the vision.
  - Daniel 11:2–12:4 is the actual vision.
  - Daniel 12:5-13 is the conclusion to the vision.
- Daniel 11 can be broken down into the rules of 5 main kings, all starting with the letter ‘A’ [Hitchcock, 2013]:
  - Ahasuerus (Xerxes)—circa 445 BC
  - Alexander the Great—circa 330 BC
  - Antiochus the Great—circa 210 BC
  - Antiochus IV Epiphanes—circa 168 BC
  - Antichrist—20xx AD?

Here is a chronological summary of the kings in Chapter 11 [Missler, 2004; Wikipedia, 2019]. The dates are approximate:

- Verses 1-2: **Persian Empire**
  - 539-530 BC: Cyrus the Great (Daniel 5; Isaiah 44-45). Cyrus reigned at the time of Daniel’s writing. This is King Cyrus of Persia.
  - 529-522 BC: Cambyses II (son of Cyrus the Great)
  - 522 BC: Pseudo-Smerdis (another son of Cyrus the Great, and this son may also be known by the name Bardiya)
  - 521-486 BC: Darius I (son of Hystaspes)
  - 486-465 BC: Xerxes I (aka Ahasuerus who was Queen Esther’s husband)—Xerxes I was the son of Darius I
  - 465-425 BC: Artaxerxes Longimanus (Daniel 9:24-27; Nehemiah 2)—son of Xerxes I



- Verses 3-4: **Greek Empire**
  - 334-323 BC: Alexander the Great
- Verses 5-35: **Seleucid-Ptolemy Rivalry**
  - This is the Syria-Egypt rivalry between 2 of the 4 divisions of the Greek Empire, over a period of about 150 years. This long rivalry was between the King of the North (Syria) and the King of the South (Egypt). Note that Israel was the buffer zone between Syria and Egypt.
    - **Seleucids: “Kings of the North”**
      - There were 8 kings in the Seleucid Dynasty.
    - **Ptolemies: “Kings of the South”**
      - There were 6 kings in the Ptolemaic Dynasty.
  - “Between the Testaments” = 400 “silent years”
  - The following chart is from [Missler, 2004] and [Bates, *et al.*, 2020]:

Daniel 11	Kings of the North (Seleucids)	Daniel 11	Kings of the South (Ptolemies)
v. 5	Seleucus I Nicator (312-281 BC) Antiochus I Soter (281-262 BC)	v.5	Ptolemy I Soter (323-285 BC)
v.6	Antiochus II Theos (262-246 BC)	v.6	Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC) Note: the Septuagint translation (“LXX”) was written during his reign. This became the Christians’ Bible.
vv. 7-9	Seleucus II Callinicus (246-227 BC)	vv. 7-8	Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 BC)
v. 10	Seleucus III Soter (227-223 BC)		
vv. 10-19	Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BC)	vv. 11-12	Ptolemy IV Philopator (221-204 BC)
v. 20	Seleucus IV Philopator (187-176 BC)	v. 13-19	Ptolemy V Epiphanes (204-181 BC)
vv. 21-35	Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 BC)	v. 25-27	Ptolemy VI Philometor (181-145 BC)

- Verses 36-39: The willful king (Antichrist)
- Verses 40-45: The Armageddon scenario

Keep in mind that the prophecies of Chapters 11-12 in the book of Daniel were written around 536 BC—hundreds of years before they were fulfilled.

At the start of Chapter 11, the angel of Chapter 10 is telling Daniel:

[Daniel 11:2-4, NIV] "Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will appear in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against **the kingdom of Greece**. **Then a mighty king will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. After he has appeared, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others.**"

The 4 kings were likely Cambyses (529-522 BC), Pseudo-Smerdis (522-521 BC), Darius I Hystaspes (521-486 BC; mentioned in Ezra 5-6), and Xerxes I (486-465 BC; Queen Esther's husband, who was so rich that it encouraged **Alexander the Great** of Greece to conquer the Medes and Persians) [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. The "mighty king" was Alexander the Great (336-323 BC). He died in his early 30s without a qualified heir to succeed him. His son Hercules died before he did, and his young son Alexander (who was born after Alexander the Great died), did not want to rule and was murdered in 310 BC. Within 15 years, Alexander's family did not exist.

**Alexander's kingdom was divided into 4 parts** in 301 BC. Verses 5-21 give the story of the **4 generals** who got possession of Alexander's kingdom. The generals were: **Cassander** (Macedonia and Greece); **Lysimachus** (Thrace (southeastern Europe), Bithynia (northwest Asia Minor, and most of the rest of Asia Minor); **Ptolemy** (Egypt, Cyrene, Arabia); and **Seleucus** (Syria and lands to the East, all the way to India). *Note that that this 4-part division was prophesied hundreds of years in advance.*

- Note: The Septuagint ("LXX") is the pre-Christian translation of the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament into the language of the day: Greek. During Roman times, the common language was still Greek, even though Latin became the official language.
  - Translation took place during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC).
  - The Septuagint includes the book of Daniel, which is one of the 39 books of the Old Testament.
    - The fact that Daniel is in the Septuagint debunks the claims of liberal scholars who claim that Daniel was written much later. (Liberal scholars think that Daniel is more about history than prophecy; but, recall that Christ specifically called Daniel a *prophet* in Matthew 24:15.)
  - Greek is a highly precise language with specific words to accurately define concepts or terms like "love". Note that a word like "love" may have several interpretations in English, and therefore be ambiguous in English; but, not so in Greek (because Greek has several words for "love").
  - Thus, the Greek language (and hence the Septuagint) is very useful.

[Daniel 11:5-6, NIV] "The king of the South will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power. After some years, they will become allies. The daughter of the king of the South will go to the king of the North to make an alliance, but she will not retain her power, and he and his power will not last. In those days she will be betrayed,

together with her royal escort and her father and the one who supported her.

- The daughter of the King of the South (Ptolemy II Philadelphus) was Berenice. The son of the King of the North was Antiochus II Theos, who married her, after divorcing his current wife, Laodice. It was hoped that this alliance would bring peace and stability to the North and the South. The fathers died and war broke out. Berenice ruled in place of her father, but there was confusion. When Ptolemy II died, Antiochus II abandoned Berenice and returned to his first wife, Laodice, who wanted revenge and thus poisoned and killed Antiochus II, Berenice, and their infant son [Hocking, 2011]. Laodice's son, Seleucus II Callinicus, became ruler [MacArthur, 2006]. The city of Laodicea, mentioned in Revelation 3, was built by Antiochus II, who named it after Laodice.

[Daniel 11:7-10, NIV] "One from her family line will arise to take her place. He will attack the forces of the king of the North and enter his fortress; he will fight against them and be victorious. He will also seize their gods, their metal images and their valuable articles of silver and gold and carry them off to Egypt. For some years he will leave the king of the North alone. Then the king of the North will invade the realm of the king of the South but will retreat to his own country. His sons will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will sweep on like an irresistible flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress.

- Ptolemy III Euergetes was the brother of the murdered Berenice. He invaded Syria from the south, seized the port of Seleucia near Antioch, and invaded Seleucus II's empire as far as Babylon [Missler, 2004]. Ptolemy III killed Laodice. He seized 40,000 talents of silver (a talent is about 75 pounds) and 4,000 talents of gold from the North, including about 2,500 idols that were taken from Egypt to Persia, circa 522 BC, during the rule of the Medes and the Persians [Bates, *et al.*, 2020]. After 2 years, Seleucus II marched south against Egypt, and lost, circa 242 BC. He returned with only a small remnant of his army. The north and the south were at peace from 241-223 BC [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. In 225 BC, Seleucus II was succeeded by his son Seleucus III, who in turn was succeeded in 223 BC by his brother, Antiochus III, also known as Antiochus the Great.

[Daniel 11:11-13, NIV] Then the king of the South [Ptolemy IV Philopator] will march out in a rage and fight against the king of the North [Antiochus the Great], who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated. When the army is carried off, the king of the South will be filled with pride and will slaughter many thousands, yet he will not remain triumphant. For the king of the North will muster another army, larger than the first; and after several years, he will advance with a huge army fully equipped.

- In summary, the kings of the north and south were in battle, back and forth, for about 200 years. Every time they invaded, they passed through Israel.
- In verse 11, Ptolemy IV Philopator's army (circa 217 BC) soundly defeated the army of Antiochus the Great at the battle of Raphia. From 212-204 BC, Antiochus turned his

sights towards India and towards the Caspian Sea [Walvoord, et al., 2012]. Ptolemy IV toured Israel, including Jerusalem, but was prevented from entering the Holy of Holies by temporary physical paralysis. Ptolemy IV and his wife died mysteriously circa 204 BC [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. After that, using a well-equipped army, Antiochus the Great led a series of attacks against Egypt.

[Daniel 11:14-15, NIV] In those times many will rise against the king of the South. Those who are violent among your own people [the Jews] will rebel in fulfillment of the vision, but without success. Then the king of the North will come and build up siege ramps and will capture a fortified city [Sidon in Lebanon]. The forces of the South will be powerless to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to stand.

- The army of the King of the South, under the leadership of General Scopas, retreated to Sidon after being defeated at Caesarea Philippi. At Sidon, circa 198 BC, the Egyptians surrendered due to besiegement and starvation [Bates, *et al.*, 2020].

[Daniel 11:16-17, NIV] The invader [Antiochus the Great] will do as he pleases; no one will be able to stand against him. He will establish himself in the Beautiful Land [Israel] and will have the power to destroy it. He will determine to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will make an alliance with the king of the South. And he [Antiochus the Great] will give him [Ptolemy V] a daughter [Cleopatra] in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom, but his plans will not succeed or help him.

- Antiochus the Great, the King of the North, placed Israel under his sovereignty.
- After his death in 204 BC or 203 BC, Ptolemy IV was succeeded by his 4-year old son, Ptolemy V Epiphanes. The daughter of Antiochus the Great, Cleopatra I Syra, at the age of 7 was given in marriage to the King of the South (Ptolemy V) when the groom was 10 years old [Lindsted, 1984]. Note: This was not Cleopatra of the famous pair Antony & Cleopatra because the latter was Cleopatra VII who came on the scene about 150 years later. Antiochus the Great's motive was to secure peace with Egypt, but he also hoped that his daughter would help spy on Egypt and therefore weaken the kingdom [MacArthur, 2006]. Cleopatra, however, remained loyal to her Egyptian husband, and not to her father, Antiochus the Great.
- As a side note, the Rosetta Stone was created under Ptolemy V, and "it was the recognition of his name on the inscription that became the key to unlocking the meaning of the hieroglyphics, which were formerly unintelligible" [Bates, *et al.*, 2020, p. 43].

[Daniel 11:18-19, NIV] Then he will turn his attention to the coastlands and will take many of them, but a commander will put an end to his insolence and will turn his insolence back on him. After this, he [Antiochus the Great] will turn back toward the fortresses of his own country but will stumble and fall, to be seen no more.

- Antiochus turned his attention to Greece, but was defeated by the Romans. A new, world power—Rome—was starting to form. Antiochus the Great risked 300 ships, but was defeated soundly by the Romans. He may have met his death in Persia while trying to plunder the Persian temple of Bel in Elam to meet this debt [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012].

[Daniel 11:20, NIV] "His successor will send out a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor. In a few years, however, he will be destroyed, yet not in anger or in battle."

- Antiochus the Great was succeeded by his son, Seleucus IV Philopator, who was required to pay a large amount of taxes in tribute to Rome [Woods, 2017a]. The Romans taxed him 2,550 talents, plus 1,000 talents per year. Seleucus IV taxed the people, and they were not happy about this. He also sent Heliodorus, a tax collector, to take treasures from the temple in Jerusalem. The part about “not in anger or in battle” refers to a conspiracy by Heliodorus, who wound up poisoning Seleucus IV in 175 BC.

[Daniel 11:21-24, NIV] "He [Seleucus IV] will be succeeded by a contemptible person [Antiochus IV Epiphanes] who has not been given the honor of royalty. He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue. Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed. After coming to an agreement with him, he will act deceitfully, and with only a few people he will rise to power. When the richest provinces feel secure, he will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did. He will distribute plunder, loot and wealth among his followers. He will plot the overthrow of fortresses -- but only for a time.

- Enter Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the brother of Seleucus IV, and the youngest son of Antiochus the Great. Epiphanes means “the glorious one”. Seleucus IV was murdered, and his son Demetrius (who could have succeeded him) was held hostage in prison in Rome [MacArthur, 2006]. There was a younger son, but he was still a baby [Walvoord, 1990], and was subsequently murdered. Antiochus IV of Athens, despite not being next in line to the throne, gained the throne illegitimately through flattery and intrigue. He reigned from 175-164 BC. The “prince of the covenant” refers to the high priest at the time, Onias III, who was murdered by his brother Menelaus in 171 BC, at Antiochus IV’s request [MacArthur, 2006]. Antiochus IV did not like Onias, and replaced him with Onias’s brother Jason in 175 BC, with the intent of promoting Greek culture (i.e., Hellenization) in Israel [Hocking, 2011; Fruchtenbaum, 2019].
- By comparison, it is interesting to note that when Christ was born, he was a legitimate heir of King David, and the Bible is very clear about that, carefully outlining Christ’s ancestry back to David, and then back further to Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham ... and finally continuing back through Noah all the way to Adam and Eve. The Antichrist, however, like Antiochus IV Epiphanes, will not be a legitimate heir to the throne [Woods, 2017b].

- Unlike his fathers, Antiochus IV Epiphanes robbed the rich; thus, he became popular with the bulk of the population. History confirms that Antiochus IV took spoils from war, and shared them. Around this time, his two nephews, Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VII in Egypt, were engaged in a power battle for control of Egypt.

[Daniel 11:25-27, NIV] "With a large army he [Antiochus IV Epiphanes] will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South [Ptolemy VI Philometor]. The king of the South will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against him. Those who eat from the king's provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle. The two kings [Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI, circa 169 BC], with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time.

- After the death of his mother Cleopatra, Ptolemy VI Philometor was defeated by Antiochus IV Epiphanes [Missler, 2004]. Historians record that Antiochus IV took Ptolemy VI under his protection. The two kings sat at the same table and spoke lies to each other while they were trying to make a truce, and peace was not reached. Antiochus IV returned to his own country (Syria) with great wealth.
- There is a lot of treachery in Daniel 11. "Human nature doesn't change, even today", says Mark Hitchcock. It is interesting to note that the Antichrist in Daniel 9:27 will make a deceitful agreement during Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week. Like Antiochus IV, the Antichrist will set himself against the Jewish people.

[Daniel 11:28, NIV] The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it and then return to his own country.

- The Jews heard that he had been defeated, and they celebrated even as he returned to Syria though Israel. "His heart shall be against the holy covenant" (God's covenant with Israel).
- In another campaign against Egypt, in 168 BC, Antiochus IV Epiphanes went against the two Ptolemy brothers who had since reconciled and then ruled together [Hocking, 2011]. The brothers appealed to Rome, which was starting to rise in power.

[Daniel 11:29-30, NIV] "At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. Ships of the western coastlands [Kittim] will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant.

- Antiochus IV Epiphanes failed to take Alexandria. The ships of Kittim (Rome, but it is a term that encompasses the northeast Mediterranean area, including Cyprus) supported Egypt and came against him. He was humiliated, and conceded Egypt to the Romans. Then, he took out his anger against the Jews and Jerusalem, and attempted to Hellenize them by turning their Jewish customs to Greek customs [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012].
- There was an insurrection in the land, led by Jason who was under pressure from the Jewish leaders, who did not want Greek culture and who didn't recognize his claim to the priesthood [Hocking, 2011]. Antiochus IV stopped the insurrection. Extra-biblical accounts in the books of First and Second Maccabees mention that 80,000 Jews—including children—were killed during the revolt (including 40,000 in a three-day period in Jerusalem), and 40,000 Jews were enslaved [Fruchtenbaum, 2019].

[Daniel 11:31-35] "His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up **the abomination that causes desolation**. With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God [Judas Maccabeus and his army/followers] will firmly resist him. Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.

- History records that Antiochus Epiphanes brought a pig into the Jewish temple, slaughtered it on the altar, cooked it, stuffed it into some priests' mouths, took its broth and spread it around the temple, turned the sanctuary into a brothel, caused the daily sacrifices to God to cease, and placed a statue of Zeus Olympus in the Holy Place (i.e., in the Holy of Holies) [Hitchcock, 2013]. The statue had the facial appearance of Antiochus Epiphanes. He also outlawed Judaism, circumcision, and the reading and practice of the Law of Moses (Torah) [Fruchtenbaum, 2019]. In fact, he demanded that copies of the Law be burned. This series of events in the Temple in 168 BC was called "the abomination of desolation". The Jews refused to enter the Temple after all of this.
- During these violent times, the Maccabees under the leadership of Judas Maccabee rebelled. Over a period of about 3 years, they recaptured the Temple Mount and purified the temple. This led to the Feast of Hanukkah. Hanukkah also celebrates the miracle of how one day's supply of oil kept the lamps burning in the sanctuary for 8 days.
- In summary, there are about 135 prophecies in Daniel 11:1-35, and they were all fulfilled [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. Daniel 11:36-45 and Daniel 12 have not been fulfilled (yet). Note, in particular, the last words of Daniel 11:35: "... until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time". Thus, at this point in the Chapter, Daniel is about to describe end times events.
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes is a *type* of the future Antichrist who will also set up the abomination of desolation, referred to by both Daniel and Jesus Christ. Antiochus IV

went on to Persia, gained some victories, but died there circa 164 BC [Larkin, 1929]. He never fulfilled the words of Daniel 11:36, namely Antiochus did not “exalt himself or magnify himself above every god” because he was trying to honor the Greek gods, and in particular, Zeus [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012]. Furthermore, he never “[divided or] distributed the land for a price” (Daniel 11:39).

- Consider the phrase “the abomination that causes desolation” in verse 31. Jesus Christ, circa 30 AD, stated:

[Matthew 24:15-16, NIV] "So when you see standing in the holy place '**the abomination that causes desolation**,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel -- let the reader understand -- then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

[Matthew 24:21-22, NIV] "For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now -- and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened."

- Thus, “*the* abomination that causes desolation” has a *future* fulfillment, according to Jesus. This event did not happen during—or before—70 AD; and since 70 AD, there was no temple; therefore, this event has to be a future event. It is also described in Revelation 13. Furthermore, the Apostle Paul states in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 that the lawless one (Antichrist) will be revealed in the future:

[2 Thessalonians 2:4, NIV] He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

[2 Thessalonians 2:8, NIV] And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

- In summary, verses 21-35 speak of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Note that all of this was told 300-400 years in advance. The Jewish Feast of Hanukkah celebrates the Jewish tradition that one day’s supply of oil (for the lamps in the temple) miraculously lasted for 8 days. It also celebrates the rebellion of the armies of Judas Maccabeus against the Syrian army, whereby the Maccabean army captured the Temple Mount, cleansed the sanctuary, and restored the daily sacrifice—in 165 BC, 3½ years after the desecration by Antiochus IV.
- About 100 years later, Rome became a world empire. Recall that Rome ruled over Israel at the time of Christ. In fact, in 18 BC, to appease the Jewish people and therefore have some degree of peace in the region, Rome’s King Herod started restoring and rebuilding the Jewish Temple into a magnificent structure that was completed in 64 AD [Hocking, 2011]. This is why the second temple is sometimes called Herod’s temple.
- Verses 21-35 are a picture or *type* of the Antichrist. Every detail up to this point in Daniel was confirmed by history, but we know that verses 36-45 have not been fulfilled



yet for the following reasons. (1) There was no historical evidence of their fulfillment [Hitchcock, 2013; Lindsted, 1984]. In fact, verse 35 ends with "... until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time." As we will see shortly, verses 36-45 in Daniel 11 go *beyond* just Antiochus Epiphanes, that is, to a future fulfillment under Antichrist. (2) Antiochus Epiphanes did not die in the way described in these verses. Thus, liberal scholars who claim that this is part of history are wrong; those verses are about *future* prophecy. (3) Verse 40 states that the King of the North will move against him [Antichrist]. But, if this latter person were Antiochus Epiphanes, then that would have been himself, since Antiochus Epiphanes was the King of the North! So, that doesn't fit.

Of all the treaties that the Antichrist will make, note that, like Antiochus Epiphanes, he keeps persecuting the Jews. The Antichrist is likely to be a Gentile because the *type*, Antiochus Epiphanes, was a Gentile. Revelation 13 also says that the beast will rise out of the sea, which traditionally means the Gentile nations. He will also be the final Gentile ruler, as per Daniel's vision of Nebuchadnezzar's statue.

The Antichrist will stop the sacrifice, and this is still in the future: at the time of the end.

Compare what the Apostle Paul wrote circa 50-53 AD with what Daniel wrote almost 600 years earlier:

[2 Thessalonians 2:4, NIV] **"He [Antichrist] will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God."**

[Daniel 11:36-39, NIV] **"The king [Antichrist] will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath [Tribulation] is completed, for what has been determined must take place. He will show no regard for the gods [or God] of his ancestors or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses [military power]; a god unknown to his ancestors he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price."**

- The Antichrist will be a dictator that thinks of himself first. He will reject religion and be obsessed with power. The "one desired by women" is most likely Jesus Christ, since Jewish women have traditionally longed for having a son who would be the Messiah. Furthermore, the Antichrist will have military might.
- The following supporting verses help to clarify how history will unfold:

[Zechariah 12:3, NIV] **"On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves."**

[Zechariah 12:6, NIV] "On that day I will make the leaders of Judah [Israeli government and military] like a firepot in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. They will consume right and left all the surrounding peoples, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place.

[Zechariah 12:9, NIV] "On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem."

[Joel 3:2, NIV] "I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat [Jerusalem]. There I will enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and **divided up my land.**"

- Let's return to the concluding verses of Daniel Chapter 11:

[Daniel 11:40-45, NIV] "**At the time of the end** the king of the South [Egypt] will engage him [Antichrist] in battle, and the king of the North [Assyria, or possibly Gog from Magog] will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land [Israel]. Many countries will fall, but Edom [southern Jordan], Moab [central Jordan] and the leaders of Ammon [northern Jordan] will be delivered from his hand. He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites [Sudan] in submission. But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. He will pitch his royal tents between the seas [the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea] at the beautiful holy mountain [in Jerusalem]. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

- Verses 40+: We have an alignment of nations. The picture may be that of a military campaign by the Antichrist where his forces invade Israel, and then pass through into Egypt and North Africa [Walvoord, *et al.*, 2012].
- The Antichrist is unlikely to be the king of the North. The Antichrist will prosper for a time, but the King of the South and the King of the North will move against him by ground and by sea. Tidings out of the North will come, possibly from Russia, argue Mark Hitchcock and David Hocking, who think that Ezekiel 38-39 (i.e., the Magog invasion of Israel) and Daniel 11:40 may be parallel passages. (Obviously, this would not be the case if Ezekiel 38-39 were fulfilled by that time. Remember that the Magog invasion is against Israel rather than against the Antichrist, and secondly, God defends Israel against the Magog invasion.)
- John Whitcomb takes an alternative view [Whitcomb, 1985]. He thinks that the events of Daniel 11:36-45 are connected to Ezekiel 38-39 and to Revelation 13 and 17. The timeframe is the middle of the Tribulation. In particular, Whitcomb thinks that the king of the North will inflict the fatal wound on the Antichrist. Then, the king of the North moves quickly into Africa. Later, he is alarmed by reports from the east and the north,

that is, from Israel which lies to the north and east of his current position of Libya or Sudan. It might be at this point that the Antichrist is resuscitated in the holy land, kills the two witnesses of Revelation 11, has an image of himself set up (via the False Prophet) in the rebuilt temple, and declares himself to be God. Whitcomb argues that this happens at the midpoint of the Tribulation, and is obviously a serious challenge to the king of the North who appeared to be on his way to world domination. The king of the North now heads back to Israel and challenges the Antichrist. The Antichrist calls down fire from heaven, bringing the king of the North to his end.

Joel 2:20 "I [God] will drive the northern horde far from you, pushing it into a parched and barren land; its eastern ranks will drown in the Dead Sea and its western ranks in the Mediterranean Sea. And its stench will go up; its smell will rise." Surely he [God] has done great things!

Whitcomb connects Joel 2:20 to Ezekiel 38-39, Daniel 11:40-45, and the prophecies about "the Assyrian" (i.e., the kind of the North) in Isaiah and Micah. This takes place in the middle of the Tribulation. It is an interesting perspective, but most prophecy scholars think these events are about the Antichrist rather than the king of the North, and that these events unfold in the Armageddon scenario.

- Will the Isaiah 17:1 prophecy about the destruction of Damascus in Syria be fulfilled by that time? Or, will Isaiah 17 be part of the Armageddon scenario? Scholars are divided about this, but most think that Ezekiel 38-39 and Isaiah 17 will be fulfilled *before* the time described in Daniel 11:40-45.
- Verse 43: He will have power over treasures of gold, silver, and precious things of Egypt, Libya, and Sudan. This suggests that the Antichrist is accumulating wealth.
- Verse 44: Later, reports from the east will alarm him. Might this be the "kings from the east" mentioned in Revelation 16:12? Traditionally, this refers to countries east of the Euphrates River. Some authors think this may involve China, but that need not be the case.
- Since his opposition comes from the north, east, and south, this suggests that the Antichrist comes from the west of Israel, that is, from the revived Roman Empire. Many countries will be overthrown, but not Jordan (i.e., Edom, Moab, and the children of Ammon). Why not? That is a good question since Jordan is not a military powerhouse—at least not now. Perhaps God will supernaturally spare Jordan, as per the symbolism in Revelation 12:3-6. Parts of Jordan (e.g., Bozrah, Petra) may give the Jews a place to flee to, in the latter days. Zechariah 14:1-5 and Revelation 19:11-21 mention more about Armageddon—when Christ returns.
- Eventually, there will be peace among Israel, Syria, and Egypt—and this will likely be fulfilled during the Millennium, under the rule of Jesus Christ:

[Isaiah 19:23-25, NIV] In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. The LORD Almighty will bless them, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance."

## Chapter 12: The Tribulation: The 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel

Scene: Daniel, near the end of his life. This is the last chapter in the book of Daniel. The Tribulation (also known as “the time of Jacob’s trouble” in Jeremiah 30:7) is a 7-year period of time, just before Christ’s return. It is the 70<sup>th</sup> and final ‘week’ of years that will start in the future. The Great Tribulation is the last 3½ years of this 7-year period. One of the purposes of the Tribulation is to cause Israel to return to the Lord—and therefore become saved (eternal life).

[Daniel 9:27, NIV] "He [Antichrist] will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' [7 years] In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the [rebuilt] temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

[Jeremiah 30:7, NIV] How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob [Jacob was renamed "Israel"], but he will be saved out of it.

[Zechariah 13:8-9, NIV] "Two-thirds of the land [Israel] will be struck down and perish, yet one-third will be left in it. This third, I will bring into the fire [Tribulation]. I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. ..."

[Matthew 24:15-16, NIV] "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel -- let the reader understand -- then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

[Matthew 24:21-22, NIV] "For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now -- and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened."

[Revelation 12:1-6, NIV] A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman [Israel] clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon [Satan] with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child [Jesus] the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter [still future]. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

[Revelation 11:2-3, NIV] "But exclude the outer court [of the Temple]; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city [Jerusalem] for 42 months. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

[Revelation 13:4-5, NIV] Men worshiped the dragon [Satan] because he had given authority to the beast [Antichrist], and they also worshiped

the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.

[Revelation 13:16-18, NIV] He [the False Prophet] also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast [Antichrist] or the number of his name. This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.

- [Revelation 13:16, KJV] And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

[Daniel 12:1-2, NIV] "At that time [the Tribulation] Michael, the great prince who protects your people [the Jews], will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people -- everyone whose name is found written in the book -- will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt."

- Daniel 12:2 contains the first use of the words "everlasting life" in the Bible. The Hebrew grammar in Daniel 12:2 does *not* teach that there is a *single* resurrection event for both the saved and the unsaved at the same time [Hitchcock, 2013]. Revelation 20 clearly states that there is a first resurrection and a second resurrection—two separate events. "This Earth is the only hell we're ever going to know as believers; but for the lost, this Earth is the only Heaven they're going to know" [Hitchcock, 2013, possibly quoting the Puritan Thomas Watson].

[Daniel 12:4-7, NIV] "But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll **until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.**" Then I, Daniel, looked, and there before me stood two others, one on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank. One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?" The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, 'It will be for a time, times and half a time [3.5 years or 1,260 days]. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.'

- Many commentators today think that verse 4 means that there will be an explosion of not only general and scientific knowledge, but also biblical and prophetic knowledge. There will be widespread travel or transportation, and implied in this would probably be an increase in communication capabilities.

[Daniel 12:11-13, NIV] "From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days. As for you [Daniell], go your way till the end.

You will rest, and then **at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.**"

- Note that Daniel (and the other Old Testament believers and also the Tribulation believers who have passed away) will not be resurrected until *after* the Tribulation—possibly at the end of the 1,335 days—just before the Millennium, but in time for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.
  - [Revelation 19:9, NIV] Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God."
  - [Matthew 8:11, NIV] I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.
- What is the purpose of the 1,290 days or the 1,335 days past the midpoint of the Tribulation? Some possibilities include:
  1. The regathering of the Jewish people
  2. The judgment of the Gentile nations
  3. The building of the Millennial temple
  4. The cleanup because of the great devastation

[Isaiah 63:1-4, NIV] Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah [Southern Jordan], with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing. **For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come.**

- Jesus knew there was a break between His first and second comings—a break that has now lasted for almost 2,000 years. Many had expected Christ to set up His kingdom around 30 AD. Jesus, however, knew that He would be rejected by most people. In the following Scripture passage, Jesus is reading a well-chosen scroll (from the book of Isaiah) in a synagogue at the start of His ministry, circa 26 AD):

[Luke 4:18-21, NIV] "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

The above Scripture is only part of the longer passage from Isaiah, but note that Jesus deliberately stopped at a gap which divides the two phases of His coming. Here is the longer passage from Isaiah:

[Isaiah 61:1-3, NIV] The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, **to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor** [Jesus stopped here] and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion -- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

[Isaiah 35:10, NIV] [This is after Christ's Second Coming] and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

"The year of the Lord's favor" may well refer to the start of a Year of Jubilee. A Year of Jubilee was supposed to be observed every 50 years in Israel, and at that time, 3 things were to happen: land was to be returned to its original owner, slaves were freed, and debts were cancelled.

- Some closing thoughts/comments about Daniel's 70 weeks of years:
  1. There were 69 weeks of years from the time of the decree to rebuild the walls and the streets of Jerusalem until the Messiah. This was fulfilled.
  2. There is 1 week of years remaining—to make 70 weeks of years, in all.
  3. This final week is called "Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week", but it is also called the 7-year Tribulation or "the time of Jacob's trouble".
  4. 7 years = 3½ years + 3½ years
    - a. 3½ years = 1,260 days (using a 360 day/year prophetic calendar)
    - b. 3½ year mark = midpoint of the Tribulation
      - The midpoint is often thought of as the time that the Antichrist sets up an image of himself in the rebuilt temple, declaring himself to be God.
    - c. 1,260 more days (3½ years) occur before Christ's Second Coming

[Daniel 12:4-7, NIV] "But you, Daniel, **close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end.** Many will go here and there to increase knowledge."

[Revelation 22:10, NIV] But he said to me, "**Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near.**"

[Daniel 12:13, NIV] "As for you [Daniell], go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance."



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