

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

CHAPTERS 7-12 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- The next chapters of the book of Daniel **require some introductory information.**
- **TIMELINE** (see Daniel timeline). Dating of book is 600 BC (6th century BC), NOT 2nd century BC.
- All civilization began in the Garden (Mesopotamia), spread outward after flood. **Genesis 10 (Table of Nations)** is a record of the 3 sons of Noah as they populated the earth after the flood. From these three sons come all of our civilizations and cultures.
- **Egypt first major world kingdom**, is a symbol and type for the WORLD. God brought fledgling nation of Israel – all 70, to Egypt. Next 400 years built them into huge nation, delivered them with Moses, brought into Promised Land—their inheritance.
- Next 800 years Israel prospers, in spite of disobedience, for a time. God allowed Temple to be built, kingdoms of David and Solomon, but eventually united Kingdom of Israel was divided after Solomon’s death into Northern Kingdom of Israel (10 tribes) and Southern Kingdom of Judah (2 tribes). All evil kings in north, a few good kings in south. Judgment is coming.
- The **second major world kingdom was Assyria**, capital was Nineveh. God used Assyria to judge Northern Kingdom of Israel. 722 BC taken into captivity in Assyria, and never returned.
- Now time for **judgment of southern kingdom**. 606 BC Nebuchadnezzar took first hostages to Babylon, beginning 70-year time of captivity. Temple and City of Jerusalem destroyed in 586 BC, 19 years later. **Babylon is now the reigning world empire.**
- Throughout the Word we see that **God is indeed Sovereign**. He is above history. In order to convince His children that He is real, He has chosen to give us a glimpse of history. He gave Nebuchadnezzar a dream (Dan. 2) so all mankind would know how the world would shape up
- Babylon **head of gold** in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. The place where God brought His people into captivity. **Babylon is judged, and** after Nebuchadnezzar died, God used Cyrus and Darius the Mede to usher in Persian empire. In 539 BC the head of gold has now **given way to the arms and chest of silver, the Persian Empire.**
- **God addressed Cyrus personally** in a letter to him 150 years before his birth, found in Isaiah 45. Cyrus let Jews go home to Israel, even helped fund return and rebuilding of Temple.
- Alexander the Great is 20 years old when he begins his domination. Brilliant military strategies, “lightning fast” campaigns, swallowed up world fast. About 330 BC Persian Empire fell. Arms and chest of silver have disappeared and now we see **the belly and thighs of bronze – the next great world empire – Greece.**
- Alexander made his home in Babylon, but died about age of 35. As he lay dying, asked “*to whom should the kingdom go?*” Didn’t have a “legitimate” heir. He said, “*Give it to the strong.*” So it went to his **four chief generals**. Ptolemy took Egypt, Seleucus Syria, Cassander Macedonia, and Lysimachus Asia Minor. **Feuding between Ptolemy and Seleucus** until the Roman conquests. From Syria and the Seleucids came Antiochus Epiphanes, a madman, the first historical fulfillment of an Antichrist –mere shadow of what still is to come.
- And finally, comes Rome. In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, the legs of iron are thought to be the Roman Empire. ***(Lately, however, there has been some discussion about the identity of the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream statue. For years the traditional identity has indeed been Rome, and the Roman Empire. However, there is some interesting scriptural and historic evidence that it might be more than that, and perhaps the Islamic Empire may have some identity here as well)***

- Should also know Islamic Empire was extensive. **Today not really an empire, but loosely collected group of nations led by Islamic rule, or host world's majority of Muslims.** Roman Empire was not overtaken but collapsed from within. In some form or another, Roman Empire is still in existence. In some ways, the entire world could almost be divided between the remnants of the Roman Empire, and the remnants of the Islamic Empire. Two legs on the statue? Both old Roman Empire (*the European Union currently*) and old Islamic Empire (*the Arab theocratic states*) are trying for world dominion “comebacks.”

PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS 7 THROUGH 12

- **Chapter 7:** Daniel’s vision of four beasts, defined as four world kingdoms. Also sees vision of the Son of Man and Ancient of Days, sort of “courtroom” scene. A lot of information about the 4th beast, the final world ruler and conditions during that time.
- **Chapter 8:** Vision of ram with two horns, identified as the Median and Persian Empire. Then sees a male goat with a large horn, which breaks off and becomes four horns. Greek Empire, dominated first by Alexander the Great, then his four generals. Also an “evil horn” fulfilled first by Antiochus Epiphanes, a “type” for the final world ruler (Antichrist).
- **Chapter 9:** Amazing prayer by Daniel. Receives angelic messenger with message about end times referred to as “Daniel’s 70 Weeks.” Timeline covers return to the land, rebuilding the Temple and the city walls, the Messiah, and the end of time.
- **Chapter 10:** Daniel visited by incredible heavenly beings to strengthen him and prepare him to receive more about what is yet to come for his people. A glimpse into spiritual warfare.
- **Chapter 11:** Continuation of ch 10. One of the most detailed prophetic pieces in all scripture. The transition of power from Persia to Greece, eventual end of the Greek Empire. Antiochus Epiphanes is seen, as well as the final world ruler, an evil king.
- **Chapter 12:** Concludes vision of ch 11 (ch 10-12 seen as one). Deals with end times. Final instructions, a few glimpses of what world will be like when all human government ends.

All of this information is important as we begin our study of these prophetic chapters of Daniel. God has authenticated Himself through prophecy, by revealing what WILL happen, BEFORE it happens, with great precision.

The scriptures tell us that God inhabits eternity. God is above history, outside of our timeline dimension. He has seen all of history already. Through these remarkable books, He has chosen to share with us His plan, and is underscoring the plan, and His Authority, by giving us a look at history before it happens.

