

LESSON 8

LIVING WITH THE PROPHETS

(Daniel)

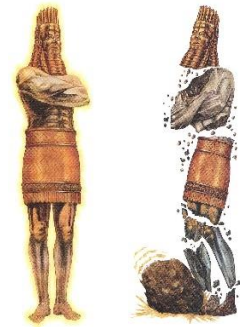
While Ezekiel was taken to Babylon in 597 BC, Daniel was already there, deported with Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, among others in 605 BC. Daniel would minister into the 3rd year of the reign of Cyrus, king of Persia (Elam) in 536 BC (10:1). Daniel's prophecies assert YHVH's sovereignty over history and the kingdoms of the world. All the kingdoms of the world opposing YHVH will come to an end, and be replaced by the kingdom of God, which will never pass away (2:44; 7:27).

The book is a bifold. The 1st half is found in chapters 1-6, narrating prophecy around Daniel and his 3 friends. Chapters 7-12 form the second half, which appear to reinforce the vision of Nebuchadnezzar's great statute. The book is also a di-glott, written in Hebrew and Aramaic, Aramaic occurring in 2:4-7:28. Jesus will reference Daniel in Matt. 24—"the abomination of desolations." Daniel's visions are apocalyptic, stretching to the end of the age. Its order follows this development. Rulers during the time of Daniel are five—Nebuchadnezzar, 605-562; Nabonidus, 556-539; co-regent Belshazzar, 550-539; Cyrus, 539-530; and Darius I, 522-486.

I. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM—the end of days, latter days (2:31-45)

A. The dream (2:31-35)

1. A single great statue, large and of extraordinary splendor (31)
2. Head of fine gold
3. Breast and arms of silver
4. Belly and thighs of bronze
5. Legs of iron
6. Feet partly of iron and partly of clay
7. A stone is cut out without hands
 - a. It strikes the statue on the feet
 - b. The iron, clay, bronze, silver and gold are crushed with them, like one
 - c. They become like chaff from the summer threshing floor
 - d. The wind carries them away so that not a trace is found
 - e. The stone becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth (see Ezek. 36)



B. The interpretation of the dream (2:36-45)

1. Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold (605 BC)
 - a. He is King of kings
 - b. The God of heaven has given him the kingdom, the power, the strength/might and the glory (this begins the times of the Gentiles, Lk. 21:24)
 - c. The sons of men, beasts of the field and birds of the sky are all given into his hands
 - d. God has caused him to rule over all
2. After Nebuchadnezzar comes an inferior kingdom of silver

3. After the silver will come a third kingdom who will rule all the earth—the bronze
4. A fourth, strong as iron, in that iron crushes and shatters all things, will crush and break these in pieces
5. The feet equal a divided kingdom—
 - a. Having the toughness of iron mixed with common clay (mud)
 - b. The toes, partly of iron and partly of pottery, shows that the kingdom will be both strong and brittle
 - c. And the iron mixed with common clay will adhere in the seed of men (Gen. 2:7; 3:15), but they will not adhere to one another
6. In the days of those kings, the God of heaven—
 - a. Will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed
 - b. It will not be left for another people, but will endure forever
 - c. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms
7. In as much as you saw a stone, that was cut out of the mountain without hands, that crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, the gold, the great God has made known what will take place after this

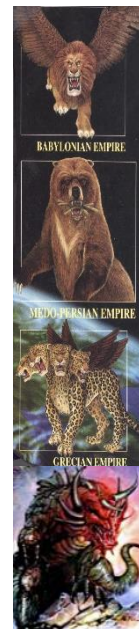
II. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S SECOND GREAT DREAM—the judgment of the “watchers” (4:1-37)

- A. Nebuchadnezzar declares the signs and wonders the Most High God has done for him
- B. It comes as a declaration that God's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom
- C. The God Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whom He wishes, and sets over it the lowliest of men

III. DANIEL'S FIRST DREAM—the vision of 4 great beasts and the Son of man (7:1-28)

A. The first scene (2-8)

1. Four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea
2. Four great beasts were coming up out of the sea, different from one another
 - a. The first was like a lion with the wings of an eagle; I kept looking until its wings were plucked and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human heart (mind?) was given to it
 - b. The second resembled a bear raised up on one side and three ribs were in its mouth; it was told, arise, devour much meat
 - c. Another, like a leopard with four wings like a bird on its back; and it had four heads and dominion was given to it
 - d. The fourth was dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; it had large iron teeth, devouring and crushing and trampling down the remainder with its feet; it was different from the other three and had ten horns; a little horn came up and pulled up 3 by their roots; it possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts



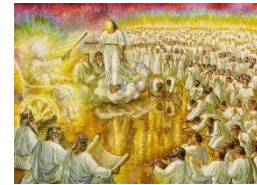
B. A second scene—(9-10)

1. Thrones were set up and the Ancient of Days took His seat
2. His hair was like pure wool
3. His throne was ablaze with fire
4. Thousands upon thousands attended him
5. The court sat and the books were opened



C. A third scene (11-12)

1. I looked because of the sounds of the great words the little horn was speaking
2. I kept looking until the beast was slain
3. Its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire
4. The dominion of the other beasts was taken away but they were given an extension of life for an appointed period of time



D. A fourth scene (13-14)

1. With the clouds of heaven came one like a Son of Man
2. He came to the ancient of days and was presented to Him
3. He was given dominion, glory, a kingdom, that all nations of every language might serve Him
4. His dominion is everlasting and will not pass away
5. His kingdom will never be destroyed

E. The interpretation is given—(17-28)

1. The four beasts are four kings who will arise from the earth (17)
2. But the saints of the highest one will receive the kingdom and possess it forever, unto the age of the ages (18)
3. Then Daniel desired to know the meaning of the fourth beast, along with the ten horns; the other horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and was larger than it associates and before whom 3 fell—that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them until the ancient of days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints and the time arrived for them to take possession of the kingdom (19-22)
 - a. The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom on earth, different from all others (23)
 - b. It will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it (24)
 - c. Out of this kingdom, ten kings will arise, and another will arise after them
 - d. He will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings
 - e. He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One
 - f. He will intend to make alterations in times and in law, and they will be given into his hand for a time, times and half a time (25; see 12:7)
 - g. But the court will sit, and his dominion will be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end (26)

- h. And the kingdom, dominion, the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole of heaven shall be given to the saints of the Most High (27)
- i. His kingdom will be everlasting and all dominions will serve Him (27)

IV. THE RAM AND THE GOAT—a subsequent vision to the previous (8:1-27)

A. In the vision, Daniel was in the citadel of Susa, in the province of Elam (Persia, modern Iran), beside the Ulai Canal

B. The vision (3-14)

- a. A ram with two horn was standing in front of the canal (3)
- b. Two were long but one was longer
- c. The ram was butting westward, northward and southward (4)
- d. No one could stand before him (4)
- e. Behold a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; having a conspicuous horn between his eyes (5)
- f. And he struck the ram with two horns, shattering them, and trampled him to the ground (6-7)
- g. Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly
- h. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken and four conspicuous horns toward the four winds came up in its place (8)
- i. And out of one came forth a rather small horn, which grew exceedingly toward the south, toward the east and the glorious place (9)
- j. And it grew up to the host of heaven and threw some of the hosts and some of the stars to the ground and trampled them (10)
- k. He became great, even toward the prince of the host; and the regular burnt offering was taken away from the prince; and the place of His sanctuary was overthrown (11)
- l. Because of transgressions, a host will be given over to him, along with the regular burnt offering; and he will throw truth to the ground
- m. He will prosper for 2,300 days, then the sanctuary will be restored



C. The interpretation—by Gabriel (15-26)

- 1. The vision is for the time of the end (17)
- 2. It shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end (18-19)
- 3. The ram is the kings of Media and Persia (20)
- 4. The goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn is the first king, Alexander (21)
- 5. Of the four horns, four kingdoms will arise from this one nation, but not with his power (22)
- 6. At the latter end, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face will arise; one who understands riddles (23)
- 7. His power shall be great, but not by his own power (24)
- 8. He shall destroy to an extraordinary degree, mighty men and saints, even rising up against the prince of princes (24-25)

9. He shall be broken, but by no human hand (25)

V. THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF SEVEN—a revelation from Gabriel (9:24-27)

A. Daniel was contemplating the number of years prophesied by Jeremiah for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, 70 (9:2)

B. So, he gave his attention to seek the Lord with prayer, supplications, fasting, sackcloth and ashes (9:3)

C. In his extreme weariness, at the time of the evening offering, Gabriel came and gave him instruction

1. Seventy sevens have been decreed for your people and the holy city (24)

a. To finish the transgression (pesah)

b. To make an end of sin (chattah)

c. To make atonement for iniquity (awon)

d. To bring in everlasting righteousness (sedek)

e. To seal up vision (chazon) and prophecy (nabi)

f. To anoint the most holy (place) (kodesh kodashim)

2. Know from the issuing of a decree (word) to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, or an anointed one, a prince (25-26)

a. There shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks; it shall be built again in troublesome times

b. After the 62 weeks, the anointed one will be cut off and have nothing (or, no one)

c. And the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary (hachodesh)

d. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war

e. Desolations are decreed (see chs. 11-12)

3. And he will make a strong covenant with the many for one week (27)

a. But in the middle of the week, he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering

b. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator

D. No interpretation is given

E. Differing views

1. The passage refers to events surrounding Antiochus IV Epiphanes, 175-164 and the 70 years of desolation referred to in Jeremiah's prophecy

2. The 70 sevens are to be understood figuratively where the 70 years are symbolic of differing periods of time

3. The passage refers to events around the time of Christ, where the 70 sevens refers to 490 years; but those who apply these years, apply them to differing periods of time (this is the majority view of scholars)

VI. THE HEAVENLY CONFLICT—a vision of the latter days (10:1-12:13)

- A. In 536, Cyrus' 3rd year, a word was revealed to Daniel
- B. In the vision, it is demonstrated that the conflicts on earth reflect the conflicts in the heavens (10:12-13, 20-21)
- C. The vision is for the purpose of giving Daniel an understanding of what will happen to his people in the latter days (10:14)
- D. 11:2-35 covers in detail the visions and interpretation of Dan. 8
 - 1. Antiochus IV Epiphanes reigned from 175-164, and is the little horn of Dan. 8
 - 2. Jesus references his activities in Matt. 24:15
 - 3. Antiochus died in 164 while on a campaign in Persia
 - 4. Verse 21-35 cover the activities around him, including the Maccabean revolt that began in 167 BC.
 - 5. The Maccabean kingdom lasted until 63 BC, when Rome annexed Judea
- E. 11:36 is thought by many to transcend the persecution under Antiochus, and thus the remainder of the chapter is thought to be about the anti-Christ (see 2 Thess. 2:3-4; Rev. 20)
 - 1. He will exalt himself above every god, even the God of gods, and will prosper until his indignation is finished (36-39)
 - 2. At the end of time, he will be attacked by the king of the south and the king of the north, and he will enter the Beautiful Land, but Edom, Moab and Ammon will be rescued (40-41)
 - 3. Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia will not escape; he will gain control of their hidden treasures (42-43)
 - 4. When rumors from the North and East disturb him, he will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain (44-45)
 - 5. Yet he will come to his end and no one will help him (45)
- F. At that time, Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the people of Israel, will arise and there will be a time of distress such as never occurred (12:1)
- G. And the people found written in the book will be rescued (12:1)
- H. And many who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake to everlasting life, but others to disgrace and everlasting abhorrence (12:2)
- I. Daniel is then to seal up the book until the end of time, when many will go back and forth and knowledge will increase (12:4)
- J. It was then revealed how long it would be, before the end of these wonders; and he was told, it would be for a time, times and a half time; and when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, then all these things will be finished
- K. A riddle is propounded for those who will have insight (12:11-12)
 - 1. From the time that the abomination of desolation is set up there will be 1,290 days
 - 2. Blessed is he who keeps waiting until the 1,335 days