

Understanding
the
PROPHECIES
of
Daniel

Keith S. Andrews, teacher

Understanding the PROPHECIES of Daniel

Wk 1	Historical Background – part 1	pg. 2
Wk 2	Historical Background – part 2	pg. 5
Wk 3	Daniel's Call and Ministry	pg. 8
Wk 4	Dreams and Visions – part 1	pg. 10
Wk 5	Dreams and Visions – part 2	pg. 12
Wk 6	Daniel's Dreams in the light of Bible and history	pg. 14
Wk 7	God humbles the mighty	pg. 17
Wk 8	Handwriting on the Wall	pg. 19
Wk 9	Seventy Weeks	pg. 21
Wk 10	Seventy Weeks in the light of Bible and history	pg. 23
Wk 11	The End	pg. 25
Wk 12	Daniel in the light of Jesus	pg. 27

LESSON 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Part 1

THE SUCCESSION OF KINGS FROM GODLY TO GODLESS

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. _____

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,

NOTES:

Manasseh and Amon

Manasseh was born during the last 15 years of Hezekiah’s life – the *additional* 15 yrs that he prayed for. (2 Kngs 20:1-6)

“Had this good king been able to foresee the wickedness of his unworthy son, he would doubtless have no desire to recover from his sickness. Better by far die childless than beget a son such as Manasseh proved to be.” (Knapp)

SEE 2 Kngs. 21:3-12.

Amon – 2 Kngs. 21:19-20.

Define these terms:

Restoration – “The return of something to a former, original, normal, or unimpaired condition.”

Reformation – “improvement or alteration for the better.”

Revival – “Restoration to life, consciousness, vigor, or strength -- an awakening, in a church or community, of interest in and care for matters relating to personal religion.” (Always involves a change of heart-KA).

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. Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, was appointed to replace him by the Babylonian king. **READ 2 Kings 25:1-12.** Zedekiah was ultimately taken as a prisoner to Babylon. What happened to Zedekiah prior to his exile? _____

_____ 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? _____

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

Josiah dies at the hand of Neco's army

The Assyrians had made a treaty with Egypt to protect them from the Babylonians. SEE 2 Chron. 35:20-25.

Note God's involvement. Why would Josiah have disguised himself??

Daniel's deportation

Taking the "best and brightest" back to Babylon to be trained for service to the king had a two-fold purpose: 1) It supplied the Babylonian court with strength, talent, and a fresh perspective, and 2) It deprived Judah of much-needed leadership.

These were "king's descendants and nobles," not average citizens.

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? _____

The general attitude of the Babylonians was quite different from that of the Assyrians who conquered the Northern Kingdom. For the most part, they did not seem to have the objective of destroying the people's culture.

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.

Those left after the 3rd deportation were considered the opposite of "best and brightest."

LESSON 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Part 2

PROPHETIC WARNINGS

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? arrogance What, according to vs. 16, are the people hoping for? light What does God promise instead? terrible darkness and gloom In vs. 17 we get a glimpse of God’s heart. How does He feel about His people’s hardness of heart? The verse speaks of weeping and loss – it may refer to the prophet or it may refer to God (Compare Jer. 31:20 & Hos. 11:8-9; NOTE Ephriam = Israel) What is going to happen to Judah? (SEE vs. 19b). the people of Judah will be taken away as captives. All will be taken into exile.

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? Their lies will be demonstrated in their own lives God’s instruction to Jeremiah in vs. 11 is somewhat remarkable; what does God say? God tells Jeremiah not to pray / intercede for them Why do you think God directed Jeremiah in this way? God knows the people’s hearts and knows that their prayers and acts of worship are not authentic.

NOTES:

Lamentations

The book of Lamentations is also by Jeremiah and is a collection of songs or poems. It was written after the fall of Jerusalem in 597 BC.

Many/most of the poems are acrostic in Hebrew.

DISCUSS how repentance, obedience, and authentic worship are ruled out in an environment of arrogance and pride.

The New Testament uses the phrase “grieve the Holy Spirit” (Ex. – Eph. 4:30). This is a similar thought to that expressed in vv. 17-19, Jer. 31:20, and Hos. 11:8-9.

God makes a clear distinction in His response to “real” prayer and just going through the motions. SEE Prov. 1:28, Isa. 58:3, and compare Jer. 29:12-14.

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? **He instructs them to be fair and honest in the way they treat others. If they obey God in this, then there will always be a descendent of** What is the warning in vs. 6? **Even though God loves them, He will turn their palace into a desert – i.e., uninhabited**

What is the even greater reason for God to send disaster upon Jerusalem? (See vv. 8-9). **The people have forsaken their covenant and have worshipped other (i.e., false) gods.**

SEE Hos. 4:1 and Mic. 6:8.

SEE Ex. 20:3 and Jer. 16:13.

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)? **The godly of Judah who would be sent into exile in the land of the Babylonians** 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)? **King Zedekiah, his officials, and the survivors of Jerusalem.** What is God's plan for them? **He is going to make a spectacle of them and, ultimately destroy them with sword, famine, & plague.**

This prophecy would have surely served to encourage those who had been taken into exile . . . God's intent for them is protection and restoration. Particularly vs. 7!

Compare Jer. 29:18.

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)? **There was an idol there – one that provoked the Lord to jealousy.** 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? **God is going to respond to them with anger and not with mercy. Even if they cry out for mercy, He will not listen!**

Such an idol had been placed there by Manasseh, removed by Josiah, and then replaced by one the later kings. 2 Kngs. 21:7

Compare Ex. 20:5

“Putting the branch to the nose” is an idiom for scorn or insolence.

“Early Jewish commentators translated “branch” as “stench.” Some scholars feel that “their” was a later scribal change for an original reading of “my.” In this case the phrase would read “putting the stench to My nose,” that is, idolatry is a putrid, offensive smell to God.” —*Bible Knowledge Commentary*

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? **The remnant is what is left – God's remnant is always those who remain faithful to Him. He promises to restore them to the land.**

What is the promise of vs. 5? **This is a Messianic prophecy and speaks of the coming of the "son of David."** What, according to vs. 6, is the name by which this just king will be known? **"The Lord [i.e., YHWH] our Righteousness** Who is the subject of this prophecy? **Jesus Christ.**

READ Eze. 34:11-16, 23. How is this passage similar to that of Jeremiah 23? **It speaks of rescuing the lost sheep from the nations and bringing them back to the mountains of Israel.**

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? **Absolutely, it is God who is the "doer" in both cases.**

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.

In this case, it would seem that God's promise applies to the remnant of both Judah and Israel . . . "I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture. . ." [Although we know that some from Judah were eventually taken to Egypt and other places].

Compare these passages to Heb. 13:20-21 and John 10:11-15.

NOTE: Feeling left behind, forgotten, or forsaken is the common element in the lives of many Americans. Hurts, habits, and hang-ups don't have to separate people from God!

 This is **IMPORTANT!**

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:

THE FALL OF BABYLON TO THE MEDO-PERSIANS:

Astyages, [as-TI-uh-jeez] king of the Medes, was defeated by the Persian ruler, Cyrus. The combination of the two powers made them an invincible force in the Middle East. Cyrus' own accounts tell of his armies marching into Babylon without resistance. This confirms the record in Daniel 5.

NOTE: Darius, who was a Mede, was a regent or governor under the authority of Cyrus.

CYRUS IN BIBLICAL HISTORY AND PROPHECY:

Isa 44:24-45:13 - Even though Cyrus was not a believer and did not directly serve Yahweh, God directed his life and accomplished His purpose through him. This is given as a "proof" of God's sovereignty.

Ezr. 1:1-2, 7-8, 5:13-17, 6:3 -

These passages confirm that Cyrus did make the proclamation to order the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple.

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

– It almost seems that writing of this type is purposely difficult to understand. The word Apocalypse, however, comes from a Gk. word which means, "an uncovering or revealing." Properly understood, this literature serves to make things which *were obscure* more *clear*.

In some ways, the word pictures in apocalyptic literature must be handled like the parables – **the meaning is in the big picture rather than the details**. It is easy to "miss the forest for the trees."

DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS

READ Dan. 1:1-7, 18-20. What do we know about Daniel from vv. 3-4? Daniel was an Israelite of “noble birth;” he was strong, handsome and intelligent.

What was the duration and purpose of the training? They were to be trained for 3 years then enter into the service of the king.

Daniel and three of his companions are mentioned by name. What were their Hebrew names? Hananiah, Mishael, & Azariah

What Babylonian names were they given? Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego.

READ Dan. 3:1-6. What are the king's orders with regard to the image of gold that he has set up? Whenever they hear the sound of various instruments they are to fall down and worship the idol of gold. What is the punishment for those who don't comply with his order? Being immediately thrown into a blazing furnace. Read 3:8-12. What report is brought to the king by his astrologers? They reported that some Jews were ignoring the king's order. The report is, of course, true. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abennego 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? Their God is ABLE to save them, but even if He doesn't, they will still serve him and not the false gods of Babylon.

Do you agree with their "statement of faith"? Why or why not? Yes. We serve and worship God because He is God and He is worthy of our worship, not because of what He does for us!

For the "rest of the story" read 3:19-30. What is the king's analysis of the situation? (See vs. 29) He recognizes the reality and supremacy of the God of Israel and decrees that only the God of S, M, & A can save in this way. Who do you think the "fourth man in the furnace" was? The Son of God, “angel of the Lord,” the pre-incarnate Christ.

READ Dan. 6:1-5. What do we learn about Daniel from these verses? He was known for his honesty & administrative skill. Read Dan. 6:6-28. Compare Daniel's experience with that of his three friends. In what ways were they similar? They were all being punished for their faithfulness to God. All were preserved in their situation rather than being removed from the situation.

What was the outcome of each? The king publically acknowledged (glorified) the God of Israel and the Lord's servants prospered.

CONSIDER Dan. 1:8. Why might Daniel have refused the king's provisions?

[Possible answer: it is possible / likely that the Babylonians ate foods that would cause the Hebrews to violate the Mosaic dietary code. NOTE the use of the word “defile” which usually implies making something “unclean.”]

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

The "angel of the LORD," mentioned several times in the OT, seems to be an extraordinary angel. When he speaks for God, he often does it in 1st person. He is often worshiped as God and does not reject such worship. The word "angel" actually means "messenger." This designation is, therefore, "Messenger of Yahweh." Some think that the OT "angel of the LORD" is the pre-incarnate Christ, the "Word of God."

Consider the following passages:

- Gen. 16:7-13
- Gen. 22:10-18
- Ex. 3:1-6
- Jud. 2:1-4
- Jud. 6:11-14

GOD'S PRESERVATION:

God often protects his people in their difficulties rather than remove them from their difficulties. DISCUSS!

Lesson 4

DREAMS AND VISIONS

Part 1

DANIEL AND THE GREAT STATUE

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? **He asked them to pray – to plead with God for mercy. Note that Daniel believed that God was in charge of the situation.** How did God respond? **God enabled Daniel to fulfill the king's request.**

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? **The pagans believed in gods who remained hidden. Daniel knew the living God who reveals truth.**

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. <u>Head of gold</u> | <u>The king of Babylon</u> |
| 2. <u>Chest of silver</u> | <u>An inferior kingdom</u> |
| 3. <u>Belly & thighs of bronze</u> | <u>A kingdom that will rule the earth</u> |
| 4. <u>Legs of iron/feet of clay</u> | <u>A kingdom of strong & weak</u> |
| 5. <u>Great stone</u> | <u>An eternal kingdom set up by God</u> |

NOTES:

MAGICIANS, ENCHANTERS, SORCERERS, ASTROLOGERS.

Even though the king considered these men and Daniel to be alike, we must not make the same mistake. **While God is a revealer of truth, He does not use the means of magic and astrology to do it.** Consider **Deut 18:9-14 & Isa. 8:19-20.**

→ So what does this teach us about the wisdom of men? SEE 1 Cor. 1:25-29.

Also READ Daniel's praise in **2:19-23.**

DISCUSS the king's response in **2:46-47**

DO NOT go to any application at this point . . . **wait for lesson 6!**

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. <u>A lion with wings</u> | <u>a doomed kingdom</u> |
| 2. <u>Bear-like beast</u> | <u>a conquering kingdom</u> |
| 3. <u>4-winged 4-headed leopard</u> | <u>a kingdom with authority</u> |
| 4. <u>Powerful 10-horned beast</u> | <u>a destroying kingdom</u> |
| 5. <u>One like a son of man</u> | <u>an everlasting kingdom</u> |

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**).

Belshazzar becomes king. Belshazzar was the son of Nebuchadnezzar, although secular histories claim he was the son of Nabonidus. Actually Nabonidus was Nebuchadnezzar's daughter, which make Belshazzar his grandson. Calling a male ancestor "father" is common in Scripture; ex. "then he rested with this fathers . . ."

Lesson 5

DREAMS AND VISIONS

Part 2

DANIEL IN THE CITADEL OF SUSA

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

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? **The two horns of the ram did not grow together, one grew up before the other.** How is the ram described in vs. 4? **It seemed to be invincible.** How is the goat described in vs. 5? **It had a single horn and crossed the whole earth.** According to vv. 6-7, what does this goat do? **It attacked the ram ferociously and shattered his two horns.**

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

NOTES:

Dreams and visions

In Dan. 8:1 it says that Daniel had a "vision." Qs: Is there a difference between a *dream* and a *vision*? Do you think that they are authentic means of divine communication?

READ and discuss **Acts 2:17-18.**

Prov. 29:18a – "Where there is *no vision*, the people perish. . ."

The city of Susa was not an important city at the time of Daniel's vision nor, on all probability, did the citadel exist.

Two horns (kings) representing Medo-Persia
Persia became the dominant kingdom even though it was initially relatively unimportant as compared to that of the Medes.

of its power, its **one horn** was broken off. What replaced it? **Four horns grew up in its place.** There is a final horn that started small but grew until it “reached the host of heaven.” What do you think that could mean? **This ruler had little power to begin with, but his power increased. He seems to be a persecutor of God’s people (Israel or the church) and their leaders.** 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? **The angel Gabriel** He tells Daniel that this vision is to reveal the events at what time in human history? **“The time of the end”** What does the ram represent? **the kings of Media and Persia** What does the goat represent? **The king of Greece.**

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? **Proud, ruthless, crafty, powerful, opposing Christ** 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? **He is doomed to destruction, He will take a stand against God, He will be a deceiver, he will be strong through Satan’s power.**

Note that this one takes his stand against the “prince of princes” (vs. 25). Who might that be? **The anti-Christ, the man of lawlessness.**

What is the outcome of his rebellion? **He will be destroyed, but not by human power.** (Compare 2 Thess. 2:8).

The one horn

Alexander, the Greek conqueror died just when he had subjected all Medo-Persia to himself. On returning to Babylon from the east, he was taken with a severe fever, and in June 323 b.c., died at the age of 32. He had left his country over 11 years before, and apparently never returned. He was taken in death, a young military genius, cut off at the height of achievement and power.

The division of Alexander’s empire

After Alexander’s death his vast holdings were divided between four of his generals: Cassander receiving Macedonia and Greece; Lysimachus, Thrace and much of Asia Minor; Seleucus, Syria and vast regions to the east; and Ptolemy, Egypt. —Teacher’s Commentary

The times of the end = “when the transgressors have reached their limit”
Read and discuss 2 Tim. 3:1-9.

Christ vs. Anti-Christ

Christ **overcomes** the lawless one **by this Word** and **destroys** Him **by the splendor of His coming.**

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:

Daniel's accurate description of the flow of history in his prophecies has led many Bible scholars & commentators to deny the dating of the book or to deny Daniel's authorship of the book – after all, how could he possibly know about the Greek and Roman empires before they even existed!?

In the vision of Daniel 8 the goat represents the Greek empire of Alexander which divided into four parts. It was from one of those kingdoms that the smaller horn (seemingly representing the anti-Christ) comes. Historically, the Empire of the Greeks was simply swallowed up into that of Rome. Notice that the “stern-faced king” of Dan. 8:23 arises in the “latter part” of the goat kingdom. Perhaps we should look for the final ruler to come from some part of the world where the Greek and Roman empires overlap??

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?

1- Babylonian

2 - Medo-Persian

3 - Greek

4 - Roman

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? **All the power and greatness of all the kingdoms of the world will be taken from them. In their place will be an everlasting kingdom of saints ruled by Christ.**

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-

NOTE: An alternate understanding of the "little horn" is to see it as fulfilled in the person of Antiochus Epiphanes – a Gk. ruler who came from the Seleucid Empire (one of the four remnants of Alexander's Empire) desecrated the Jewish temple, prohibited temple worship sacrifice and demanded that all worship be directed toward Zeus (of whom he believed he was the incarnation). He is often seen as a "type" of the Anti-Christ. The 1,150 days (2,300 mornings and evenings) of Dan. 8:14 (a little over 3 yrs.) also fits with the actual timing from the desecration to cleansing of the temple 168 - 165 BC.

If this is correct, it is a remarkable prophecy – Antiochus IV did not appear until 175 BC. Remember that Daniel was taken into exile ca. 597 BC (400 years earlier).

Ex. We read about the "glories of Rome" when, in fact, Rome was a ruthless conquering empire that oppressed people and subordinated their male children to serve in its Legions. They took slaves and forced them to kill or die for the entertainment of the masses.

The point being that Nebuchadnezzar gave up his "bestial" qualities.

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.

We should not forget that it is from the remnant of the fourth kingdom – the iron and clay toes of the statue in Dan. 2 – that the final earthly king, the antichrist, arises.

Discuss

The ten toes of Daniel 2 and the ten horns of Daniel 7 have no fulfillment in the history of the Roman Empire. Many conclude that there is a ten member union that is still to be established that will provide a power-base for the Anti-Christ. NOTE: There are presently 27 nations in the EU.

Lesson 7

GOD HUMBLER THE MIGHTY

ANOTHER DREAM AND ITS INTERPRETATION

Read Daniel 4:1-18. To whom is Nebuchadnezzar's testimony addressed? To the peoples, nations, men of every language who live in the world. What is the general content of his testimony? The king declares that the "Most High God" works miraculous signs and wonders. His signs are great and his wonders are mighty! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation. Who did the king call first to interpret his dream? All the wise men of Babylon. Was this attempt to come to an understanding of its meaning successful? No. What does the king say about Daniel in vs. 8? He knew that "the spirit of the holy gods" was in him 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? He certainly knows about the true and living God, but he still claims another as "his god."

What are the essential points of the king's dream? He saw an enormous tree that touched the sky. He heard a command to cut it down and let its fruit be scattered. The roots were to be allowed to remain. He was to live with the animals and his mind was to be changed to that of an animal for seven years so that he would know that God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men.

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? God graciously saves the humble but brings down and scatters the haughty. Why is pride so offensive to God? (Consider Isa. 14:13-15) Pride is a devilish attitude. It = putting one's self above God. Define "humility." A righteous assessment of God and self / Not over-valuing one's own ideas or accomplishments. "Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self." --- Charles H. Spurgeon

DANIEL INTERPRETS THE KING'S DREAM

Read Daniel 4:19-27. What does the tree represent? The tree represents Nebuchadnezzar. He is to be driven away from his people and made to eat grass and be drenched with dew

NOTES:

"Being impressed with God isn't the same as being converted." David Guzik

Consider Dan. 4:37.

for a seven year period. His kingdom is to be restored to him when he acknowledges God's sovereignty and power. 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? **The acknowledgement of God**

Does Daniel offer the king any hope? **Yes.** What does he suggest? **That he seek to do right and be kind to the oppressed – perhaps God will allow him to keep his prosperity.**

THE DREAM BECOMES REALITY

Read Daniel 4:28-37. What does Nebuchadnezzar's statement in vs. 28 (actually vs. 30) reveal about him? **That he takes credit for doing what only God can do. (He is prideful and ungodly).** What came upon him as a result of his failure to acknowledge God? **He lost his authority and his reason – he lived like an animal and began to look like one too! . . . his hair grew like feathers and his nails like the claws of a bird.** How did the king become restored? (See vs. 34) **He acknowledged and praised the God of heaven.** In what ways do praise and authentic worship relate to one's acknowledgement of God? **Praise is giving credit / honor where it is do. This means that one cannot take credit themselves. Worship is acknowledging the worthiness of another, bowing the knee of the heart down before them. Both require an authentic knowledge of God.**

Do you believe that Nebuchadnezzar had a true change of heart? Why or why not? **It would appear so.**

The fact that this judgment was to last until the king acknowledges that "heaven rules" implies that Nebuchadnezzar did not yet have that understanding or faith.

This statement is both foolish and arrogant. This is particularly true considering that it was uttered after having the dream and having it interpreted. I wonder if anyone stood on the pinnacle of the tower of Babel and uttered a similar boast??

Consider rulers, businessmen, builders, etc. in our time who think similarly about their own wisdom and accomplishments – what do you expect their outcome will be?

Lesson 8

HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

THE BIG PARTY

Read Daniel 5:1-6. Who is Belshazzar? King of Babylon – successor of Nebuchadnezzar. Belshazzar was giving a dinner party. What is the special significance of his choice of goblets (vs. 2) He asked for the golden goblets that had been in the Temple in Jerusalem to be brought. While they were drinking they were praising their false gods. Do you think Belshazzar's use of these relics offended God? Why or why not? (Compare vs. 4 with Ex. 40:9-10) God is always offended by idolatry. In addition, these vessels were holy! Read 1 Cor. 11:29-30. Do you think that there is any parallel that can be drawn here? Explain your answer. Maybe . . . we must take care not to underestimate the importance or value of that which has been set apart by God.

THE WRITING

Read Daniel 5:8-12. Was the writing on the wall a vision, a dream, or reality? Reality. How did Belshazzar react when he saw it? (vs. 6) He was scared out of his wits! Some party! Who did he call to help him understand the writing? He called for the standard group of wise men. Who suggested that he call upon Daniel and why? The Queen-she remembered that Daniel had been able to help Nebuchadnezzar. Why do you think Belshazzar didn't call Daniel in the first place? Perhaps he didn't know about Daniel.

INTERPRETATION AND FULFILLMENT

Read Daniel 5:13-23. What did Belshazzar promise Daniel if he would read and explain the writing on the wall? Purple robe, gold chain, third in line of authority. How did Daniel respond to his offer? He said "you can keep your gifts or give them to someone else." How does Daniel relate the events of Nebuchadnezzar's life to that of Belshazzar? (vs. 22) Nebuchadnezzar became wiser and more humble toward God, Belshazzar sets himself against God. How does Daniel describe the false gods of Babylon in vs. 23? Gods of metal, wood, and stone that can't see, hear, or understand. How

NOTES:

Belshazzar's Party

This party took place while the Medo-Persian army stood at the very gates of the city! We might wonder why. Perhaps the city itself gave Belshazzar a false sense of security. . .

- The outer walls were 17 miles long.
- These walls were 22 feet thick and 90 feet high.
- The outer walls had guard towers another 100 feet high.
- The city gates were made of bronze.
- A system of inner and outer walls and moats made the city very secure.

Sacrilege - blasphemous behavior; the act of depriving something of its sacred character; the violation or injurious treatment of a sacred object.

Saying: This event is the source of the phrase "seeing the handwriting on the wall."

The Queen - probably Belshazzar's mother, not his wife.

does he differentiate them from the true God? **The true God holds Belshazzar's life in His hands!**

Read Daniel 5:24-30. What was the inscription that God wrote on the wall in the banquet hall and what did it mean? **MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN, meaning *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: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.***

What happened to Belshazzar that very night? **Belshazzar was killed and Darius, a ruler under Cyrus (possibly his uncle), took over his kingdom.**

How does this story illustrate the truth that God exalts the humble and humbles the arrogant? **The king thought that his earthly position and power put him above the authority of God. He found out too late that that was not the case. God took his kingdom and his life in the same night.**

Breath

The text says that God holds the king's *breath* in His hands. Remember that the breath of life comes from God. SEE Job. 12:10, Ps. 150:6, Isa. 42:5, Acts 17:25.

Remember that the Medo-Persian army dammed up the Euphrates River, which ran under the walls and through the city of Babylon. When the river channel was dry, the army was able to sneak in under the wall, kill the guards, and take the city. The leaders were all at a party with the king!

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? Judah would serve Babylon for 70 years (but no longer), then Babylon would be punished. Judah would be restored.

Read Daniel's prayer in 9:3-19. Does Daniel blame God for what has happened to his people? No. What is the cause? (vv. 5-8) The people had sinned, rebelled, and turned away from God's law; they didn't listen to the prophets. What does Daniel base his requests upon in vs. 18? Not their righteousness but God's mercy/compassion. Read vv. 20-23. What is the response to Daniel's prayer? God sent a messenger, the angel Gabriel. What two things does Gabriel claim to bring? Insight (KJV, "skill;" can mean "wisdom" or "instruction") and understanding.

THE MESSAGE

Read Daniel 9:24-27. For whom and what have the "seventy sevens" been decreed? Your people and your holy city. What do you understand this to mean? The simplest understanding is: the Jews and Jerusalem. There are six purposes stated for this decree. What are they? To provide time for them to:

1. Finish (complete) their rebellion/transgression [change their behavior]
2. Put an end to their sin [change their nature]
3. Atone for their guilt [satisfy God's requirement for justice]
4. Bring everlasting righteousness [restoration of holiness]
5. Seal up / confirm the prophetic vision [keep the revelation]
6. Anoint the most holy (place) [Christ in the temple] →

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

BEGINNING - Issuing the decree to restore & rebuild Jerusalem.

END - The coming of the Anointed One/Messiah.

Who might the "Anointed one" of vs. 26 be? Explain your answer. Jesus Christ; He is the Messiah/Christ. In what way would he be "cut off"? Crucifixion. The temple was rebuilt before the rebuilding of the city wall. Which do you think is indicated? The completion of the city's restoration, temple and city wall.

NOTES:

READ Jer. 29:11 – "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

God's judgments are brought about by man's sin. And man is sinful (i.e., full of sin). If not for God's mercy we would have no hope. **READ and CONSIDER** 1 Sam. 15:22, Prov. 21:3, Hos. 6:6, and Ps. 51:17.

Q: Why do you think these things were necessary . . . or were they? Application??

Consider the list. How much of this requires Christ?

1 Cor. 3:16 – "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?"

Consider:

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

1st return; Zerubbabel begins temple restoration – 536 BC

Temple completed and dedicated – 516 BC

2nd return under Ezra – 458 BC

3rd 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? **No, its purpose is to demonstrate God's sovereignty; but it does inform us about the times & seasons.**

What is to happen after the anointed one is cut off? **The city and the sanctuary (temple) will be destroyed.** →

Compare Matt. 24:1-31 with vv. 26-27. What parallels do you observe? **Jesus said the temple would be destroyed. He also spoke about the need to be careful not to be deceived**

We know from history that the temple and much of the city were destroyed after Christ's death and resurrection (in 70 AD).

Do you think "the people of the ruler who will come" is the Roman army? If so, why? If not, why not? **Yes, however, but must be noted that the destruction is not done by the "ruler" but by the people from whom he will eventually come.** The final "7" is divided into two parts. What takes place in the middle? **In the seven year period we ARE talking about the anti-Christ himself (therefore the focus jumps to the end of the age). It would seem that he outlaws worship or, in some way, makes it impossible.** Who is the "he" of vs 27? **The final earthly ruler** →

This is not teaching us that Titus or Caesar is the "ruler." It is being consistent with the other visions and dreams that indicated that the final ruler would ascend to power from a remnant of the Roman Empire.

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 (שֶׁבַע, *sheva*) means "to be full" or "satisfied."
- The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week.
- The year following the 7th 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:

Daniel learned from Jeremiah that Judah's exile would last 70 years. This revelation expands to seventy sevens of years.

READ 2 Chron. 36:15-21. Pay particular attention to vs. 21. The people were to let the land rest every 7th year. There is no record that God's people *ever* followed this commandment.

Note in vs. 25 that the anti-Christ ruler is given authority over the saints. However, in vs. 27 authority is given back to the saints and the kingdom is given to the Most High, whose kingdom is everlasting.

Could this mean that the "man of lawlessness" assumes a place of power within the church?

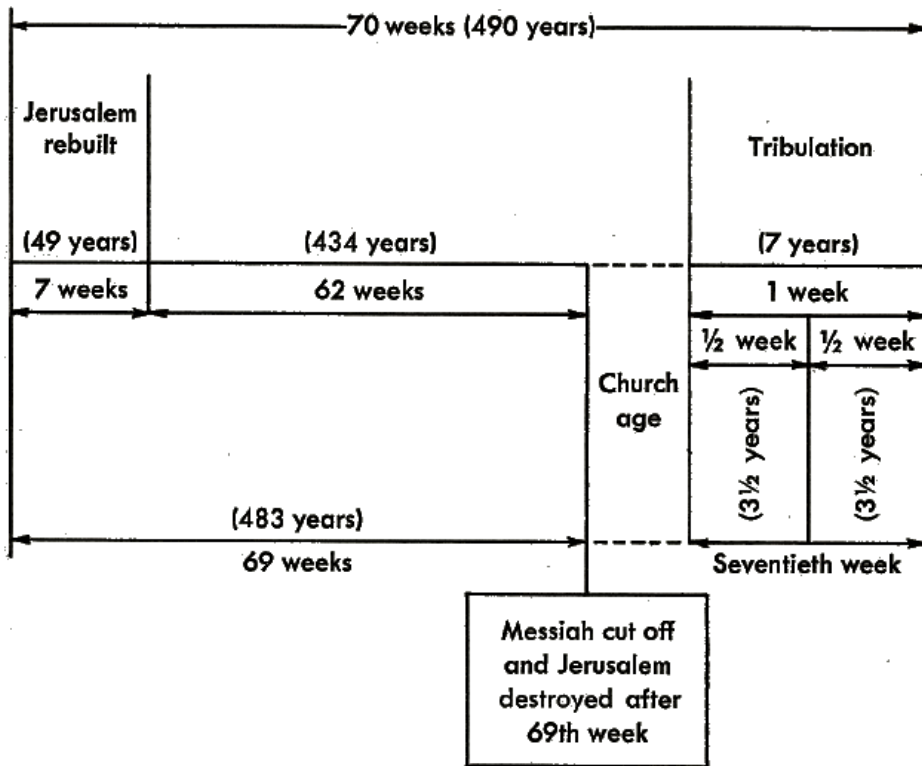
This doesn't mean that the church age is unimportant to God, it just doesn't pertain to "Daniel's people."

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.

THE PROPHECY OF ISRAEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS



NOTE: A clear indicator that the final "7" is yet to occur is that Daniel's people have not received "everlasting righteousness." That awaits their being re-grafted into the olive tree (a symbolic representation of the people of God / saints). **SEE Rom. 11:25-26.** This gives us hope for a great awakening among the Jews at the end of the age. SEE also: Isa. 1:11-12, Isa. 45:17, Hosea 3:5.

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? **A great war / conflict** Compare vv. 5-6 with those of Rev. 1:12-15. Do you think that these are the same person? Why or why not? **Yes. There are many similarities (golden sash/belt, eyes like a blazing fire/torch, the sound of his voice, etc.).**

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? **Persia & Greece**

Regarding the ministry of holy angels SEE Heb. 1:14

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. **He is a destroyer who opposes God and godliness / a deceiver and manipulator (vs. 32)**

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? **Against the people of God (saints), mocks God and the worship of God.**

A PROMISE

Read Dan 12.

- 12:1 – What kind of "trouble / tribulation" do you think is being described here? **Disciples will be flogged in the synagogues, put on trial before powerful people, be betrayed by family, and generally hated. (Mk. 13:9-13)** 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). **The Lamb's Book of Life**

NOTES:

By the third year of Cyrus' reign the first group had returned to Jerusalem led by Ezra (SEE Ezra 1-2).

Daniel was in mourning. Why? Perhaps because he was now too old to return with Ezra and the others. He had to be in his 80s.

NOTE vs. 7 – Only Daniel saw the vision. Does this mean that it was a dream rather than a real encounter? *Something* made them flee in terror! In vs. 9 it seems that Daniel passed out (or had been asleep all along).

It would seem from vv. 12-13 that Daniel's prayers had coincided with his mourning – 3 wks/21 days. [Don't stop praying just because you haven't seen a response!]

The Messenger was opposed by a demon of high rank.

Q: is the "messenger" he same person/angel that Daniel saw in his vision of 10:1-6? Why or why not. (If it is Christ/angel of the Lord would he have needed help from Michael???)

Note: "your people in the future/latter days" in vs. 14. This fits Antiochus, but probably is not fully realized until the anti-Christ at the end of the age.

Antiochus Epiphanes (IV) –

A Greek ruler who opposed Judaism. he killed 40k Jews, sold another 40k into slavery, and purposely desecrated the Temple—all because he heard a rumor that the Jews were happy about a false report of his death.

He erected an altar to Zeus in the Temple and sacrificed a pig in the holy place.

NOTE the anti-Christ's "end" in 11:45.

- **12:2** – This is one of the few OT verses that deal directly with resurrection and judgment. Compare this verse with 1 Thess. 4:13-14, 16-17, 5:10; Matt. 16:27.
- **12:3** – Who are the “wise”? (Compare Prov. 11:30; Matt. 24:45-51). **Those who trust Christ rather than self**
- **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. **No. Additional information isn’t what’s needed, what is important is revelation and context**
- **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). **Through conversion and redemption – by the Spirit and Word of God, by the blood of Christ, and through faith in the Gospel message**
- **12:11-12** – The message of these verses is to “stand firm” even in the face of persecution. Compare Matt. 24:12-13; 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:12, 21; 1 Jn. 5:4-5.

ALSO compare Job 19:25-27.

The wise man builds his house (life) on the rock = hears the Word of God and puts it to practice.

The phrase seems to refer to a search for answers / solutions. The only real solutions, however, come from God, who is all-wise!

Daniel has revealed enough to us so that the book really can be sealed.

From Daniel 11:36 to Daniel 12:3, we see:

- A world ruler, utterly opposed to God
 - A world religion, based on the abomination of desolation
 - A world war, which defeats the ruler
 - A time of great tribulation for Israel lasting three and one-half years
 - Deliverance for the people of God after the tribulation
 - Resurrection and judgment
 - The reward of the righteous
- Commentary on Daniel*, Guzik

Lesson 12

DANIEL in the light of JESUS

THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

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.

NOTES:

DISCUSS Dan. 12:1 which defines “your people” – “*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.*”

James, son of Zebedee – 44 AD

Philip – 54 AD

Andrew – 60 AD

Matthew – 60 AD

James, son of Alphaeus – 62 AD

Peter (Cephus) – 64 AD

Paul (Saul) – 64 AD

Also consider Matt. 23; particularly vv. 34-38).

(Perhaps = the “times of the Gentiles” in Lk. 21:24).

Discuss “tribulation,” “great tribulation,” and “wrath”.

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.

Look at 11:24 – = communism / socialism?

Vs. 27 – Politics!! It doesn't change the plan of God!

Other passages about the Antichrist:

Rev. 6:1-2

Rev. 13:2-9 (3.5 yrs = 42 mo.)

Rev. 13:14 (compare vs. 3 – there seems to be some kind of ungodly resurrection)!

2 Thess. 2:3-10

NOTE: Anti-Christ = a false Messiah. The people who follow him will be looking for a Savior while rejecting Jesus Christ who IS the Savior.

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!