

Intro. The book of Daniel is an amazing book. It gives us the famous childhood stories of Daniel in the lion's den, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the fiery furnace.

- * Daniel is an important book historically. It shows the final transition of Israel, from self-rulership to foreign rule under pagan empires, because of God's judgment on them.
- * It's also greatly prophetic because it gives some of the most astounding prophecy in history which has come to pass perfectly, and is still coming to pass in our time.

A. GENERAL FACTS TO SET THE STAGE FOR THIS STUDY.

1. The book was written by Daniel himself. (8:15, 27, 10:2,7)

- In the first 6 chapters, Daniel seems to be dictating his account to someone else, and then Chapter 7-12 Daniel is speaking to himself in the first person.

2. Daniel wrote this late in life about 535 bc, at 85 years old, still in Persia (formerly Babylon).

- The book covers the 70 year period of Judah (2 southern tribes) in Babylonian and then Persian captivity, before the Persian King allowed Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah to bring Jews back to their land.

3. Daniel lived during the time of prophets Ezekiel, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and Zephaniah.

- All these men preached against the nation's sin. Jeremiah prophesied 40 years, and Zephaniah at the same time, all while Daniel and his friends were growing up in the nation.
- The nation rejected the rebukes of all these prophets, and finally went into captivity, but these men must have been a great influence on Daniel and the 3 other young men who stood for God. (Especially Jeremiah who was terribly persecuted)
- God used the influence of these prophets to make Daniel an astounding testimony to the largest pagan world power up to that time, and used him to preserve the nation, to be delivered back to the promised land.

**** Lesson- Never underestimate your influence for Christ.**

- * From what we know, these prophets had little or no visible success from their preaching.
- 1 * But later, 4 teenagers who knew them, stood for God in the face of a pagan king and nation.

B. THE PURPOSES OF THE BOOK. (4 main purposes)

1. This book demonstrates that sin results in God's judgment. (background)

- After Moses led Israel out of Egypt, God gave them the Law, and when they disobeyed it, God immediately and severely judged those who led them into sin.
- Soon, when they refused to take the land, God allowed that unbelieving generation to die in the wilderness, and let the next generation take the land under Joshua.
- As they did, Moses commissioned Israel with the law a 2nd time (Deuteronomy- 2nd Law).
- In that law Moses told them obedience would bring great blessing, but he also warned that disobedience would bring great judgment.
- * **Blessing- (Duet. 28:1-14) Judgment- (Duet. 28:15-20, 36-37, 48-52) (Deut. 31:17-18)**
- Notice in v41 that this judgment said conquering nations would remove their children. (exactly what happened to Daniel and dozens of others).

**** In 931 bc the nation split in 2.** The 10 northern tribes retained the title of Israel, The 2 southern tribes took the title of the dominant tribe, which was Judah.

- From there, Israel had nothing but wicked kings that led the nation into greater sin, and in 722 God sent extremely cruel Assyria to conquer them.
- The Assyrians put hooks in their prisoner's nose or lip to drag them off into slavery, and they often skinned their prisoners alive and left them to die on the battle field.
- **During that same time**, Judah had some wicked kings but they also had 4 good kings, which held back God's judgment for decades.
- The judgement of the northern tribes was a warning to Judah, that they had better obey God.
- In 30 years, Judah received a 2nd warning, when Assyria besieged them under king Hezekiah.
- In great fear, the king repented and got right with God and begged God to deliver them, and in 686, God sent an angel to destroy 185,000 Assyrians in one night. (Rambo)
- But 80 years later, Judah had slipped so far back into sin, that God sent Babylon to take Judah, which ended Israel as a nation from that time until 1948 in our time.

2 **SUM- God is a God of judgment.**

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* The book of Daniel is a sad report on the nation God chose to honor Him, but who consistently turned to sin, walked in it for long periods of time, and then received the judgment God promised.

- **Daniel's name** is a compound word. Dan means- to judge, El means- God.

- Daniel's name literally means "God judges". It was appropriate that Daniel write this book.

Q- (J.I. Packer) The reality of divine judgment engulfs Bible history.

God judged Adam and Eve, expelling them from the Garden and pronouncing curses on their future life. God judged the corrupt world of Noah's day sending a flood to destroy mankind.

God judged Sodom and Gomorrah, engulfing them in a volcanic catastrophe.

God judged Israel's Egyptian taskmasters, just as He foretold, unleashing against them the terrors of the ten plagues.

God judged those Jews who worshipped the golden calf, using the Levites to execute them.

God judged Nadab, Abihu, and then Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for offering Him strange fire.

God judged Achan and his family for stealing forbidden treasure from a wicked nation.

During the OT, God used Israel to judge wicked pagan nations, who were beyond repentance, and He used those and other wicked nations to judge Israel for their sin and unbelief.

Q- Israel was once the greatest, richest, strongest nation in the world, enjoying the promises of a Holy God of blessing. But sin brought judgment on them.

- America will fair no better. (Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord),
(Sin is a reproach to any people) (Be not deceived, God is not mocked...)

* Pastors and churches today, that downplay sin, and speak only of God's mercy and grace, are not doing our wicked world any favors. Our holy righteous God judges sin.

* **BUT --- in relation to this truth notice also that--**

2. This book displays God's extreme patient. (See timeline)

- * Yes, God judges sin. But notice the background and timeline leading up to Israel's judgment, and Daniel's life in the midst of the nation's history.
- Abraham was called about 2250, Jacob's family was brought to Egypt by Joseph- 1870,
- Moses led Israel from Egypt - 1450, Israel took the promised land under Joshua- 1406.
(For 350 years the Judges and Levites ruled Israel).
- The first Kings - Saul 1050-1010 (limited judgment), David- 1010-970, Solomon 970-930.
- Then the nation split in 931 into 2 nations, the 10 northern tribes retained the title of Israel, the 2 southern tribes became Judah, occupying the land around Jerusalem.

- Due to the northern tribe's sin, God finally sent Assyria to take them (722 bc, **225 yrs later**)
- The Babylonians conquered Assyria in 612, then Egypt and Judah in 605. (**120 yrs later**)
(Daniel and his friends were taken in this first invasion).

- At that time, Babylon put Judah under their rule, and then came back and took the Majority of the populace to Babylon in 597, and in 586, Babylon completely destroyed Jerusalem.
(God kept His promise and destroyed the nation, as a viable political entity)

But in all those events, notice God's great patience.

- * God was patient with Israel for decades in the wilderness, for 350 years during the Judges and Levites rulership, for 200 plus years after Solomon's rule, and another 120 years after the 10 northern tribes were taken.
- * In all, many decades, even hundreds of years of God's patience was shown to Israel, who had fully received God's Law, knew exactly what was expected of them-- ,
--- was constantly warned by powerful prophets,
AND YET consistently fell back into terrible sin and disobedience.
- * Since Christ lived, God has been extremely patient with a world of sinners,
- * And in the future 7-year tribulation, God will drop devastating judgment on this wicked world but at the same time, he will also send miraculous witnesses so multitudes will be saved.
- * Those who accuse God of cruelty and impatience, fail to understand God's holiness and man's sinfulness, and the vast amounts of time God has given Israel and mankind to recognize His truth, and repent and turn to Him.

God faithfully judges sin, but God is SO SO patient

3. This book was also given to reveal future prophecy.

- Many commentators say, Daniel is to the OT what Revelation is to the NT.
- While other OT books give prophecy, Daniel reveals **much** prophecy about world history.
- He reveals the world's kingdoms from Babylon forward, right through to Christ's 2nd coming.
- He speaks of Christ's first coming, His rejection and death, and predicts the very day Christ formally presented himself to Israel as their Messiah on Palm Monday.
- Other world rulers are also spoken of, as well as details of what they would do hundreds of years into the future from Daniel's time. **Daniel's prophecies show 2 things.**

a. Daniel's prophecies show us - God is sovereignly in control of His world.

Ps. 47:2- How awesome is the LORD Most High, the great **King** over all the earth.,

Ps 103:19- The LORD has established **his throne** in heaven, **his kingdom rules** over all.

Jer 27:5- With my great power and outstretched arm I made the earth and its people and the animals that are on it, and I give it to anyone I please. (Job 34:23-25, Ps 75:6-7, Pr. 21:1)

Dan 2:21- He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them.

**** God rules, He has a plan, and no one has or will ever thwart it.**

b. Daniels prophecies also show - how close Christ's coming could be.

- Daniel prophesied of 4 coming world empires, the fourth one being the Roman Empire.
- The Roman Empire is described in 2 forms, the first form was here when Jesus lived, the 2nd form was to revive later, to become the antichrist's 1 world Empire, before Christ returns.
- In the 1940's the European Economic Community formed, and in time became the European Union, then adopted 1 currency. (All nations that were part of the original Roman Empire)
- This entity, with the United Nations, The World Economic Forum, and other groups have been working for decades to organize the world into 1 government, currency, and religion.
- This is revealed in Daniel, and it's taking place right before our eyes in our modern time, so the rapture, tribulation, and Christ's return to earth could be just around the corner.

SUM- As the book of Daniel progresses, we will see the future from ancient times unfold, and we can look back and see that it has all come to pass just as God gave it to Daniel.

* This is one of the reasons this book is so exciting and relevant for our modern times, and it shows that the world needs to pay attention to what's happening in our world.

4. Final purpose-- This book details Daniel's Godly, uncompromising life.

**** Note 4 important things about Daniel's life, as he lived for God.**

a. Daniel was a righteous man.

, Of all the main characters in the bible, Daniel and Joseph are the only 2 where nothing sinful is written about them.

, Ezekiel lived along with Daniel in captivity, and said some great things about Daniel.

, In 14:14, 20, Ezekiel said twice that Daniel was righteous like Noah and Job.

, 1 writer said- "Noah and Job were already long dead when Daniel lived, and rarely did a prophet honor a person's righteousness, whose life was not yet over.

b. Daniel was extremely wise.

, In Ezekiel 28:1-3, God basically said through Ezekiel that Daniel's wisdom was only exceeded by God's wisdom.

Q- In that passage God painted Daniel as the earthly standard for wisdom during his time.

c. Daniel, from mid-teens, spent his life in public office in a pagan Godless culture.

, He was surrounded by wicked pagan people, practices, and laws, and was faced with various transitions to new pagan leaders, yet in all this he remained faithful to God.

, He worked under Babylonian and then Persian kings, yet he loved and followed God all his life, and even turned some of those leader's hearts toward God.

, This is probably 1 of the main reasons why 3 times in this book, God calls Daniel "greatly loved" (highly esteemed) by God.

d. Daniel refused to compromise.

- , He was fully committed to doing right, regardless the consequences, and at times he faced severe trouble, but he trusted God through them.
- , This was an extremely rare thing in the midst of his wicked world, where everyone lived to please the king, for fear of losing their life if they disobeyed.
- , In modern society, it's becoming a rare thing to find someone who will do right, even if it means losing a job, or a public office, or being ostracized by the crowd.
- , In this book Daniel shows us how to be a person who stands for Christ in a wicked world, obey God even when we have to pay a price for it--- and trust God to lift us up and bless and prosper our life because we determine to be Godly, instead of trying to advance ourselves by compromising our purity before the world.
- * The world and Satan will do their best to force us into their mold, make us compromise, and think we have to be well liked to be accepted in society.
- * But what really matters is that we live obediently before the Lord and the world, in and out of season (as Paul said) regardless of whether the world likes it or not.
- * God never called us to make the world feel good about themselves or us.
- * He called us to live a righteous life, speak the truth in love, and do right in the face of dislike, hatred, and even opposition.

@ Many believers have forgotten our righteous place in the world.

* Paul said this to the compromising Corinthian believers---

2 Cor 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

2 Cor. 6:17-18- "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

John said in 1 John 2:15- Do not love the world or anything in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Jas. 4:4- You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

@ This doesn't mean we have to be reclusive hermits, but it does mean that we are not to get along with or compromise with the evil world system and the evil it promotes.

TIMELINE

