

DANIEL

SAMPLE

ADVANCED
BIBLE
STUDY
SERIES

David W. Cloud

Daniel

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Ways These Courses Can Be Used

- *As a private study tool for the individual Christian*
- *As a course of study in Sunday Schools*
- *As a textbook in Bible colleges and institutes*
- *As part of a home schooling curriculum*
- *As study material in jails and prisons*
- *For discipling new Christians*
- *As a refresher study for Bible College graduates*
- *As expository preaching outlines*
- *As commentaries*

In What Order Should the Courses Be Studied?

We recommend starting with *The Effectual Bible Student*. This is a 12-hour video course with four major sections: (1) The spiritual requirements for effectual Bible study, (2) tips for daily Bible study, (3) principles of Bible interpretation, and (4) how to use Bible study tools. It also deals with using Bible study software on a computer, a tablet, or a smartphone. It is a package consisting of the videos of the course and the textbook with review questions for testing. The course notes can be used as a standalone tool by teachers to teach church classes and home schooling programs or can be used for self-study. The package can be purchased as a set of 6 DVDs and textbook, or it can be downloaded for free from www.wayoflife.org.

After that we recommend *Old Testament History and Geography*, *The Four Gospels*, and *Acts*. These three courses give an overview of the history of the Bible and how each part fits together within the whole.

After that we suggest studying the courses in whatever order best fits your need and interest or that of your class.

The other course titles are as follows: *The Bible Version Issue*, *Daniel*, *Defense of the Faith*, *1 Corinthians*, *Genesis*, *Give Attendance to Doctrine*, *Hebrews*, *History of the*

Churches from a Baptist Perspective, James, Job, New Testament Church, Pastoral Epistles, Proverbs, Psalms, Revelation, Romans, Understanding Bible Prophecy.

Other courses published by Way of Life Literature are *Keeping the Kids* and *The Mobile Phone and the Christian Home and Church* (youth discipleship), *One Year Discipleship Course*, *The Discipling Church*, and *An Unshakeable Faith* (apologetics).

Tests and Teacher Score sheets are available separately for some courses

A lot of time and effort has gone into the creation of the review questions and tests, which are carefully designed to draw the student's attention to the most important points and to help him remember these points long after the course is finished. There are no fluff questions and no mere busy work that wastes the student's time with things of no consequence. Each question is important and deals with things that the Bible student needs to keep in mind beyond the life of the course. The SECTIONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS go over all of the important points in the lessons, thus pointing the student's attention to the most significant material and preparing him for the sectional tests. The SECTIONAL TESTS are drawn from the most important of the review questions. And the FINAL TEST draws from the most important of the sectional tests. Thus each test focuses the student's attention in more closely on the things that he should take away from the course and helps him remember these things by repeating them throughout the review and testing process.

If you take the courses by yourself, don't skip over the review questions. Test yourself. It is an important part of the learning process.

Introduction to Daniel

The Situation

Daniel (“God is my Judge”) was carried away captive to Babylon as a youth. This was in the reign of Jehoiakim (compare Da. 1:1-2 and 2 Ki. 24:10-16).

He was of royal seed (Da. 1:3).

He became a high official in the Babylonian government (Da. 2:48).

He continued to hold high office until the beginning of the Persian kingdom (Da. 6:1-3).

He lived at the same time as Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Jeremiah was prophesying in Israel when Daniel was taken captive. Ezekiel was carried captive eight years after Daniel and lived in Babylon and prophesied from there.

Daniel’s Importance

Daniel’s prophecies give an overview of God’s program for Israel from Daniel’s day until the second coming of Christ.

1. Daniel is one of the fundamental keys to understanding New Testament prophecies (such as Matthew 24, 2 Thessalonians 2, and Revelation). Christ referred to Daniel in His great prophecy of Matthew 24 (verse 15). “Our Lord refers to Daniel in His great prophetic Olivet Discourse. Hence that discourse can only be correctly understood in the light of the Book of Daniel. The last Book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation ... would ever be a sealed Book, if we had not the prophecies of Daniel, and the prophecies of Daniel would in part remain sealed if we had not Revelation” (Arno Gaebelein, *Daniel*).

2. Daniel’s prophecies are the key to understanding human history over the past 2,500 years and particularly the end times.

- a. Daniel 2 teaches us that Rome holds a central role in the events of the end times. The Roman Empire is depicted by the legs of iron, but it continues until the time of the Antichrist in the form of the feet and toes of part iron/part clay.
- b. The Roman Empire united Europe and created the European culture that exists today.

c. The Antichrist will rise out of Europe. He is the “prince” of the people who destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70 (Da. 9:26).

The Times of the Gentiles

To Daniel God revealed the major events of “the times of the Gentiles” (Lu. 21:24), during which Israel is under the authority of Gentile nations. The times of the Gentiles dates from the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon until the coming of Christ to establish His kingdom. This revelation is contained in six prophecies:

The prophecy of the great image shown to Nebuchadnezzar (Da. 2)

The prophecy of the four beasts (Da. 7)

The prophecy of the ram and goat (Da. 8) (Greece and Persia)

The prophecy of the 70 Weeks (Da. 9) (Rome)

The prophecy of Antiochus Epiphanes of Greek Syria (Da. 11:1-35)

The prophecy of the Antichrist (Da. 11:36 - 12:13)

The Latter Days

Daniel’s prophecies are for the latter days and the time of the end. This is emphasized by repetition (Da. 2:28; 8:17, 19; 10:14; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9).

This means that the prophecies are chiefly not only for Daniel’s time or any other former time, as the allegorical method claims. The prophecies are for our day.

This also means that the prophecies were not fully understood until the time of the end (Da. 12:9). In the late 19th and 20th century there was a movement to interpret prophecy literally. It was a revival of the type of interpretation that existed in the early centuries. The first churches were looking for a literal return of Christ to establish a literal kingdom (1 Th. 1:9-10). The literal prophecy movement of the 20th century was promoted by the Scofield Reference Bible, the Bible Institute movement, and a slew of books on prophecy. There was an intense study of Bible prophecy, and current events became clear in light of prophecy. These included the ecumenical movement (toward building a one-world “church” as described in Revelation 17), the creation of the United Nations (toward a one-world government as described in Revelation 13), and the return of Israel to her land and the establishment of her modern state in 1948 (as described in Ezekiel 37).

The Liberal Attack upon Daniel

Liberal theologians have tried to cast doubt upon the historicity of Daniel.

They claim that the book was not written during the Babylonian exile by the historical prophet Daniel, but that it was written long afterward in the time of the Maccabees by an unknown writer who created a fiction to encourage the Jews during their battles with the Greeks.

This view is a Satanic attack upon the divine inspiration of Scripture. The Bible's prophecies are irrefutable evidence of its divine origin, so the devil's tactic is to cast doubt on them with the liberal lie that they were written *after the events*.

The critical view is not based on scholarship; it is based on unbelief. Modernists do not believe in supernatural prophecy, and since it is obvious that the book of Daniel describes the details of events that occurred after the Jewish exile, in their minds it could not have been written beforehand. For example, the vision of Daniel 8 claims to have been given during the reign of Belshazzar king of Babylon, and it describes the coming Medo-Persian (ram with two horns, vv. 3-4) and Greek empires (goat, vv. 5-7) in perfect detail, including the death of Alexander the Great and the division of his kingdom into four parts (v. 8) and the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes to desecrate Israel (vv. 9-12). Either this vision is of divine origin or it is a lie, because it clearly purports to be divine prophecy. Since the unbelieving critic does not believe in miracles, he rejects supernatural prophecy and invents modernistic theories to account for it. "The whole reasoning method of the destructive Bible-Criticism may be reduced to the following: Prophecy is an impossibility, there is no such thing as foretelling events to come. Therefore a book which contains predictions must have been written after the events which are predicted" (Gaebelein, *Daniel*).

Refutation of the Critical View

The biblical Daniel is attested by the prophet Ezekiel (Eze. 14:14; 28:3), by the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt. 24:14-15; Mr. 13:14), and by the apostles (Heb. 11:13). Christ taught that Daniel was a real man who spoke of the future. No other testimony is needed, because the evidence that He rose from the dead and is therefore the Son of God as He claimed is irrefutable, in our estimation.

If Daniel is a "pious fraud," as it has been called, then it is a lie, and no lie is of God.

For a more thorough refutation of the liberal view of Daniel see *Commentary on the Old Testament by Merrill Unger, A Survey of the Old Testament Introduction* by Gleason Archer, and *An Introduction to the Old Testament* by Edward Young.

God's Greatness

God's greatness is the major theme of Daniel. God is revealed as the One who is in control of history. His infinite characteristics are on display: His omniscience, His omnipotence, His foreknowledge, His determinative will.

1. The testimony of Daniel to God's greatness (Da. 2:20-23)

a. God is eternal (Da. 2:20).

b. God is the possessor of wisdom (Da. 2:20-22).

(1) He owns wisdom. All wisdom comes from Him.

(2) He is omniscient. He knows the deep and secret things.

(3) He is the source of all wisdom (Da. 2:21). Man must seek wisdom from God because man is entirely dependent on God. Compare Ex. 31:3; 1 Ki. 4:29; Pr. 2:6-7; Lu. 21:15; Jam. 1:5.

c. God is the possessor of might (Da. 2:20). He is the source of all power. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. His creatures can only partake of the wisdom and power that comes from God. They do not possess these things of themselves. Compare Job 12:16-20; Psa. 62:11; 75:5-7; Pr. 8:15-16; Jer. 27:5; Da. 4:32; Mt. 6:13; Jn. 19:11; Ro. 13:1.

d. God is in control of human history (Da. 2:20-21). Compare Psa. 75:6-7; Isa. 40:21-25.

(1) God is not an impersonal pantheism or "force." He is not an absentee God who has set up "natural laws" and let them run their course as in Deism. He is not the God that Albert Einstein believed in, "a God who reveals himself in the harmony of all being, not a God who concerns himself with the fate and actions of men" ("Einstein Once Kept Kosher," *Times of Israel*, Nov. 25, 2005).

(2) God has an eternal plan that He is working out in human history. He has given angels and men a free will, and they make choices; but God is

above all. He works all things together toward His ultimate purposes (Ro. 8:28).

(3) God is in control of “natural history” (Psa. 145:15-16; 147:9). Even the birds are known of Him (Psa. 50:11; Lu. 12:6, 24).

2. The testimony of Nebuchadnezzar to God’s greatness (Da. 4:34-37)

a. God is eternal (Da. 4:34).

b. God’s dominion is everlasting (Da. 4:34).

c. God’s will is done in heaven and on earth and cannot be thwarted (Da. 4:5).

d. God’s works are truth (Da. 4:37).

(1) There is no darkness or error or lies with God. Everything is truth. His word is utterly dependable. He is the God of truth (Isa. 65:16).

(2) Truth characterizes God’s kingdom, as Zechariah exhorted Israel after the return from Babylon (Zec. 8:16). His people are to walk according to truth and speak the truth. See Eph. 4:15; Col. 3:9.

e. God’s ways are judgment (Da. 4:37).

(1) He is a holy judge and will judge all sin, either in the sinner or in Christ. He will humble the proud.

(2) He judges righteously and equitably.

(3) He is the Author of justice and honesty (Pr. 16:11).

3. The testimony of Darius to God’s greatness (Da. 6:25-27)

a. The true God is the God of Daniel, meaning that He is the Jehovah God of the Jewish covenants and Scriptures.

b. He is the living God, in contrast with dead gods.

c. He is steadfast forever, meaning He is eternal and unchanging. God is always the same, always “on the job,” always dependable, always available to His people. His plans cannot be changed.

d. He has an eternal kingdom that cannot be destroyed. The God of Daniel is man’s true ruler, King of kings and Lord of lords. Nothing can destroy His kingdom; nothing can stop His plans. Satan only has whatever limited and temporary power God has allowed him.

e. God delivers His people. He is compassionate and caring.

f. God intervenes in human affairs with signs and wonders. He is almighty and is above natural laws. He has performed enough signs and wonders to satisfy those who are not intractable (John 20:30-31). Faith doesn't come through signs themselves, but through signs as recorded in God's Word. Compare Romans 10:17. Nebuchadnezzar saw one of the greatest miracles in history, which is the preservation of the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, but he didn't believe then. It was through Daniel's testimony and the Word of God Daniel preached that Nebuchadnezzar and Darius believed.

4. The testimony of the angel to God's greatness (Da. 11-12)

Nine times the angel says that the events recorded in Scripture are determined and appointed (Da. 8:19; 10:1; 9:24, 26, 27; 11:27, 29, 35, 36). The elect angels understand God's sovereign power, and they submit to it.

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Daniel's Life

1. Daniel's situation

- a. He was far from home and on his own, with no parents or teachers to help him.
- b. Daniel was honored by the king of Babylon (Da. 1:4). He had a chance to live the life of a prince in the most glorious and wealthy kingdom of his day.

2. Daniel's friends (Da. 1:6)

- a. He chose spiritual friends, though he could have chosen any others.
- b. This is one of the most important decisions in a young person's life (Pr. 13:20; 2 Ti. 2:22).

3. Daniel's temptation (Da. 1:5)

- a. God's Word forbid him to eat certain things like pork (Lev. 11:45-47).
- b. The Babylonians ate everything; also they dedicated their food to their idols (De. 32:37-38; Psa. 106:28).

4. Daniel's choice (Da. 1:8)

- a. It was a choice made from the heart; this is the innermost part of the person; the choice was made from a deep conviction; it was not a shallow thing.
- b. It was a choice made by faith (Heb. 11:32). This is the only way to make a difficult decision that looks like a loss from the human perspective. Daniel was possibly choosing between a comfortable life in the Babylon court or a life as a slave. Examples today are choosing church over job or school, choosing Bible college over secular college; and choosing to wait on the right mate in God's will instead of making a hasty decision.
- c. It was a lonely choice. Most Jewish young men who were selected with Daniel did not follow his example. Most of the Jews settled into a comfortable life in Babylon and did not return to Israel even when they had the opportunity under the Persian king Darius.
- d. It was a choice about "non-essentials." Many would say the Old Testament dietary law was a small matter and not very important. Examples today are

dress, music, television, movies, video games, modes of baptism, and church discipline. But Daniel cared about *all* of the Word of God. Compare Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 20:27; 1 Co. 11:1-2; 1 Ti. 6:13-14. When Bible commentator John Phillips was inducted into the army, he decided to kneel every night beside his bed and pray. He knew that other soldiers would mock him but he wanted to do this “small thing” as a witness for His Lord.

5. Daniel’s wisdom (Da. 1:8-14)

- a. He didn’t demand; he asked in an honorable and polite way.
- b. He didn’t want to put the eunuch in danger (Da. 1:10). He had compassion on others.
- c. He used wisdom, proposing a test (Da. 1:12-13).

6. Daniel’s blessing from God (Da. 1:17-19)

- a. God blessed Daniel by causing Nebuchadnezzar to choose him. It appears that only Daniel and his friends were selected while those who compromised and did not obey God’s Word were not selected.
- b. God blessed Daniel with high positions in two great kingdoms.
- c. God blessed him with many revelations.
- d. God blessed him with commendation (Da. 9:23; 10:11, 19). Compare Mt. 25:21-23 -- “well done, thou good and faithful servant.”
- e. God blessed him with greatness in the kingdom of God forever.

7. Daniel’s life of faith

- a. The life of a believer is a life “from faith unto faith” (Ro. 1:17).
- b. Daniel learned to obey God and to live by faith when he was young. He took a great step of faith in the matter of the king’s food. This is the path of spiritual growth and victory.
- c. Many more tests came, but Daniel had victory each step of the way and his faith grew.
- d. His greatest test of faith came at the end of his life (Da. 6).

8. Daniel’s honesty and humility (Daniel 2:26-30)

a. Daniel had the opportunity of a lifetime to glorify himself before the world's greatest king, but he did not. He humbled himself and glorified God.

b. This is in direct contradiction to Arioch (Da. 2:24-25). He did what unsaved and carnal men do, which is to try to turn every situation into an opportunity to glorify and enrich himself. He told Nebuchadnezzar that he had found a man to give the interpretation, when he had done no such thing. Arioch had zero part in the matter, but he tried to make himself a hero before the king.

9. Daniel's boldness

Daniel used every occasion to glorify God and to reprove sin and idolatry and call men to repentance. He did this before Nebuchadnezzar (Da. 4:27). He did this before Belshazzar (Da. 5:17-28).

REVIEW QUESTIONS - INTRODUCTION AND DANIEL'S LIFE

1. What is the meaning of the name "Daniel"?
2. He was carried away captive from Israel to what city?
3. This occurred during the reign of what Jewish king?
4. Daniel held high office in what two pagan kingdoms?
5. What are two other Jewish prophets who lived in Daniel's day?
6. In what book and chapter is "the times of the Gentiles" mentioned?
7. Why is this called "the times of the Gentiles"?
8. When did the times of the Gentiles begin?
9. When will the times of the Gentiles end?
10. According to the liberal theologians, when was Daniel written?
11. Why do they make this claim?
12. What God did Albert Einstein believe in?
13. How do we know that miracles do not result in faith?
14. Why did Daniel refuse to eat the Babylonian food?
15. How did Daniel act with wisdom in the matter of the food?

SAMPLE

Daniel 2:31-45

1. Introductory lessons

This prophecy is an overview of the times of the Gentiles, from Babylon to the Antichrist. It describes four great kingdoms that are associated with Israel.

This is one of the most important and amazing prophecies in Scripture. It is impossible to understand human history properly apart from this prophecy.

2. Five world kingdoms (Da. 2:31-45)

The prophecy describes five world kingdoms.

a. **The head of gold signifies Babylon** of Daniel's day (Da. 2:37-38).

Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, signifying that the Babylonian Empire was at its greatest and most glorious in his day. It weakened quickly under Nebuchadnezzar's successors. "His son Evil-Merodach reigned two years only. Neriglissar reigned four years (560-556) and Labashi-Marduk only one (556). Nabonidus engineered a coup d'état in 555 and ruled till Babylon fell to the Persians in 539" (*Expositors Bible Commentary*).

b. **The breast and arms of silver signify the Medo-Persian Empire** (Da. 2:39).

It conquered Babylon (Da. 5:28). The arms probably signify the two groups of people who originally formed the empire, the Medes and the Persians.

c. **The belly and thighs of brass signify the Greek Empire** (Da. 2:32).

This is made clear in the prophecy of Daniel 8, where the Medo-Persian Empire is depicted by a ram that is destroyed by a goat, depicting Greece (Da. 8:20-22).

d. **The legs of iron and feet part of iron and part of clay signify the Roman Empire** (Da. 2:33, 40-43).

It is Rome that conquered the Greek Empire. "Macedon was annexed by Rome in 168; Greece was permanently subdued in 146; the Seleucid domains west of the Tigris were annexed by Pompey the Great in 63 BC; and Egypt was reduced to a Roman province after the Battle of Actium in 31 BC" (*Expositors Bible Commentary*).

e. **The stone cut out without hands is Christ's kingdom** (Da. 2:44).

3. General observations

a. The image represents the Gentile empires from man's viewpoint.

(1) It was impressive. The 90-foot-high image of Daniel 3:1 was probably patterned after the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. "The huge image would have stood like a dazzling colossus before the king" (*Zondervan King James Version Commentary*).

(2) It was glorious ("brightness was excellent" 2:31).

(3) It was awe inspiring ("form thereof was terrible" 2:31).

(4) It was valuable from a worldly perspective (gold, silver, brass).

In contrast, the beasts of Daniel 7 represent the Gentile empires from God's viewpoint: cruel, destructive.

b. The image is one, signifying that all of the pagan kingdoms have the same character. Each has its own specific traits, but the overall character is the same. All are idolatrous, covetous, cruel, etc. This has been true throughout man's history.

c. The image represents a gradual deterioration through human history. This is the opposite of the teaching of evolution. Though civilization is increasing in technological prowess, it is decreasing in morality and true wisdom. And politically, democracy is weaker than a kingdom.

d. The empires decrease in quality, but increase in power.

This is represented by the transition from gold to iron. Gold is more valuable than iron, but iron is stronger.

The Babylonian Empire of Nebuchadnezzar's day was superior to the others in that it enjoyed a centralized authority (Da. 5:19). Nebuchadnezzar exercised complete dominion, whereas the subsequent kingdoms had decentralized governments.

On the other hand, the Roman kingdom was stronger militarily than the Babylonian kingdom and exercised authority over much more territory.

e. The image appears to be glorious and powerful, but it is actually weak and pathetic because its feet are not solid. Its foundation is built on sand. Fallen man

cannot build anything that is solid and true and lasting. Everything he builds is built on the sand of sin, unbelief, rebellion, and false human principles.

f. The dream is certain and sure (Da. 2:45). Bible prophecy is absolutely dependable because it is the word of the Almighty God of truth who knows the end from the beginning. The interpretation of prophecy is found in Scripture itself, either in the immediate context or elsewhere.

4. Characteristics of the fourth empire

This kingdom receives the greatest attention by Daniel (Da. 2:40-43).

a. It begins as the strongest kingdom but gradually weakens in power (from iron to iron mixed with clay). This is exactly what happened in the Roman Empire.

Between 58-58 BC, Julius Caesar expanded Rome's territory by conquering Germany, France, and Spain, and by beginning the subjugation of Britannia.

In 45 BC, Julius Caesar became Rome's first dictator.

Between 27 BC to AD 19, Augustus Caesar created an empire called *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace) that lasted 200 years. He extended and secured the empire's borders and posted legions to maintain peace. He pushed the border north to the Rhine and Danube rivers. He pushed east to Syria and Egypt. He initiated vast building projects. He expanded the highway system across the empire. He built magnificent cities with theaters, race courses, libraries, public buildings and temples.

In AD 284, the empire reached its zenith with the reign of Emperor Diocletian. It was at the height of its territorial extent, wealth, and political power.

From 376-382, Rome fought a series of battles against invading Goths from the north, and the empire steadily became weaker. Its armies could no longer protect the borders. Its economy was in shambles.

In 395, Theodosius permanently divided the empire into east and west before his death. His son Arcadius was emperor in the east, and his son Honorius was emperor in the west.

Between 410 and 476 the western empire was conquered by the Goths. The Goths were tribes to the northeast of Italy that had previously been kept at bay by the Roman legions.

In 476, the last emperor of the Western Empire, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed by a Hun or a Goth named Odoacer (433-493). Romulus was sent into exile and disappeared from history.

b. Its existence continues until Christ's return (Da. 2:43-44).

(1) The vision describes only four world empires represented by the image. See Daniel 2:40. Therefore, the legs of iron and feet of iron mixed with clay signify the same kingdom. In God's eyes, the Roman Empire continues to exist through the church age until the time of the Antichrist. The church age is invisible to the Old Testament prophets, as it was a mystery not yet revealed (Col. 1:25-27).

- The Roman Empire continued in the west until AD 476.

- It then existed as the kingdom of the Franks and the Holy Roman Empire, which continued until 1806, when it was dismantled by Napoleon. (For this history see *The Hand of God in World History* course, scheduled for publication in 2018 by Way of Life Literature.)

- The Roman Empire existed in the east as the Byzantine Empire headquartered in Constantinople, which continued until the city was conquered by the Muslims in 1453.

- It continues to exist in the unified European nations. In 1957, six nations signed the Treaty of Rome, pledging unity (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands). In 1958, the European Economic Community was born, often called the Common Market. In 1979, an election was held for the first European Parliament. In 1993, the European Union was formed. It encompasses 500 million people and in 2014 owned about 24% of the world's gross domestic product. In 2002, the Euro was adopted as a common currency. One of the symbols of the European Union is the ancient Tower of Babel. The Tower was featured on a European Union poster in 1992, and the Union's headquarters in Strasbourg, France, is shaped like an unfinished tower. Another symbol of the Union is the ancient goddess Europa riding a bull, which is a woman riding a beast! See Revelation 17:3. Europa is on the Euro coin, and a statue