

# Chapter One

## Early Life of Daniel in Babylon

Daniel 1:1-2

**In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure-house of his god.**

The first chapter of Daniel is a beautifully written, moving story of the early days of Daniel and his companions in Babylon.

Daniel begins by giving us the historical setting which includes the first siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, which occurred in 605 B.C. Because of sin, Israel was being carried off captive to wicked Babylon.

Daniel 1:3-7

**Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring in some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility – young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king’s table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service. Among these were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.**

Daniel explains how he and his companions came to Babylon.

He records that the King ordered Ashpenaz to bring some of the children of Israel to Babylon for training to be servants of the king. Those selected were to be descendants of Jacob who belonged to the nobility of Israel. Their physical, personal and intellectual capacities were included in this selection process.

Their training was to separate them from their previous Jewish culture and environment and teach them “the language and literature of the Babylonians.”

Their environment and circumstances soon presented some real challenges, at least for Daniel or Belteshazzar, Hananiah or Shadrach, Mishael or Meshach and Azariah or Abednego because there would have been certain aspects of their training which may have been ungodly. Nevertheless, they went through their training program but they did not allow it to change them. Neither did they allow their new names to change their real identity.

Then they had to face the issue of food and drink. They knew that the food and the wine had been dedicated to idols and to partake thereof would be to recognize the idols as deities. So what should they do in this case? We can read the answer in:

Daniel 1:8-16

**But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he**

asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself in this way. Now, God had caused the official to show favour and sympathy to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men of your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

Daniel then said to the guard, whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

This time, Daniel and his friends knew that they needed to take a stand, even though this could cost them their lives, because they understood that taking part in the king's food and wine which had been dedicated to idols would have defiled them. So Daniel requested to be given a ten-day trial during which time he and his three friends would only be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. His request was granted and the result was four very healthy looking young men.

Likewise, we too need to know when to take a stand, even when it may cost us our lives, so that our relationship with God will not be affected and we need to know when it is ok to participate in something since it will not affect our relationship with God.

Daniel 1:17-20

**To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.**

Daniel gives us here a summary of the three years of hard study which resulted in them being selected for the king's service.

Although all four youths shared in an intelligent understanding of the literature of the Babylonians and were able to wisely separate the true from the false, only Daniel had "understanding in all visions and dreams." In this, Daniel differed from his companions as a true prophet.

## Chapter Two

### Nebuchadnezzar's Vision of the Great Image

Daniel 2:1-11

In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came in and stood before the king, he said to them, "I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means."

Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, "O king, live for ever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it."

The king replied to the astrologers, "This is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me what my dream was and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble. But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honour. So tell me the dream and interpret it for me."

Once more they replied, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will interpret it."

Then the king answered, "I am certain that you are trying to gain time, because you realise that this is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me the dream, there is just one penalty for you. You have conspired to tell me misleading and wicked things, hoping the situation will change. So then, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can interpret it for me."

The astrologers answered the king, "There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among men."

This made the king so angry and furious that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to Daniel and his friends to put them to death.

The chapter starts with the words "In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep."

Because of his agitation, Nebuchadnezzar summoned all his wise men.

He demanded of them that they not only interpret the dream for him but tell him the dream itself. However, the wise men could not do so. They knew that the king's request was out of their league. This was something for the gods and gods do not live among men. Their comments caused the king to be so enraged that he decided to get rid of these wise men once for all. Unfortunately, Daniel and his friends were included in the people to be killed, even though they had not been part of the group of magicians the king had called in for counsel. Let's read on:

Daniel 2:14:18

When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact. He asked the king's officer, "Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him.

Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Having found out what was happening, Daniel went to the king and asked for some time. Now, please remember that this was a very courageous act of Daniel since he had not been summoned by the king but went on his own accord. He could have been killed for his action. Obviously God had prepared the way for him to see the king and that is why he was given a favourable response from the king. Next, Daniel called his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah together to seek God's face. And God spoke to them in a night vision as we can read in:

Daniel 2:19-23

During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven and said: "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are His. He changes times and seasons; He sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; He knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with Him. I thank and praise You, O God of my fathers: You have given me wisdom and power, You have made known to me what we asked of You, You have made known to us the dream of the king."

Having received the understanding of the vision, Daniel went to speak to Arioch, the king's official as we can read in:

Daniel 2:24-28

Then Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to execute the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not execute the wise men of Babylon. Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream for him."

Arioch took Daniel to the king at once and said, "I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can tell the king what his dream means."

The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?"

Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you lay on your bed are these: As you were lying there, O king, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen. As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than other living men, but so that you, O king, may know the interpretation and that you may understand what went through your mind."

Daniel made sure that the wise men did not get killed before going before the king. He made it very clear to the king that no wise man could have discovered the secret which was revealed to him. He then moved on to declare that there was a God in heaven who was able to reveal secrets for this God knew "what is going to happen." The dream has been recorded in:

Daniel 2:31-45

"You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue – an enormous,

dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay. While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on the threshing-floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth. This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king. You, O king, 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; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. 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. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands - a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy.”

In the context of Daniel 2 “the events which are going to happen” cover the period from 600 B.C. to the Second Coming of Christ. After having given the purpose of the dream to the king, Daniel began to reveal the dream; the king had seen “a great image”, a large statue, which was destroyed by a stone. This statue was made of different kinds of metals in decreasing value. However these metals depicted at the same time increasing strength. The statue’s head was of gold and represented Nebuchadnezzar, the king of kings who owed his power to the God of heaven.

The statue’s chest and arms were of silver and represented another kingdom, the Medo-Persian Empire, which followed the Babylonian Empire. The statue’s belly and thighs were of bronze and represented the Greek Empire, which followed the Medo-Persian Empire. The statue’s legs were of iron and its feet were partly iron and partly clay and represented the Roman Empire. This kingdom, though great in strength, would be divided as indicated by the presence of iron, symbolic of strength, and clay, symbolic of brittleness, in the feet.

The crux of the interpretation of the entire symbolic vision is found in the prediction of a final kingdom which God will set up, as symbolized by the stone cut without human hands which broke the image into pieces. Though many interpretations have been given as to the timing of this kingdom, it seems reasonable to say that the feet stage, including the destruction of the image by the stone, is still future and unfulfilled and will coincide

with the Second Coming of Christ.

See also Daniel 7:3-12

Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea. The first was like a lion, and it had wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it. And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, "Get up and eat your fill of flesh." After that, I looked and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule. 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. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attended Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated and the books were opened. Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

And Daniel 7:17-27

The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth. But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever – yes, for ever and ever. Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, 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 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 the 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 laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will

worship and obey Him.

And Daniel 9:24-27

**Seventy “sevens” are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish 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. Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the Ruler comes, there will be seven “sevens” and sixty-two “sevens”. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the sixty-two “sevens,” the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven”. 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, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.**

Let’s turn back to Daniel 2 where we see that Nebuchadnezzar began to realise the greatness of Daniel’s God as we can read in:

Daniel 2:47

**The king told Daniel, ‘Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.’**

Afterwards, Nebuchadnezzar appointed Daniel to a high position in his court. Daniel’s friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were given important positions in the province of Babylon as well as we can read in:

Daniel 2:48-49

**Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men. Moreover, at Daniel’s request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the royal court.**

Did that mean that Nebuchadnezzar became a true believer of the God of Daniel? I don’t think so at this time as we will be able to see when we continue our study of the book of Daniel. However, we can clearly see God’s hand at work so that this king will begin to know who the true God is.

## Chapter Three

### The Golden Image of Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 3:1-7

**“King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that king Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it. Then the heralds loudly proclaimed, “This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language. As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that king Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.”**

Therefore, as soon as they heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshipped the image of gold that king Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Nebuchadnezzar had ordered that a golden image was to be made and placed “on the plain of Dura”, which was very likely a location not far from Babylon. We can see from this account that, even though Nebuchadnezzar had recognised the greatness of Daniel’s God in chapter 2, he seems to have forgotten about it in this chapter.

After the statue had been placed on the plain of Dura, Nebuchadnezzar gathered his principal officials for the dedication of this image.

At the sound of the music all those gathered were “to fall down and worship the golden image” as a recognition of his great power.

This would have been a very shrewd move politically on the part of the king since it would have brought unity to the nations he was ruling over.

We will have a similar situation in the future as we can read in:

Revelation 13:14-15

**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 honour 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.**

Let’s now return to Daniel where we will read:

Daniel 3:8-12

**At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews. They said to king Nebuchadnezzar, “O, king, live forever! You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold and that whoever does not worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. But there are**

**some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – who pay no attention to you. O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up.”**

Daniel seemed not to have been present but his friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were at the ceremony.

Certain Babylonians used this time to bring about the downfall of these men. They went to Nebuchadnezzar and accused these men of disobeying the king by not bowing down to the golden image. They made three charges against Daniel’s friends:

1. They had no regard for the king.
2. They did not serve the gods of the king.
3. They did not worship the golden image.

Daniel 3:13-15

**Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these three men were brought before the king, and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, ”Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?”**

Nebuchadnezzar regarded the disobedience of these three men a threat to his political security as well as a personal affront. He called these men to find out if this was so, making it very clear that, if they did not obey him, punishment would follow in the form of a fiery furnace.

The answer of Daniel’s friends can be found in:

Daniel 3:16-18

**Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into a 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.”**

The three men responded by declaring to the king their total trust in God regardless of what would happen to them. They were certain of one thing: they would not bow down and worship the golden image.

The question arises: What about us? What will you and I do in such circumstances? I believe the reason that these three men stood the test was because they had determined beforehand that they would be obedient to their God, no matter what the consequences might be. Likewise, we must determine beforehand that we will obey God, no matter what the consequences might be. We cannot say to ourselves, ‘O, when things get tough, I will decide what to do.’ No, we must make the right decision before we are challenged in our faith and then hold on to our decision when we get challenged.

Daniel 3:19-27

**Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude towards them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace. Then king Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, O king." He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth look like a son of the gods." Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their head singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.**

Their response caused Nebuchadnezzar to immediately command their execution by fire. He sat down in a safe place to watch this spectacle. While watching, he suddenly rose from his seat for he saw something or rather someone "a son of the gods" with these three men, and all of them were freely walking around in the fire.

The king next ordered these three men, servants of the Most High God, to come out. Their deliverance is typical of Israel's deliverance during the period of Gentile domination. I need to say that looking at history and even today many believers have been martyred for their faith. They were not delivered out of their circumstances as these three men were. Some examples from the New Testament are the Apostle Peter who was taken out of prison by an angel according to Acts 12:7-11 while the Apostle James was killed according to Acts 12:2.

Daniel 3:28-29

**Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued His servants! They trusted in Him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way."**

Once again God gave Nebuchadnezzar an opportunity to get to know who the real God was. This time Nebuchadnezzar told people in his realm that they were not to say anything amiss concerning the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. This shows that he was beginning to have a greater understanding of who the God of Daniel and his friends is. Nevertheless, he was still not yet a true believer.

## Chapter Four

### Nebuchadnezzar's Pride and Punishment

Daniel 4:1-7

**King Nebuchadnezzar, "To the peoples, nations and men of every language, who live in all the world. May you prosper greatly! It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. How great are His signs, how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; His dominion endures from generation to generation.**

**I, Nebuchadnezzar was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous. I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in my bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me. So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me. When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me."**

The theme of this chapter is God's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar, while in a position of security and prosperity, had a dream which made him afraid. He called in the wise men and this time told them the contents of the dream. However, they were unable to give the king the interpretation.

Let's read what happened next in:

Daniel 4:8-18

**Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream. ( He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.) I said, "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me. These are the visions I saw while lying in my bed: I looked and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous. The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth. Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the beasts of the field found shelter, and the birds of the air lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed. In the visions I saw while lying in my bed, I looked and there before me was a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven. He called in a loud voice: Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches. But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth. Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times pass by for him. The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and set them over the lowliest of men. This is the dream that I, king Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means, for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you."**

**Daniel entered the king's presence. The king shared the dream with him, in whom "the spirit of the holy gods lives."**

In his vision, Nebuchadnezzar saw a tree, which was becoming very strong and very high until it was visible all over the earth. It bore much fruit and “it was food for all” symbolizing all of mankind was under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar.

As Nebuchadnezzar observed the scene ‘a watcher and a holy one came down from heaven’. The most natural conclusion is that this being described as ‘a messenger, a holy one’ was an angel sent from God. This heavenly messenger cried for the tree to be cut down. However the stump was to be bound with a band of iron and bronze and to have its portion with the beasts of the field. Let’s read Daniel’s reaction to the king’s dream in:

Daniel 4:19-27

**Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you.” Belteshazzar answered, My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your advisaries! The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth, with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the beasts of the field, and having nesting places in its branches for the birds of the air – you, O king, are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth. You, O king, saw a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, “Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live like the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him. This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king. You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes. The command to leave the stump of the tree with its root means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules. Therefore, O king, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue.”**

Daniel interpreted the dream as follows:

The tree represented Nebuchadnezzar who had grown great and reached into heaven with his dominion to the end of the earth. According to the decree of the Most High, Nebuchadnezzar would be driven from ordinary association with men and would dwell with the beasts of the field. In that condition he would eat grass as the ox until he understood that God is the One who gives power to men to rule as He wills.

The stump with its band of iron and bronze represented the fact that he would retain control of his kingdom and that it would be restored to him after he had come back to his senses.

Now Daniel knew his God and he knew that, at this stage, God was only giving the king a warning that, if he did not repent and change his lifestyle, these things would happen. Therefore, Daniel spoke and urged the king to renounce his sins by doing what is right and to be kind to the oppressed. That shows the concern Daniel had for the king and was a very courageous act of Daniel because he could have lost his head if the king had

become angry with him for daring to be so forthright.

Sadly the king did not take to heart the words of Daniel as we can see from:

Daniel 4:28-33

**All this happened to king Nebuchadnezzar. Twelve months later as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, 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?" The words were still on his lips when a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, king Nebuchadnezzar. Your royal authority has been taken from you. You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone He wishes." Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.**

Twelve months later this dream was fulfilled and king Nebuchadnezzar lost his sanity as he was driven from the palace he took so much pride in. However, after seven years, his sanity returned to him as we can read in:

Daniel 4:34-37

**At the end of that time, I Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honoured and glorified Him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; His kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as He pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?" At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honour and splendour were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything He does is right and all His ways are just. And those who walk in pride He is able to humble.**

When the prophesied season was over, Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes to heaven and his understanding returned. He was once more established in his kingdom. This experience taught him that even the greatest of earthly sovereigns is completely subject to the sovereign power of God. Through these experiences God gave Nebuchadnezzar an increasingly clear understanding that He truly was the one and only God who was worthy of worship.

## Chapter Five

### Belshazzar's Feast and the Fall of Babylon

Daniel 5:1-2

**King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.**

About seventy years had elapsed since the capture of Jerusalem recorded in Daniel 1. Nebuchadnezzar had died in 562 B.C. and a number of monarchs had succeeded him. In chapter five we meet King Belshazzar.

Belshazzar had made a great feast. This took place when the Medes and the Persians had conquered the whole surrounding territory of the city of Babylon and the related provinces. Only Babylon with its massive walls and fortifications remained intact. Under the stimulus of wine, the thought occurred to Belshazzar to bring in the gold and silver vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar almost seventy years before.

Daniel 5:3-4

**So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them, As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron wood and stone.**

Even though Nebuchadnezzar had brought these vessels from Jerusalem to Babylon, he had kept them in his temple and had never used them out of respect. Sadly, Belshazzar did not carry the same respect for these vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had shown, for these holy vessels were removed from the temple and distributed among the crowd to be used as vessels from which to drink wine.

This act was a put down of the God of Israel while the gods of Babylon were praised, the "gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone." Their pride in their deities may have been bolstered by the greatness of the city of Babylon itself, which they saw as evidence of the power of their gods.

But then the God of Israel spoke as we can read in:

Daniel 5:5-9

**Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way. The king called for the enchanters, astrologers and diviners to be brought and said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing and tells what it means will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around his neck, and he will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom. Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant. So king Belshazzar became even more**

**terrified and his face grew more pale. His nobles were baffled.**

While the feast was in progress, there appeared the fingers of a man's hand which wrote on the plastered wall of the palace. The effect upon the king and his associates was immediate: his countenance became pale; he was filled with terror. He immediately demanded that the wise men come to interpret the writing and promised to anyone who would be able to read and interpret the writing the position of third ruler in the kingdom. None of the so-called wise men assembled could read the writing or interpret it. Was there a truly wise man in their midst?

Let's read:

Daniel 5:10-24

**The queen, hearing the voices of the king and his nobles, came into the banquet hall. "O king, live forever!" she said. "Don't be alarmed! Don't look so pale! There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the time of your father he was found to have insight and intelligence and wisdom like that of the gods. King Nebuchadnezzar your father – your father the king, I say – appointed him chief of the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners. This man Daniel, whom the king called Belteshazzar, was found to have a keen mind and knowledge and understanding, and also the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means." So Daniel was brought before the king, and the king said to him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles my father the king brought from Judah? I have heard that the spirit of the gods is in you and that you have insight, intelligence and outstanding wisdom. The wise men and enchanters were brought before me to read this writing and tell me what it means, but they could not explain it. Now I have heard that you are able to give interpretations and to solve difficult problems. If you can read this writing and tell me what it means, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck and you will be made the third highest ruler in the kingdom." Then Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your 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. O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendour. Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled. But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes. But you his son, O Belsazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. Instead you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honour the God who hold in His hand your life and all your ways. Therefore He sent the hand that wrote the inscription."**

Daniel, who was probably in semi-retirement at that time, was called to appear before the king. And God gave Daniel understanding and Belshazzar, possibly for the first time in his life, was willing to listen. In addressing the king, Daniel first of all reminded Belshazzar of all that had happened to Nebuchadnezzar. You could say that Daniel lectured the king on the facts of the past, in a way saying to the king, “King, you should have known better for you have had the privilege of knowing what has happened to Nebuchadnezzar in relation to the God of Israel.

You have heard how the God of Israel dealt with Nebuchadnezzar and that should have humbled you but you have not done so. Instead you have completely put aside everything you were taught about this God and continued worshipping your own gods. Moreover, despite all you have known, you have shown great disrespect for these sacred vessels, a disrespect Nebuchadnezzar never showed”. It is very clear from the words Daniel used when addressing this king that he did not have the respect for him that he had for his predecessor Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel then continued in:

Daniel 5:25-28

**“This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN. This is what these words mean: MENE: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. TEKEL: you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. PERES (PARSIN): Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.”**

Daniel next moved on to read the writing, which read “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin” and to interpret the writing. The word “Mene” means “numbered” and Daniel interpreted this word as indicating that God had numbered Belshazzar’s kingdom and it was coming to an end. The word “Tekel” means “weighed” and indicates that Belshazzar had been put into the balance and found wanting, that is short of true weight. The word “Peres” (“Parsin”) means “divided”. Belshazzar was made to understand that Babylon would be given to the Medes and the Persians. As promised the king rewarded Daniel as we can read in:

Daniel 5:29-30

**Then at Belshazzar’s command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in the kingdom. That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.**

Belshazzar, true to his word, proclaimed Daniel third ruler of the kingdom. His honours, as Daniel well knew, were short-lived and useless for “that very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain” and Darius the Mede became ruler of Babylon.

## Chapter Six

### Daniel in the Lion's Den

Daniel 6:1-3

**It pleased Daniel to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.**

This chapter begins with the details regarding the organisation of the new kingdom under Darius the Mede. Daniel had such “an excellent spirit” that the king thought to put all the princes who had been appointed to rule under him.

Daniel 6:4-9

**At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find ground for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.” So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said, “O king Darius, live forever. The royal administrators prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lion's den. Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered – in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” So King Darius put the decree in writing.**

Daniel's favour with the king aroused the jealousy of his fellow officials so they tried to find some means of exposing Daniel. They realised that the only way they could trip up Daniel was to provide a conflict between official regulations and Daniel's conscience and the law of God.

They brought a petition before the king requesting that a decree should be issued that no one should present a petition to any god or man for thirty days except to the king. The king signed the petition since he, in all probability, regarded this act as a pledge of loyalty to himself and a token of their desire to respect his authority to the utmost.

Daniel 6:10-18

**Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to God, just as he had done before. Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree; “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or man except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lion's den?” The king answered, “The decree stands – in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O**

king, or the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him. Then the men went as a group to the king and said to him, “Remember, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.” So the king gave the order and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lion’s den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!” A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed. Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

Daniel’s enemies, knowing his daily prayer habits, assembled to witness his prayers which were always prayed before an open window facing Jerusalem, thus to have evidence for a charge against Daniel before the king. They were not disappointed.

With the fresh evidence acquired they went to the king to accuse Daniel before him. The king recognized the trap sprung on Daniel and attempted in every legal way to find a loophole by which Daniel could be delivered. However there was no way out and so the king issued the command that Daniel should be cast into the lions’ den.

What will we do when we are challenged in our faith? Will we continue to live it out as we have done or will we compromise on our faith? Daniel can teach us so much on being faithful to what we believe to be right and not to give in, even when it seems the easier thing to do.

Daniel 6:19-24

**At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den. When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, who you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?” Daniel answered, “O king, live forever! My God sent His angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in His sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king! The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. At the king’s command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lion’s den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.**

**Early the next morning, the king went to the den of the lions. He called Daniel and, to his great joy, Daniel greeted him with the courteous words “O king, live forever. “ His God had protected him. Daniel was then taken up out of the lions’ den and in his place his accusers were cast into the lions’ den.**

The experience of the false accusers is another illustration of God’s faithfulness to the Abrahamic Covenant where God promised to bless those who blessed Abraham’s seed and to curse those who curse him (Genesis 12:3).

Daniel 6:25-28

**Then king Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language**

**throughout the land: “May you prosper greatly! I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. For He is the living God and He endures forever; His kingdom will not be destroyed, His dominion will never end. He rescues and He saves; He performs sign and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”**

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

The chapter ends with the decree given by the king calling on men everywhere in the kingdom of Darius to ‘tremble and fear before the God of Daniel’. God was using the kings He had appointed to rule at a certain time so that people everywhere received knowledge of the one true God. You could say that God was making sure that His people were still fulfilling their role, even when they were dispersed.

## Chapter Seven

### Daniel's Vision of Future World History

Daniel 7:1-3

**In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying on his bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream. Daniel said, "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea."**

This chapter is a unique chapter because it contains the most detailed prophecy of future events to be found anywhere in the Old Testament. Daniel had his dream in the first year of king Belshazzar, which means he had the dream after the events of chapter four had taken place since that chapter deals with events related to king Nebuchadnezzar. But he had his dream before the events of chapter five took place since that happened in the third year of King Belshazzar. In the opening verse of this chapter, Daniel speaks of having had a vision in a dream in which world history was shown as four horrible beasts, the last one was most terrifying.

Daniel's dream reminds us of the dream of king Nebuchadnezzar in:

Daniel 2:31

**You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue – an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance.**

Also read Daniel 7:17

**The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth.**

Let's now go back to:

Daniel 7:4

**The first was like a lion and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it.**

#### 1. The First Beast: Babylon

Daniel described the first beast as being like a lion but having the wings of an eagle. In spite of the power indicated in the symbolism of the lion with eagle's wings, Daniel saw the wings plucked and the lion made to stand upon his feet, with a man's heart given to it. This is undoubtedly related to the experience of Nebuchadnezzar when he was humbled before God. Although Daniel in this vision did not dwell on the fall of Babylon, other prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah have discussed the fall of Babylon in:

Isaiah 13:19-22

**Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there, no shepherd will rest his flocks there, jackals will fill her houses; there the owls will dwell, and there the wild goats will leap about. Hyenas will howl in her strongholds, jackals**

in her luxurious palaces. Her time is at hand, and her days will not be prolonged.

And Jeremiah in:

Jeremiah 51:37-40

**“Babylon will be a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and scorn, a place where no one lives. Her people all roar like young lions, they growl like lion cubs. But while they are aroused, I will set out a feast for them and make them drunk, so that they shout with laughter – then sleep forever and not awake,” declares the Lord. “I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams and goats.”**

Also see Daniel 2:38

**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.**

We will next look at:

Daniel 7:5

**“And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, “Get up and eat your fill of flesh.”**

## **2. The Second Beast: Media-Persia**

The second beast of Daniel’s vision was described as corresponding to a bear.

This seems to indicate that the second empire would be powerful like a bear, ferocious as Isaiah describes in:

Isaiah 13:17-18

**See, I will stir up against them the Medes, who do not care for silver and have no delight in gold. Their bows will strike down the young men; they will have no mercy on infants nor will they look with compassion on children. But this empire will be less majestic, less swift, less glorious.**

The bear raised itself up on one side. This probably represented the one-sided union of the Persian and Median Empires. Persia at that time, although coming up last, was by far the greater and more powerful and had absorbed the Medes. The bear as the symbol of government and military conquest had three ribs in its mouth which represented the people subdued, and the flesh it still was to eat refers to further conquests.

Also, see Daniel 2:39a

**After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours.**

And Daniel 8:3

**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.**

And Daniel 8:20

**The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.**

And Daniel 11:2

**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.**

We will now look at:

Daniel 7:6

**After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.**

### **3. The Third Beast: Greece**

The third beast is like a leopard with four wings on its back and with four heads. This beast has been identified as the Empire of Greece under Alexander the Great. With the swiftness of a leopard, Alexander the Great conquered most of the civilized world all the way from Macedonia to Africa and eastward to India with tremendous speed.

The four wings and the four heads most likely refer to the four generals who succeeded Alexander and divided his empire into four sections.

Also, see Daniel 2:39b

**Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.**

And Daniel 8:5

**As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between his eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground.**

And Daniel 8:21-22

**The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his 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.**

And Daniel 11:3-4

**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.**

We will now return to:

Daniel 7:7-8

**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. His horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.**

#### 4. The Fourth Beast: Rome

The fourth Beast has been identified as the Roman Empire.

Daniel described this beast as “terrifying and frightening and very powerful”. He was very clear that this Beast was quite different from any of the beasts which were before it. The Roman Empire was in existence in the time of Jesus and beyond, before eventually collapsing. However, Daniel mentioned ten horns after which a little horn emerged.

These horns refer to rulers who are part of the Roman Empire. However, the previous Roman Empire did not have ten rulers in her midst; neither did a little horn or another ruler arise from her midst. Therefore these words have not yet been fulfilled. This must mean that this particular Empire is to rise to power yet again at a future date.

Interestingly, the United Nations has divided the world into ten sections or ten kingdoms. So far, this has only been done on paper. It is not yet a reality but I believe it will one day be fulfilled. When that happens we will have ten rulers. After these ten rulers have been established, another ruler will come on the scene who will conquer three of the ten rulers. This last ruler will very likely be the man whom the Bible refers to as the antichrist.

See also Daniel 2:40-43

**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; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. 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.**

See also Daniel 7:19-22

**Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, 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 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 judgement in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.**

And Daniel 7:23-26

**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. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed for ever.**

And Daniel 8:25

**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.

See II Thessalonians 2:8

**And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of His mouth and destroy by the splendour of His coming.**

Also, let's look at:

Daniel 9:26b-27

**..... The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one "seven". 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, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.**

And Daniel 11:36-45

**The king 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 is completed, for what has been determined must take place. He will show no regards for the gods of his fathers 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 honour a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honour 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 honour those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price. At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North 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. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon 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 Lybyans and Nubians 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 at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.**

And Revelation 13:5-7

**The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander His name and His dwelling place and those who live in heaven. He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.**

And Revelation 17:12-14

**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. They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast. They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because He is Lord of**

**lords and King of kings - and with Him will be His called, chosen and faithful followers.**

Let's return to:

Daniel 7:9-14

**As I looked , thrones were set in place and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of His head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing coming out from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attended Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.) In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His Presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.**

Daniel was then given a vision of heaven at the time of final judgement on the nations. He learned that the Fifth Kingdom will be the final and everlasting Kingdom when all people will serve and obey God.

See also Revelation 11:15

**The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign for ever and ever."**

## Chapter Eight

### The Vision of the Ram and the Goat

Daniel 8:1-4

**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 he charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against him, and none could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.**

And Daniel 8:1

**"While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man. And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision." As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me. "understand that the vision concerns the time of the end." While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet. 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. The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia."**

In this chapter Daniel recorded his second vision.

Timewise, the events as described in this chapter occurred before Chapter Five. This vision concerns the Empires of Persia and Greece. Daniel found himself projected to Suza, a town little known at that time but destined to be the important capital of Persia.

Daniel, in his vision, saw a ram with two horns, one higher than the other, and the higher one growing out of the ram last. The ram did according to his will and became great. The ram represented both the Median and Persian Empires in their combined states in which the Persian Empire, as represented by the higher horn, was the more prominent and powerful.

See also Daniel 2:32

**.....its chest and arms of silver.**

And Daniel 2:39a

**After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours.**

And Daniel 7:5

**And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, "Get up and eat your fill of flesh."**

Daniel 11:2

**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.

Let's now read:

Daniel 8:5-8

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

And Daniel 8:21-22

**The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his 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. Daniel next observed a goat which had a single horn between its eyes. The goat attacked the ram in great anger and broke its two horns.**

The goat represented the king of Greece and its single horn pointed to Alexander the Great.

The breaking of the two horns of the ram referred to the disintegration of the Medo-Persian Empire with the result that the ram, the Medo-Persian Empire, had no power to stand before the goat, the Greek Empire.

Then, unexpectedly, Daniel saw the great horn breaking and four horns taking its place. This symbolized a division of the Empire of Alexander into four divisions. All this has been fulfilled in history.

See also Daniel 2:32c

**.....Its belly and thighs of bronze.**

And Daniel 2:39b

**Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.**

And Daniel 7:6

**After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule."**

And Daniel 11:3-4

**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 towards 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.**

Let's return to:

Daniel 8:9-14

**Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. It set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host; it took away the daily sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was brought low. Because of rebellion, the host of the saints and the daily sacrifice were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground. 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, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?" He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated."**

And Daniel 8:23-24

**In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced 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 the mighty men and the holy people.**

Daniel then noticed a little horn which grew exceedingly great and came out of one of the four horns.

This little horn represented Antiochus Epiphanes, the eighth King in the Syrian Dynasty, who blasphemed God by taking away the daily offerings and desecrating the Sanctuary.

He also persecuted the people of Israel, the people of God.

The Sanctuary was reconsecrated at a later stage.

Daniel 8:25-26

**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 vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future.**

The interpretation of Daniel's vision was brought to him by the angel Gabriel, who seemed to go beyond Antiochus Epiphanes to the final world ruler.

Gabriel made it plain to Daniel that the vision would not become immediately understandable to him and that its fulfillment would take a long time. Daniel became the recorder of the vision without understanding all that he wrote or experienced.

## Chapter Nine

### The Seventy “Weeks” Program

Daniel 9:1-2

**In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes ( a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom – in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.**

Daniel had learned through reading the writings of Jeremiah that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. Why a seventy-year period? God had prescribed Sabbatical years for the land according to Exodus 23:10-11, Leviticus 25:1-22, Leviticus 26:33-35, Deuteronomy 15, II Chronicles 36:19-21. However, the Israelites had not followed these rules for 490 years which meant that 70 Sabbatical years were still outstanding. Consequently, God decided to discipline them for seventy years, thereby giving the land a seventy-year rest at the same time.

Also see Jeremiah 25:11-12 and Jeremiah 29:10.

On the basis of these prophecies Daniel was encouraged to pray for the restoration of Jerusalem and the re-gathering of the people of Israel for he realised that the years of captivity were about to end. However, Daniel realised too that the Word of God would only be fulfilled on the basis of prayer as we can read in:

Daniel 9:3-19

**So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with Him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with all who love Him and obey His commands, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. Lord, You are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame – the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to You. O Lord, we and our kings, our princes and our fathers are covered with shame because we have sinned against You. The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against Him; we have not obeyed the Lord our God or kept the laws He gave us through His servants the prophets. All Israel has transgressed your laws and turned away, refusing to obey you. Therefore the curses and sworn judgements written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing upon us great disasters. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favour of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. The Lord did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in everything He does; yet we have not obeyed Him. Now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for Yourself**

a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. O Lord, in keeping with all Your righteous acts, turn away Your anger and Your wrath from Jerusalem, Your city, Your holy city. Our sins and the iniquities of our fathers have made Jerusalem and Your people an object of scorn to all those around us. Now, Our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For Your sake, O Lord, look with favour on Your desolate sanctuary. Give ear, O God, and hear; open Your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears Your name. We do not make requests of You because we are righteous, but because of Your great mercy. O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For Your sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people bear Your Name.”

### **Gabriel's Visit**

Daniel, while still praying, was interrupted by a heavenly visitor as we can read in:

Daniel 9:20-23

**While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the Lord for His holy hill – while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, “Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision.”**

### **Gabriel's Explanation**

Gabriel had come to give Daniel understanding as we can read in:

Daniel 9:24-27

**Seventy “sevens” are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish 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. Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the Ruler, comes, there will be seven “sevens” and sixty-two “sevens”. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.**

**After the sixty-two “sevens”, the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven”. 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, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.**

Jesus referred to this passage in Matthew 24:15-22

**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. Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go**

**back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equalled 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.**

This is part of his reply to some of the questions the disciples had asked him in:

Matthew 24:1-3

**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.” As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”**

The disciples asked Him three questions:

1. When will this happen?
2. What will be the sign of Your coming?
3. And what will be the sign of the end of the age?

Jesus' focus was on Israel and not on the Gentile world. He covered a very long period of history and ended up with a prophetic statement about the end of the age which would end with the time of the Great Tribulation mentioned by Daniel in:

Daniel 12:1b

**There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then.**

He spoke as well of the “Abomination of Desolation” mentioned by Daniel in Daniel 9. This had happened before in 167 BC when a pagan idol was placed in the Holy of Holies by Antiochus Epiphanes. However, Jesus was speaking prophetically about an event which would eventually happen and has not happened as yet.

The Holy of Holies is the place where only the high priest was allowed to enter and only once a year. But Jesus said: “When you see standing....” meaning others will be able to see it as well. So how will other people be able to see this event taking place? One possibility is that it will be a major political event, which will be televised and watched on news broadcasts all over the world. We need to remember as well that since 70 AD there has not been a temple in Jerusalem but Jesus predicts an event will take place in the temple. This must mean that a temple will be rebuilt before this event happens and is therefore still a future event.

Let's now go back to Daniel 9:24-27 and take one verse at a time.

### **The Scope**

Daniel 9:24

**Seventy “sevens” are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish 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.**

The angel Gabriel explained that seventy ‘sevens’ have been decreed for the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem:

1. To finish transgression
2. To make reconciliation for iniquity
3. To bring in everlasting righteousness
4. To seal up the vision and prophecy.
5. To anoint the Most Holy Place (the Holy of Holies)

One “seven” equals one period of seven years. This means that seventy “sevens” equal a period of 490 years.

Gabriel continued in:

Daniel 9:25

**Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven “sevens”, and sixty-two “sevens”. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.**

**The first sixty-nine “sevens” or 483 years, are split into seven “sevens” and sixty-two “sevens”. The seven ‘sevens’ or 49 years may possibly refer to the period it took to rebuild the Temple.**

According to the prophecy, the period between the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem and the time the Anointed One would come was going to be 483 years.

A total of 4 Decrees have been given to rebuild Jerusalem:

Cyrus 537 BC	Ezra 1:2-4
Darius	Ezra 6:1-5, 8, 12
Artaxerxes 458 BC	Ezra 7:11-26
Artaxerxes 445 BC	Nehemiah 2:5-8, 17, 18

The first three decrees dealt only with the Temple.

The fourth decree dealt with the city of Jerusalem when the streets and the wall were rebuilt and is the decree the angel Gabriel referred to in Daniel 9:25.

According to the Jewish calendar 483 years are 173,880 days.

The Decree was given on 14 March 445 BC.

And the Triumphal Entry of Jesus took place on 6 April, 32 AD. The period between the Decree and the Triumphant Entry covers exactly 173,880 days. Gabriel was correct to the day!!

Luke wrote of the Triumphal Entry in:

Luke 19:28-36

**After Jesus had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As He approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’” Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as He had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you**

untying the colt?” They replied, “The Lord needs it.” They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As He went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

Luke’s words were a fulfillment of:

Zechariah 9:9.

**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.”**

At that time the people were declaring Him to be the Messiah by quoting from:

Psalm 118:26a

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

As we can read in:

Luke 19:38a

**Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.**

The Pharisees understood this and told Jesus to tell His disciples to stop shouting these words because, according to them, Jesus’ followers were blaspheming according to:

Luke 19:39

**Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”**

However, at that time, Jesus declared judgement on Jerusalem for a season as we can read in:

Luke 19:41-42

**As He 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.”**

Jesus expected the Jewish people to know His Coming as prophesied in Daniel 9.

But they did not, and 38 years after His words, the city fell in 70 AD as foretold in:

Luke 19:43-44

**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 recognise the time of God’s coming to you.**

Jesus made them accountable to understand prophecy. They should have known the hour of their visitation. That puts a responsibility on us as well to know and understand the times we live in today.

### **The Interval**

Gabriel then gave an explanation of what was to happen after Daniel 9:25 but before Daniel 9:27 in:

Daniel 9:26

**After the sixty-two “sevens”, the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.**

This verse deals with events that will occur after Daniel 9:25 but before Daniel 9:27.

After sixty-two “sevens” shall the Messiah be cut off, shall be killed, but not for Himself. The angel Gabriel in this passage refers to the period after the first seven “sevens”, which is a period of 434 years and is the year the Messiah would be killed, which took place in 32 AD when Jesus was crucified for the sins of the world. “The ruler who will come” refers to the Roman leader who, with his people, destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD. Verse 26 indicates an Interval after the Messiah was killed during which time many things would take place. This Interval would last at least 38 years because Jerusalem was destroyed 38 years after the crucifixion of Jesus in 70 AD. However the Interval is still ongoing.

See also Daniel 2:31-33

**You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue – an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.**

This passage is connected to:

Daniel 2:40-43

**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; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. 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.”**

And Daniel 7:7

**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.**

This verse is connected to:

Daniel 7:19

**Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, 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.**

And Daniel 7:23

**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 original fourth kingdom, which was the Roman Empire in power at the time of Jesus, did not have ten horns or ten kings in it. This kingdom split in two parts, its Western and its Eastern part as was predicted in:

Daniel 2:43

**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 that iron mixes with clay.**

### **The Interval Implied**

The interval of Daniel 9:26 has been implied in other passages of Scripture:

Luke 4:18-20

**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 favour.**

This passage refers to:

Isaiah 61:1-2

**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 broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God. However, Jesus did not speak out the line of Isaiah 61:2 “and the day of vengeance of our God”, for it was not yet the time for the day of God’s vengeance. This day will be fulfilled at a future date.**

The interval of Daniel 9:26 has been implied as well in:

Isaiah 54:7

For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. This verse refers to the return of the Israelites to their land which is happening today after nearly 1900 years.

And Hosea 3:4-5

**For the Israelites will live for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stoned, without ephod or idol. Afterwards the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the Lord and to His blessings in the last days.**

And Amos 9:10-11

**All the sinners among My people will die by the sword, all those who say, “Disaster will not overtake or meet us.” In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins and build it as it used to be.**

And Zechariah 9:9-10

**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 war-horses 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.**

And Luke 1:32-33

**He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the House of Jacob for ever; His kingdom will never end.**

And Luke 21:2

**They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

## **The Interval Defined**

The Interval has been defined in:

Luke 19:41-42

**As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He (Jesus) 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."**

Jesus declared that Israel would not know what would bring her peace but not for always. It was to be hidden for a season as we can read in:

Romans 11:25

**I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.**

Paul declared that the Israelites as a nation would experience true peace after all the Gentiles who would come to the Lord had become believers.

## **The Church**

God is using the time of the Interval to bring forth the Church, which is something of a mystery in the Old Testament according to:

Ephesians 3:4-5.

**In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.**

And Ephesians 3:9

**And to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages**

past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.”

The Church was born at Pentecost according to:

Acts 2:1-11

**When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed they asked: “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them speaking in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Lybia near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs - we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!”**

However, the Church could not be born until certain things had taken place such as:

**1. The Atonement** according to:

Matthew 16:21

**From that time on Jesus began to explain to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.**

**2. The Resurrection** according to:

Ephesians 1:20

**...which He (God) exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.**

**3. The Ascension** according to:

Ephesians 1:20b –21

**And seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.**

The Church is distinguished from Jews or Gentiles according to:

I Corinthians 10:32

**Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the Church of God.**

The Apostle Paul talks about ‘The fullness or the full number of the Gentiles’ in:

Romans 11:25

**I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be**

**conceited; Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.**

He refers here to the full number of believers. They will be raptured.

“The fullness of the Gentiles” is not the same as “the Times of the Gentiles” which Luke mentions in:

Luke 21:20-24

**When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

“The times of the Gentiles” refers to the time period from Nebuchadnezzar to the Antichrist.

### **The 70<sup>th</sup> “Week”**

We will now go back to Daniel and look at:

Daniel 9:27

**He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven”. 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, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.**

This verse deals with the 70<sup>th</sup> “week”, the final seven-year period of God’s discipline of Israel. This period is divided into 2 period of 3 ½ years.

“And he, the ruler that will come, will confirm the covenant” with Israel for seven years. This refers to the final world ruler who is still to come. And he will ignore his agreement after 31/2 years and force sacrifices to cease. Furthermore, he will set up a pagan idol in the Holy of Holies. That means that a Temple must have been built in Jerusalem at the time this ruler comes on the world scene.

Also see Daniel 2:31-33

**You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue – an enormous dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.**

This passage is connected to:

Daniel 2:40-43

**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 crash 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; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. 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.

And Daniel 7:7-8

**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. This horn has eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.**

This passage is connected to:

Daniel 7:19-26

**Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, 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 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 judgement in favour 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. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.**

This time we are dealing with a revived Roman Empire which has ten horns or ten kingdoms in it. Interestingly, the United Nations has divided the world up into ten sections or ten kingdoms. They are not yet properly established but no doubt this will happen one day in the near future. The Antichrist will come out of one these nations and be in charge of all these nations, which means in fact that he will be in charge of the world as foretold in:

Revelation 13:7b

**And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.**

And Daniel 8:25

**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.**

And Daniel 11:36-45

**“The king 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 is completed, for what has been determined must take place. He will show no regards for the gods of his fathers 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 honour a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honour 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 honour those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price. At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North 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. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon 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 Nubians 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 at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.”**

And Daniel 12:1

**At that time Michael, the great Prince who protects your people, 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.**

## **The Great Tribulation**

Apart from Daniel 9:27, a number of passages declare that the time of the Great Tribulation will be a 3 and ½ year period or 42 months period or 1260 day period, the time of the Great Tribulation.

Daniel 12:7

**The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand towards heaven, and I heard him swear by Him who lives for ever, saying, ‘It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.’”**

And Revelation 11:1-2

**I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, ‘Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshippers there. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.’”**

And Revelation 11:3

**And I will give power to My two witnesses, and they will prophecy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.**

And Revelation 13:5

**The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.**

As we have already seen, Jesus made reference to the Temple standing during the Great Tribulation according to:

Matthew 24:15

**“So when you see standing in the holy place “the abomination that causes desolation”, spoken of through the prophet Daniel - let the reader understand.”**

Such an event had already happened in the past, namely in 167 BC when Antiochus Epiphanes, who was a Syrian Greek, acted in the following manner:

He made reading the Torah punishable by death.

He slaughtered a pig on the Altar.

He erected an idol to Zeus in the Holy of Holies.

However, Jesus in Matthew 24:15 speaks prophetically about a time still to come.

The prophet Zechariah declared that, at that time, two-thirds of the Jewish people will die according to:

Zechariah 13:8-9

**“In the whole land,” declares the Lord, “two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on My Name and I will answer them; I will say, “They are My people,” and they will say, “The Lord is our God.”**

When Israel cries out to God, the Lord will return according to:

Hosea 5:15

**Then I will go back to My place until they admit their guilt. And they will seek My face; in their misery they will earnestly seek Me.**

Jesus went back to Heaven nearly 2000 years ago and He is patiently waiting for the Jewish people to cry out to Him for His return. This will happen at the time of the Great Tribulation.

## **Titles of the Antichrist**

Some of the Old Testament titles of the Antichrist are:

“The Offspring or the Seed of the Serpent” according to:

Genesis 3:15

**And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.**

‘The Idol Shepherd’ according to:

Zechariah 11:16-17

**For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land who will not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy, but will eat the meat of the choice sheep, tearing off their hoofs. Woe to the worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! May his arm be completely withered, his right eye totally blinded!**

‘The Little Horn’ according to:

Daniel 7:8

**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. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.”**

And Daniel 7:20

**I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn 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.”**

“The ruler who will come” according to:

Daniel 9:26

**After the sixty-two “sevens”, the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of “the ruler who will come” will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.**

“The king who will do as he pleases” according to:

Daniel 11:36

**The king 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 is completed, for what has been determined must take place.**

“The Assyrian” according to:

Isaiah 10:5-7

**Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of My anger, in whose hand is the club of My wrath! I send him against a godless nation, I dispatch him against a people who anger Me, to seize loot and snatch plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. But this is not what he intends, this is not what he has in mind; his purpose is to destroy to put an end to many nations.**

And Micah 5:5b

**....When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men.**

## New Testament Titles of the Antichrist

Some of the New Testament titles of the Antichrist are:

“The one who comes in his own name” according to:

John 5:43

**I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not accept Me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.**

“The man of lawlessness” and “the man doomed to destruction” according to:

II Thessalonians 2:3

**Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.**

“The Beast” according to:

Revelation 11:7

**Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them.**

And Revelation 13

**And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with then crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous 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.**

“The false prophet” according to:

Revelation 13:11

**“Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon.”**

We need to remember that there are two Beasts according to Revelation 13, a political leader as well as a religious leader, the false prophet. They work very closely together under the Dragon, who is Satan.

## The Characteristics of the Antichrist

The characteristics of the Antichrist are as follows:

He will be an intellectual genius according to:

Daniel 7:20b

**.....the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully.**

And Daniel 8:23b

**.... a master of intrigue will arise.**

He will be a persuasive orator according to:

Daniel 7:20

**...and a mouth that spoke boastfully.**

And Revelation 13:2b

**...and a mouth like that of a lion.**

He will be a shrewd politician according to:

Daniel 8:25a

**He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior....**

He will be a financial genius according to:

Daniel 11:38b

**....a god unknown to his fathers he will honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts.**

And Revelation 13:17.

**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.**

He will be a forceful military leader according to:

Daniel 8:25b

**...When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes...**

And Revelation 6:2

**I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.**

And Revelation 13:4

**Men worshipped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast and asked, 'Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?'**

He will be a powerful organiser according to:

Revelation 13:1

**"And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name."**

And Revelation 17:17

**For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish His purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until God's words are fulfilled.**

He will be a person who unifies all religions according to:

2 Thessalonians 2:4

**“He will oppose and 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.”**

And Revelation 13:14b

**He ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.**

### **The Antichrist, a Jew or a Gentile?**

Will the Antichrist be a Jew or a Gentile?

This leader will be the Son of Satan according to:

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring (or seed) and hers; he will crush your head and you will strike his heel.

And Revelation 13:2b

**The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.**

Some believe this leader will be a Jew because of:

Ezekiel 21:25-27

**O, profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose days has come, whose time of punishment has reached its climax, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: Take off the turban remove the crown. It will not be as it was. The lowly will be exalted and the exalted will be brought low. A ruin! A ruin! I will make it a ruin! It will not be restored until He comes to whom it rightfully belongs; to Him I will give it.**

Daniel 11:37

**He will show no regard for the God (or gods) of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all.**

John 5:43

**I have come in My Father’s Name and you do not accept Me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.**

Others believe he will be a Gentile since he must be a prince from the Roman Empire, a Syrian according to:

Isaiah 10:5-7

**Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of My anger, in whose hand is the club of My wrath! I send him against a godless nation, I dispatch him against a people who anger Me, to seize loot and snatch plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. But this is not what he intends, this is not what he has in mind; his purpose is to destroy, to put an end to many nations.**

And Micah 5:5b

**...When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, we will raise seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men.**

**At the end of the Great Tribulation, Armageddon will take place when Christ returns to deal with the Antichrist and to put an end to the Time of the Great Tribulation. After that the Millennium age will begin.**

The Church will not go through the Great Tribulation but will be raptured before that event will take place because the Church is not to experience God's wrath according to:

1 Thessalonians 5:9

**For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Moreover, the Church will come back with Christ when He returns to earth according to:

Revelation 19:14

**The armies of heaven were following Him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.**

## Chapter Ten

### The Vision of the Glory of God

Daniel 10:1-3

**In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and 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.**

This chapter is an introduction to Daniel's fourth vision.

At that time Daniel had entered a period of three weeks of fasting.

Daniel's vision occurred when Daniel was near the Tigris River.

Other men were present but did not see the vision.

Daniel 10:4-9

**On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left along, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.**

In his vision Daniel saw a glorious man whom Daniel described as clothed in linen, with a belt around his waist of the finest gold, his body was like chrysolite.

His face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes as flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice sounded like the words of a multitude.

The impression upon Daniel must have been tremendous and similar to that of John the Apostle when he saw the glorified Christ while on the island of Patmos.

The sight of the vision affected Daniel physically, robbing him of his normal strength.

Daniel's experience illustrates the difficulty of mortal, sinful man, even a prophet like Daniel, of encountering the glory of God.

Daniel 10:10-21

**"A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. 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.” While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me. “I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. How can I, your servant, talk with you my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.” Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. “Do not be afraid, O man, highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace” Be strong now; be strong.” When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak my lord, since you have given me strength.” 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 in the Book of Truth. (No-one supports me against them except Michael, your prince).”

It was in this position of weakness and semi-consciousness that Daniel was touched by an angel to strengthen him so that he could receive further revelation. The angel, who is to be distinguished from the previous glorious being, explained to Daniel that he had been sent by God at the beginning of Daniel’s intercession but had been delayed due to a spiritual struggle. The subject of the unseen struggle between the holy angels and the fallen angels is not clearly revealed in the Scriptures.

However, from the rare occasions that we are allowed a glimpse of what happens as in this instance, it is plain that behind the political and social condition of the world there is angelic influence – good on the part of the holy angels, evil on the part of the angels under satanic control. The angel then explained to Daniel that his purpose in coming was to make Daniel understand what was going to happen to his people. The angel explained at the same time that much time would be involved in the vision.

Having been strengthened two more times, Daniel was ready to receive the great revelation regarding the vision. We can read about the interpretation of his vision in chapter 11.

## Chapter Eleven

### World History from Darius to the Time of the End

Daniel 11:1-2

**(And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.) 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.**

This Chapter contains the revelation of important events beginning with Darius the Mede (539 B.C.) and extending to the last Gentile ruler in the time of the end.

The prophecy covers a period that coincides with the prophecy of Chapter Eight of the ram and the goat. Daniel was informed that there would be three kings in Persia to be followed by a fourth far richer and greater than the others, who would stir up all against the realm of Greece. The most natural explanation would be that the four kings were the first four Persian rulers in addition to Darius the Mede, the last one being Xerxes I who led the great expedition against Greece.

See also Daniel 2:32b

**.....its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze.**

And Daniel 2:39a

**After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours.**

And Daniel 7:5

**And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it has three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, "Get up and eat your fill of flesh!"**

And Daniel 8:3-4

**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 he charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against him, and none could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.**

And Daniel 8:20

**The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.**

Let's now return to:

Daniel 11:3-4

**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.**

Daniel next received details regarding “a mighty king” which refers to Alexander the Great the ruler of the Greek Empire.

See also Daniel 2:32c

**.....its belly and thighs of bronze.**

And Daniel 2:39b

**Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.**

And Daniel 8:5-8

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

And Daniel 8:21-22

**The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king. The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from this nation but will not have the same power.**

Let's return to:

Daniel 11:5-29

**“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.... At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before.**

This section of Daniel 11 gives us details regarding the struggle between the various kings of Egypt and the kings of Syria ending with Antiochus Epiphanes, a comparatively obscure Syrian ruler.

Daniel 11:30-35

**Ships of the western coastlands 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 favour to those who forsake the holy covenant. 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 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.**

Disgruntled by his defeat in Egypt at the hands of Rome, Antiochus Epiphanes seemed

to have vented his wrath upon the Jewish people. In the process of his opposition to the Jews, Antiochus polluted the holy altar in the Temple by offering a sow upon the altar and forbidding the continuance of daily sacrifices. He also issued orders that Jews should cease their worship and he erected an idol in the holy place.

Thus Antiochus attempted to annihilate the party among the Jews that was devoted to God, but succeeded only in contributing to its purifying. His purging process foreshadows events which are yet to come as we can read in:

Daniel 11:36-45

**The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say un-heard of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. He will show no regard for the (God) gods of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above all. Instead of them, he will honour a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honour 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 honour those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price. At a time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North 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. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon 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 Nubians 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 at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet, he will come to his end, and no one will help him.**

The second part of Chapter Eleven is a description of the closing days of the Gentiles when the final world ruler will come on the world scene who will invade many nations, including Israel. His end will come when Christ returns.

See also Daniel 7:25-26

**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. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed for ever.**

And Daniel 8:25

**“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.**

And Daniel 9:27

**He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven.” 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, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.**

## Chapter Twelve

### The Time of the End

Daniel 12:1

**At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, 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.**

Chapter twelve relates specifically to the people of Israel.

This prophecy assures that, in spite of satanic efforts to exterminate the people of Israel, a godly remnant will be ready to greet their Messiah when He returns.

See also Daniel 9:27

**He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven.” 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, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.**

And Matthew 24:21

**“For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now - and never to be equalled again.”**

Let's return to:

Daniel 12:2-3

**Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.**

Daniel revealed that there will be many who will awake from their sleep in the dust of the earth. This refers to the resurrection of the dead and makes it clear that there will be two resurrections with two different destinies.

Following the resurrection of the righteous, their faithfulness in witness will be rewarded.

See also Daniel 7:9-10

**As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of His head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attended Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.**

And Revelation 20:6

**Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.**

Let's return to:

Daniel 12:4

**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.**

Daniel was told that the prophecies were primarily for those living in “the time of the end”.

Daniel 12:5-13

**“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. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.” I heard, but I did not understand. So, I asked, “My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?” He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but the wise will understand. 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, 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.”**

Daniel was informed that the time of the end would have a two-fold result:

1. Purification of the saints.
2. Manifestation of the true character of the wickedness of the human heart.

Furthermore, Daniel was given some further details to help him understand the length of the time of the end. In the light of world conditions today, which would seem to anticipate the fulfillment of Daniel's time of the end, it is possible to understand Daniel today as never before in history.

We truly live in a unique time. This puts a responsibility on us to wait for the coming of the Lord on the one hand and, at the same time, to share the gospel with others while we are still able, for the day may come when we can no longer do so.