

# Eschatology ABF Series

## Daniel's Visions

### September 15<sup>th</sup>

#### Introduction

Overview of next 600 years of history and beyond.

Original vision in Chapter 2, then details added about kingdoms in other chapters.

Chapter 2	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 9	Chapter 10	Chapter 11	Chapter 12
Babylon	Babylon		70 Weeks	Angel		
Medo-Persian	Medo-Persian					
Greece	Greece	Greece			Greece	
Rome	Rome				Rome	Rome
Kingdom of God	Kingdom of God					Kingdom of God

#### Overview of Chapters

**Chapter 1** – Danial & his three friends were taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar – they proved themselves faithful and God blessed them.

#### Chapter 2

Nebuchadnezzar has a dream – he demands that his “wise” men tell him the dream, so he can trust their interpretation – they balk at this – Daniel interprets the dream.

The original dream described future kingdoms: Babylon, Medo-Persian, Greek, Roman, kingdom of God. These were represented by the image of a statue.

**Chapter 3** – Nebuchadnezzar sets up the Golden statue – fiery furnace incident because the three friends would not bow.

**Chapter 4** – Nebuchadnezzar has another dream which Daniel interprets to mean that the king will be humiliated for a time, and then he will be restored, which happens at the end of the chapter.

**Chapter 5** – King Belshazzar holds a blasphemous party and sees the handwriting on the wall about his destruction – Daniel interprets the handwriting.

**Chapter 6** – King Darius signs a decree that if anyone prays to a god besides the king, he will be cast into the lion’s den and eaten by lions – Daniel still prays and survives the lion’s den.

**Chapter 7** – Daniel has a vision of four beasts and then a coming kingdom

Lion – Babylon

Bear – Medo-Persian

Leopard – Greece

Terrible Beast – Rome

The Lord and saints – Kingdom of God

### **Chapter 8** – Daniel’s vision about the ram & the goat

More information concerning the second and third kingdoms, especially their struggle for power. The Medo-Persian Empire represented as a two-horned ram and the Greek shown as a swift he-goat with one great horn. Daniel describes the victory by the he-goat and his subsequent demise and replacements.

### **Chapter 9**

In this chapter Daniel recognizes that the captivity of the Jews predicted to be for 70 years is now over and he prays and urges their return based on Jeremiah’s prophecy. He also makes a prophecy about the future duration of the Jewish nation in terms of 70 weeks. We will examine this next week.

### **Chapter 10**

An angel appears to Daniel and prepares him for more visions to come. He also provides a certain insight into the struggle taking place and the spiritual discussion between God’s angels and Satan’s demons.

### **Chapter 11**

This chapter predicts events that will take place between the rise and fall of the Greek and Roman Empires. We’ll come back to this.

### **Chapter 12**

The final chapter summarizes the conflict between the last great world power and the kingdom of God. Daniel correctly sees the victory of God’s people after much persecution by the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom.

Our problem with these chapters is determining the exact time that Daniel is referring to. Some visions of prophecy can be taken literally or symbolically, they fit either way. Some prophecies have primary, secondary and even final fulfillments.

For example:

Primary fulfillment in Daniel’s day (King’s madness)

Secondary fulfillment in history (Greek, Rome, etc.)

Final fulfillment at the end of time (Second coming)

The visions and symbols can be flexible as to when they find their final interpretation.

For example, do they just point to the destruction of Rome and the beginning of the church? Do they refer to the destruction of Satan’s forces and the Antichrist and the second coming of Jesus?

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### **Chapter 7** – Continuation of the vision & prophesy of chapter 2, statue is replaced with imagery of 4 beasts

1 – the first year of Belshazzar – implies Daniel was writing about something in the past, around 555 BC.

## Four Kingdoms

Not much given about the first three, but Daniel tells us what the kingdoms are.

1<sup>st</sup> Kingdom – Babylon – Nebuchadnezzar's palace was adorned with lions with wings.



The plucking of the wings could refer to the madness, and loss of rulership, when he was cast out.

The giving of a human heart to an animal could be when he was restored when he repented.

This kingdom lasted from 612–539 BC, when, in 539 BC the empire fell to the Persians under Cyrus the Great at the Battle of Opis.

2<sup>nd</sup> – Medo-Persia – bear favoring one side – one side of the dual kingdom was stronger than the other – Persia eventually overtook the Medes – the Medo-Persians were much more aggressive than the Babylonians and conquered much more territory – the voice saying to conquer.

This kingdom lasted from 539–331 BC when Alexander beats Darius in three battles with the final one in 331 BC. Darius is murdered in 330 B.C.

3<sup>rd</sup> – Greece – both are explained in Chapter 8

Swift & powerful - in just 12 years, Alexander the Great conquered the known world – the four heads are the four generals who took over and divided Alexander's empire after his death – dominion means that Alexander had complete control

This kingdom's great power lasted until the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC. – after that it was divided among four generals who gradually lost power over the next 100 years or so. Then there was a semi-gradual rise in power of Rome until Roman victory over the Corinthians at the Battle of Corinth in 146 BC.

Chapter 8 – The Medo-Persian Empire: chest of silver with two arms in Nebuchadnezzar's dream; bear with ribs in his mouth in first vision; ram with two horns in second vision. Greece: belly and hips of brass in Nebuchadnezzar's dream; leopard with wings in first vision and a he-goat with horn in the second vision.

4<sup>th</sup> – Rome – the last great empire (God's kingdom begins during the reign of the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom) – it was the vicious – be conquered or be destroyed –

Before Christ – Rome was ruled as a Republic – After Julius Caesar, Rome was ruled by single emperors, beginning with Augustus through Domitian (who was the 11<sup>th</sup> ruler – the little horn) – the three horns that were displaced could refer to the "house emperors", who were three co-conspirators with Domitian, who were later killed – eyes & voice of little horn suggests that the empire was embodied in the

emperor – speaking blasphemies = Domitian actually forced his people to refer to him as “Lord” & “God” while he was alive.

10 horns are ten kings –

Kingdom of God – throne destroys the terrible beast – time/times/half-a-time –  
3½ years – Terrible beast – Daniel & John – Rome will be destroyed by  
Christ.

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## **END OF WHERE WE GOT AFTER WEEK 2**

### **Chapter 8**

The eighth chapter describes in more detail the struggle for power between the second and third kingdoms, Medo-Persia and Greece. These are presented as a two horned ram for the Medo-Persian Empire with the two horns representing its nature, and a very swift he-goat with one horn representing Alexander’s speedy victories.

The he-goat charges and destroys the ram which describes Greece’s victory over the Medes some two hundred years before either nation confronted each other.

This passage prophesizes what happened after Alexander’s death as his four generals divided and took control of his kingdom.

Verses 9 through 27 describe the rise of a smaller horn which would attack God’s people and blaspheme God. I explained earlier that prophecies can have primary, secondary and final fulfillment. (Primary: in Daniel’s lifetime; secondary: in the future sometime; final: specifically at the end of time). This prophecy can have secondary and final fulfillment.

The fulfillment of the “little horn” prophecy can have:

1. Secondary fulfillment (future sometime) - a reference to the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes (400 years after the prophecy) who attacked the Jews (170 BC.), desecrated the temple, blasphemed God and led to the Maccabean uprising. Daniel will give more details about this person and time in chapter 11 as he describes the “regional” wars between the Syrians in the north and Alexander’s general who controlled Egypt with Palestine as a pawn between the two.
2. Final fulfillment (end time) - this reference can also point to the end of time when a person in the “likeness” of Antiochus will come to blaspheme God and turn people away from Him. This would be the antichrist described by Paul in II Thessalonians. Side-Note: This is another reason why there are several systems or approaches to Bible prophecy. Is there a final fulfillment, or does the prophecy end with Antiochus Epiphanes? I believe Paul is referring to a final fulfillment, but we’ll hold that for another discussion.

All this background was needed to set up what the book of the Revelation is going to say about the revived Roman Empire and the ultimate victory of God’s kingdom.