

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.

