



These are murals from the actual ancient walls of Babylon, now on display in the Istanbul, Turkey, archeological museum.

The Prophecies Of **D A N I E L**

Daniel lived 2400 years ago. In his long lifetime, he served as a chief counselor to nine different monarchs in two dynasties, both Babylonian and Persian. God gave him some of the most startling and vivid prophecies of “things to come” ever presented to mankind. Many, if not most, of those prophecies have already come to pass with startling accuracy. Reading his book in the Old Testament is like reading the morning newspaper (*with no fake news*).

We will take a number of Wednesday nights to fill our hearts and minds with those things God said would take place. In so doing, we will be obeying Christ’s command, *Let not your heart be troubled.* (John 14:1)

SESSION ONE - THE INTRODUCTION
January 3, 2018

1 THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL, STATESMAN FOR THE AGES

2 Session One / The Introduction

3 Wednesday, January 3, 2018

4
5 This is the remarkable, true story of a man named Daniel. As a young Jewish boy, he
6 was captured by Babylonians (along with thousands of others) in 605 B.C. and taken from
7 Jerusalem, Judah, to Babylon (current-day Iraq). Rather than caving in to what must
8 have been initial pressure to ingratiate himself to his captors, he and some of his Jewish
9 buddies (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) stood staunchly for their God and their most
10 fervent faith.

11
12 Amazingly, they arose to the highest pinnacles of power in the Babylonian Empire and,
13 following the collapse of that regime, of the Medo-Persian Empire that followed it.

14
15 Today church children sometimes sing *This Little Light Of Mine, I'm Gonna Let It Shine*.
16 That is precisely what these men did, not hiding their fervent belief in Jehovah God in the
17 shadows, but frankly putting their lives on the line again and again. They could have
18 perished - Daniel to a den of hungry lions and the other three (with their Babylonian
19 names, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) to a furnace belching fire. But as an old
20 spiritual declares, *They would not bend; they would not bow!*

21
22 During Daniel's lengthy lifetime, God spoke to him and through him again and again,
23 revealing to the Jewish prophet many things that would come to pass. Those prophecies
24 that did actually happen make it very clear that the Bible is not some casual old book that
25 one can take or leave. The realities of those prophecies show clearly that Scripture is
26 truly inspired of God. We will study those prophecies already fulfilled and, even more
27 stunning, those remaining to happen.

28
29 THE HISTORICAL SETTING FOR THE BOOK OF DANIEL

30
31 Something over 600 years B.C., the Empire of Babylon was just coming into its own. Its
32 capital city (also known as Babylon) sat astride the Euphrates River, some 900 miles east
33 of Jerusalem. Its kings were bright, cruel, ferocious and voracious consumers of other
34 people's properties.

35
36 I will list just a few of those leaders, those who are involved in the Daniel story.

37 625-604 B.C. Nabopolassar

38 604 - 568 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar II

39 555 - 539 B.C. Nabonidus

40 539 B.C. Belshazzar (who ruled Babylon's last days)



This hand-colored engraving, probably made in the 19th century after the first excavations, depicts the fabled Hanging Gardens, with the Tower of Babel in the background.

There were quite a few others but the members of this evil quartet were all involved with Daniel.

The city of ancient Babylon was huge, for that day and time. It dwarfed Jerusalem. A hundred years before Nebuchadnezzar, the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib had destroyed Babylon, but it was rebuilt, largely by Nebuchadnezzar. The Greek historian Herodotus said the city surpassed in beauty any city in the world at that time, even containing one of the seven ancient wonders of the world, the famed Hanging Gardens.

The walls of the city were massive and considered impregnable (more about that later). They were 80 feet thick, 320 feet high and 56 miles long. They were not ugly walls either, with gates bedecked with brilliant ceramic tiles of deep blue and adorned with pictures of white and yellow lions, dragons and bulls.

Two things must simultaneously have struck Daniel and his friends about Babylon. The first was the sheer elegance of the architecture and the advanced state to which learning had been brought; the second was the fact that idolatry permeated the whole society to an

1 *almost unbelievable degree. There were gods all over the place; the main gates were*
2 *named after them and there were temple galore - over a thousand at that time.*

3 AGAINST THE FLOW / JOHN C LENNOX / Monarch Books / pages 31-32

4
5 While Babylon was increasing in power, the little state of Judah was growing more and
6 more wicked in God's eyes and would be a choice land morsel for Babylon to swallow.
7 The culprit was idolatry! The people of Judah should have known better. They knew
8 the law of Moses; they had known it for centuries. How did it begin? Oh yes

9
10 **Exodus 20:3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.**

11
12 The people in Jerusalem had been warned again and again. Jeremiah 22:3-9

13 **Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the**
14 **spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the**
15 **stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. [4]**
16 **For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house**
17 **kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his**
18 **servants, and his people. [5] But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself,**
19 **saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation. [6] For thus saith the Lord**
20 **unto the king's house of Judah; Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon:**
21 **yet surely I will make thee a wilderness, and cities which are not inhabited. [7] And I**
22 **will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut**
23 **down thy choice cedars, and cast them into the fire. [8] And many nations shall pass**
24 **by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, Wherefore hath the Lord**
25 **done thus unto this great city? [9] Then they shall answer, Because they have**
26 **forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God, and worshipped other gods, and served**
27 **them.**

28
29 For his warning from God to the people, Jeremiah was imprisoned and suffered greatly.
30 Judah did not heed his words. Since the people rejected God, God rejected them and
31 turned away when the massive attacks came, not once, not twice but three times between
32 605 and 586 B.C. Babylon swooped down upon the once-blessed nation. And there
33 was no divine intervention.

34
35 Judah should have known better. You will remember that when King Solomon died,
36 Israel was one great nation. Shortly after his death, the king was split in two over the
37 issue of taxation. Israel, with ten tribes, split off to the north with Samaria (present-day
38 Sebaste) as its capital, and Judah was left with a mere two tribes, yet its capital remained
39 Jerusalem. Israel fell first - to the Assyrians in 721 B.C. Same basic issue: idolatry.

1 Did the people of Judah learn anything from their fallen neighbors? No. 130 years
2 later Jerusalem and all Judah suffered the same fate. Even though Judah had been at that
3 time divinely delivered from the Assyrians, the people did not appreciate their
4 deliverance. No sooner had good King Hezekiah passed away than his no-good son
5 Manasseh began his administration marked by witchcraft, wizardry, and even child
6 sacrifice in the Valley of Hinnom just below the holy city of Jerusalem.
7

8 In the meantime, the relatively “new kid on the throne” in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar,
9 began flexing his muscles. The Babylonian Empire would be forged by this cruel leader.
10 He began by moving to the west and south, ending Assyrian power in the historic Battle
11 of Carchemesh in 605 B.C. The Egyptian army of Pharaoh Necho II was delayed at
12 Megiddo (Armageddon) by the forces of King Josiah (who had no business intervening
13 and it cost him his life). His death came in 609 B.C. The remainder of the
14 Egyptian/Assyrian coalition met their doom at Carchemesh. This was a war between the
15 allied armies of Egypt and Assyria against the armies of Babylon, allied with the Medes,
16 Persians and Scythians (at that time basically Greeks).
17

18 With the Assyrians conquered, Nebuchadnezzar continued his string of conquests through
19 Syria and what we know today as Lebanon. Now he fixed his eyes on Judah.
20

21 In that small country, Jeremiah and others did everything they could to get the people to
22 repent of their wickedness, seek God’s forgiveness, and somehow hold off the humanly-
23 unstoppable Babylonians. Jeremiah became the most unpopular man in Jerusalem.
24 Even the priests mocked him. Mobs reviled him. He was publicly struck by a temple
25 priest and placed in the stocks to be ridiculed and taunted by the passing crowds. When
26 the King Jehoiachin could not coerce Jeremiah to stop his warnings, he became livid and
27 had Jeremiah arrested. But a friend delivered the prophet. When he was released he
28 wrote the divine warnings on parchment and had them delivered to the king, who
29 promptly tore them up. In the meantime, the Babylonians were encroaching on the
30 morally bankrupt city of Jerusalem.
31

32 The Babylonians rather easily got Jerusalem to surrender the city and Nebuchadnezzar
33 now arrested the King, the queen mother, the soldiers and some ten thousand leading men
34 with their wives and children. Among those arrested were Daniel and his three pals.
35 Jehoiachin spent the last 37 years of his life in a Babylonian prison.
36

37 Jerusalem was not destroyed but remained a vassal state to Babylon and one of their own,
38 Zedekiah, was made king (subject to Babylonian approval.) In the meantime, Jeremiah
39 warned the people that the worst was yet to come and walked through Jerusalem with a
40 yoke on his shoulders to illustrate what was yet to come in Judah.

1 In 597 B.C. the Babylonians again attacked Jerusalem, carting off masses of treasure and
2 multitudes of Judah's finest citizens. Jerusalem was left in the hands of Zedekiah.
3 Patriots in the city, who had forgotten that God was their defense, persuaded Zedekiah
4 that they could throw off Babylonian control. Fatal mistake.

5
6 Infuriated by the chutzpah of the King and his followers, Nebuchadnezzar led his army
7 around the fertile crescent, and by 586 B.C., to the very gates of Jerusalem. He laid
8 siege to the city and starved it into surrender. The people perished so rapidly that it was
9 impossible for the survivors to bury the dead. Corpses decayed in the streets of
10 Jerusalem. And in cellars and basements pestilence engendered by the poison stench of
11 the city added further horrors to the siege.

12
13 Near the end of the nightmare, one night King Zedekiah and his chief men fled but were
14 overcome in the plains of Jericho some sixteen miles to the east. Nebuchadnezzar gave
15 his verdict and the sons of Zedekiah were put to death in front of the captured Jewish
16 king. Then Zedekiah's eyes were put out and, in chains, he was taken to Babylon.

17
18 Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took possession of the gold, silver and brass
19 vessels of the great Temple, built by Solomon almost four centuries earlier, burned the
20 Temple and all the main structures in Jerusalem. The Kidron Valley, just east of
21 Jerusalem, is quite deep; but at the time of Jerusalem's destruction, debris from the city
22 was rolled into the valley. Thus now it is not nearly as deep as it once was.

23
24 Jeremiah was not killed, but upon returning to his grotto cave on Jerusalem's northside,
25 he wrote the book of Lamentations which opens:

26
27 Lament. 1:1-8

28 **How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people how is she become as a**
29 **widow she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how**
30 **is she become tributary [2] She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her**
31 **cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt**
32 **treacherously with her, they are become her enemies. [3] Judah is gone into captivity**
33 **because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the**
34 **heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits. [4]**
35 **The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates**
36 **are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness. [5]**
37 **Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the Lord hath afflicted her**
38 **for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before**
39 **the enemy. [6] And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes**
40 **are become like harts that find no pasture, and they are gone without strength**

1 before the pursuer. [7] Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of
2 her miseries all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people
3 fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, and
4 did mock at her sabbaths. [8] Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is
5 removed: all that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness:
6 yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

7
8 Now we pick up the story of young Daniel, one of the first Jews exiled from Jerusalem
9 and taken prisoner to Babylon. There he found his fellow Jews mourning their great
10 loss:

11
12 Psalm 137:1-2

13 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered
14 Zion. [2] We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

15
16 Daniel 1:1-7

17 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar
18 king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. [2] And the Lord gave Jehoiakim
19 king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he
20 carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels
21 into the treasure house of his god.

22 [3] And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should
23 bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; [4]
24 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and
25 cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to
26 stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue
27 of the Chaldeans. [5] And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's
28 meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the
29 end thereof they might stand before the king. [6] Now among these were of the
30 children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: [7] Unto whom the
31 prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar;
32 and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of
33 Abed-nego.

34
35
The treasures stolen from Jerusalem and the Temple will play a subsequent vital role in the collapse of Babylon later. The Jewish prophet Ezra gave us a list (partial) of the stolen inventory. In his list were 5,400 treasures of gold and silver that would be in the hands of the Babylonian kings for about 50-70 years.

1 Try to imagine young Daniel having been wrenched from his beloved Jerusalem which
2 would succumb to starvation and disease now being confronted by the finest cuisine in
3 the world. Indeed, it was the food given to King Nebuchadnezzar himself. From famine
4 to feast, we might have said. Accommodations provided such as no young Hebrew had
5 ever imagined. But Daniel and his three pals, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,
6 refused these provisions.

7
8 All four of them had been given pagan names. It was the intent of their captors to turn
9 them into idolaters, virtual budding Babylonians, if you will. Daniel would not have it!
10 He refused the food, drink and surroundings:

11
12 Daniel 1:8

13 **But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion**
14 **of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the**
15 **prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.**

16
17 Daniel and his three friends dared to be different! They would not fall prey to peer
18 pressure! They would not conform to the world, but would dare to be transformed by the
19 power of God. Daniel, a brilliant scholar and leader, fully understood that there could be
20 no testimony in this strange and foreign land without the foundation of a life lived holy to
21 God!

22
23

It is important in this narrative to realize that Daniel, in his protest, was not pushy or obnoxious. He did not say to his overseer, "Hey, I am a Jew and I don't eat this stuff!" No, he REQUESTED that he might be given the normal Jewish food he would have eaten back in Jerusalem. Nor would he drink the wine! In the Assemblies of God we do not condone drinking any alcoholic beverages. It is a "testimony" concept. Booze is weakening our nation, destroying families, ruining health and reputations. We cannot think of one solitary good thing to say about drinking alcohol. And Daniel would not have it!

24
25 The test was critical! If after three years, Daniel and his pals looked weak, thin,
26 unhealthy, etc., there is little question they would have been summarily dispatched,
27 probably after vicious ridicule. On the other hand, if after three years, they were in even
28 better shape than those who consumed the king's provisions, who could venture what
29 elevation and prize could come their way? So what happened?

30
31 Daniel 1:9-17

32 **Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the**

1 eunuchs. [10] And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the
2 king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your
3 faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me
4 endanger my head to the king. [11] Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of
5 the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, [12] Prove thy
6 servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse* to eat, and water to
7 drink. [13] Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the
8 countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou
9 seest, deal with thy servants. [14] So he consented to them in this matter, and proved
10 them ten days. [15and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had
11 understanding in all visions and dreams.] And at the end of ten days their
12 countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat
13 the portion of the king's meat. [16] Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat,
14 and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. [17] As for these four
15 children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel
16 had understanding in all visions and dreams.

17
18 * Pulse: Vegetables and seeds from that area
19

20 I think it imperative here to mention that this knowledge and understanding did not just
21 “happen” to the four young men apart from their own diligent efforts. Yes, God gave
22 them good brains and blessed them, but it is reasonable to believe that during those years
23 of testing they worked and studied diligently.
24

25 In addition to the four young men having mental acumen, Daniel was given by God a
26 special interpretative ability as to visions and dreams. Daniel could not have “learned”
27 those things. The gift was completely from God. It was supernatural. The Babylonians
28 believed that by human comprehension visions and dreams could be interpreted; but, as
29 we will see in the next chapter, they struck out badly when they were pressed for results.
30 Daniel knew to reject all “human” skullduggery when he appeared before
31 Nebuchadnezzar. He made sure to give God all credit for his wondrous
32 accomplishments.
33

34 Daniel 1:18-21

35 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then
36 the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. [19] And the
37 king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel,
38 Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. [20] And in
39 all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found
40 them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his

1 **realm. [21] And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.**

2
3 Yet another blessing God conferred upon Daniel was a long life. That 21st verse is
4 amazing to any follower of history. King Cyrus was the first of the Persians to assume
5 world dominance and power, which means Daniel was still a statesman to the power
6 brokers through a succession of dynasties. Scholars believe Daniel was front and center
7 in that part of the world for at least six decades or longer.

8
9 In our next study, Daniel chapter 2, we are going to learn of perhaps the most dazzling
10 prophecy ever heard. It is truly amazing and can be explained by the supernatural! I
11 encourage you to read that chapter before you come next week. It proves beyond all
12 argument that the Bible is a supernatural Word from God.