

Who's Who in Daniel

Daniel. Daniel was an exile from Judah at the court of Babylon. He was taken there as a boy when Nebuchadnezzar deported the nobility of Judah in 605 B.C. Daniel belonged to a noble (possibly royal) family and was exceptionally able and intelligent. Along with other young men of Judah (see next) he was trained in the Babylonian schools to become a civil servant in the Babylonian government. His ability to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream (ch. 2) was the reason for his advancement at court. For a period of about seventy years Daniel was "God's man" in the courts of Gentile empires. Right at the beginning of Israel's history God had His man—Joseph—at the Egyptian court. Now again, at this great crisis-point, God placed Daniel in a position of influence at the political center of the Babylonian Empire, for the whole period of the exile. As you read his story, take note of the role of *prayer* in his life—a great example for



us! Daniel faced severe tests of his faith (chapters 1 and 6).

Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah. Better known as *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*. Captives in Babylon with Daniel. Their faith in God is tested in chapters 1 and 3.

Nebuchadnezzar (c. 2–4) and **Belshazzar** (c. 5) and **Darius** (c. 6) are Gentile kings who learn the God of Israel is the only True and Living God. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius profit from their experiences and give glory to God. Belshazzar does not learn from his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar's experience, and is destroyed (5:18-23).

Daniel Who's in Charge?

The book of Daniel appears with the Major Prophets in modern Bibles. In the Hebrew arrangement, Daniel is included in the “Writings,” which follow the “Torah” (Law) and “Prophets.” The Writings (Hebrew, *Kethuvim*) include Psalms, Proverbs, Job and several other books. Daniel is placed after Esther and before Ezra.

The first six chapters relate a series of stories revolving around seven main characters (see back). The main point of these stories is that God rewards faithfulness and He is able to humble the arrogant persecutors of His people. God is in charge, not man! (cf. 4:37)

The last six chapters contain a series of visions given to Daniel to reveal God's faithfulness to His people and their future troubles and triumphs. The ultimate triumph is the exaltation of “the son of man” to God's right hand and the establishment by God of an everlasting kingdom that would never be eclipsed or lost to others. These six chapters expand on Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter two.

Reading Schedule

Thematic arrangement

Monday: Daniel 1, 3, 6

Stories of faithfulness to God

Tuesday: Daniel 2, 7

Dreams of Nebuchadnezzar & Daniel (first vision)

Wednesday: Daniel 4, 5

God humbles arrogant rulers—He is in charge!

Thursday: Daniel 8, 9

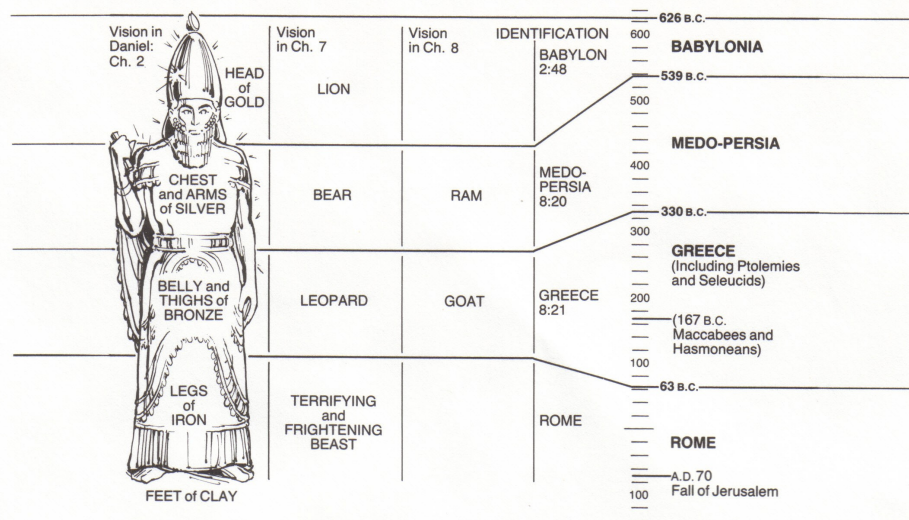
Daniel's second vision and prayer

Friday: Daniel 10-12

Daniel's third vision

Identification of the Four Kingdoms

Chronology of Major Empires in Daniel



Did You Know?

Daniel is mentioned three times in Ezekiel—a fellow prophet of the Captivity who lived out in the countryside from Babylon on a farm labor camp. Daniel is mentioned along with Noah and Job as an example of righteousness (Ezek. 14:14, 20). Another passage remarks on Daniel's reputation for wisdom (Ezek. 28:3).

Daniel 2:4–7:28 is written in Aramaic, not Hebrew! Aramaic was the international language of that day, like Greek in the New Testament era, and like English today. God wanted the Gentiles to be able to read this important part of His Word about His government of the world so they would know who was truly in charge!

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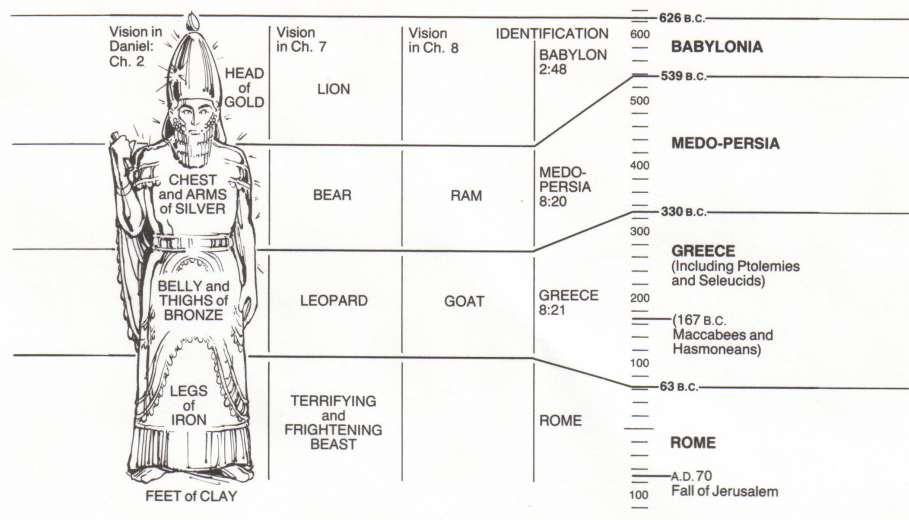
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