

BIBLE SYNTHESIS IV (Bible Survey)

Introduction to Daniel

The student must appreciate the greatness of the magnificent city of Babylon, and the Babylon Empire itself, in order to fully understand and appreciate Daniel. Students are encouraged to read *Halley's Bible Handbook*, by Henry H. Halley, Zondervan, 1965, pages 336–342. Also *Unger's Bible Handbook*, by Merrill F. Unger, Moody Press, 1966, pages 240–241. Also, Bible encyclopedias, Bible dictionaries, and other works can add to that appreciation. The City of Babylon was a huge and magnificent city in Daniel's day, yet it is in complete ruin today.

1. Author:

Daniel the prophet — 7:15, 28; 8:1, 15; etc. See Matt. 24:15.

(1) Daniel means “God is my judge.”

(2) Daniel was one of the first Jewish captives taken to Babylon — 1:1, 36.

He was probably in his teens when carried into Babylon. Lockyer suggests that he was about 16 years of age. He was in Babylon more than 70 years (see 1:21 and 10:1).

Note: Isaiah made a prediction to Hezekiah in Isaiah 39:7, and it is probable that Daniel is one of those of Hezekiah's descendants who were carried away to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

(3) Daniel became one of the chief wise men of Babylon (and no doubt was the chief of all by the time of the end of Nebuchadnezzar's reign) — 1:17, 20

(4) Daniel was a high official under Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar of Babylon, as well as of Darius and Cyrus of Medo-Persia — 2:48; 5:29; 6:1–3, 28 Though his position under Belshazzar lasted but a few hours (Dan. 5:29–31).

(5) He was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk and (?) Obadiah (?).

Jeremiah prophesied from Jerusalem, Ezekiel from Babylonia, and Habakkuk from in the land, but prior to Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion of Judah. Though Obadiah was probably written much earlier, some place it during this time (see under *Introduction to Obadiah*).

2. Addressees:

(1) The general addressees are indicated by the language used by the writer in the book:

–1. The Hebrew language is used in 1:1 through 2:4a, and from 8:1 through 12:13.
[A message of hope and consolation relating to God's people Israel]

–2. The Aramaic language is found in 2:4b through 7:28.

[A message of judgment. Aramaic was the *lingua franca* (the commercial and diplomatic language) of the Near East in that day.]

(2) Nebuchadnezzar — 2:27–28; 4:18–19

(3) Belshazzar — 5:22

3. Date:

From 606 to 534 B.C., about 72 years.

[From the third year of Jehoiakim (1:1–2) to the third year of Cyrus, the Persian (10:1)]

4. Circumstances or Purpose of the Book of Daniel:

Daniel is “the key to all Biblical prophecy.” Without the great disclosures of this book all of the other prophetic portions of the Word of God would remain a mystery to us.

Daniel unlocks:

- 1. The Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24 – 25; Mark 13; Luke 21). In the Olivet Discourse, the Lord Jesus Christ quotes from Daniel.
 - 2. Paul’s prediction given in II Thess. 2. We must have Daniel’s account in order to recognize the “man of sin.”
 - 3. All of the book of the Revelation. Without Daniel and the imagery of Ezekiel, the book of the Revelation would be entirely without any meaning to us.
- (1) To present certain important events of history which took place during the time of the Babylonian captivity — 1:1–2; 2:28; 3:24–25; 5:30–31; etc.
 - (2) To foretell the history of Gentile domination of the land of Israel and the world — 1:1–2; 2:37–40; 9:24–26; etc.
[Daniel defines “The Times of the Gentiles” —see Luke 21:24]
 - (3) To foretell the eventual worldwide ascendancy of Christ’s Kingdom — 2:44–45; 7:13–14, 27

• *Note: Ellicott presents a threefold purpose of Daniel:*

- 1. To supply a missing link in the chain of the continuity of revelation;
- 2. To support Israel amidst the doubts and fears occasioned by the Exile;
- 3. To reveal to a polytheistic nation the eternal power of the One True God.

5. Relationship of Daniel to Other Books:

- (1) Prophecies of the whole Babylonian period (see *Introduction to Jeremiah*, under #5, (1), “Relationship to Other Books”)
- (2) Prophecies during the exile (see *Introduction to Ezekiel* under #5, (2). “Relationship to Other Books”)
- (3) Prophecies concerning the Restoration of Israel and the Great Tribulation
 - 1. Jeremiah: “The time of Jacob’s trouble; ...” — 30:7–11, 15–18
 - 2. Daniel: “A time of trouble, such as never was ...” — 12:1–3
 - 3. Matthew: “Great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” — 24:21–22
 - 4. Revelation: “Great tribulation,” and “hour of temptation (trial),” followed by the Millennium — 2:22; 3:10; 7:14; 20:4–6
- (4) Prophecies of the Seventieth (70th) Week
 - 1. Daniel: The first 69 weeks, to Messiah’s death (“cut off”), and the final week ending in desolation — 9:24–27
 - 2. Revelation: The final week, especially the latter half — 11:1–2; 12:6; 14

6. Theme:

World Empire — 2:37–45; 7:13–14, 23, 27

(“The Times of the Gentiles,” its beginning, nature, course and conclusion)

The rise and fall of kingdoms

7. Key Terms:

“King” — 188 times

“Kingdom” — 59 times

8. Key Passages:

Daniel 7:13–14

Other notable passages: 2:21, 28–29; 4:34–35

BIBLE SYNTHESIS IV
(Bible Survey)

Outline of Daniel

There are two common methods of outlining Daniel. One has to do with the contents of the book, and it divides it into two sections, while the other has to do with the linguistic structure and has three divisions.

1. Division according to contents:

- (1) The Historical Section (“The Historic Night”) — Dan. 1 – 6
- (2) The Prophetic Section (“The Prophetic Light”) — Dan. 7 – 12

2. Division according to linguistic structure:

- (1) Introduction — Dan. 1:1 – 2:4a
(The private life of Daniel) — Written in Hebrew
- (2) The Gentile Kingdoms (“The Times of the Gentiles”) — Dan. 2:4b – 7:28
(The public life of Daniel) — Written in Aramaic
- (3) The Nation of Israel (Israel to the Millennium) — Dan. 8:1 – 12:13
(The prophetic visions of Daniel) — Written in Hebrew

3. A third method is based upon events and prophecies in the book:

- (1) Events Under Nebuchadnezzar — Dan. 1 – 4
 - 1. Daniel’s youth — Dan. 1
(1:1–3, 6, 8, 17)
 - 2. Nebuchadnezzar’s image dream — Dan. 2
(2:27–28; 31–35)
 - 3. Nebuchadnezzar’s image of gold — Dan. 3
(3:3, 7, 16–18, 24–25, 27)
 - 4. Nebuchadnezzar’s tree vision and humiliation — Dan. 4
(4:3, 13–17, 24–27, 30, 33–37)
- (2) Events under Belshazzar and Darius — Dan. 5 – 6
 - 1. The handwriting on the wall — Dan. 5
(5:1–2, 5, 13, 16, 25–31)
 - 2. In the lion’s den — Dan. 6
(6:1–3, 7–10, 16, 22, 26–27)
- (3) Prophecies of World Empire — Dan. 7 – 8
 - 1. Vision of the four beasts and the Son of Man — Dan. 7
(7:1–8, 11–14, 17, 23–27)
 - 2. Vision of the ram and the he goat — Dan. 8
(8:3–8a, 8b–9, 12, 20–23)

- (4) Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks — Dan. 9
- 1. The seventy *years* of desolation of Jerusalem — Dan. 9:1–2
(See Jer. 25:11–12; 29:10)
 - 2. Daniel’s prayer of confession and petition — Dan. 9:3–19
(9:5, 16, 19)
 - 3. The Seventy *Weeks* (sevens) of Israel’s future — Dan. 9:20–27
(9:24, 25–26a, 26b, 27)
- (5) Final Visions and Prophecies — Dan. 10 – 12
- 1. Vision of the man clothed in linen — Dan. 10
(10:2–3, 5–6, 11–12, 19–21)
 - 2. Vision onward to the time of the end — Dan. 11–12
 - 1. Four more Persian kings — 11:1–2
(11:2)
 - 2. A mighty king — 11:3–4
 - 3. Wars between south and north — 11:5–20
(11:11)
 - 4. A vile person — 11:21–35
(11:21, 31)
 - 5. The “Anti-God” — 11:36–45
(11:36–38, 45)
 - 6. The deliverance of Israel — 12:1–13
(12:1–3, 4, 9, 13)

Daniel is the book of “World Empire” (2:37–45; 7:13–14, 23, 27). Here, the “Times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24; Rev. 11:2; 18:2) begin (1:1–2; 2:37–38); and, prophetically, run their course (2:39–43), and terminate with the establishment of God’s kingdom under Christ (2:44–45; 7:13–14).

