

Understanding  
the  
PROPHECIES  
of  
*Daniel*

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# **Understanding the PROPHECIES of Daniel**

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# LESSON 1

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Part 1

#### THE SUCCESSION OF KINGS FROM GODLY TO GODLESS NOTES:

##### A. The reign of Josiah

It seems quite amazing to us in our time and culture that a nation could be led by a child. We learn from Scripture, however, that Josiah became king of Judah when he was only eight years old. According to 2 Kings 22:2; *“He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in all the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.”* In short, Josiah was a good and a godly king who reigned over the Southern kingdom for 31 years. His faithfulness to God was quite a departure from the wickedness of kings Manasseh and Amon who had preceded him.

When he was 20 years old Josiah put into motion a program to restore the temple of the LORD, which had fallen into disrepair during the reigns of Manasseh and Amon. In the midst of the process of rebuilding a tremendous discovery was made. READ 2 Kings 22:8-10. The Book of the Law was found and read to the king. Josiah’s immediate response was to tear his robes as a sign of repentance and begin to seek the Lord.

**READ 2 Kings 22:18-20.** Write a brief summary of God’s promises to King Josiah. \_\_\_\_\_

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Josiah ordered all pagan articles removed from the temple and removed the pagan priests. He also destroyed all of the shrines and altars and idols from the countryside. In that same year he ordered the celebration of the Passover.

**READ 2 Kings 23:26.** God blessed Judah as long as King Josiah lived, but after his death God’s intent to remove Judah from the land began to bear fruit. It would seem that Josiah’s work was a restoration but not a revival. The temple was put back into order,

the priesthood was re-established, and the sacrifices and festivals were restored; but the hearts of the people were unchanged.

In the thirty-first year of Josiah's reign, Neco, the Pharaoh of Egypt led his army up the Euphrates River valley to help the king of Assyria. Even though Neco had not come to attack Judah, Josiah opposed him as was killed in the battle.

## **B. After the death of Josiah**

After the death of Josiah his son Jehoahaz became king. Even though he reigned for only three months the Scripture tells us: *"He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his fathers had done"* (2 Kngs. 23:32). The Egyptian king Neco had him removed and, in his place, put Jehoiakim (Jehoahaz's older brother) on the throne. Jehoiakim reigned for 11 years but, unlike Josiah, was an ungodly ruler.

It was during Jehoiakim's reign that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon invaded Judah. Jehoiakim served the Babylonian king for several years, but later rebelled against him; provoking an all-out war with Babylon. After Jehoiakim's death he was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin.

His was another short, but ungodly reign. He occupied the throne for only three months, but it was during that time that Nebuchadnezzar's forces besieged Jerusalem and took Jehoiachin prisoner. Zedakiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, was appointed to replace him by the Babylonian king. **READ 2 Kings 25:1-12.** Zedakiah was ultimately taken as a prisoner to Babylon. What happened to Zedakiah prior to his exile?

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\_\_\_\_\_ Compare this with Jeremiah's warning in Jer. 34:1-3. Did God fulfill His word? \_\_\_\_\_ At the end of the siege, the army of Nebuchadnezzar burned the temple and the palace in Jerusalem and then tore down the city walls.

## **THE FIRST DEPORTATION**

The prophet Daniel was captured and taken to Babylon in the first deportation. **READ Daniel 1:1-7.** What do you think might have been Nebuchadnezzar's motivation in bringing the young men from the Judean court back to Babylon? \_\_\_\_\_

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According to the Scripture, the men were provided for and received training to enter into the service of the king of Babylon.

## **THE SECOND DEPORTATION**

**READ 2 Kings 24:8-16.** You will notice in vs.14 that all but the poorest residents of Jerusalem were deported and exiled in Babylon. The prophet Ezekiel was included among the group who was deported. When Ezekiel arrived in Babylon he found Daniel already established in the royal court of Nebuchadnezzar. What does Ezekiel say about Daniel in Ez. 14:14, 16, 18, 20, and in 28:3 and with whom is he compared? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **THE FINAL DEPORTATION**

**READ 2 Kings 25:1-21.** It was at the same time that the temple, palace, and city walls were destroyed (586 BC) that the final deportation of the residents of Judah to Babylon took place. We know from Jeremiah 39:11-40:6 that, unlike Daniel and Ezekiel, Jeremiah was never taken to Babylon, but remained with the few who were left behind.

# LESSON 2

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Part 2

#### PROPHETIC WARNINGS

#### NOTES:

There were three Major Prophets who spoke to the people about the Babylonian exile, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. You might recall from the previous lesson that Jeremiah was never part of the exile community as were Daniel and Ezekiel.

#### Jeremiah – Early prophecies

**READ Jer. 13:15-19.** At the beginning of this passage the Lord says: *“Hear and pay attention, . . . for the LORD has spoken.”* What does the Lord consider an unwillingness to hear and pay attention? \_\_\_\_\_ What, according to vs. 16, are the people hoping for? \_\_\_\_\_ What does God promise instead? \_\_\_\_\_ In vs. 17 we get a glimpse of God’s heart. How does He feel about His people’s hardness of heart? \_\_\_\_\_

What is going to happen to Judah? (SEE vs. 19b). \_\_\_\_\_

The sad fact is that the people of both Israel and Judah went far beyond a simple failure to worship and honor God; they built pagan altars on the hillsides and participated in the worship of idols (SEE Jer. 17:1-4). God’s chosen people broke their covenant with Him and put their trust in false gods.

**READ Jer. 14:11-16.** This prophecy focuses on those who claim to be prophets but who speak only the words the people want to hear. What, according to vs. 15, is going to happen to them? \_\_\_\_\_ God’s instruction to Jeremiah in vs. 11 is somewhat remarkable; what does God say? \_\_\_\_\_ Why do you think God directed Jeremiah in this way? \_\_\_\_\_

## Jeremiah – Later prophecies

**READ Jer. 22:1-9.** This prophecy was delivered by Jeremiah during the reign of Zedekiah, the last of the Judean kings. God leaves just a glimmer of hope in this message to the king. What is God's instruction and promise in vv. 3-4? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What is the warning in vs. 6? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the even greater reason for God to send disaster upon Jerusalem? (See vv. 8-9). \_\_\_\_\_

**READ Jer. 24:1-10.** In this prophecy God uses an "audio visual" to illustrate His lesson. What is represented by the good figs (vs. 5)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ It is important to see that, even though the exile is a form of discipline for the people, it is not God's intent to abandon them or destroy them (see vv. 6-7). It is His purpose, in fact, to protect them and to bring them back to serve Him in the land of promise. What is represented by the bad figs (vs. 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What is God's plan for them? \_\_\_\_\_

## Ezekiel – Judah's Judgment

**READ Eze. 8:1-18.** In this vision Ezekiel sees a figure who probably is God the Son, the pre-incarnate Messiah. He is called "the glory of the God of Israel." He gives the prophet a tour of the temple in Jerusalem. What did he see at the entrance to the north gate of the inner court (vs. 3)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ This was probably an image of Baal or some other pagan idol. The seventy elders in vs. 11 may represent the Sanhedrin which was a council of that number. Notice that they think their sin is being carried out in secret; they say: "*The Lord does not see us. . .*" Here we see the leaders who are in a position to judge others exhibiting the highest form of depravity themselves! The activity we see in vs. 16 seems to be a form of sun-worship. According to vs. 18, what is God's response to all this going to be? \_\_\_\_\_

## PROPHETIC PROMISES

**READ Jer. 23:3-6.** We know that God revealed His purpose to send the people of the northern and southern kingdoms into exile. That is not the totality of God's plan, however. Notice that vs. 3 speaks of a remnant. What is meant by the term *remnant* and what is God's plan for them? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the promise of vs. 5? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ What, according to vs. 6, is the name by which this just king will be known? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Who is the subject of this prophecy? \_\_\_\_\_.

**READ Eze. 34:11-16, 23.** How is this passage similar to that of Jeremiah 23? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think that the shepherd described in vs. 23 is that same person as the king described in Jeremiah 23:5-6? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

**READ Zeph. 3:14-20.** This passage is certainly a word of encouragement to a people in distress. It is a message of hope to those who feel left behind, forgotten, or forsaken.

Remember, the purpose of prophecy is:

- To encourage God's people to trust God's power and mercy rather than man's strength, wisdom, or merits.
- To remind God's people that safety and blessedness depend on faithful adherence to the covenant.
- To insure them that God's purpose is redemption and restoration.
- To confirm to God's people that He is the sovereign Lord.

# Lesson 3

## DANIEL'S CALL AND MINISTRY

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the last lesson we looked at prophecies in the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah. Like those books, the book of Daniel has the Babylonian exile as its backdrop. However, the prophet Daniel was deported to Nebuchadnezzar's country several years before the prophet Ezekiel. (Daniel's exile began around 605 B.C., while Ezekiel's began about 597 B.C.).

The Babylonian empire lasted until 539 B.C. when Babylon fell to the Medo-Persians. Belshazzar was the last of the Babylonian rulers. Daniel still seems to be in the Babylonian region, however, during the rule of Cyrus the Persian; the man who authorized the rebuilding of the Temple in the city of Jerusalem (See Dan. 1:21, 6:28, and 10:1).

### THE LANGUAGE AND FORM OF THE BOOK

The book of Daniel deals with two subjects: 1) the historical situation and hope of the *Hebrew people*, and 2) the historical situation and judgment of the *Gentile nations*. These two are kept distinct by the use of language--those portions which deal primarily with the Jewish people are written in Hebrew, those portions which deal primarily with Gentile nations are written in Aramaic. The original language text of Daniel is in Hebrew from the beginning of the Chapter 1 through 2:4a and from the beginning of Chapter 8 to the end of the book. The entire section from 2:4b through 7:28 is written in Aramaic.

The book also contains two distinct styles, historical narrative and apocalyptic. Chapters 1, 3-6 are historical narrative. Chapters 7-12 are apocalyptic. Chapter 2 is a combination of the two literary styles.

### NOTES:

## **DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS**

**READ Dan. 1:1-7, 18-20.** What do we know about Daniel from vv. 3-4? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the duration and purpose of the training? \_\_\_\_\_

Daniel and three of his companions are mentioned by name. What were their Hebrew names? \_\_\_\_\_

What Babylonian names were they given? \_\_\_\_\_

**READ Dan. 3:1-6.** What are the king's orders with regard to the image of gold that he has set up? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What is the punishment for those who don't comply with his order? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read 3:8-12. What report is brought to the king by his astrologers? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The report is, of course, true. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abenego did refuse to worship and serve the gods of Babylon. In verse 15, Nebuchadnezzar tells them the punishment and then asks the question, "What god will be able to rescue you from my hand?" Read 3:16-18. What is their answer to the king? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree with their "statement of faith"? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

For the "rest of the story" read 3:19-30. What is the king's analysis of the situation? (See vs. 29) \_\_\_\_\_

Who do you think the "fourth man in the furnace" was? \_\_\_\_\_

**READ Dan. 6:1-5.** What do we learn about Daniel from these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Dan. 6:6-28. Compare Daniel's experience with that of his three friends. In what ways were they similar? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome of each? \_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 4

## DREAMS AND VISIONS

### Part 1

#### DANIEL AND THE GREAT STATUE

#### NOTES:

**READ Dan. 2:1-6.** Here we see the king calling together his court magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to give them a "mission impossible." He was asking them to not only interpret his dream, but also tell him the content of the dream. **READ 2:10-11.** The "wise men" he consulted didn't think this was possible. In his anger, the king ordered the execution of all the wise men in Babylon. This edict, of course, included Daniel and his friends. **READ 2:13-19.** After visiting with the king, Daniel talked to his friends. What did he ask them to do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ How did God respond? \_\_\_\_\_

It is interesting to compare the statements of the king's pagan "wise men" with those of Daniel. **Compare 2:10-11 with 2:27-28.** What is the essential difference in the two views of God / the gods represented here? \_\_\_\_\_

**READ 2:31-44.** What are the five primary components of the statue in the king's dream and what does Daniel say that they represent?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## **DANIEL AND THE FOUR BEASTS**

**READ Dan. 7:1-28.** This dream would seem to have come to Daniel some time after the Nebuchadnezzar's dream. We can see from vs. 1 that Belshazzar is now king of Babylon. Though the content of the dream is very different from that recorded in chapter 2, its interpretation is very similar. What are the primary components of this dream and what do they represent?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

There has been much written concerning the "ten horns" and the "little horn" which are part of the vision of the fourth beast. It is important to note at this point that: 1) both are part of, or come out of, the fourth beast; 2) that the ten horns and the little horn exist at the same time; and 3) that their appearance precedes the coming of the "son of man" on the clouds. (Compare 2 Thess. 2:1-15).

# Lesson 5

## DREAMS AND VISIONS

### Part 2

#### DANIEL IN THE CITADEL OF SUSA

#### NOTES:

**READ Dan. 8:1-14.** How much time has passed since the Daniel received the vision described in Chapter 7? \_\_\_\_\_

Susa was a city in the country of Elam and was located about 230 miles east of Babylon (about 50 miles southeast of Baghdad, Iraq). It was captured by the Medes and Persians and eventually became the capital city of the Persian Empire. King Darius, who ruled the Persian Empire at its peak of power, built a palace there. This palace and the fortress described in Daniel's vision may have been the same. Note that his presence in the citadel was part of his vision; he was probably not there physically.

Prophecy is full of symbolism. In the last lesson we saw a statue that was made of different materials. Each of the materials, gold, silver, bronze, iron, and clay, represented a different empire that ruled over mankind. Two very common symbols appeared in Daniel's second vision and in this prophetic vision as well. The first being beasts, which natural or fanciful, generally represent kingdoms or empires. The second common symbol is the horn, which usually represents a king or ruler. So . . . a beast with 7 horns would symbolize an empire with seven kings. Often the strength or fierceness of the beast is an indicator of the power or ruthlessness of the empire. The relative size of the horn similarly indicates the power of the king or ruler.

The two primary components of this vision are the ram and the goat. Look closely at vs. 3. What is odd about the two horns of the ram? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ How is the ram described in vs. 4? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ How is the goat described in vs. 5? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ According to vv. 6-7, what does this goat do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ We read that the goat continued to gain in power, but at the height

of its power, its one horn was broken off. What replaced it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ There is a final horn  
that started small but grew until it "reached the host of heaven."  
What do you think that could mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In vs. 12 we read that everything that was attempted by the one  
represented by this horn prospered and even truth was thrown to  
the ground! The last phrase probably means that the scrolls of the  
Scripture were destroyed, true doctrine was refuted, and true  
worship was ended.

**READ 8:15-22.** Who was the one who appeared to be a man who  
came and stood before Daniel? \_\_\_\_\_ He tells  
Daniel that this vision is to reveal the events at what time in human  
history? \_\_\_\_\_ What does the ram  
represent? \_\_\_\_\_ What does the goat  
represent? \_\_\_\_\_

**READ 8:23-27.** Read vs. 23 carefully. This is a description of a  
powerful human leader that will arise. How would you describe his  
character? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ While this ruler could be  
seen to represent Alexander the Great, or Antiochus Epiphanes, or  
even Adolph Hitler, it would seem more likely that he is the one  
Paul calls "the man of lawlessness." Compare the description in  
vv. 24-25 with the description Paul gives in 2 Thess. 2:3-12. In  
what ways are they similar? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note that this one takes his stand against the "prince of princes"  
(vs. 25). Who might that be? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is the outcome of his rebellion? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (compare 2 Thess. 2:8).

# Lesson 6

## DANIEL'S DREAMS in the light of BIBLE AND HISTORY

### DREAMS AND VISIONS IN DANIEL

Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8	Meaning
Gold	Winged lion	XXXX	Babylonian Empire
Silver	Bear	Ram	Medo-Persian Empire
Bronze	Leopard	Goat	Greek Empire
Iron & Clay	Beast	XXXX	Roman Empire
XXXX	Little Horn	Final horn	Antichrist (man of lawlessness)
Great Stone	Son of man	Prince of princes	Messiah (Parousia)

### EMPIRES

When we put the visions of Daniel together we get a picture of six great empires that appear in the history of man, one after the other. An important message for us to learn from this is that the empires of man are transient – none last forever. A second and more important message for us to learn is that none of this happens apart from the knowledge and purpose of God. **READ Isa. 46:9b-11.** Notice that God uses his knowledge of what is to come as evidence of His deity. But God not only claims knowledge of what is to come, He declares that it happens because it fulfills His plan and purpose: *“My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. . . . what I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do.”*

We know the identity of the first kingdom from Dan. 2:38. We know the identity of the second kingdom and the third kingdom from the clear statements in Dan. 8:20-21. The identification of the fourth kingdom as the Roman Empire is not quite so clear, although its description fits the actual character of Rome quite well (SEE Dan. 7:23). This interpretation is the consistent understanding of conservative biblical scholars. It would seem, then, that the Roman Empire is the final empire and that the antichrist figure, the man of lawlessness, rises out of it.

### NOTES:

The remaining empires are a fifth, which seems to be a product of the fourth, but is a particularly ungodly kingdom (SEE Dan. 7:25 & 8:23-25b); and a final kingdom which is everlasting (SEE Dan. 2:44, 7:27, & 8:25b).

What are the first four empires represented in Daniel's visions?

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## **THE PROPHETIC PERSPECTIVE**

It is important to note that the first vision came, not to Daniel, but to king Nebuchadnezzar. It was a vision of the statue of a man and it seems to be a monument to the power and glory of mankind, as one kingdom ruthlessly replaces the other. In the end, however, the truth is revealed as the kingdom of God replaces them, destroying them once and for all.

The second vision seems to deal with the same chain of events but from a slightly different perspective. Instead of a vision that idealizes the power and glory of man we see the kingdoms of the world through God's eyes. What seems beautiful to man is bestial to God. Compare Dan. 7:27 with Rev. 11:15-17. What are the points of correspondence? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **HISTORY UNFOLDING**

The Babylonian Empire was certainly a powerful kingdom, intent on conquest. It became great by attacking and defeating the Assyrians and taking Nineveh, their capital city. It was under the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar that Judea was over-run and that Jerusalem was looted and burned. The population of Israel's southern kingdom was captured and deported. Yet God's influence on this people is clear. The king himself was humbled by God and out of his own mouth he testified to the sovereign power of the Most High (Dan. 4:34-35). Perhaps this is what is depicted in Dan. 7:4 where the lion's wings are torn off, it was forced to stand on two feet like a man, and it was given the heart of a man.

After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian Empire began to lose power. It came to an end when it was simply taken over by the Medo-Persian king Cyrus. This was truly a bloodless conquest – well, nearly so. The Persian king had his army dig trenches to divert the waters of the Euphrates River, which ran through the city of Babylon. When the waters were sufficiently low, the soldiers simply slipped under the gates and into the city. They quickly over-

ran the city, killed its king, and took over. [We will look at this again in lesson 8].

In 333 B.C. the armies of Alexander the Great defeated the Persian armies in Macedonia. This led to the rise of the Greek Empire and the end of domination by the Medo-Persians. After the death of Alexander the Empire was divided up and ruled by four of Alexander's generals. Under this four kingdom arrangement, the Greek Empire became significantly weaker. At the same time, the Roman Empire was becoming more and more powerful.

We know that over time the armies of Rome conquered all of the nations surrounding the Mediterranean Sea and extended northward to include the British Isles. The empire ended when it was overrun by millions of people who migrated into it from the north and east of Europe. Technically, the Roman Empire collapsed after the Visigoths conquered the city of Rome in 476 AD. It ended as an empire, but the component peoples of the empire continued to exist under local leadership. The truth is that the culture and influence of ancient Rome permeates Western civilization to this day.

# Lesson 7

## GOD HUMBLER THE MIGHTY

### ANOTHER DREAM AND ITS INTERPRETATION

### NOTES:

Read Daniel 4:1-18. To whom is Necuchadnezzar's testimony addressed? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What is the general content of his testimony? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who did the king call first to interpret his dream? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Was this attempt to come to an understanding of its meaning successful? \_\_\_\_\_ What does the king say about Daniel in vs. 8? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Compare Nebuchadnezzar's statement in vs. 8 with that of vs. 2. Do you think the king really knows the "Most High God" at this point? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are the essential points of the king's dream? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### GOD DEALS WITH THE PRIDE OF MAN

Read 2 Sam. 22:28; Prov. 3:34-35; Luke 1:48-52. What is God's attitude toward those who are prideful? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Why is pride so offensive to God? (Consider Isa. 14:13-15) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Define "humility." \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### DANIEL INTERPRETS THE KING'S DREAM

Read Daniel 4:19-27. What does the tree represent? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Notice that Daniel's interpretation in vs. 25 is essentially the same as the statement of \_\_\_\_\_

the “messengers” in vs. 17. What is being required of King Nebuchadnezzar? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does Daniel offer the king any hope? \_\_\_\_\_ What does he suggest? \_\_\_\_\_

### **THE DREAM BECOMES REALITY**

**Read Daniel 4:28-37.** What does Nebuchadnezzar’s statement in vs. 28 reveal about him? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What came upon him as a result of his failure to acknowledge God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How did the king become restored? (See vs. 34) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In what ways do praise and authentic worship relate to one’s acknowledgement of God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you believe that Nebuchadnezzar had a true change of heart? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 8

## HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

### THE BIG PARTY

### NOTES:

Read Daniel 5:1-6. Who is Belshazzar? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Belshazzar was giving a dinner party.  
What is the special significance of his choice of goblets (vs. 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Do you  
think Belshazzar's use of these relics offended God? Why or why  
not? (Compare vs. 4 with Ex. 40:9-10) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read 1 Cor. 11:29-30. Do you think that  
there is any parallel that can be drawn here? Explain your answer.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### THE WRITING

Read Daniel 5:8-12. Was the writing on the wall a vision, a dream,  
or reality? \_\_\_\_\_ How did Belshazzar react  
when he saw it? (vs. 6) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who did he call to help him understand the writing? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Who suggested that  
he call upon Daniel and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Why do you  
think Belshazzar didn't call Daniel in the first place? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### INTERPRETATION AND FULFILLMENT

Read Daniel 5:13-23. What did Belshazzar promise Daniel if he  
would read and explain the writing on the wall? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ How did  
Daniel respond to his offer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ How does Daniel relate the  
events of Nebuchadnezzer's life to that of Belshazzar? (vs. 22)  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ How does Daniel  
describe the false gods of Babylon in vs. 23? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ How does he

differentiate them from the true God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Read Daniel 5:24-30.** What was the inscription that God wrote on the wall in the banquet hall and what did it mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What happened to Belshazzar that very night? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How does this story illustrate the truth that God exalts the humble and humbles the arrogant? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 9

## THE SEVENTY WEEKS

### DANIEL'S PRAYER

Read Dan. 9:1-2; Jer. 25:11-12, 29:10. What did Daniel know from his study of Jeremiah? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Daniel's prayer in 9:3-19. Does Daniel blame God for what has happened to his people? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the cause? (vv. 5-8) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What does Daniel base his requests upon in vs. 18? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Read vv. 20-23. What is the response to Daniel's prayer? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ What two things does Gabriel claim to bring? \_\_\_\_\_

### THE MESSAGE

Read Daniel 9:24-27. For whom and what have the "seventy sevens" been decreed? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you understand this to mean? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ There are six purposes stated for this decree. What are they?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

There is a particular time described in vs. 25. What marks each end of this time?

BEGINNING - \_\_\_\_\_

END - \_\_\_\_\_

Who might the "Anointed one" of vs. 26 be? Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_ In what way

would he be "cut off"? \_\_\_\_\_ The temple was rebuilt before the rebuilding of the city wall. Which do you think is indicated? \_\_\_\_\_

### NOTES:

Consider:

Cyrus' decree issued – 537 BC (**Read Isa. 44:28**)

1<sup>st</sup> return; Zerubbabel begins temple restoration – 536 BC

Temple completed and dedicated – 516 BC

2<sup>nd</sup> return under Ezra – 458 BC

3<sup>rd</sup> return under Nehemiah and city wall rebuilt – 444 BC

**NOTE:** 62 weeks = 434 years

Do you think that the purpose of this prophecy is to set dates?  
Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is to happen after the anointed one is cut off? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Compare Matt. 24:1-31 with vv. 26-27. What parallels do you observe? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think “the people of the ruler who will come” is the Roman army? If so, why? If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The final “7” is divided into two parts. What takes place in the middle? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the “he” of vs 27? \_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 10

## THE SEVENTY WEEKS in the light of BIBLE AND HISTORY

### IDEAS TO CONSIDER

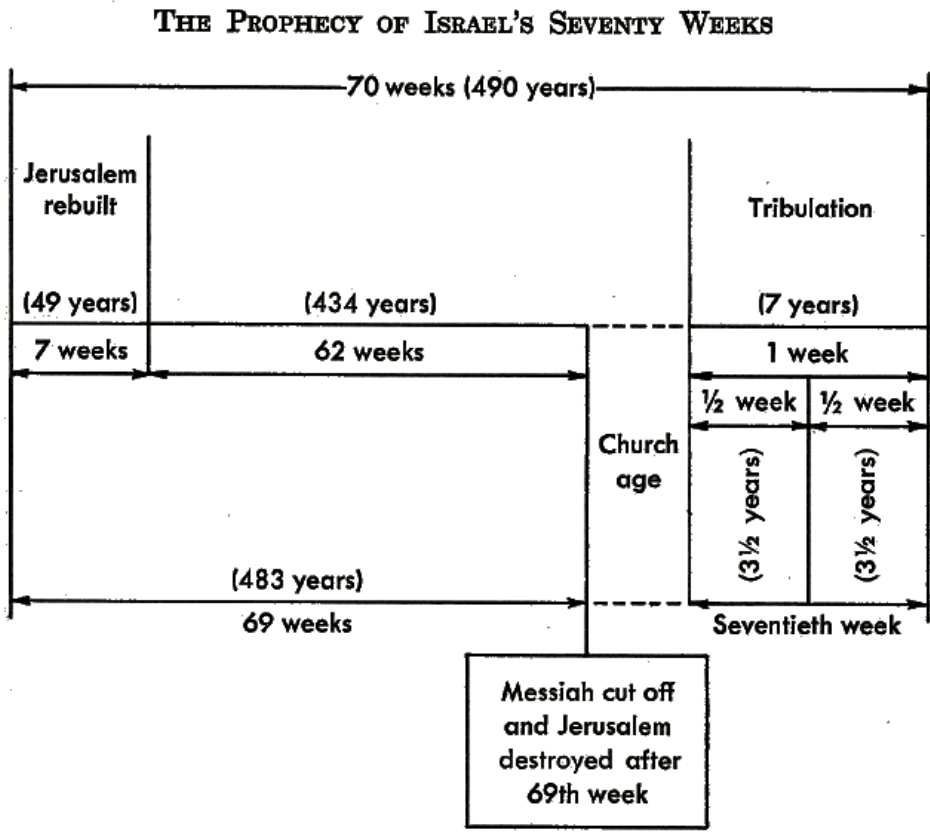
- It is not wrong to think of the Babylonian exile as an historic type or symbol for the church in the world. Its timeframe is limited by God and ends with God's people being free and in the place that God prepared for them and the ungodly being punished.
- The number seven has Scriptural significance from the seven days of creation to the seven seals of Revelation.
- The number seven is usually understood as the biblical number of *perfection* or *completion*. The root of the Hebrew word for seven (cbX, *sheva*) means "to be full" or "satisfied."
- The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week.
- The year following the 7<sup>th</sup> 7-year cycle was to be "the year of Jubilee" for God's people; a year always associated with *freedom* and *restoration*.
- Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in 70 AD. Only a retaining wall (the "wailing wall") remains.
- Read Dan. 7:24-27. Time, times, and half a time = 3.5 years.
- It is the man of sin that Paul describes that makes covenant (a treaty of some sort?). SEE 2 Thess. 2:3-12.
- Consider that the NT temple is the church (SEE 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16).
- Unless all portions of this prophecy have already been fulfilled, a gap of some sort is required. Many believe that, because this prophecy is decreed for Daniel's people and the holy city (i.e., Jerusalem), it skips over the "church age" (a primarily Gentile period).
- Remember that the things described in this message have a redemptive purpose (end sin, atone for wickedness, bring everlasting righteousness, seal vision and prophecy, and anoint the most holy). All these can only be accomplished by Christ. He, therefore, MUST BE the point and purpose of the prophecy!

### NOTES:

Hobart Freeman, a contemporary biblical scholar who has written extensively on biblical prophets and prophecy, made the following observation regarding the 70 weeks in Daniel 9:

The interpretations of this difficult passage are legion, and the only satisfactory solution is that which views the prophecy as relating wholly to Israel from the time of the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the overthrow of Antichrist at the second advent.

In his book, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, Freeman provides the following chart illustrating this interpretation.



# Lesson 11

## THE END

### DANIEL'S REVELATION

Read Dan. 10:1-6. According to vs. 1, what is the general content of Daniel's vision? \_\_\_\_\_ Compare vv. 5-6 with those of Rev. 1:12-15. Do you think that these are the same person? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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### NOTES:

Read Dan. 10:10-14, 20-21. This is the only place in Scripture that presents any hint of angels presiding over the destinies of particular nations. What nations are in view here? \_\_\_\_\_

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In general terms, chapters 10-11 deal with:

- The remaining kings of Persia (Cyrus – Darius III)
- The rise of the Greek Empire (Alexander the Great)
- The division of the Greek Empire (the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Syria)
- The rise of an anti-Christ figure / Antiochus Epiphanes

Read Dan. 11:31-36. Describe the general character of the king in these verses. \_\_\_\_\_

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Read 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:5; Dan. 8:24-25. Antiochus Epiphanes, although a real historic figure, might be seen as a "type" of the man of sin / antichrist to come at the end of the age. What parallels do you see in the verses above? \_\_\_\_\_

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### A PROMISE

Read Dan 12.

- 12:1 – What kind of "trouble / tribulation" do you think is being described here? \_\_\_\_\_

Notice the phrase "written in the book." What book is this? (Compare Ps. 69:28; Php. 4:3; Rev. 3:5, Rev. 20:12-15).

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- **12:2** – This is one of the few OT verses that deal directly with resurrection and judgment. Compare this verse with 1 Thess. 4:14, 16-17, 5:10; Matt. 16:27.
- **12:3** – Who are the “wise”? (Compare Prov. 11:30; Matt. 24:45-51). \_\_\_\_\_
- **12:4** – This message, it would seem, was not for Daniel’s time but for the “time of the end.” Do you think that it is man’s “increase of knowledge” that will make it understandable when that time comes? Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- **12:5-9** – The time period referenced here is equal to that given elsewhere for the period at the end of the age when the antichrist is allowed to persecute the saints of God. The good news that we should receive from this is that the period is *limited by God!* Here again we see clearly that it is God, not those who oppose Him and His people, who is in control.
- **12:10** – How does the purification of the saints take place? (Consider Ps. 51:7; Ezk. 36:25; 1 Cor. 6:10-11; Rev. 7:13-14). \_\_\_\_\_
- **12:11-12** – The message of these verses is to “stand firm” even in the face of persecution. Compare Matt. 24:13; 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:12, 21; 1 Jn. 5:4-5.

# Lesson 12

## DANIEL in the light of JESUS

### THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

### NOTES:

**READ Matt. 24:1-14 carefully.**

What was Jesus referring to in vs. 2 when he said “all these things?”  
\_\_\_\_\_ What was his prediction? \_\_\_\_\_

At a later time Jesus’ disciples came and asked him three questions. What were they? 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

It is possible that the last two questions are to be considered together.

We know that the city of Jerusalem was surrounded by the armies of Titus, son of the Caesar Vespasian, and that the city walls were breached in 70 AD. Thousands of citizens were slaughtered or captured, the Temple was burned, and the sacred relics were taken. Jesus’ statement that not one stone would be left on another was literally fulfilled as the Roman soldiers tore apart the walls to get at the melted gold. These events seem to be a fulfillment of Jesus’ statement in 24:2. Compare the parallel passage in Luke 21:5-28. In vv. 12-19 Jesus is speaking to the disciples who were with Him that day. Here he indicates that many of them will see persecution prior to any of the events happening. We know from the historical record that over half of the original disciples were martyred before 70 AD, thus fulfilling that prophecy as well.

Vv. 4-8 point toward an extended period of time in which events occur and reoccur:

- Many will come in my name, claiming to be the Messiah (Christ).
- There will be wars and rumors of wars.
- Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom.
- Famines and earthquakes will be common.

What does Jesus say about these “signs of the times” in vv. 6b & 8? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 9 begins with the word “then,” which means “at that time.” Since we have been looking at an extended period the statement that follows (vv. 9-12) should probably be understood as being part of the period as well. If so, what should be the expectation of disciples? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How wonderful to see that this ominous warning is followed by a great promise: *“But he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”*

Jesus finally answers their question about the end in vs. 14. What is the actual “sign of the end?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The remaining verses add some detail to this statement. They also reference the book of Daniel. **READ Matt. 24:15-24** and compare Dan. 9:27 and 12:11. The “abomination that causes desolation” can be understood in several ways, however in the context of Jesus teaching it is a sign of the end. Who does Daniel say will “set up an abomination that causes desolation” in 9:27? \_\_\_\_\_

**READ Matt. 24:25-27.** Notice that here Jesus connects the events of this time to the “coming of the Son of man.” As Jesus goes on to explain what is to come, note how compressed the time-frame is. The “distress of those days” in vs. 29 seems to be a reference back to vs. 21. It is “immediately” after this that the Son of man will appear in the sky, in the view of all the nations, and the elect will be gathered.

**READ Dan. 12:1-4.** Here we see again that the time of great distress (i.e., great tribulation) leads to deliverance for those whose names are “written in the book.” We also see the promise of resurrection and judgment in vs. 2.

**READ Matt. 24:32-34.** The lesson of the fig tree basically says that all of the events that follow the setting up of the “abomination that causes desolation” will unfold before a single generation; those who see its beginning will also see the end.

It is understandable that the greatest interest in Daniel's prophecies focuses on the final "week" of the 70 weeks. This is the time that has yet to be fulfilled. The great empires are in our past. The physical Temple has been destroyed. The final ruler of the final week, however, has yet to be revealed.

**READ Dan. 7:24-27; 8:23-25; 9:26b-27; 11:21-23, 30-32, 33-36.**

Here are the things we learn about this final world leader:

- He will rise to power through political channels – his source is the same as other empires and rulers.
- He will speak against God and oppose His plan and purpose.
- He will have authority over the saints for 3.5 years.
- His power is not really his own.
- His destructive accomplishments will be astounding.
- He will take a stand against Christ (i.e., anti-Christ).
- He will make a promise / covenant / treaty with God's people but it is a lie.
- He will be destroyed by divine power at the appointed time.
- He ultimately and utterly fails to overcome Christ, the covenant, or the church.
- He can stop neither the judgment of God nor the deliverance of Christ Jesus.

**JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!**