

*Confirmation of Daniel: 3 passages in Ezekiel* 14:14, 20; 28:3 – written after Daniel served in the king’s court. Ezekiel knew Daniel and his writing; they were captives together in Babylon. Christ’s Olivet Discourse (Matt.24:15, Mark 13:14)

- Whoever denies the authenticity of Daniel impeaches the character of Christ.
- God does not want us to be confused or afraid of Daniel’s prophecy.
- The signs given in Daniel illuminate the path to Christ’s Return. Psalm 119:105
- Why should it matter to us today if a proud, evil king had a dream 2600 years ago?
  - Peter, James, John & Andrew asked Jesus for signs of the end of the age. Mark 13:3-4
  - Jesus knew He would be dead on the cross within days.
  - At this important time, Jesus told His key leaders to pay attention to Daniel.

God in Ezekiel 28:3 When God spoke to the prince of Tyre, He said “Are you wiser than Daniel?” God referred to Daniel, not Solomon (usually considered the wisest man).

### *Purpose and Characteristics of the book of Daniel*

Daniel teaches us how to face trials today, and how to face the future with confidence.

Daniel came to Babylon as a teenager and lived in that pagan culture past age 80.

During this captivity, he was a leading government official in 3 kingdoms. Daniel served Nebuchadnezzar & Belshazzar in Babylon, then Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian.

Daniel stood like an iron post in a hurricane because he yielded to God’s will for his life.

He is one of 3 (with Joseph, Jonathan) in the Old Testament with no mention of wrongdoing.

Daniel’s enemies tried hard to find a weakness or corruption to expose but could not. Dan.6:4

In the great “Faith Chapter” Hebrews 11, he is listed as the one who stopped lions. Heb.11:33

Daniel’s middle section 2:4-7:28 was written in Aramaic (also called Syriac or Chaldee).

Aramaic was the language of ancient Syria, virtually the same as Babylonian language.

At that time, Aramaic was widely spoken, and this section concerned the Gentile world.

Daniel is not in chronological order (events of Chapters 5 & 6 came after Chapters 7 & 8).

The book of Daniel was written last, out of all the major Hebrew prophets.

Daniel and Revelation fit together – one book cannot be understood without the other.

Amazing fact: 2 books written 600 years apart by different authors *agree completely*.

Daniel was “greatly beloved” Dan.9:23, 10:11, 10:19; Apostle John was the “beloved disciple”.

Daniel is also the key to understanding the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25).

Daniel wrote about the 4 great Gentile world empires, beginning with Babylon.

Chapter 8 gives detailed prophecy about the Medo-Persian and Grecian empires.

Most if not all of chapter 8 was fulfilled in history during the 500 years after Daniel died.

The prophecy in Dan.11:36-12:13 refers to the end times, immediately before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

The prophecy of Dan.9:24-26 has been fulfilled for Israel; 9:27 remains in the future.

### **Chapter 1 - Daniel’s Early Years in Babylon**

As the book opens, Judah is about to reap what they had sown by years of disobedience. Gal.6:7

Daniel (about age 15) and several of his friends were taken captive to a foreign land.

Chapter 1 explains how God called, prepared, matured and blessed Daniel.

Daniel was probably the most educated man in the Old Testament (even Moses and Solomon).

Events in Daniel chapter 1 fulfilled a prophecy written 100 years earlier.

Isaiah told his king that offspring of Judah's royal family would be captive in Babylon. They would have offices in the palace. Isaiah wrote long before Babylon rose to power.

Isaiah 39:5-7 Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house... shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the Lord. And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

### 1:1-2 – The Captivity of Judah

**Dan.1:1-2** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god.

God's patience for Israel's Northern Kingdom ended in 722 BC; Assyrians took Samaria. Babylon rebelled against the Assyrian Empire in 626 BC and overthrew Nineveh in 612 BC. Babylon became master of the Middle East in 605 BC by defeating the armies of Egypt. The book of Daniel begins with the first capture of Jerusalem in 605 BC.

Shinar is Babylonia, the location of the Tower of Babel. Gen.10:10, 11:1-4 Near Baghdad, Iraq

This was the 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 deportations of the Jews from Jerusalem (605, 597 & 586 BC).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> siege of 597 BC took over 10,000 captives including Ezekiel. 2 Kings 24:8-16

The 3<sup>rd</sup> siege of 586 BC destroyed the Temple and city; the Jewish nation ceased to exist.

70 years: the Desolations. 2 Kings 24:17-20; 25:1-21; Jer.25:11-12; 2 Chron.36:21; Dan.9:2

The Jews returned home to Judah in 3 phases (536, 458, 445 BC) to rebuild the temple.

70 years: 1<sup>st</sup> captivity to temple foundation (605-536); destruction to rededication (586-515).

Daniel was captured in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the reign of wicked king Jehoiakim, son of Josiah.

Jehoiakim was also captive, waiting to go to Babylon as a prisoner. 2 Chron.36:1-8

But just after conquering Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar received word of his father's death.

He had to return to Babylon, so *Nebuchadnezzar left the ungodly Jehoiakim in charge.*

To assure Judah's loyalty, Nebuchadnezzar took hostages, 70 of the best and brightest.

He took holy vessels from the temple - they were desecrated the night Babylon fell. Dan.5:1-2

Jehoiakim decided to form an alliance with Egypt, and to seek revenge against Babylon.

The prophet Jeremiah advised Jehoiakim, "Don't do it! You are under God's judgment."

The angry king put Jeremiah in prison; Jeremiah called Baruch to his cell.

Baruch took dictation of Jeremiah's prophecy; the scroll was read to the people at the temple.

The king cut this scroll to shreds and threw it in the fire. God responded. Jeremiah 36

God judged Jehoiakim for his rebellion 2 Kings 24:1-16; he died in disgrace. Jer.22:17-19

His son Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) was evil king of Judah, taken captive to Babylon in 597 BC.

He was an ancestor of Joseph. Matt.1:11-12; 1Chr.3:15-17, Jer.22:24-30, 2 Sam.7:12-16

God is clear that *no* descendant of Jeconiah, including Joseph & his biological sons, would *ever* sit on the throne of David. But *Jesus* will. Luke 1:32-33 Joseph *can't* be the birth father of Jesus.

God uses even sin for His glory: Jeconiah *proves* the virgin birth; Nebuchadnezzar wrote Dan.4.