

TIME OF DANIEL IN REDEMPTIVE HISTORY

ADAM --- SETH --- NOAH --- SHEM --- ABRAHAM – ISAAC ---JACOB --- NATION OF ISRAEL (MOSES) --- KING DAVID --- FALL OF ISRAEL --- FALL OF JUDAH --- DANIEL IN BABYLON -- JESUS THE MESSIAH

THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament, the TANAK in Hebrew consists of three sections:

- TORAH (Law) - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- NEBIIM (Prophets) - Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, minor prophets
- KETHUBHIM (Writings) - Psalms, Job, Proverbs, (Books of Truth) Ruth, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther (Scrolls), Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles. (The Rest)

INTRODUCTION

Daniel wrote this book during a difficult time in Israel's history. God severely punished Israel for breaking her covenant with her Lord. She was in captivity by the hand of God. When God brought the children of Israel out of the Egyptian bondage into the Promised Land, he made a covenant with the people in the form of a suzerainty treaty used in Moses' time. Both parties, God and Israel had obligations in the treaty (ref: book of Deuteronomy). God promised blessings if they remained faithful to their obligations to him (Deuteronomy 28:1-14). God warned them of the curses that would befall them if they disobeyed Him (Deuteronomy 28:15-68).

Time and again the Israelites failed to keep God's covenant and this was documented in the book of Judges, Kings, Samuel and the Prophets. Time and again, their enemies gained the upper hand over them. By the grace of God, David brought temporary victory because of his faithfulness and leadership. Solomon was unfaithful due to his many foreign wives who led him into idolatry. The kingdom became divided into the Northern Israel and Judah during the reign of King Rehoboam, Solomon's son.

God sent prophets among his people in Israel and Judah. God's prophets were His spokesmen, his lawyers coming to his people with God's lawsuit against them for breaking

the covenant they had made with him. The prophets spoke strongly against sin and warned of punishment and captivity into a foreign land. The people did not heed the prophets, and as a result, the Assyrians captured Samaria in 722 BC (2 Kings. 17:4-23).¹ Just over a century later, the Babylonians captured Judah, the southern division of Israel in 586 BC. Jerusalem was destroyed and the country became a province of Babylonia (2 Kings. 25:1-21). Daniel and his 3 friends, among others were imported into Babylon in 605 BC.

AUTHORSHIP

Christian and Jewish tradition

Modern critical scholarship Internal evidence of the Bible

1. Jesus quoted from Daniel (Matthew 24:15--cf. Daniel 9:27 and 12:11).
2. Book claimed to have been written by Daniel. Daniel spoke in the first person and claimed to have received divine revelations (7:2, 4, 6ff., 28; 8:1ff., 15ff.; 9:2ff; 10:2ff; 12:5-8). In 12:4, he was commanded to preserve the book which contained the words.
3. Regarding the unity of the book (i.e. one author)

DATE OF THE BOOK

Jewish and Christian tradition 6th century BC

The Liberal View is that the final form was written in Palestine in the 2nd century BC.

PURPOSE OF THE BOOK:

As revealed by the nature of its contents.

1. Illustrates in testimony style true dedication to God and God's working through and for those who were committed to him.
2. God's love for his chosen people, even when they were being punished for sin. Historical events were described and prophecy given in which the interest of the Israelites were greatly considered.
3. The book is solid basis for comfort for the Jews in captivity in a foreign land. It assured them that God has not forgotten them, and even has brighter future days

¹ Leon Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973)

- ahead planned for them, especially in the coming of their deliverer, the Messiah.
4. The book is quite parallel with the book of Revelation, relating information concerning the last days. Eschatology is richly portrayed in Daniel.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

There are 12 chapters in Daniel. The 7th chapter interlocks Chapters 1 - 6, 8-12.

Criteria for analysis of the Book

I. Chronological arrangement of all the narratives:

Chapter 1 - 4	Babylonian period - scenes and visions in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.
Chapter 5	Babylonian period - Belshazzar, 2nd in command to Nebuchadnezzar.
Chapter 6	Persian Period - Darius the Mede aka Cyrus the Persian.
Chapter 7	Babylonian - Days of Belshazzar
Chapter 8	Babylonian - Days of Belshazzar
Chapter 9	Persian Period - Darius

2. Literary Form.

Chapter 1- 6 Narratives - whole series of ordeals arranged in a pattern while Daniel is the statesman in the court of the King (like Joseph in Pharaoh's court)

Daniel & Friends

(Chapter 1)	A1	Wisdom Contest - related to eating of king's food
(Chapter 2)	A2	Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream
(Chapter 3)	A3	Ordeal by Fire (Furnace)

Daniel

(Chapter 4)	A4	Wisdom Contest - Nebuchadnezzar's dream of lunacy
(Chapter 5)	A5	Belshazzar - Handwriting on the wall

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BOOK OF DANIEL - INTRODUCTION

(Chapter 6) A6 Daniel in the lion's den (King Darius)

A7 - 12 Daniel's visions - Daniel here is more like John the Seer in the book of Revelation. (Chapter 7 - Chapter 12)

3. Languages

A. Hebrew - 1:1 - 2:3

B. Aramaic - 2:4 - 7

C. Hebrew - 8:1 -12

This ABA pattern is also in the Code of Hammurabi:

Prologue - Hymnic Babylonian dialect

Laws - Standard legal style

Epilogue - Hymnic Babylonia dialect.

Hebrew was the language of God's people. God was speaking to his people more specifically and directly in Chapters 1:1 - 2:3 & 8 - 12 - where the emphasis is on the theme of God's own people, their sin, breaking of the covenant, so they are in exile.

Aramaic is the lingua franca, international language, the language of the nations in Daniel's time. God speaks to the nations about judgement on the nations of the world. Chapter 2:4 - 7 's theme is the judgement of the world.

Chapter 7 starts link to the rest of the book. Also ends link to 1 - 6

7 Son of Man figure.....Final Judgment

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9 Focus on OT AgeChrist's New Covenant 70th week (9:27)

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10-11

12 Anti Christ motif.....Final Judgment

THE BOOK OF DANIEL - THE TEXT

Chapter 1- 6 Narratives - whole series of ordeals arranged in a chiasitic pattern while Daniel is the statesmen in the court of the King (like Joseph in Pharaoh's court)

Daniel & Friends	A1	Wisdom Contest - related to eating of king's food
	A2	Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream
	A3	Ordeal by Fire (Furnace)
Daniel	A4	Wisdom Contest - Nebuchadnezzar's dream of lunacy
	A5	Belshazzar - Handwriting on the wall
	A6	Daniel's ordeal in the lion's den (King Darius)

PURPOSE OF THE NARRATIVES - THE 2 TRIADS

1. God's people were in exile, a low point in their experience and to the world. It seemed to the nations that God could not protect his people from their enemies, and the Babylonian gods were more powerful.
2. God intervened through Daniel for the cause of His good name. He revealed how He would triumph in spite of the present appearance. He will ultimately triumph in eschatological judgment over the world.
3. This was not just some future victory, but heaven intruded into the lives of the captives, demonstrating God's almighty power right in the midst of his people's exile in the first 6 chapters.
4. Here in Daniel chapters 1-6 is a historical account of the heavenly intrusion on behalf of His people.
5. The wisdom of God and his power was present in his people by his helping them (Daniel and his friends) and was demonstrated in a series of episodes. The wisdom and power of God was pitted against the supposed wisdom and power of the Chaldeans and

their wise men in Babylonian courts.

6. So, we have 2 sets of ordeals, tests, duels of champions here. God revealed that what seemed to be His weakness and lack of wisdom turned out to be more powerful than the power of the world and wiser than the wisdom of the world. We have here a pair of wisdom contests followed by an ordeal. 2 wisdom contests, then a physical ordeal. Literature of the 6th century BC were found with motifs of wisdom contests in Aramaic texts.

The First Triad (Chapter 1-3) Daniel and His Friends:

Chapter 1

A combination of both wisdom and physical ordeal—Daniel and his friends found themselves in the Babylonian court. They refused the fine foods of the king that had been offered to idols and chose to eat vegetables instead. After 10 days, they turned out to be healthier and 10 times more knowledgeable than the wise men of the court.

Chapter 2

This was a wisdom contest. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. None of his wise men could reveal the dream to him. Daniel was able to recount as well as interpret the dream.

Chapter 3

An image was set up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. People were commanded to worship the image or be thrown into the fiery furnace. Daniel's three friends were thrown into the furnace but were not hurt by the fire. Those who threw them in were slain by the intensity of the furnace instead.

The Second Triad (Chapter 4 - 6) Dealt with Daniel Alone

Chapter 4

Another wisdom contest - A vision of Nebuchadnezzar's 7-year period of insanity. This event likely came 30 years after the first, during his 43rd year reign. This is quite like the curable disease of boanthropy, when one thinks of oneself as an ox. Daniel was able to interpret the dream and explained to him what was to befall him.

Chapter 5

Wisdom contest in the last days of Belshazzar and the Babylonian Empire. The handwriting on the wall was enigmatic. No one could decipher it. Daniel alone interpreted it.

Chapter 6

The physical ordeal was the demand that everyone prayed only to the king. Daniel continued to pray to the Lord. The narrative is communicating more than "dare to be a Daniel". it is about the Lord who seemed defeated because of the fate of His people in exile.

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BOOK OF DANIEL - INTRODUCTION

The Lord was demonstrating his might. He is the Lord of the nations, King of kings and Lord of lords, Lord of creation and above all, the alleged gods of Babylon.

Theodicy - Defense of the name and glory of God. Daniel and his friends were the instruments in this demonstration of Divine power.

God was demonstrating the eschatological judgment which will surely come with His power and control over all things - that is the word of prophecy coming true in demonstration of what will also come true in the future.

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BOOK OF DANIEL - INTRODUCTION

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