

25. Jesus in Daniel

November 9, 2016

Who wrote the Book of Daniel? Daniel. He mostly speaks in the third person except for chapter 8:1, 9:2, 9:20, and 10:2, where he speaks in the “I, Daniel” form. It was customary for ancient writers to speak in the third person even when writing about themselves. Another good example is the Book of Exodus that was written by Moses.

However, some liberal theologians couldn’t settle with what the Bible says about the authorship in this Book. So, they came up with their own false conclusions that it was written by someone else. But according to Jesus in Matthew 24:15, He declares that Daniel wrote this Book. I’d rather believe what Jesus says over anyone else.

Matthew 24:15 “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand)

Even though the Book of Daniel was written around 536 B.C., the dating of the Book of Daniel also has been challenged by many liberal Bible critics. They doubted its date because the Book contains many detailed prophecies that they couldn’t believe could have possibly been written that long ago, hundreds of years before some of its most precise prophecies.

They have suggested that it was written at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, a Hellenistic Greek king, around 170 B.C. The problem with that idea is that the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament, was written around 300 B.C. – before the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and it contains the Book of Daniel in Greek. Bummer for them!

A. JESUS WHO WILL DESTROY THE HUMAN KINGDOMS

Daniel 2:44-45 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. 45 Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

Just like a little smooth stone that was powered by the Holy Spirit left the sling of David and killed Goliath, a stone was cut out without men’s hands destroyed the whole statue. It just didn’t take the statue down, it completely demolished it and left nothing. On top of it, it became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.

I am sure that by now king Nebuchadnezzar cannot even breathe, because he is reliving the dream through the interpretation by Daniel.

Thanks to our Lord, God didn’t leave the interpretation of the dreams to anyone to manipulate. God Himself clearly explained it through the mouth of Daniel.

Each metal represented a different kingdom:

1) Babylon was the head of gold.

2) It would be followed by the Medo-Persian kingdom in 538 B.C., the chest and arms of silver.

Overnight, the great Babylon was conquered by the Medo-Persian empire. King Darius of the Medes required the conquered nations to pay tribute in silver, which, interestingly, corresponds to the silver chest and arms.

3) The third section is Greece in 330 B.C., the belly and thigh of bronze.

Alexander the Great had extended his rule as far as India and destroying the Persian empire. The Greek soldiers used shields made of bronze, hence the bronze image.

4) Rome would follow as the two legs of iron in 146 B.C.

Roman military with their iron weapons conquered Europe and the surrounding nations. The Romans perfected the use of iron. Later the Roman Empire did divide into Eastern and Western parts as the two legs show.

5) The feet of iron and clay represented the kingdoms at the end times.

A continuation of the Roman Empire divided into ten kingdoms that being signified by the ten toes. Of course, the final "human kingdom" on earth will be that of the antichrist during the last part of the Tribulation.

How will it all end? Christ, the Stone will suddenly appear and destroy the nations of the world, setting up His own worldwide kingdom of power and glory. This image, then, is a picture of world history. You can see that the materials in it decrease in their values – from gold to clay – so that the statue is top-heavy and easily pushed over.

The Roman Empire outwardly would disappear, but its laws, philosophies, and institutions would continue until this very day, taking us down to the "feet of clay." The only hope for this world is the return of Christ. When He comes to the earth, it will be to conquer the nations and to establish His own glorious kingdom.

B. JESUS IN THE FURNACE

Daniel 3:19-27 Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. 20 And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. 21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 22 Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. 23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." 25 "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." 26 Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire. 27 And the satraps, adminis-

trators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

I don't think that Nebuchadnezzar liked to be told, "No." Nebuchadnezzar had an uncontrollable temper. In an extreme outrage of emotionalism, Nebuchadnezzar vented his anger against these men whom he had previously favored.

Please note that there are four places mentioning these Jewish men's physical condition: they were BOUND. Now note what they had before they were thrown into the furnace and guess what was missing after they were told to come out of it. The only thing missing is the rope that bound them. The fire didn't burn these people, as a matter of fact, it freed them. The fire from God always takes away the things that are holding us back from following Him.

The fourth Man whom Nebuchadnezzar described as being in the form "like the Son of God," in KJV and NKJV. It actually should be translated "like a son of gods," since Nebuchadnezzar had many gods to refer to. This pagan king had no knowledge of the living and true God at this time, although Daniel had spoken of Him. Having no spiritual perception, Nebuchadnezzar could only testify of His unusual appearance – He looked like one of the sons of the gods. However, I do believe that the fourth Man was the Son of God, the preincarnated Christ.

C. JESUS IN THE VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS

Daniel 7:11-14 "I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. 13 "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

Chapters 2 and 7 seem to follow the same general pattern – Babylon, Medio-Persia, Greece, and an empire beginning with Rome, but extending to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

This portion of Scripture contains the transition from human kingdoms and nations to divine kingdom as the Son of Man takes over the dominion from the fourth beast. The pompous words of the little horn, the antichrist will not last very long. The Son of Man, the Messiah comes and vanquishes the antichrist to the Lake of Fire forever.

I believe that I've told you several times that you cannot study the Book of Revelation without studying the Books of Ezekiel and Daniel. These two Books are "Musts" for Revelation, because they are completely connected. It is simply amazing that the Lord could make the same predictions through the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the Hebrew prophet Daniel's interpretation, and more than six hundred years later through the NT apostle John's dream. How? Because our God is not limited by time like we are.

D. JESUS IN THE BACKBONE OF THE PROPHECY

In my opinion, the biggest difficulty of understanding the biblical prophecies is comprehending what all the symbols and numbers mean. I taught you guys many times before regarding how to interpret the Bible. The best way to interpret the Bible is using BIBLE. Cross references and staying in context will give us enough lead ways to the proper understanding of the Word of God.

Here is the portion of the Scripture that is undoubtedly THE backbone of prophecy concerning Israel, Christ, and the antichrist. However, it is that fewer predictions in Scripture have been interpreted in as many ways as have "the seventy weeks of Daniel." Given this fact, we will make every attempt to allow the Bible to speak for itself as we apply to this portion the rules of literary interpretation.

Daniel 9:24 "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, (1) To finish the transgression, (2) To make an end of sins, (3) To make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) To bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) To seal up vision and prophecy, And (6) to anoint the Most Holy.

Understanding the word "week" is very important here. The Hebrew word for 'week' is 'shabua', meaning "a unit of measure." It would be comparable to our word "dozen." When somebody says, "I have a dozen of that," we all know he has twelve of whatever he has. When the Jewish people say, "week," they all know it means 'seven'. So 'seventy weeks' means seventy of sevens.

Not only can we tell by the Jewish custom, but also in the context of this verse, it is plain that Daniel has been reading the Book of Jeremiah about years, seventy years. Jeremiah had been preaching and writing that the captivity would be for seventy years. The seventy years of captivity were the specific penalty for violating seventy sabbatical years. That would be seventy sevens, a total of 490 years. So they would go into captivity for seventy years, according to 2 Chronicles 36:21.

During this 490 year time span, six goals are to be achieved. The first three have to do with sin, and the last three are concerned with the Millennial Kingdom.

D. THE THREE DIVISIONS

Daniel 9:25-26 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.

Angel Gabriel is telling Daniel that there would be three divisions of the prophecy: Seven weeks, sixty two weeks, and one week

1) Seven Weeks = 49 Years

The decree of king Artaxerxes in the 20th year of his reign, the commandment to rebuild the city of Jerusalem was issued in the month of Nisan which is April, 445 B.C. Then, the 49 years would take us to 397 B.C. and to Malachi and the end of the Old Testament. These were "troubulous times," as witnessed to by both Nehemiah and Malachi.

2) Sixty Two Weeks = 434 Years

434 years would take us from the end of the Old Testament to the day of Messiah's Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem, April 6th, 32, A.D.

How do we know? A simple math will do the job.

$483 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days} = 173,880 \text{ days}$

Why 360 days instead of 365 days? Because the ancient Jewish people used a lunar calendar that has 360 days, not 365.

We add 173,380 days to the date when Artaxerxes made a decree, we come to the exact date, when Jesus entered Jerusalem through the Palm Sunday road from the Mount Olive and was welcomed by the people of Jerusalem.

After the 69 weeks, or 483 years, there is an indeterminate length of time break.

Between the 69th and 70th Week, two utmostly important events took place:

- **Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself**

This was the crucifixion of Christ. He didn't die for Himself, but for us, for our sins as the Atoning Sacrifice. The Israel nation "cut off" Jesus Christ, so God cut them off from being a nation. Until May 14, 1948, Israel was not a nation.

- **The people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary**

This part of the prophecy was literally fulfilled in A.D. 70, when a Roman general named Titus forced his way into Jerusalem like a flood. On August 6 of that year, his troops burned the temple and leveled it. They also destroyed the city and its fortifications, just as both Daniel and Christ had predicted. These people of the prince were the foreshadow of the antichrist to come.

Then, the prophecy jumps many years – possibly a couple of thousand years.

3) One Week = 7 Years

Daniel 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

The antichrist will come into the picture right after the rapture of the church. He will promise peace on earth. This prince will make an agreement with the Jews to protect them from the other nations, and this agreement will be set for seven years.

This final 7 years is the completion of Daniel's 490-year period. Between the death of Christ and the signing of this covenant, you have the entire Age of the Church in God's program.

After three and a half years of the covenant with the Jews, the antichrist will invade Israel, break his covenant and set up his status as an idol in the temple of Jerusalem as God. He will stop all worship at the Jewish temple and force the world to worship him and his image. This is the "abomination of desolation." How will this period end? As we all know, Jesus Christ will return to earth which is the "Second Coming of Christ", meet the rebel armies at Armageddon, and defeat them.