



# THROUGH DANIEL'S EYES

A COMMENTARY ON DANIEL



A chronological walk through Daniel's life,  
the incredible visions he is given,  
and their impact on today.

**"look up ... your redemption draweth nigh."**



**BILL HERMAN, ED.D.**

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# CONTENTS

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Introduction.....	1
Setting the Stage .....	3
Daniel’s Circumstances .....	13
Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream .....	27
The Fiery Furnace.....	49
Nebuchadnezzar’s Vision .....	65
Daniel’s Vision of the .....	81
Four Beasts.....	81
Daniel’s Vision of the Ram, Goat, and Little Horn .....	107
Belshazzar’s Feast.....	121
The Seventy Weeks of Years.....	137
Daniel in the Lion’s Den.....	161
Daniel’s Prophetic Vision.....	175
Daniel’s Prophecies about.....	189
The Nations.....	189
Daniel’s Prophecies about Israel.....	215
Do You Know If You’re Saved? .....	231
End Notes.....	237

# Introduction

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The Book of Daniel is the story of how God took a young man in his teens during one of the most challenging times in Israel's history and used him to greatly impact the Jewish nation and the gentiles. Thanks to his fidelity to God, Daniel was given some of the greatest prophecy surrounding the life and times in which he lived. He was also chosen to deliver messages of the future to God's people, announce the date of the coming Messiah, and outline the events of the End Times.

Daniel lived as an exile for almost his entire life remaining faithful throughout his ninety plus years. His unwillingness to compromise his religious values set an example that established a standard for even some of the most ruthless rulers of the times. Recognition and authority was repeatedly given to Daniel because of his trusted service and wisdom guided by his faithfulness to God.

As Christians, you will enjoy a deeper understanding of Daniel's life and some of the challenges he faced. You will learn more of the backstory of events like the Lion's Den and the Fiery Furnace...remarkable miracles based on feats of faith. As a student of

## *Introduction*

prophecy, you will find God's plans through repeated warnings and punishments that unfolded exactly as predicted. There is also an in depth look at Daniel's prophecies focused on the future—the End Times. The story is written in a chronological order with a pre-Tribulational view.

Today's world is chaotic. We are seeing the signs Jesus gave and said would precede His return for the Church more pronounced now than at any other time in history. There are no prophecies remaining that require fulfillment before Christ can come for his Church. Jesus said, *“Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”* Are we living in the End Times? Are you prepared?

# Setting the Stage

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Daniel is one of the most exciting and important books of the Bible and shares a number of wonderful stories, such as Daniel in the Lion's Den and The Fiery Furnace. But Daniel also contains some great prophetic visions. Time has shown that some of these prophetic visions were true and extremely accurate. There is (or has been) some controversy about the accuracy in documenting these prophetic events. Scholars have questioned when the Book of Daniel was written and whether Daniel was the real author. However, Daniel's prophecies were fulfilled, and that is how people identified a true prophet during the time frame of 530 B.C. in the ninth year of Cyrus' reign. The fulfillment of Daniel's prophecies is one of the main reasons so many accept his prophecies today, especially those who are pointing to the future. According to David Pawson, The Book of Daniel "covers 75 years of Daniel's life but 490 years of history."<sup>1</sup> He adds, "Furthermore, there are parts of the book that still await fulfillment. The Bible as a whole predicts 735 events ... and 593 ... of these predictions have already been fulfilled. The Book of Daniel contains

166 predictions, many of them symbolic.”<sup>2</sup> Many people today simply have difficulty accepting miracles and prophecies, and want to explain them away through the lens of humanism. Those accepting the Bible as God’s Word, however, believe that Daniel’s unfilled prophetic visions will apply to a time in the future commonly referred to as the “End Times.”

“There are two other persons of this name [Daniel] mentioned in the Bible—a son of David (1 Chronicles 3:1) and a Levite of the race of Ithamar (Ezra 8:2; Nehemiah 10:6). The latter has been confused with the prophet at times, as he is in the apocryphal addenda to the Septuagint.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars see the reference in Nehemiah 10:6 as a third character, a priest named Daniel. Since both books, Ezra and Nehemiah, cover the return of the exiled Jews to Jerusalem from Babylon, these two references are likely the same individual. Assuming the main character of the book is the author of Daniel, Ezekiel mentions him three times.

*“...<sup>14</sup> even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves,” declares the Lord GOD.*

<sup>20</sup> *even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness.”*  
(Ezekiel 14:14,20)

<sup>3</sup> *Behold, you are wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that is a match for you.*  
(Ezekiel 28:3)

Ezekiel’s mention of Daniel would only be natural, as Daniel was a contemporary prophet of Ezekiel. They were both close in age, they were both from Jerusalem, they were both relocated to Babylon in exile, and Daniel rose to a place of power in the Babylonian government. Two of the most telling reasons to accept Daniel as author is that he claimed authorship in verse 12:4, and Jesus identified Daniel as a prophet in Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14. Therefore, scholars accept Daniel as the author of the book that bears his name.

<sup>15</sup> *“Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet ...”*  
(Matthew 24:15; cf. Daniel 9:27, 11:31, 12:11)

<sup>14</sup> *“But when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION standing where it should not be ...”*  
(Mark 13:14; cf. Daniel 9:27, 11:31, 12:11)



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***Why is the Book of Daniel so important?***

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According to Charles Swindoll, “Daniel is one of the few Bible books that takes place during a period of judgment (many books foretell it and a few look back on it) and in a foreign nation ... Daniel makes the Lord’s power shine through in a magnificent and majestic way that stands out in Scripture. The Book of Daniel makes it clear that the true God is the supreme ruler over heaven and earth even when all seems lost and the consequences of sin seem overwhelming.”<sup>4</sup> Jeffrey Krantz states, “Daniel is [also] one of the few OT [Old Testament] books that explicitly reference a bodily resurrection. In Daniel’s last vision, an angel tells him, *‘Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.’*” (Daniel 12:2)<sup>5</sup>

M. R. De Haan shares, “To the casual observer, the Book of Daniel looks very much like twelve disconnected and unrelated chapters telling the experiences of this man, Daniel, while he was a slave in the palace of the king, Nebuchadnezzar, [but] the prophecy of

Daniel is not merely a historic record of certain events which took place thousands of years ago, but a revelation of God, and we see that all these chapters are connected one to the other and reveal to us what God's purpose and plan is for these days which lay ahead in Daniel's day. These twelve chapters in Daniel ... are not isolated experiences, but they are related accounts of God's progressive revelation of the things, which He wants His children to know. The main purpose of Daniel was to give us a vision of the 'times of the Gentiles' up until the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>6</sup>

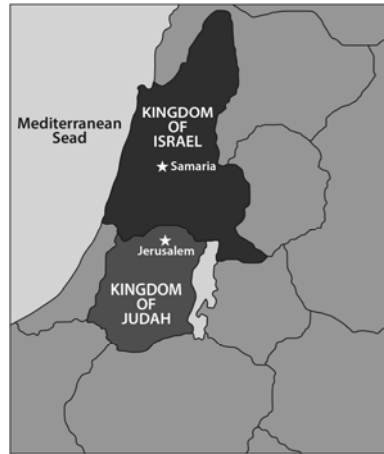
Further, Mark Esposito states, "The Jewish nation had a theocratic government, as opposed to democratic, dictatorial, or monarchical. Since God had given them the land they were not subject to anyone but God. God was making Himself known to the world through the special nation, inspiring the word of God, and doing mighty works. As far as the Jews were concerned, this was going to go on forever."<sup>7</sup> God did, however, give them some instructions for taking care of the land.

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**READ: Leviticus 25:1-7**

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<sup>1</sup>The LORD then spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai, saying,  
<sup>2</sup>“Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you come into the land which I shall give you, then the land shall have a sabbath to the LORD. <sup>3</sup>Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop, <sup>4</sup>but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard. <sup>5</sup>Your harvest’s aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year. <sup>6</sup>‘All of you shall have the sabbath products of the land for food; yourself, and your male and female slaves, and your hired man and your foreign resident, those who live as aliens with you. <sup>7</sup>‘Even your cattle and the animals that are in your land shall have all its crops to eat.



Upon King Solomon’s death in 930 B.C., his son, Rehoboam, became king of Israel (1 Kings 11:43). Rehoboam was young. He heavily taxed the people and placed his interests and pleasures ahead of those of the people. His harsh treatment of the people pushed them to ask a very charismatic and outspoken leader, Jeroboam, to be king (1 Kings 12:20). Jeroboam took about 75% of the kingdom (ten tribes)

and formed the Northern Kingdom called Israel. They formed their own government centered in their capital city of Samaria. The remaining two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) formed the Southern Kingdom centered in Jerusalem. They were known as Judah and remained somewhat loyal to the House of David. The word “Jew” reflects that the people were Judean.

God continually spoke to His people through His prophets, warning them to turn away from their disobedience and return to the established covenant fellowship. Of all the kings leading the Northern Kingdom, none were faithful. Isaiah writes of Israel’s fall to Assyria in 2 Kings 17. About 160 years after the division, the Assyrians captured the Northern Kingdom (721 B.C.). By the time Assyria fell to the Babylonians in 612 B.C., the ten tribes forming Israel had dissolved into the culture and religious practices of the nations. The Northern Kingdom and those ten tribes ceased to exist.

Judah was more fortunate. Eight of the twenty kings that ruled over Judah were good leaders. They tried to lead the people in God’s commands, but all of them had faults (cf. 1 Chronicles, 1 & 2 Kings).

The Jews strayed away from the lifestyle requirements set by God. Ezra writes of Judah's fall to Babylonia in 2 Chronicles 36. Jeremiah also sent the Jews a warning of exile if they did not repent. Judah only lasted 160 years after Assyria defeated Israel until the Babylonians conquered them and drove them into exile.<sup>8</sup>

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***READ: Jeremiah 27:4-8***

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*<sup>4</sup>“Command them to go to their masters, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, thus you shall say to your masters, <sup>5</sup>“I have made the earth, the men and the beasts which are on the face of the earth by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and I will give it to the one who is pleasing in My sight. <sup>6</sup>“Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and I have given him also the wild animals of the field to serve him. <sup>7</sup>“All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson until the time of his own land comes; then many nations and great kings will make him their servant. <sup>8</sup>“It will be, that the nation or the kingdom which will not serve him, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation with the sword, with famine and with pestilence,” declares the LORD, “until I have destroyed it by his hand.*

God's people would not listen, and “they went into exile with their new prophet Daniel. God used this time in exile to explain to Daniel that the rule of the Gentiles was not going to be just the 70

years of Israel's captivity, as prophesied in Jeremiah [Chapters 21-22], but 70 times 7 [490 years]"<sup>9</sup> (cf. Leviticus 26:18).

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***How are we similar to these people?  
Why do you think God chose 70 years of exile for the Jews?***

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“For about 490 years, from David’s reign to the exile, the land was farmed continually until it was long overdue for a Sabbath rest, in fact up to 70 years. ... They did not keep the land’s Sabbaths so God arranged for the land to rest, while they were in Babylon.”<sup>10</sup> Leviticus 26:18 states, “*If also after these things you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.*” The Jews were punished equal time for their disobedience. “Daniel was written [however] to encourage the exiled Jews by revealing God’s program for them, both during and after the time of Gentile power in the world. Prominent above every other theme in the book is God’s sovereign control over the affairs of all rulers and nations, and their final replacement with the True King.”<sup>11</sup>

Due to their disobedience God also ushered in a time in which He began to focus on the Gentiles. “The time of the Gentiles” began with Babylonia’s capture of Jerusalem. This time frame, however, is

*Setting the Stage*

relative, not actual. Daniel could not see the gap God placed in the 490-year period – a time referred to as the “church age” that will be discussed as we review later chapters in the Book of Daniel.

