

1. Last week I began an introduction to the book of Daniel.
2. As in several other books of prophecy like Jeremiah and Hosea, we noted the author is also the chief actor in the events recorded.
3. Our Lord's testimony about Daniel is not simply that the book was named after Daniel, but that its prophecies were written by him.
4. Evangelical scholars usually identify the author of our book with the Daniel of Eze 14:14 and 20, the Daniel of Eze 28:3 and the prophetic Daniel of Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14. All refer to the same man; the incomparable Daniel.

Eze 14:13 Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and destroy both man and beast which are in it:  
Eze 14:14 Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, reside in that land ... saith the Lord GOD.

Eze 14:19 Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, and remove from the land both man and beast:  
Eze 14:20 Though Noah, Daniel, and Job reside there, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, neither son nor daughter will be spared; only Noah, Daniel and Job will be delivered because of their righteousness.

Eze 28:3 Behold, Satan you are wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can keep from you ...

Mat 24:15 When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Mar 13:14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

4.1 Daniel's righteousness, wisdom and gift of prophecy are documented in the above cited passages.

4.2 In the 2nd century there were those who attempted to deny the authenticity of Daniel claiming that the book was written much later than purported and claiming its author was an unknown person who took the name Daniel as a pseudonym.

4.3 To deny Daniel however one must deny Ezekiel, Jesus and a large number of Jews who long before the 2nd century determined Daniel as part of the early canon.

4.3.1 This denial would have to include not only the many carefully copied manuscripts but also the formidable LXX—the Septuagint.

4.4 We may therefore safely assume that Daniel is the author of the book and a historical prophet who lived during the reigns of four gentile Kings.

5. In modern times theological liberals have resurrected the arguments of the earlier unbelieving skeptics. In fact liberal Bible schools and seminaries spend significant time pontificating about Porphyry's position. Porphyry was an early and very vocal critic of the generally accepted authorship and chronology of Daniel. It would seem Porphyry was what we might call today, a contrarian.

5.1 As we noted last week, the basic reason why liberals deny the genuineness of Daniel is that they have previously rejected the possibility of predictive prophecy.

5.2 This, though usually left unstated, is sometimes frankly admitted. Daniel is full of many remarkable prophecies. For example we have many prophecies made in c. 536 B.C. which we have seen recorded and accepted by secular historians. Many of which actually took place as late as 147 B.C.

6. When time ran out last week we were about to look at several arguments in support of the genuineness of Daniel:

- (1) the prima facie evidence of the testimony of the book;
- (2) its reception into the canon, which witnesses to the fact that Jews of the pre-Christian centuries believed in its authenticity;
- (3) the uniform testimony of the New Testament, including our Lord's own expressed opinion;
- (4) ancient direct external testimony (including Eze 14:14 and 20; Eze 28:3; Mat 24:3; and Mar 14:13) as well as several passages written by Josephus);

6.1 Rebuttal of the negative arguments regarding the ideas and history of the book have found especially strong support from archaeology much of which we will note later but quickly here are three examples:

- (1) It was once popular to believe that there was no secular record of Nebuchadnezzar taking sacred stolen vessels "into his house of god" as Daniel records. From antiquity it was later discovered such was the practice of Nebuchadnezzar.

Dan 1:1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

Dan 1:2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

(2) It was once the vogue to claim that there was no historical record of Ashpenaz. Later an ancient stone was found upon which an inscription which read: "Ashpenaz master of eunuchs".

Dan 1:3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

(3) Secular history, once recorded that Nabonidus was King when Darius conquered Babylon and not Belshazzar as Daniel writes. Secular history further recorded that Nabonidus was captured and treated well by the Medes it was also alleged that the King of Babylon (alleged by Daniel to be Belshazzar) was not killed after Babylon was captured and as purported by Daniel.

(3.1) Later it was discovered that Nabonidus was a King who loved to war and at the time of Darius' attack he had left his son Belshazzar in charge.

(3.2) History had to be modified to reflect that "while Nabonidus waged war away from Babylon his son ruled during his absence".

(3.3) Secular history finally caught up and documented Daniel's account of Belshazzar being King when Darius arrived; and that it was Belshazzar who was taken prisoner and killed by the Medes and not Nabonidus.

Dan 5:1 Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

Dan 5:2 Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. . .

Dan 5:30 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain,

Dan 5:31 and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.

6.2 So much for empty but interesting pontifications.

7. A superficial examination might yield a division of the book of Daniel into two main parts

- Chapters 1-6, the Histories of Daniel

- Chapters 7-12, the Prophecies of Daniel

7.1 As is often the case with neat outlines, however, this two-part division is more apparent than real.

8. All of Daniel is a book of prophecy. This from the Biblical standpoint means merely that its author was a prophet whose job (like all prophets) was to communicate until the coming of the Messiah and the completed Canon.

Mat 24:15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--

Heb 1:1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

Heb 1:2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

9. While Biblical prophecy includes prediction, it is very often more than prediction. It frequently teaches a divinely inspired moral and spiritual lesson.

9.1 Such is certainly the case with Daniel who declared national discipline would follow national error although ultimately the grace of God would ultimately deliver his people in His time.

10. Ezekiel and Daniel were written in the Exile, a name customarily given to that period during which the Jews of the Judean kingdom were displaced from their country after the destruction of their temple, capital city and commonwealth by Nebuchadnezzar.

10.1 The displacement coming as a result of a continued and prolonged rejection of God's protocol plan; mainly a sustained dalliance with "foreign gods."

11. This destruction came in three stages

11.1 First, in 606 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar brought Jehoiakim to his knees and carried off hostages, among them Daniel and some 70 other young men.

11.2 Later, in 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar returned in force to punish several rebellious acts of Jehoiachin, Judah's then king.

11.2.1 Nebuchadnezzar carried off at this siege some 10,000 captives, among them king Jehoiachin himself and a young prophet named Ezekiel. (Eze 1:1-3; compared with 2Ch 36:10; 2Ki 24:8-20).

Eze 1:1 In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month on the fifth day, while I was among the exiles by the Kebar River, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

Eze 1:2 On the fifth of the month--it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin--

Eze 1:3 the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. There the hand of the LORD was upon him.

2Ch 36:9 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD.

2Ch 36:10 In the spring, King Nebuchadnezzar sent for him and brought him to Babylon, together with articles of value from the temple of the LORD, and he made Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, king over Judah and Jerusalem.

2Ki 24:8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan; she was from Jerusalem.

2Ki 24:9 He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father had done.

2Ki 24:10 At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it,

2Ki 24:11 and Nebuchadnezzar himself came up to the city while his officers were besieging it.

2Ki 24:12 Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him. In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner.

2Ki 24:13 As the LORD had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed all the treasures from the temple of the LORD and from the royal palace, and took away all the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made for the temple of the LORD.

2Ki 24:14 He carried into exile all Jerusalem: all the officers and fighting men, and all the craftsmen and artisans--a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.

2Ki 24:15 Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the leading men of the land.

2Ki 24:16 The king of Babylon also deported to Babylon the entire force of seven thousand fighting men, strong and fit for war, and a thousand craftsmen and artisans.

2Ki 24:17 He made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place and changed his name to Zedekiah.

11.3 Finally, in 587 B.C., after a long siege, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city and the Temple and disrupted the entire Jewish community (2Ki 25:1-7; Jer 34:1-7; 52:2-11).

2Ki 25:1 So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it.

2Ki 25:2 The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

2Ki 25:3 By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat.

2Ki 25:4 Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah,

2Ki 25:5 but the Babylonian army pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered,

2Ki 25:6 and he was captured. He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where sentence was pronounced on him.

2Ki 25:7 They killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.

Jer 34:1 While Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army and all the kingdoms and peoples in the empire he ruled were fighting against Jerusalem and all its surrounding towns, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

Jer 34:2 "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Go to Zedekiah king of Judah and tell him, 'This is what the LORD says: I am about to hand this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will burn it down.

Jer 34:3 You will not escape from his grasp but will surely be captured and handed over to him. You will see the king of Babylon with your own eyes, and he will speak with you face to face. And you will go to Babylon.

Jer 34:4 "Yet hear the promise of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah. This is what the LORD says concerning you: You will not die by the sword;

Jer 34:5 you will die peacefully. As people made a funeral fire in honor of your fathers, the former kings who preceded you, so they will make a fire in your honor and lament, 'Alas, O master!' I myself make this promise, declares the LORD."

Jer 34:6 Then Jeremiah the prophet told all this to Zedekiah king of Judah, in Jerusalem,

Jer 34:7 while the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah that were still holding out--Lachish and Azekah. These were the only fortified cities left in Judah.

Jer 52:3 It was because of the LORD'S anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence. Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Jer 52:4 So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. They camped outside the city and built siege works all around it . . .

Jer 52:7 Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled. They left the city at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah,

12. Restoration to the land began in c. 536 B.C. when the victorious Cyrus, king of the new Medo-Persian empire and conqueror of Babylon, decreed the Jews could return to rebuild the Temple. 2 Ch 36:22 and Ezr 1:1-4

2Ch 36:22 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing:

2Ch 36:23 "This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you--may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up."

Ezr 1:1 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing:

Ezr 1:2 "This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah.

Ezr 1:3 Anyone of his people among you--may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem.

Ezr 1:4 And the people of any place where survivors may now be living are to provide him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem."

12.1 Isaiah some 150 plus years earlier had predicted Cyrus' actions by name and substance.

Isa 44:28 who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."

Isa 45:13 I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness: I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price or reward, says the LORD Almighty."

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