

BETHEL GOSPEL CHAPEL STUDIES IN DANIEL - "GOD RULES THE WORLD."

INTRODUCTION: Daniel was born about 620 B.C. in Judah and probably in Jerusalem. We know nothing of his parents but a hint in Daniel 1:3 suggests that they were either members of the royal family or of the nobility. Daniel's name means "*God is my judge*," his life demonstrated that he kept this truth in mind throughout his life. Josiah was the King of Judah when Daniel was born. During Josiah's reign Judah experienced spiritual revival. Daniel's parents must have been committed to God for they taught Daniel the law of God according to Moses' command found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

In 608 B.C. Josiah died, Daniel was about twelve. The revival quickly died and by 605 B.C. the Babylonians had subdued Judah and Daniel and others of his rank were deported to Babylon. Daniel was about fifteen. He lived in Babylon through the whole of the captivity and remained behind after Cyrus allowed the return under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C.

The theme of Daniel's book is "**God rules the world.**" This can be seen on the attached outline of the book. After the captivity and destruction of Jerusalem many of the Jews must have wondered about their sovereign Jehovah. Certainly to the Babylonians, Judah's God must have seemed inferior to their own gods. After all they had captured Judah, looted Jehovah's temple and destroyed it. Gleason

Archer writes in his commentary: *So the whole narrative in Daniel relates a series of contests between false gods of human invention and the one true sovereign Lord and creator of the heavens and earth.*

The contests are no contest and throughout the book God's wisdom and power brings the proud rulers of great empires to their knees vindicating Daniel's faith and courage.

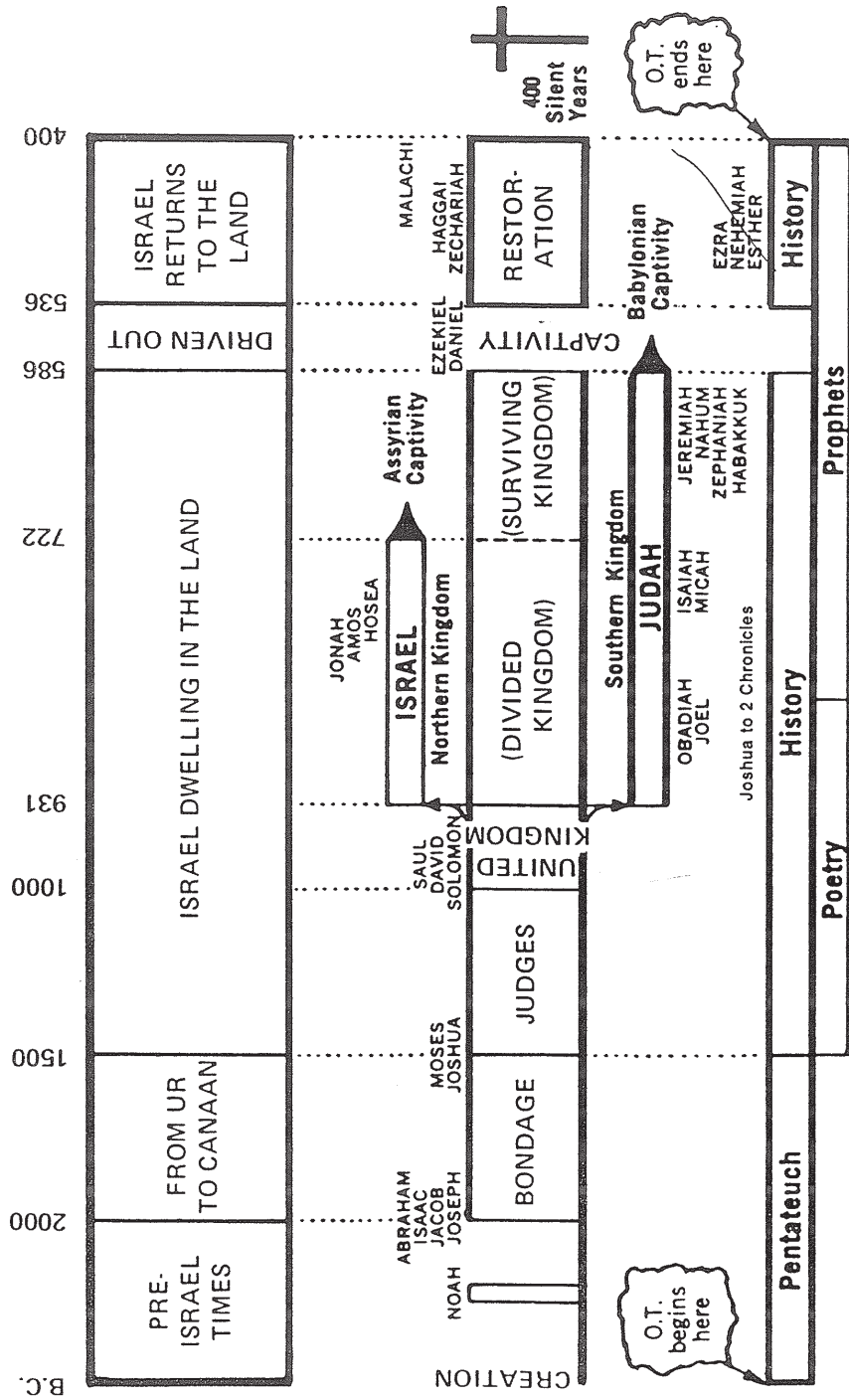
"God rules the world" is a relevant truth for us to remember. The God of the Bible is not given much press today and his success is thought little about by the world. But Daniel's God rules the world, we need to keep that fresh in our hearts and minds.

Daniel was not a professional prophet, he was a civil servant, yet God used him to reveal the divine plan for Israel. Much of his prophecy was fulfilled between the fifth century B.C. and the first century B.C. In fact, his prophecies are so exact critics refuse to accept that a fifth century Daniel wrote them. The Lord Jesus confirms the authorship in Matthew 24:15. Israel is the main subject of Daniel's prophecies. We should not look for the church or its future in Daniel.

We hope to accomplish two things in our study of Daniel. First, we want to challenge our own commitment to God by Daniel's example. Second, we want to gain an introductory knowledge of Bible prophecy. As we see God fulfilling His word to Israel we can be encouraged about His promises to us despite what governments and people say and do.

*His dominion is an eternal dominion
his kingdom endures from generation to generation.
All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing.
He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven
and the peoples of the earth.
No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"*

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY



DANIEL

GOD RULES THE WORLD

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--------|
| MAINLY HISTORICAL: 6 HISTORICAL NARRATIVES | | MAINLY PREDICTIVE: 4 APOCALYPTIC VISIONS | |
| DANIEL INTERPRETS OTHERS' DREAMS | | ANGEL INTERPRETS DANIEL'S DREAMS | |
| Nebuchadnezzar | | Belshazzar | Darius |
| Darius | | Cyrus | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 |
| WRITTEN IN HEBREW | | WRITTEN IN ARAMAIC | |
| INTRODUCTION | | GENTILE NATIONS | |
| JEW IN A GENTILE SETTING | | IMPOTENT IN OPPOSING GOD | |
| DESTINY IN GOD'S HANDS | | DESTINY IN GOD'S HANDS | |
| GENTILE NATION | | GENTILE NATION | |
| HEBREW NATION | | HEBREW NATION | |
| -DESTINY IN GOD'S PLAN | | -DESTINY IN GOD'S PLAN | |
| -BLESSED FOR OBEYING GOD | | -BLESSED FOR OBEYING GOD | |
| THROUGH ALL THE AGES TO THE END OF TIME | | THROUGH ALL THE AGES TO THE END OF TIME | |
| GENTILES BEFORE CHRIST | | GENTILES BEFORE CHRIST | |
| 8 | | 9 | |
| 12 | | 12 | |

A KEY VERSE: 4:17 A KEY WORD: DREAM

Study #1 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel Chapter 1

1. Daniel was a man of conviction, define the word conviction and explain why convictions are important in a godly life.

2. Compare verses 1-3; with 2 Chronicles 36:15-21. Why did God allow the captivity of Judah?
 - 3a. What is the purpose for the policy outlined in verses 3-5?

 - 3b. Why were the captives names changed, verses 6 & 7?

4. Daniel accepted the training offered in Babylon but he refused the food and drink provided, why?

5. Read Leviticus 11:43-46; explain God's purpose in regulating Israel's food and drink.

6. Are Christians today faced with choices similar to Daniel's? Give an illustration.

7. What does Daniel's choice tell us about him personally?

8. Daniel's convictions result in great blessing. Do convictions ever produce an apparent lack of favourable results? Explain.

9. Obviously Daniel and his friends did not share the rebellion against God that caused the captivity, yet they shared the captivity, why?

10. Why do people today suffer consequences for which they are not personally responsible. How can we help them in such circumstances?

Study #2 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel 2:1-23

1. What is the difference between a dream and a vision? Under what circumstances might we expect God to reveal His mind by a vision or a dream?

2. Read verses 1-3; what was the spiritual state of Babylon?

3. Read Deuteronomy 18:9-21;
 - 3a. Why does God condemn occult practices?

 - 3b. What was to distinguish the Israelites from other nations?

4. How do we recognize occult activity today? What should our reaction be to such activity?

5. Nebuchadnezzar's demand for the interpretation of his dream was also a test for his wise men. Why did he wish to test them?

6. How was the stage set for Daniel's intervention by the statement of the astrologers recorded in verses 10-11?

7. What three truths about prayer are found in verses 14-19?

8. List the specific things Daniel acknowledges about God in his praise prayer, verses 20-23.

9. Divide Daniel's praise prayer into its two parts and give a title to each part.

10. The answer to Daniel's prayer was clear and direct, why is this not always the same with our prayers?

Study #3 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel 2:24-49

1. What is Daniel's attitude as he opens God's mind to Nebuchadnezzar? What should we learn from this example as we serve the Lord?
2. Compare verses 27 & 28 with the astrologers statement in 2:10 & 11, what differences are evident in the two statements?
3. Why did God give this vision to Nebuchadnezzar?
4. How many kingdoms are, represented by the image. What important fact about earthly kingdoms is emphasized?
5. What is significant about the material that illustrates each successive kingdom.
6. In verse 38 Daniel states that Babylon is the head of gold, what is represented by the rest of the image? (See attached chart.)
7. List the characteristics given for the feet of the image?
8. What is significant about the last kingdom according to verses 34 & 35 and verses 44 & 45, how is it different from the others?
9. We are living in the church age, what can we learn from this image vision?
10. How can the daily appreciation of God's sovereignty help our Christian development?

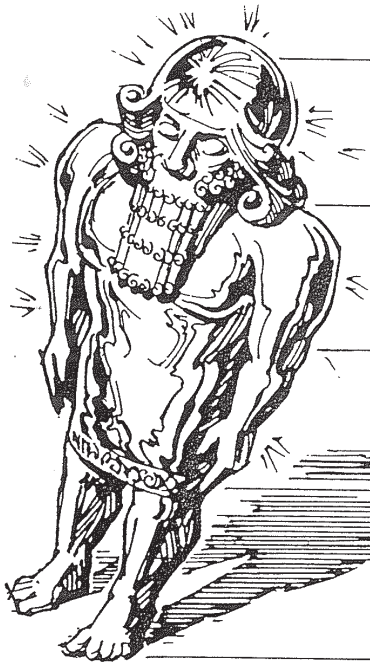
1. The Divine Diet

Resolution:
Not to eat the king's food
Recommendation:
That a ten-day diet be conducted
Reward:
Daniel graduates ten times smarter

2. A Statue and a Stone



Statue is destroyed by a great stone, which represents Jesus Christ



HEAD
GOLD

WORLD POWER
BABYLON
606-539

CHEST AND ARMS
SILVER

WORLD POWER
PERSIA
539-331

STOMACH AND THIGHS
BRASS

WORLD POWER
GREECE
331-323

LEGS AND FEET
IRON & CLAY

WORLD POWER
ROME
322 B.C.—A.D. 476
FUTURE

- The frustration of the Babylonians: the king's aides cannot interpret his dream and are sentenced to death.
- The revelation of the Lord: God reveals the dream to Daniel.
- The interpretation of the prophet: Daniel explains the dream.
- The prostration of the king: upon hearing their interpretation, Nebuchadnezzar falls down and worships Daniel.

In Daniel 7 the same four nations are described, but from a heavenly view, which looks upon them as four wild animals.

| WORLD POWER | DESCRIPTION |
|-------------|-------------|
| Babylon | Lion |
| Persia | Bear |
| Greece | Leopard |
| Rome | Monster |

Study #4 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel Chapter 3

1. What motivates rulers or governments to actions like those recorded in Daniel chapter 3? Try to think of a present day example.
2. Is there a relationship between the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2 and his actions in chapter 3? Explain.
3. Does the event in chapter 3 prove that Nebuchadnezzar's statement in chapter 2:46 & 47, was insincere? Explain.
4. What motivates the action of the astrologers in verses 8-12?
5. State verses 16-18 in your own words.
6. Note that verses 16-18 express both certainty and uncertainty, what are the men certain and yet uncertain about? Give a present day illustration.
7. What motivates a willingness to be martyred?
8. What can we learn from the details recorded in verses 19-25?
9. Compare Chapter 2:46 & 47 and chapter 3:28 & 29; what did Nebuchadnezzar learn from the miracle of chapter 3?
10. The three men were obedient servants, how is their obedience shown in chapter 3? Can you think of an occasion where the same kind of obedience may be required today?

Study #5 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: DANIEL 4:1-37

1. What is pride? Explain how it is usually displayed and why it is abhorrent to God.
2. Compare Nebuchadnezzar's statement in Chapter 4:1-3 with the others found in chapter 2:47 and chapter 3:28 & 29: what differences are found in chapter 4:1-3?
3. Why does God give this additional dream to Nebuchadnezzar, see verse 17?
4. What title is used for God throughout chapter 4? Why?
5. Read verses 26 & 27, does Daniel believe that Nebuchadnezzar's judgement is inevitable?
6. What principle present in many other scriptures is expressed in verses 26-27?
7. Read verses 29-31, what triggers the fulfilment of Nebuchadnezzar's dream?
8. What lesson is finally learned by Nebuchadnezzar as a result of the experience recorded in chapter four?
9. Why is sovereignty such an important issue with God?
10. What spiritual and personal advantage can be gained by us if we accept and practice the truth of God's sovereignty?

Study #6 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel 5:1-30

1. History repeats itself in Daniel chapter 5, how do we experience this phenomenon in the world and in the church today?
2. Read verses 1-4 and verses 22-23, why did Belshazzar introduce the captured objects into his feast? What did he hope to gain by doing it?
3. Compare chapter 4:19 with chapter 5:17, what is missing in Daniel's attitude to Belshazzar?
4. Daniel's rebuke in verses 18-21 is based on history. What was Belshazzar expected to learn from the past?
5. How accountable are we for the information we receive through the example of others? What New Testament verses confirm your answer?
6. What attitude is essential if we are to learn from other peoples example, see verse 22?
7. What lesson from the past is re-emphasized in verse 26?
8. Read chapter 4:37, what is the criteria by which Belshazzar is judged and found wanting?
9. Read chapter 4:34-35, what lesson from Nebuchadnezzar is confirmed in the final word, peres, verse 28?
10. What does it mean to be "*found wanting?*" How can we avoid the experience.

Study #7 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel 6

1. Was Daniel's choice to ignore the royal decree wrong? What governs a Christian's response to governmental rule and authority?
2. Daniel 6:3 speaks about Daniel's "exceptional qualities," what were some of those qualities?
3. Read verses 3-5; list the characteristics of human nature displayed in these verses?
4. Clearly by today's standards Darius' law discriminates against Daniel's freedom. What should we do about laws that discriminate against Christian belief and practice?
5. What key characteristic in Darius do the administrators count on to make their efforts successful?
6. Explain why manipulation is never a God approved method of obtaining compliance?
7. According to Nebuchadnezzar's dream the Medo-Persian empire was to be inferior to the Babylonian Empire. What fact in chapter 6 illustrates that inferiority?
8. Read I Kings 8:46-50; explain why Daniel follows the practice described in verse 10.
9. Read verses 14-23; record what you discover in these verses about God, Daniel and Darius.
10. Make a list of the attributes of God mentioned in King Darius' declaration.

Study #8 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel Chapters 7 & 8

1. Critics prefer to date Daniel's writings from the first century B.C. instead of the fifth century B.C.. Why is this date change so important to them? What does their attitude say about them?

2. List briefly the similarities and the differences between the vision reported in chapter 2 and the vision seen in chapter seven.

3. What is the reason for the differences between the two visions?

4. Chapter 8 expands our knowledge of beasts two and three in chapter seven. Why do you think this expansion is given?

5. Who is the Ancient of Days and who is the son of man in chapter 7? What is their relationship?

6. Compare chapter 7:8 and 7:20-25 with 8:23-25;
 - 6a. From which kingdoms do these authoritative figures emerge?
 - 6b. Are they the same person?
 - 6c. What event follows the overthrow of each?
 - 6d. Why is the person in chapter 8 introduced?
 - 6e. Which is the anti-christ?

7. What encouragement can be found from the dismal view of man's rule and authority given in these chapters?

8. Look for some New Testament references which correspond to and confirm chapter 7:13 & 14.

Study #9 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel 9:1-19

1. Jeremiah 25:1-14 is the prophecy Daniel refers to in Daniel 9:2. What does Daniel's attitude toward Jeremiah's prophecy teach us in regard to Daniel's prophecies?
2. Daniel describes his actions at prayer in verse 3. What can we learn about prayer from him?
3. In verses 4 and 5 Daniel describes first God and then Israel. What striking difference stands out?
4. Read verses 7-14. How does the judgement of Israel reveal God's righteousness?
5. Daniel confesses Israel's shame in verse 7. Is shame a proper feeling for sinning believers today? Explain your answer.
6. What particular sin is being referred to in verses 10 & 11? What is the result?
7. What scriptures are being transgressed among God's New Testament people? Is there a judgement corresponding to Israel's to be experienced?
8. Read verses 15-19. State Daniel's request in your own words.
9. Why does Daniel say: *"Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake look with favour on your desolate sanctuary."*?
10. What would compare with Daniel's request for the restoration of Israel to Jerusalem today? What would a restored church be like?

Study #10 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel 9:20-27

1. Why does Daniel confess the sins of Israel in his prayer? Is confession something we should be concerned about? Why?
2. State Gabriel's message to Daniel (verses 21-23) in your own words? What is Daniel promised?
3. What about angelic manifestation, should we expect it today?
4. Read verse 24. Who are the subjects of this prophecy?
5. What will occur according to verse 24 during the "seventy sevens" period?
6. Could the list given in verse 24 be in a different order? Explain your answer.
7. What begins and what ends the first 69 weeks of Daniel's revelation? (See attached chart.)
8. Who is "cut-off" in verse 26? How was this fulfilled historically?
9. Read verses 26-27. Who is the "*ruler who will come?*" List the results of his coming.
10. Compare chapter 9:26-27, with chapter 7:19-27. What will occur after the events seen in 9:27?

Study #11 STUDIES IN DANIEL

READ: Daniel Chapters 10-12

1. Compare 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 with Daniel 10:1. What occurs prior to this last revelation Daniel receives from God.
2. How do you think Daniel felt about the restoration of the captives to Judah? Why didn't Daniel return to Jerusalem?
3. Some commentators teach that the messenger here in verses 4-6 is Jesus Christ. What two facts mentioned in verse 13 confirm that this is not correct?
4. Why is Daniel so completely overcome? What is the angel's response, see verse 10; verses 15-16; verses 17-18?
5. Chapter 11 covers the same historical period spoken about in chapter 8. Why did God reveal the history of the Medo-Persian and Greek period to Daniel?
6. The final ruler described in chapter 11:21-35 is the same person described in chapter 8:9-14, and 8:23-25. Since this person is from the Greek empire and is not anti-christ, why is he introduced?
7. The real anti-christ is introduced in chapter 11:36-45. What three things distinguish him from the person referred to in chapter 11: 21-35.
8. Who is to be spared in the final judgement? What is the reward of the wise?
9. Does Daniel 12:2 teach us to expect a general resurrection which includes both the righteous and the wicked? Explain your answer.
10. Daniel 12:13 is specifically spoken to Daniel. What New Testament passages would lead us to believe that present day Christians have this promise too?

SEVENTIETH WEEK OF DANIEL

