

Lesson 39 Daniel

Read the Book of Daniel (The RSV Oxford has Susanna, The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, Bel and the Dragon at the back.)

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. *What setting does the Book of Daniel claim? If, as scholars believe, this book was not written until the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, what would be its purpose in claiming to be a long lost sealed document recently found? What is its overall message to the Jews?*
2. *What nations of O.T. history are referred to in the great image of chapter 2? The supernaturally quarried stone is an image for what or whom?*
3. *In these chapters we have more imagery that is part of apocalyptic eschatology. Do you recognize any of the allusions from earlier scripture? Watch your footnotes for cross references to the New Testament.*
4. *Jesus quoted from Daniel and identified Himself with "the son of man" of 7:13. In what ways did Jesus share Daniel's world view?*

Psalm 51 and prayer. The Song of the Three Young Men found in the middle of the third chapter of Daniel is echoed in Psalm 51.

The book of Daniel opens in a deceptively simple way. It seems to be placed in the time of the Babylonian exile, and concerns a Hebrew youth named Daniel and his friends as they experience both the favors of the Babylonian court and its king, Nebuchadnezzar, and the persecution by the same court and king. The stories are those we learned as children - the handwriting on the wall and the lion's den - and are meant to inspire obedience to the commands of God regardless of the cost. However, about half way through the book the simple stories change and instead of reading about Daniel, we have Daniel's own words, "I, Daniel Then the stories are no longer simple, but full of complex imagery and difficult allusions to numbers and animal forms which are not only mysterious but seemingly non-decipherable. The book claims to have been written during the Exile, yet includes experiences which include other pagan kings, Cyrus and Darius the

Mede. The writings are then sealed up, not to be found until the second century B.C., sometime during the persecutions of Antiochus IV. This type of writing, prophecy after the events, was not uncommon two centuries before the birth of Jesus, and will appear again during the Christian persecutions. As a literary form, certainly in the case of Daniel, it is used to bring inspired revelation to God's people during a most critical time.

Something is being said in a hidden way. When the deceptively simple opening of the book becomes more and more baffling and complex, it appears we are reading a code. It is as if a thousand and more years from now, someone were to find a preserved newspaper with the words, "Twins stomp on Cardinals," and in another place, 'Pope appoints two Cardinals." The reader without knowing the context, but only the regular meaning, "a red bird", of the ancient English words, would wonder, "Who are these twins who beat up some birds that the Pope appointed?" In such a way this book is puzzling to our understanding. We need to know the code in order to understand the beasts and the numbers. And why does the writer think he must write in code?

The purpose of the book explains its peculiar format. If this book was written and circulated among the Israelites during persecutions suffered under Antiochus IV Epiphanes, we have the answer. The code will be easily deciphered by the readers, but will be gibberish to the persecutors. Many things point to a second century writer who takes up this literary form to encourage God's people; we can pinpoint the date of his writing. First, the writer is fully aware of all the details of history of that time even to the Egyptian princesses who married some of the Seleucid kings under particular circumstances. At the same time the writer is not clear nor particularly accurate concerning the events and timing of the historical era during which he supposedly wrote - the sixth century exile. He is mistaken about the Medes - they ruled a territory at the same time Babylon ruled, and did not succeed that kingdom. There was no Darius the Mede. The knowledge of the time of Nebuchadnezzar is hazy in other regards, but the time and events of Antiochus are crystal clear. The book is written in Aramaic and Hebrew, two languages extant during the sixth century, a fact that makes the

book seem authentically old, and not in Greek which was the language of the second century B.C. However, many of the concepts and words are Greek and were unknown in the earlier sixth century.

A new theology is developing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Even more importantly the theological outlook is very much the same as II Maccabees: 1) the concept of God 2) the angelic watchers 3) martyrdom in the face of persecution 4) a reward that awaits righteous suffering 5) resurrection to new life - the parallels are striking, and no time before the second century B.C. had these insights been part of Israel's consciousness. This is a time of a new revelation of God, and Daniel plays an important part in that revelation which is not truly clear unless we lay it next to II Maccabees. This is a Hasidic work, a forerunner of Phariseism, from which the Jews of the first century A.D. inherit belief in all of these unfolding doctrines passing them on to us through the confirmation of Jesus Christ. Obviously not all of the Jews of Daniel's time accepted this revelation as from God. By the first century AD. there were still Jews, especially the Sadducee party, who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead and everlasting life.

The time of the prophetic voice has ended. As I Mac 4:46 tells us, during the Greek period there were no more prophets in Israel. The time of the prophetic voice had ceased. That voice from Moses, through Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Joel, had been consistent - obey God, obey His Law, and you will be blessed. But the other side of the coin is just as true; disobey and you will meet curses and death. The covenant between God's people and Himself was based on the Law. 'Obey it and you will be my people, don't obey it and I will discipline you.' The other party to the covenant, God, however, would be faithful to them in love, no matter which course they took. The covenant had failed to make the people one with God; they had been unable to keep it. Jeremiah, knowing this, realized that in the future there would need to be a new covenant, one written on the heart, one that would change the very nature of God's people. Ezekiel foresaw it, too. With this tremendous gift from God, they would finally be able to keep His covenant.

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Daniel reinterprets the old prophecies. Ezekiel prophesied that the people would be given a new heart, one of flesh rather than stone. God's Spirit falling on all people was further promised by Joel. On such a note the era of the old prophets of the Law ceased. As we noted in a previous lesson, while the spirit of prophecy waned, the Lord through His special spokesmen began to reinterpret the prophets. The hope in political, earthly solutions, that after God punished He would restore the earthly kingdom under a son of David, faded. The new voices for God proclaimed that this kingdom was not going to be here on earth, but it would be a transcendent kingdom in a life after this life. We see in Daniel this reinterpretation of the old prophecies.

The people must be encouraged to hold on to their faith. In this puzzling apocalyptic, eschatological style, Daniel speaks of the last things. The language had to be cryptic, seemingly an old prophecy about current events, yet it had to encourage and strengthen people to hold on to their faith, to be ready for martyrdom. It also reinterpreted the old prophecies in order to explain what was happening and why. The prophets of God had spoken the truth. It was impossible that they had not; therefore, previous comprehension of their words was not enough; there must be more. They had tried to keep the Law and they had anticipated a Davidic kingdom of peace and prosperity, not more suffering like they were receiving, so they must have missed something in the previous words God had spoken to them. This forced upon Daniel the task of interpreting in a more extensive way the meaning of their suffering. Daniel assures us on a new level of revelation that God is in charge of history.

Jeremiah is the prophet of old whose prophecies most cry for interpretation. Rightly understood these will help the people of God persevere despite the agonizing persecutions of Antiochus pressing upon them. Unlike what the old prophets had led people to believe, the more faithful and law abiding God's people have become, the worse has been their suffering. Therefore, it is not always "obey and be blessed." Besides, hadn't Jeremiah himself promised that after the exile there would be a wave of blessings that would wash over the people of God - didn't he promise that at last God's kingdom would come to the people? Instead there had been a continual struggle in Judea for the past several

hundred years. Nothing really good has come. Now all that struggle was capped by . . . Antiochus! So what was it that Jeremiah really said that we misunderstood? Look at Jer. 29:10. Here the prophet says that after seventy years the people will be returned home from their exile and God will give them a future and a hope! They will pray to God and He will hear them. What has gone wrong? In the first place the exile was not seventy years, but fifty. Daniel, praying about this discrepancy, is visited by the angel Gabriel, see 9:20ff. Reinterpretation is sent by God. Instead of years, the word means clomads - weeks of years. With this small addition a whole new hope is revived. "For seventy weeks of years" means 490 years were to pass before peace and prosperity would come - a Fifth Kingdom. From the fall of the Temple in 587 to the desecration of the Temple by Antiochus in 167 is 410 years, which very happily and significantly leaves 70 years before the full persecution is over, and the Fifth Kingdom which we will refer to later, comes to pass. Daniel 9:24. These time references have been a playground for eschatological prognostications right up to this moment, but many of Daniel's actual reference points remain mysterious.

Reinterpretation begins with Jeremiah. II Maccabees is very involved with Jeremiah, see II Mac. 2 where Jeremiah takes care of the ark at the time of the destruction of the Temple. The lost ark, says the text, will be found when God "shows mercy" and gathers His people again. (Raiders of the Lost Ark is based on the fact that the ark has disappeared into history.) And in I Mac 15:12 Jeremiah is seen praying and interceding in heaven for God's people in their struggle. While the old prophetic voice has ceased, and a new voice interprets to them in a hidden language about the last things, Ezekiel is understood as a midpoint between the two kinds of spokesmen for God. Ezekiel at first was one of those who said, repent or be punished, disobey and die, but after the fall of the Temple, his message changed. He then, too, spoke in apocalyptic eschatological terms, God declaring through him that He would now vindicate His name. His Holy Name had been dishonored by His people, so no longer for their sakes would He act, but for the sake of vindication of His Holy Name. This was an immensely important revelation. God's Name is His nature, and the chronic punishment

necessarily meted out to a disobedient people was not allowing God's true nature to be revealed to the nations. So God promised a new thing. Instead of punishing disobedience until the people repented, and then granting forgiveness, God announced that for the sake of His Name, He would reverse things. He would forgive sinners before they were repentant and without punishment. Then they would see the enormity of their sin in the light of unearned forgiveness and respond by hearty repentance. This we can see only in the light of Christ Jesus on the cross. He died for me, says St. Paul, when I was yet a sinner.

We must always hold the old revelation with the new in dynamic tension. While our understanding of God is expanded as time goes by, we never throw away a revelation in the Old Testament as being superseded. It is still true that obedience to God brings blessings, and disobedience brings discipline; we see it everyday. Yet along with this truth, we must also see that on another level the obedient do suffer. How they suffer is important. Daniel says that the obedient suffer for several reasons: first, they must be refined and be made pure for the Fifth Kingdom which is coming. God loves them, but He allows them to be refined so they can hold more of His love. They also suffer because the end time is very near - the fulfillment of the reinterpreted prophecy of Jeremiah which places events now happening in the last 150 days - 8:14. But again, in tension with the new is the old. Israel still has punishment coming for its lack of faithfulness to God. 9:16, 6:19. During this punishment the saints will be proven, their heroism revealed 11:32, and many will be turned to righteousness 12:3. Eleven hundred and fifty days is three and a half years, the time that the Temple was consecrated to Zeus and pigs were sacrificed there. One half the perfect number seven, it therefore has a symbolic meaning also, half of perfection is incompleteness. When the plan is incomplete we wait anxiously, and long for the peace of its completion.

Daniel in the seventh chapter depicts four beasts. The first is a symbol of Babylon, the second, Media, the third, Persia and the fourth, Greece. On the head of the fourth beast are ten horns depicting the Seleucid kings, and among them the little horn with the big mouth - Antiochus IV Epiphanes. As this big mouth speaks high sounding things, a scene is revealed in heaven. Things on earth may go on

without any let up of persecution, but look beyond the earthly political realities and see our consolation! There in heaven wonderful things are going on, there is a preparation for a Fifth Kingdom. There has been a first kingdom, Babylon; a second, the Medes; a third, Persia; a fourth, the Greeks; but the great and glorious fifth is God's kingdom. The people must hang on for they are close to experiencing the End Time. The Ancient of Days, Yahweh, is on His throne. Even as Antiochus struts across the earthly stage, Yahweh reigns in heaven and coming to Him is the Son of Man, to whom Yahweh gives dominion, glory, and kingdom over all nations, peoples, and languages. His kingdom is true, it shall never pass away. 7:18 The saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess it forever. Rejoice, the Messianic age is about to begin!

There is a reason that the good plans of God have been delayed. Though the Archangel Michael set out to help the people, he was detained by an angelic overseer of Persia, one of the rebellious angels. Until reinforcements came he was unable to go on to help 10:1 2ff. The whole realm of angels becomes important in our knowledge of the workings of the affairs of men. We have seen angels important to the Jews since Abraham, but now we have further insight into their workings. The "watchers" are angels who watch history and pronounce sentence 4:13. Thousands of these angels minister for God 7:10. They are terrible in appearance and most serve God 10:9, but not all are obedient, 10:20. Their chiefs fight for or against God and the upper conflict determines the earthly one. We have a new idea here of how the things of earth, without our knowledge, are impinged upon by the hosts of heaven. Things that seem to have only a human dimension to us, actually occur because of "principalities and powers." We are introduced to the first two of the archangels, Michael and Gabriel, through Daniel. The names mean Who is like God? or God fights and God is Mighty. Raphael who appears in Tobit means God heals. The effect on Daniel of talking with these archangels is debilitating. He is revived by angels and strengthened by them. It is the same angelic world that has become real in II Maccabees.

Martyrdom Is preferable to apostasy. The first stories in the book of Daniel, along with Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon, are part of a cycle of stories that circulated among the Jews from earlier in their history. Along with stories about a worthy man named Daniel were stories about Noah and Job, see Ezek 14:15. These were taken by the writer of Daniel as the nucleus for his work of encouragement to those under persecution. They were polished up and slanted to reveal to the Jews their predicament with the Hellenization pogrom. Nebuchadnezzar had not been a religious persecutor. His name is just a foil for Antiochus as it was in Judith. By these stories the writer showed that the Seleucids were insignificant compared to the old rulers whose power was much greater - the head of gold compared to the feet of clay and iron. Yet even these great potentates were nothing compared to God! The people must cling to faith the way Daniel and his friends had. God would only purify them for the better kingdom to come. God would save and deliver. All men (even the old potentates) experience God and confess His glory. Even the little horn would be forced to confess, as II Mac. says he eventually did. For the saints, there would be lovingkindness, because God loves them. How many times does the angel tell Daniel that God personally loves him? Despite appearances, God never fails His own 3:28, 16:22. Just be sure your name is among those written in "the book." 12:1

The Son of Man takes HIS seat next to the Ancient of Days. The idea of the son of man is interesting in light of the New Testament. The Jews have not been able to accept Jesus as God and consider it the worst of all blasphemies to think a man, God. But in Daniel there are seeds that indicate such a truth, even as there are in Ezekiel. The Son of Man takes His seat next to the Ancient of Days and his kingdom is everlasting. We can see the important contribution of Daniel to the New Testament and its proclamation. God is indeed preparing the "fullness of time." Advent draws near. Daniel believed it was soon, even within seventy years. Add another hundred and Jesus will be born. The angelic visitor who appeared to Mary is also introduced. But we know now that the seventy was not meant to be a specific time. In Hebrew numerology it is a number that meant "sometime fairly soon," or "the perfect time." This life is but a prelude to another fuller life, and how we live here will determine what that life will be. Salvation history gains

depth of understanding as we see the writer of Daniel contributing more than he could know - a true prophetic work, even though the age of prophecy is past in Israel.

As an analogy, suppose that the U.S. was conquered by China in 2020. Christianity is bitterly persecuted with the goal of expunging it from earth. Written by a contemporary, a document to encourage Christians is circulated that contains stories about George Washington depicting his honesty, courage, and wisdom in trying times; then midway, the work declares it has been buried for 300 years, and was really written by George Washington himself! He prophesies all the wars, now in the past, and in a disguised form describes the enemies in terms of animals - Britain, a lion, Germany, a hyena, etc., including as a great beast the fierce Chinese ruler. Enmeshed with prophetic statements about events that have not yet occurred are assurances that God is in charge. What would we think of such a book and its author?

Lesson 39 Daniel

GOD REIGNS OVER THE SWEEP OF HISTORY

APOCALYPTIC ESCHATOLOGY
 Hidden things of the End Time
SEVERE PERSECUTION

How will people cope?

A type of code-writing meant to encourage images, numbers, dreams, visions

Reinterpreting the Prophets

HAGGADAH
 Cycles of stories of worthy ancients for a moral lesson.

NOAH
JOB
DANIEL
 EZ. 14:15, 28:3
 I Mac 2:59-60

Susanna
 Bel and the Dragon

In 587 B.C. Jeremiah prophesied the exile would last 70 years followed by peace but it lasted 50 years and was followed by no peace
 Jer. 25:11,12; 29:10

Therefore, Jeremiah didn't mean years, but clomads, which are weeks of years

70x7=490 years after Exile the Messianic age comes
 587B.C. - Destruction of Temple and the Exile
 587- 490 = 97 B.C. the 5th kingdom will come
 167BC the desecration of the Temple
 587BC - 167BC = 420 years are already gone by
 420 years means 70 years left - 10 clomads
 167BC-70 = 97 BC The Messianic Kingdom Begins
 Jesus is born in 4BC Joachim and Ann in 70BC
 Mary is born in 20BC their parents, 90BC

THAT EVIL MAN
ANTIOCHUS IV
EPIPHANES
 the little horn

THESE GREAT POWERS HAD TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD.
 Nebuchadnezzar
 Belshazzar
 Cyrus
 Darius the Mede
HE WILL HAVE TO, TOO

PRAY, FAST, CLING TO GOD
DON'T DISOBEY THE LAW
GOD LOVES HIS SERVANTS
PREPARE FOR MARTYRDOM
THERE IS A LIFE ETERNAL
THE ANGELS ARE THE WATCHERS

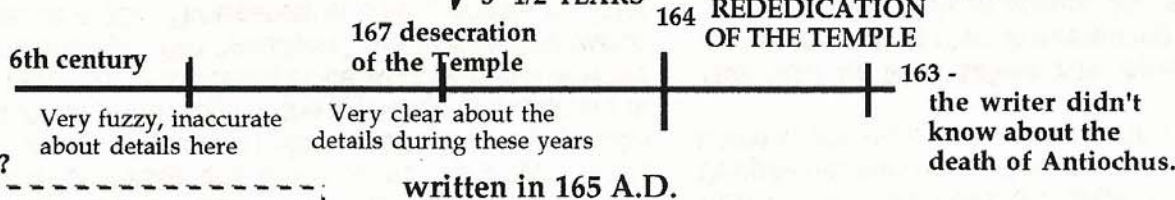
SO TAKE HEART! THE TIME IS CLOSE FOR THE COMING OF THE REIGN OF GOD.

THE KINGDOMS OVER ISRAEL

- 8th C. Assyrian
- 7th C. Medes and Babylonians
- 6th C. Babylonians
- 5-4th C. Persians
- 4th C. Alexander the Great -Greeks
- 3rd C. Ptolemy -Egypt
- 2nd C. Seleucid

THE FIVE KINGDOMS IN DANIEL

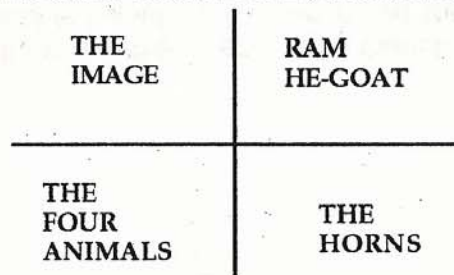
1. BABYLON
2. MEDIA (not historical)
3. PERSIA
4. GREEKS
5. THE KINGDOM OF GOD



wrote as though he lived back at the time of Babylon exile but note 9:1-2, what "scriptures"?

A style of literature common during times of persecution
 Too many discrepancies to be written during the exile.
 "Seal up the vision" 12:4,8
 Written in Aramaic and Hebrew to appear old. Yet uses later Greek words and phrases. Writing style is like II Mac.

LOOKING TOWARD THE 5TH KINGDOM



Lesson 39 Daniel Synopsis

1. the setting is Jeholakim's reign and Nebuchadnezzar's siege when Israelite youths were taken to Babylon and assigned rich food Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah each is given a Babylonian name they refused the rich food eunuchs took them to the king they were found superior in wisdom and understanding on their simple, kosher diet
2. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream he demanded his diviners to make known the dream and the interpretation he knew his diviners were corrupt angry with them, he had them slain Daniel replied with prudence to give the king the interpretation he and friends sought mercy of God mystery revealed in a night vision I will tell interpretation, says Daniel do not destroy the wise men God in heaven reveals mysteries the image is a human construction made of gold, silver, bronze, iron a supernaturally quarried stone broke it all in pieces then the stone became a mountain which filled the whole earth Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Greek/Seleucid/Ptolemais interpretation is deciphered high honors appointed the Jews over the affairs of the province
3. a golden image is set up all must fall down, worship the image Shadrach, Meshach, Abegnego will not worship the golden image the furnace is heated 7x hotter the three are thrown in the furnace the king sees four men walking in it one is like "a son of the gods" the three came out unscathed the king promoted these three to official authority in the kingdom
4. Nebuchadnezzar repeats the story his dream is a tree with top in heaven visible all over the world beasts and birds, all flesh fed from it decree of the watcher (angel) Daniel interprets: the tree is you your greatness has grown to heaven Nebuchadnezzar is driven from men mentally off, he dwells with beasts he bragged and lost his reason sane again, blesses the Most High
5. Belshazzar feasts with holy vessels from the Lord's Temple profaned as drinking cups for wine for the concubines a handwriting appears on the wall this terrifies Belshazzar whose wife calls Daniel for interpretation Nebuchadnezzar's pride punished Belshazzar has not humbled himself God will "number, weigh, and divide" Belshazzar slain, Persians rule
6. Daniel distinguished under Darius satrap gets Darius to make interdict all petitions to be to the king disobedient to be cast into lions' den Daniel found on his knees King disturbed, wants to save him but is held to his interdict
7. Daniel cast to the lions King finds Daniel unharmed accusers are thrown to the lions along with all their families Darius decrees that the God of Daniel is the living God a vision: four winds of heaven the four beasts from the sea the first a lion, Assyria with eagles wings plucked off stood like a man with a man's brain then a bear with ribs, Babylon winged leopard is Persia a beast with 10 horns, Greece terrible, dreadful, with iron teeth it devoured, had ten horns one a little horn with eyes and mouth Ancient of Days rules in heaven His judgment takes away dominion of beasts, but their lives prolonged the son of man presented to God given dominion, glory, all serve him angel reveals to Daniel the meaning vision of the ram and the he-goat understanding given to Daniel vision is the time of the end no one stands up to the goat does as he wants, overcomes ram but great horn broken into four horns out of them grows a little horn magnifies self, desolates the Temple angels say, "how long?" Gabriel spoke to me, Daniel Daniel sleeps, angel makes known the evil one who would arise seal up the vision, it is of the future Daniel sickened and appalled
8. In reign of Ahasuerus son of Darius Daniel prays, fasts and repents over 70 yrs of Jeremiah's prophecy; God is all steadfast love, yet confusion of face belongs to Israel because of sin calamity has come because of sin we have not obeyed we have become a by word the sanctuary is being desolated O Lord, incline your ear and hear delay not for the city and the people called by your name Daniel is greatly beloved he has wisdom, understanding therefore, consider the word understand the vision 70 weeks of years is the secret to the prophecies of years then comes lasting righteousness but first the desolator comes
9. Daniel mourns for three weeks standing on the banks of Tigris he sees a holy one in a great vision Daniel fell on his face in a deep sleep Gabriel comes and explains to him his prayer has been heard the delay due to angel interference talking with the angel has given pain and taken away strength Michael fights beside Gabriel now, the angel will show the truth Persian kings described and the rise of Alexander the Great his kingdom broken and divided king of the south shall be strong but one of his princes is stronger they shall make alliance daughter of the south given to north as alliance that shall not endure she, her child, attendants given up further intricate interchanges

between north and south sons
of the north shall wage war king
of south moved with anger shall
fight, downing ten thousands
king of north raises up siege
works he who comes against
him has no strength to stand all
of it shall be in his power
afterwards to the coast lands a
commander shall end his pride
he shall stumble and fall then a
contemptible person shall come
without warning
armies shall be swept away and
the prince of the covenant devising
plans against strongholds king of
the south shall not stand he shall
return to his land his heart set
against the covenant ships of
Greece come against him he shall
be afraid and turn back but his
forces will profane Temple
seduces all violating the covenant
people who know God stand firm
this evil one shall exalt himself at
the end, the king of the south shall
attack him
many countries shall follow his
train yet he shall come to his end
with none to help him
1 2. in the end Michael shall arise
in a time of trouble
but your people shall be delivered
each one whose name is in the book
those asleep shall awake
some to everlasting life
others to contempt
Daniel shut the words, seal the book
until the end of time

I Daniel looked at two other angels
how long to the end of the wonders
a time, two times, half a time
go your way now Daniel
for the words are shut up and sealed
many will purify themselves, refined
but the wicked shall not understand
from the time offering is taken away
by desolating sacrilege, 1,290 days
blessed is he who waits
you shall rest and stand
in your place at the end of days
13. Susanna is wife of rich man
living in Babylon
taught according to Law of Moses
two elders were appointed judges
they were frequently at the house
Susanna goes into the garden
the elders are lustful for her
they confess their lust to each other
and plan seduction
the elders hide and watch her bathe
accost her and trap her
she refuses them and cries out
they tell their lies
that she was with a young man
all are greatly ashamed
Susanna is to be put to death
elders repeat their lies
Susanna led away praying
Daniel is aroused to save her
"she is innocent"
Daniel examines, exposes their lies
lust has perverted their hearts
assembly blesses God
the elders are put to death
innocent blood saved that day
Daniel had a great reputation

1 4 . Bel and the Dragon

Daniel a companion of Cyrus
Bei, Babylonian idol worshipped
Daniel worshipped God
the King believes the idol eats
Daniel says it does not
he is being deceived
proof is required
priests come and go
through a hidden entrance
Daniel sifts ashes on the floor
priests and families come at night
doors sealed and unbroken
Daniel shows the king footprints
the priests and families put to death
also a great dragon revered
alive, but Daniel worships God
Daniel feeds the dragon pitch
it bursts open
Babylonians angry
conspire against the king
Daniel given over to them
thrown into the lions' den
seven lions for six days
Habakkuk brings food
lifted from Jerusalem to Babylon
Daniel arose and ate
Daniel is pulled out alive
those who'd destroy him, destroyed

Lesson 39 Daniel Outline

I The Evidence of an historical person, Daniel

- A. Josephus mentions a Daniel
- B. A late rabbinical tradition says he returned to Jerusalem with the exiles
- C. A Jewish traveler in AD12th C was shown his tomb in Susa
- D. Mentions of this tomb as early as AD 500

II. The inspired folk-tales of Daniel

- A. Stories circulated in Near East for many hundreds of years
 - 1. Susanna - Daniel's wisdom at an early age to save the innocent
 - 2. Bel and the dragon - Daniel exposes false worship; is saved from lion's den
- B. Later stories collected and edited by the author - a Hasidic Jew
 - 1. dates for stories 1- 4 edited between 246 - 240
 - 2. Daniel and his companions refuse the King's food
 - a. a courageous act of those who trust God
 - b. not depending on the king or food for their health and well being
 - 3. Daniel reveals and interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream
 - a. the Hebrews are wiser than the wisest
 - b. their trust in God makes them superior
 - 4. Daniel's companions refuse to worship idols; saved from fiery furnace
 - 5. Daniel is saved from the lion's den
 - a. nothing will keep the Hebrew from worshipping his God
 - b. God will save him from evil
- C. Now the stories are put together and used for a special purpose
 - 1. basic theme: conflict between the religion of the Jews and paganism
 - a. from God's viewpoint, pagan kingdoms are tolerated by Him
 - b. to contrast the vast superiority of Israel's wisdom
 - c. to demonstrate the truth that God of Israel is Master of all history
 - d. the conflict continues until He establishes His eternal kingdom
 - 2. meant to bolster spirits under persecution of Antiochus IV Epiphanes
 - 3. like Daniel, Israel is to prepare for martyrdom if necessary
 - 4. Daniel is mentioned in Ezekiel 14:14 and I Mac 2:59-60
 - a. with Noah and Job, he is one of the ancient heroes of the Hebrews
 - b. many stories are circulated about all three
 - 5. two different sections in the book
 - a. style of the first is simple story, chapters 1-6
 - b. the second is obscure and difficult; the apocalyptic style 1)
 - because of persecution the references are hidden in symbol

- 2) pessimism of the times forces hope of heavenly intervention
 - c. Persian words present in the first part are absent in the second
 - 1) makes it likely the first stories date from the Persian period
 - 2) the second section was written during the Greek persecution
 - d. there is no presence of Antiochus in the first section - referred to in various images in the second, compare 2:39f and 7:23f
 - e. 1:21 says Daniel "continued until the first year of Cyrus;" 6:28 says "reign of Darius and Cyrus"; 10:10 is a vision from the third year of Cyrus." Confusion in history, inconsistencies.
 - f. use of two languages - chapters 2-7 in Aramaic, the rest is Hebrew
- D. Historic background of the book claims the 6th century B.C.
- 1. Daniel seems to live during the exile, prophesying 3 centuries in future
 - a. written in old languages of Hebrew and Aramaic; the first stories may date to pre-Babylonian times
 - b. written in haggadic genre - from Hebrew word "haggadah"
 - 1) means a setting forth, a non-historic story with a moral lesson
 - 2) if elaboration on historic event, then called "haggadic midrash"
 - 2. most likely written during the height of persecution of Antiochus IV a. between 167 -164 B.C., before rededication of the Temple, and death of Antiochus. The year may be pinpointed to 165 B.C.
 - a. some musical terms are Greek, not in circulation 400 years earlier
 - b. mistakes in far past history, which is claimed as the present
 - 1) who is Astyages? Unknown historically
 - 2) Merles did not rule the world between Babylonians and Persians
 - a) Darius the Mede? didn't succeed Belshazzar
 - b) confusion about successions in Ezra and Nehemiah also
 - 3) recent discovery proves that Belshazzar had more power than was thought. Will Daniel's historicity be vindicated someday?
 - 3) Nebuchadnezzar's siege, "third year of Jehoiakim" is inaccurate
 - 4) use of "Chaldeans" is a common anachronism
 - 5) narratives of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius are not true to their historically known characters
 - c. accuracy in details of the present history, claimed to be foreseen 11
 - 1) written in the time immediately after the desecration of the Temple
 - 2) not a prophecy about these times from 6th C as it claims, but
 - a) it reflects a late stage of Jewish thought
 - b) in 9:2 refers to the authoritative scriptures already gathered as if gathered in the past
 - c) doctrine of resurrection revealed late, during time of II Mac

- d) angelology also developed more fully during the Persian era
 - e) the growing importance of the individual is a later Greek idea
 - f) the Hebrew language used is also of a late type
 - d. writing in this pseudo-prophetic pattern was common
 - 1) a hero, Daniel, was writing for the future to encourage those under persecution, as he was under persecution, to hold on to faith.
 - 2) written partly to deceive the "authorities" should it be confiscated
 - 3) a style of literature not uncommon- postdated, sealed and found at the right time. Many such did not achieve canonical status
 - 4) apocalyptic style of writing like II Mac. is full of animals, numbers
 - a) other allusions to be deciphered - dreams, visions
 - b) profoundly affecting early Christian scriptures
 - c) hope for Israel in the normal course is dim, only divine intervention can save them, signs point to its coming soon
 - e. significant for dating, position of Daniel in O.T. is with the *Hagiographa*
 - 1) these wisdom books were introduced to the Hebrew Bible *after* the collection of "Later Prophets" had been made
 - 2) among these Later Prophets was the parable of Jonah
 - 3) if Daniel had been known, the book would be with Later Prophets
 - 4) Jesus ben Sirach, 180 B.C., listed leading spirits; but not Daniel
 - 5) justifies dating after 180 the Antiochian persecution in the 160's
 - 3. a time of terrible persecution produced the work
 - a. all *the* terrors of Antiochus' Hellenizing pogrom lie behind it
 - b. it echoes II Maccabees in tone and theology
 - 1) the Hasidic resistance to Greek ways
 - 2) the "warm" presence of God-with-them
 - a. God speaks of His love of Daniel
 - b. God reigns supreme above the turmoil
 - c. He will overcome all earthly powers and rulers
 - 3) the angelic warriors and watchers are on Israel's side
 - 4) evil on earth comes of rebellious angels, principalities and powers
- III. Beginning in Chapter 7, Daniel, of the early stories speaks
- A. To rouse the flagging spirits of the people he prophesies to the times:
 - 1. Seleucids were insignificant compared to the old dominions of pagans
 - 2. Nebuchadnezzar was *the* power
 - a. he was a head of gold 2:38 and a colossal image 3:1
 - b. his prodigious assembly of officers 3:3
 - c. he eclipsed the Seleucids 3:4
 - d. his tortures were worse - fiery furnace 3:6
 - e. his arrogance was great 3:15
 - f. his successors were powerful too, Belshazzar 5:1, Darius 6:1
 - 3. these potentates are nothing compared to God (continue to praise God)
 - a. God of heaven 2:18 ; Most High 3:26
 - b. He knew all their secrets 2:28
 - c. He humbled Nebuchadnezzar 4:25
 - d. He confronted with a hand on the wall 5:5
 - e. a doom given that fulfilled itself 5:30
 - f. thru all of this, the praise of God rises 2:20ff
 - 4. faith in God is to be clung to (like Daniel did)
 - a. Daniel and his friends refused to defile themselves 1:8
 - b. they were unbending before images 3:16
 - c. they continually prayed to God
 - 5. God proved worthy of their trust (continue to trust Him despite the pain)
 - a. gave health to youths 1:15
 - b. answered their prayers 2:17
 - c. revealed meaning of dreams and visions
 - d. He sent angel (or His son?) and saved from fiery furnace 3:28
 - e. stopped mouths of lions 6:22
 - f. if He does not intervene, it is because He has a better plan
 - 6. the enemy will be brought to confess God's glory
 - a. 3x Nebuchadnezzar confessed 2:47, 3:38, 4:1
 - b. Belshazzar also 5:29 and Darius the Mede 6:25
 - c. the "little horn" will be forced to confess; his story is told in II Mac 9:12
 - 7. the Jews constantly attain success and honor because of God 2:30
 - a. youths 10x better than magi 1:20
 - b. Daniel alone is able to interpret the dream 2:28
 - c. Daniel alone interpreted the writing on the wall 5:23
 - d. Daniel alone to rule 2:48 6:3 almost receives divine honor 2:46 B. The
 - B. writer helps them understand the meaning of their troubles
 - 1. understood only in the great sweep of history
 - 2. reinterpreting the prophets
 - a. Jeremiah's prediction only seems wrong - this is what it really means
 - 1) exile would last 70 years (lasted fifty)
 - 2) reinterpreted as 70 Hebrew clomads, 70 weeks of years - 490 yrs.
 - 3) 587B.C.- destruction of the Temple, 490 years till the everlasting righteousness of fifth and final kingdom- would make it 97 B.C.
 - 4) 167 B.C. saw desecration of the Temple. 587B.C.(destruction)

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- minus 167 B.C. (desecration) = 420 yrs., which taken from 490 years leaves 10 clomads, or 70 years before the fifth kingdom, the Messianic, begins at about 97 B.C. 9:24
- 5) "going forth of the word to rebuild Jerusalem" - was in 538 B.C. (the year of Cyrus' edict that sent the exiles home)
 - a) 7 clomads = 49 years to the coming of a prince (anointed one - high priest?)
 - b) 62 clomads = 434 years allowed for rebuilding the city
 - (1) at the end of that time an anointed one will be cut off - Onias III, the High Priest is deposed by Antiochus.
 - (2) Then "people and prince who is to come shall destroy the city" brings the end!
 - c) Seven year trial, 3 1/2 years of which the sacrifices cut off.
 - (1) Antiochus' profanation of the Temple was 3 1/2 years.
 - (2) From 538 B.C., these clomads add up to 490 years, bringing the trial described down to 150 BC which is close to when these events happened.
 - 6) All to show the difficulties of interpreting Daniel's numbers who is reinterpreting Jeremiah's numbers
- b. Jeremiah's numbers are listed in Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10
 - c. nevertheless; Daniel believed the 5th Kingdom very close - "the end" and he wasn't too far off
 - d. The Messiah did come close to 70x7 years from the rebuilding of Jerusalem, if we add one more clomad, he had it!
 - 1) his intent here was to prophesy deliverance from Antiochus - soon
 - 2) it had not yet taken place, so this was written between 167-165
 - 3) he wrongly prophesies the future beyond the year of this writing
 - a) fall of the kingdom he relates; 40-45 is not historic
 - b) death of Antiochus as related, is not historic e,
- various dreams and images refer to four empires
- 1) Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image 2:31
 - 2) Daniel's dream of the four beasts 7:2
 - 3) ram and he-goat 8:2 3.
3. worldly dominion of these empires
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar of the Babylonians
 - 1) always idealized 2:38
 - 2) lion with eagle's wings 7:4
 - 3) stood like a man and had a man's heart
 - b. Medes (did not rule between Babylon and Persia)
 - 1) represented by the bear 2:32, 7:5
 - 2) and the shorter horn of the ram 8:3
 - 3) known for prowess 7:5
 - c. Persian 2:32
 - 1) the leopard 7:6 (Cyrus)
 - 2) agile, intelligent, cruel 8:4
 - 3) also the second and higher horn of the ram
 - d. Greeks 2:32
 - 1) refer to Alexander's successors 2:40, 7:7
 - 2) the great horn of the goat was Alexander 8:5, 8:7
 - 3) Alexander's death; the division of kingdom 2:42, 8:8
4. events are recorded vividly from Alexander to Antiochus
 - a. the divided kingdom 2:42
 - b. ten horns represent successive rulers 7:7
 - c. struggles between Ptolemies and Seleucids 11:5
 - d. a contemptible person 11:21, 7:8, 8:23, 8:25 is Antiochus
 - e. his world empire the height of effrontery, end comes soon 7:11, 11:43
 - 1) burnt offerings ended, sanctuary overthrown 8:11, 7:25
 - 2) profanations against the covenant 11:28
 - 3) changes times and Law 7:25
 - 4) makes war on the saints 7:21, 7:25
 - 5) flatters apostate Jews 11:32
 5. Why do these terrors come upon the people of God?
 - a. God is angry at Israel 9:16, 8:19 so it's time of indignation
 - 1) the promises of Jeremiah were of rest and plenty
 - 2) and the Jews have tried to be faithful to the covenant
 - 3) yet, according to the Law they must be guilty
 - b. a better explanation is presented in a new theology
 - 1) it is a time to prove the saints and reveal their heroism 11:35
 - 2) it will turn many to righteousness, refining, purifying the people
 - c. another reason - the End Time is near
 - 1) the Ancient of Days takes His fiery seat 7:9-11
 - 2) we are in the last 1150 days foretold to Daniel 8:14, 3 1/2 yrs 12:7
 - 3) close to destruction of the little horn 7:11
 - 4) a stone cut without hands 2:34 will destroy these kingdoms
 - d. we are entering the time of the Fifth and Final Kingdom of God
 - 1) kingdom of the saints of the Most High 7:27
 - 2) the Son of Man 7:13 comes
 - a) now a human replaces beasts of the other kingdoms

- b) his coming precipitates these agonies
- 3) don't fear, names of the faithful are in the book 12:1-4
- 4) avenging angel is delayed by principalities and powers
- 5) this same philosophy influenced the Maccabean point of view

IV. The further revelation of God in Daniel

A. Greatness of God magnified and the littleness of mankind

B. Titles of God

- 1. God of heaven 2:18
- 2. Most High God 4:2
- 3. Living God 6:20
- 4. God of gods, Lord of kings 2:47
 - a. no sin more deadly than pride against Him
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar made a beast before Him 4:32
 - c. Antiochus' insolence 7:8 will be brought low

C. Visions of God

- 1. the Ancient of Days
 - a. fiery stream from the throne 7:9
 - doxologies extol Him 2:20
- 2. Prince of the heavenly host 8:11
 - a. 1000's minister to Him 7:10
 - b. angels, terrible in appearance 10:9, serve Him
 - 1) God so great, there are intermediaries to men
 - 2) angels are the watchers of history
 - 3) they pronounce sentence 4:13
 - 4) they help and teach the saints
 - 5) their chiefs fight for God
 - a) not all superhumans are obedient
 - b) upper conflict determines earthly one
 - c. God is in control
 - 1) His doom falls on Nebuchadnezzar 4:31
 - 2) on Belshazzar 5:26
 - 3) He breaks kingdoms in pieces 2:44

D. To the Saints, God -

- 1. keeps covenant
- 2. shows loving-kindness (hesed) 9:4
- 3. is God of their fathers 2:23
- 4. is distant? not really 2:18, 9:21
- 5. reveals Himself personally 2:19

- 6. never gives up His people even though they sin
 - 7. intercession moves Him 9:3
 - 8. He loves Daniel 9:23, 10:11 - personally loves people
- E. He never fails His own 3:28, 16:22

- 1. reassures the terrified 9:21, 10:10, 12:5
- 2. loving care of those who love Him
- 3. there is a greater glory to come
 - a. an everlasting dominion 7:14,27
 - b. those who die will have everlasting life 12:2
 - c. if they uphold others - pre-eminent honor 12:3
 - d. then they will befriend non Jews who befriend them

V. Daniel's contribution to religion

A. Son of Man (also in Ezekiel) designation is used by Jesus

- 1. identified with the heavenly Man whom God has chosen to rule forever 7:13
- 2. this is a key to the mystery of His person
- 3. He blended words of Daniel with His own Mk 14:32
- 4. new meaning to abomination of desolation Mk 13:14
 - a. nameless horror Dan 9:27,11:31, 12:11
 - b. tribulation still coming Dan 11:21,12:1
- 5. Jesus also interpreted history as Daniel did
 - a. final breakup of the world and the apocalyptic eternal kingdom of God
 - b. resurrection of the faithful

B. For today

- 1. great nations still posture, time goes on, but God is in control
- 2. the Son of Man has his seat by the Ancient of Days
- 3. "So be it Lord; thy throne shall never,
like earth's proved empires, pass away;
Thy kingdom stands and grows forever
Till all thy creatures own thy sway."