

DANIEL VIEWS THE FUTURE

Earlier in our series of studies, we found that the Old Testament writers, over many centuries, predicted a day far off in the future when Jesus would come to earth to live and die for sinners. Jesus' fulfillment of these "prophecies" is important in two ways. First, it has helped many to believe that Jesus was really the One He claimed to be, and second, it has been an important factor in proving that the Old Testament writers were truly God's chosen agents who accurately predicted future events.

The most extensive revelation in the Old Testament of future events was made by the prophet Daniel. It is both fascinating and faith-building to study some of the prophecies that he has recorded. Our confidence in the Bible grows as well as our knowledge of what is predicted.

Daniel's ministry parallels the seventy years when many of the Jews were in Babylonian captivity (605-539 BC). He was eighteen years old when it started and lived for a short time after it ended. What an eye-opener we will get as we open his book and study what God revealed to him of the near and far off future from his day.

- Let us begin in chapter 2. The captivity had recently begun. King Nebuchadnezzar was twenty-two. Daniel was twenty. Quickly review the situation in Daniel 2:1-35. Then study carefully the interpretation of the king's dream in verses 36-45. If the head of gold represented Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, Babylon (verse 38), can you then piece together the rest of the interpretation?

(a) <u>The Head of Gold</u> _____	Babylon	626-539 BC
(b) _____	Medo-Persia	539-331 BC
(c) _____	Greece or Grecia	331-168 BC
(d) _____	Pagan Rome	BC 168-476 AD
(e) _____	Rome, divided, Divided kingdoms	About 350 AD to end of world
(f) _____	God's eternal kingdom	Yet future

- Very close to half a century later, and only a few years before the end of the captivity, Daniel had a dream or vision of his own which very closely parallels what Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream in chapter 2. The imagery was completely different, but the same kingdoms were represented. Also, some additional information was revealed. Read Daniel 7:1-14 to get the overall picture. Verses 15-27 then help us to understand what it means. Review it with these questions:

- How is Babylon represented? _____
- By what is Medo-Persia pictured? _____
- What represents Greece? _____
- How is Pagan Rome described? _____
- What about the ten divisions of Rome? _____
- What about God's kingdom? _____

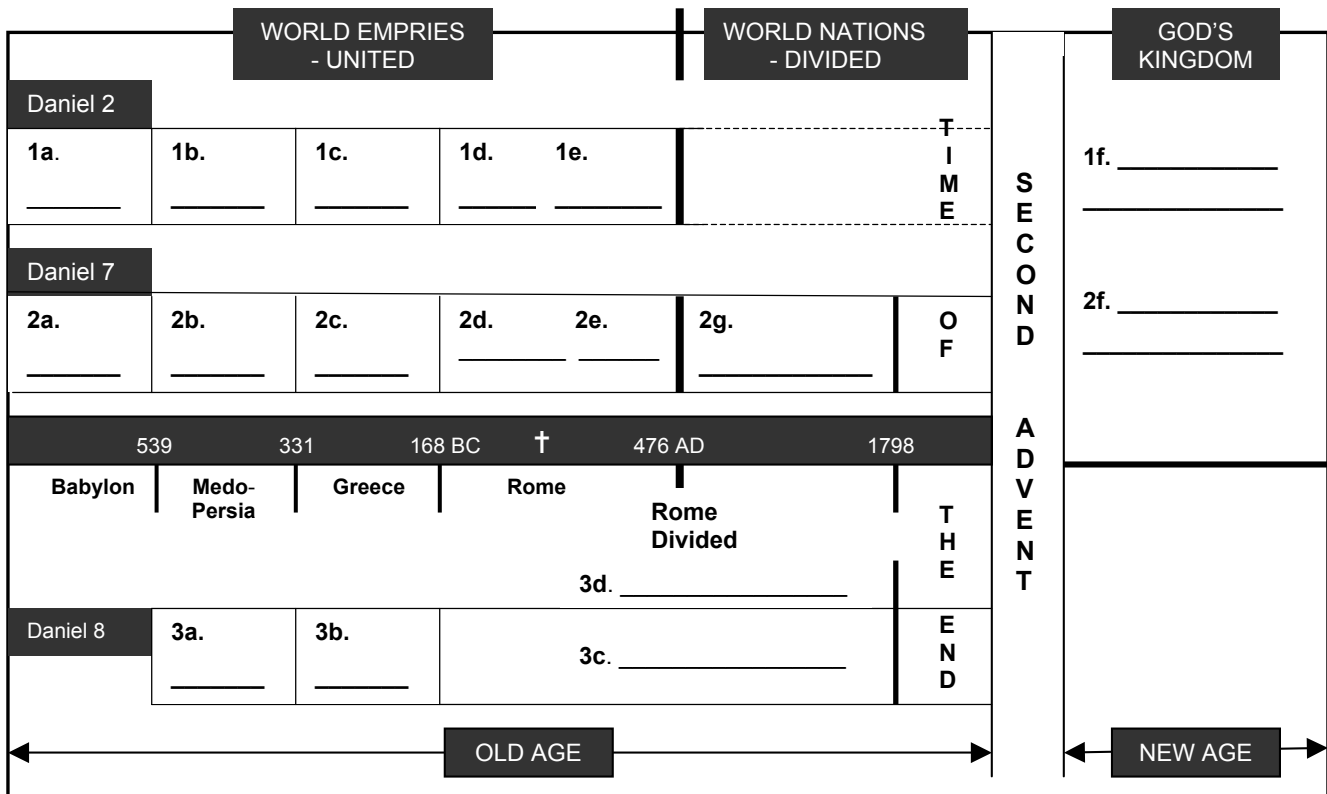
(g) Finally, list any information given in Daniel 7 that is not included in Daniel 2.

3. About two years later, God revealed to Daniel yet a third look into the future. Again, the imagery is different, but much of the same history is included and even more details are added to round out the picture. The amazing truth is that the composite revelation to this date has all clearly come to pass. The details so far have all been correct. Thus, we have faith to say that the rest of the predictions will be accurately fulfilled. What parallels and additions can you find in Daniel 8?

- (a) Verses 3,4,20 _____
- (b) Verses 5-7,21 _____
- (c) Verses 9,23 _____
- (d) What new point is introduced in verse 14 that was not found in chapters 2 or 7?

(This will be studied further in the next lesson.)

4. It is fascinating to see, in this lesson, these clear glimpses of where we stand in history. We are very close to the end of time. The stone is about the strike the image of chapter 2. We are confronted with the judgment of chapter 7. In connection with chapter 8, the next three lessons will be real eye-openers. The warning and invitation of Luke 21:25-28 should stir our hearts.



1. Daniel 2

¹Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him. ²Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. ³And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

⁴Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."

⁵The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. ⁶However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."

⁷They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation."

⁸The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm: ⁹if you do not make known the dream to me, *there is only* one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation."

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has *ever* asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. ¹¹*It is* a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

¹²For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹³So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise *men*; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill *them*.

¹⁴Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise *men* of Babylon; ¹⁵he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.

¹⁶So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.

¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁹Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

²⁰Daniel answered and said:

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
For wisdom and might are His.

²¹ And He changes the times and the seasons;
He removes kings and raises up kings;
He gives wisdom to the wise
And knowledge to those who have understanding.

²² He reveals deep and secret things;
He knows what *is* in the darkness,
And light dwells with Him.

²³ "I thank You and praise You,
O God of my fathers;
You have given me wisdom and might,
And have now made known to me what we asked of You,
For You have made known to us the king's demand."

²⁴Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise *men* of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation."

²⁵Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation."

²⁶The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?"

²⁷Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. ²⁸But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: ²⁹As for you, O king, thoughts came *to your mind while* on your bed, *about* what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. ³⁰But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for *our* sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

³¹"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor *was* excellent, stood before you; and its form *was* awesome. ³²This image's head *was* of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

³⁶"This *is* the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷You, O king, *are* a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you *are* this head of gold. ³⁹But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

⁴⁰And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, *that kingdom* will break in pieces and crush all the others.

⁴¹Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴²And as the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. ⁴³As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

⁴⁵Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. ⁴⁷The king answered Daniel, and said, "Truly your God *is* the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret." ⁴⁸Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise *men* of Babylon. ⁴⁹Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel *sat* in the gate of the king.

Answer:	(a) Head	-	Gold
	(b) Chest & arms	-	Silver
	(c) Belly & thighs	-	Bronze
	(d) Legs	-	Iron
	(e) Feet	-	Iron & Clay
	(f) Stone	-	Cut out w/o hands

2. Daniel 7:1-27

¹In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head *while* on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.

²Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. ³And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. ⁴The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

⁵"And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and *had* three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'

⁶"After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

⁷"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. *It was* different from all the beasts that *were* before it, and it had ten horns. ⁸I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, *were* eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

⁹ "I watched till thrones were put in place,
And the Ancient of Days was seated;
His garment *was* white as snow,
And the hair of His head *was* like pure wool.
His throne *was* a fiery flame,
Its wheels a burning fire;

¹⁰ A fiery stream issued
And came forth from before Him.
A thousand thousands ministered to Him;
Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.
The court was seated,
And the books were opened.

¹¹"I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. ¹²As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³ "I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, *One* like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.

¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom *the one*
Which shall not be destroyed.

¹⁵"I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me. ¹⁶I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷Those great beasts, which are four, *are* four kings *which* arise out of the earth. ¹⁸But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.'

¹⁹"Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, *with* its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, *which* devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; ²⁰and the ten horns that *were* on its head, and the other *horn* which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance *was* greater than his fellows.

²¹"I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them,

²²until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made *in favor* of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

²³“Thus he said:

‘The fourth beast shall be
A fourth kingdom on earth,
Which shall be different from all *other* kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.

²⁴ The ten horns *are* ten kings
Who shall arise from this kingdom.
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first *ones*,
And shall subdue three kings.

²⁵ He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.
Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time.

²⁶ ‘But the court shall be seated,
And they shall take away his dominion,
To consume and destroy *it* forever.

²⁷ Then the kingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,
Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.
His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom,
And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’

- Answer:**
- (a) **Lion** w eagle’s wings
 - (b) **Bear**, raised on one side, with three ribs in its mouth
 - (c) **Leopard** w four wings on its back
 - (d) **Huge, terrible beast** w huge iron teeth and 10 horns on its head
 - (e) **Ten (10) horns** on the huge beast’s head
 - (f) **Judgment scene** w God on His throne
 - (g)

3. Daniel 8

¹In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared *to me*—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time. ²I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I *was* in Shushan, the citadel, which *is* in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. ³Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns *were* high; but one *was* higher than the other, and the higher *one* came up last. ⁴I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor *was there any* that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.

⁵And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat *had* a notable horn between his eyes. ⁶Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. ⁷And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke

his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.

⁸Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. ⁹And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious *Land*. ¹⁰And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some* of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. ¹¹He even exalted *himself* as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily *sacrifices* were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. ¹²Because of transgression, an army was given over *to the horn* to oppose the daily *sacrifices*; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did *all this* and prospered.

¹³Then I heard a holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain *one* who was speaking, "How long *will* the vision *be*, *concerning* the daily *sacrifices* and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?"

¹⁴And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

¹⁵Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶And I heard a man's voice between *the banks of* the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this *man* understand the vision." ¹⁷So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision *refers* to the time of the end."

¹⁸Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. ¹⁹And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end *shall be*. ²⁰The ram which you saw, having the two horns—*they are* the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹And the male goat *is* the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that *is* between its eyes *is* the first king. ²²As for the broken *horn* and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.

²³ "And in the latter time of their kingdom,
When the transgressors have reached their fullness,
A king shall arise,
Having fierce features,
Who understands sinister schemes.

²⁴ His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power;
He shall destroy fearfully,
And shall prosper and thrive;
He shall destroy the mighty, and *also* the holy people.

²⁵ "Through his cunning
He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule;
And he shall exalt *himself* in his heart.
He shall destroy many in *their* prosperity.
He shall even rise against the Prince of princes;
But he shall be broken without *human* means.

²⁶ "And the vision of the evenings and mornings
Which was told is true;
Therefore seal up the vision,
For it refers to many days in the future."

²⁷And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

Answer: (a) Ram w 2 horns, one higher than the other = Media & Persia

(b) Male goat w a horn between its eyes = Greece; horn between its eyes = Alexander the Great

(c) Little horn that became exceedingly great = Rome at the end of time

(d) ¹⁴"For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

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Notes for the Instructor

Purpose of lesson 15: Two objectives quickly focus in relation to this lesson. First, the study and understanding of the three lines of prophecy (Daniel 2, the political aspect, kingdoms; Daniel 7, political and religious aspects mixed; and Daniel 8, the sanctuary emphasized) gives unity to the book of Daniel and adds to our confidence in the accuracy of the prophetic messages of the Bible. Also, this study lays important ground-work for the next study which focuses on Daniel 8:14. Later reference will be made to particularly Daniel 7:25, as the change of the Sabbath is considered in lesson 23.

During the study itself: The answers to questions 1 and 2 have been kept in a very simple form. The volume of material being covered is large – thus, if we can get the simple "grit" into an easily comprehended form, the memory can pick it up more quickly. If we combine extensive information in the Bible with extensive answers, it is possible to leave people asking us, "What are you talking about?"

In questions 2(g) and 3(e) the instructor should be prepared to isolate the new material in each chapter and not do a re-reading of many texts. Read only one verse which presents the new material in each case. Have these marked in your Bible ahead of time. Question 3 demands more investigation than do questions 1 and 2.

Appeal: The appeal again centers on the need for readiness in light of the climax of each of the chapters. The study also can be used to stir interest in the studies that immediately follow.

Illustration: It is quite striking how these prophecies of Daniel fit into the basic diagram with which the student has become acquainted over many weeks. The student then sees very clearly the political development as time passes from BC to AD, the place of the Romans in harrassing Christ at His birth and ruing His life, etc. Again, the visual aid needs to retain a simplicity as stated above, for quick learning and retention. The 490 years (Daniel 9:24-27) and the 2300 years (Daniel 8:14), which come in lesson 16, will fall very naturally over this lesson's visual aid.

