

1. Last week I continued the introduction to the book of Daniel.
2. When time ran out I was teaching how the destruction of Judah was accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar in three stages. Before continuing this study let's do a short review.
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.
 - 4.1 We may safely assume that Daniel is the author of the book and a historical prophet who lived during the reigns of four gentile Kings.
5. Last week we noted four of numerous arguments in support of the genuineness of Daniel
 - the prima facie evidence of the testimony of the book
 - its reception into the canon, which witnesses to the fact that Jews of the pre-Christian centuries believed in its authenticity;
 - the uniform testimony of the New Testament, including our Lord's own expressed opinion;
 - 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. Rebuttal of the negative arguments regarding the authenticity of the book of Daniel has found strong support from archaeology.
7. A superficial examination might yield a division of the book of Daniel into two main parts:
 - 7.1 Chapters 1-6, the Histories of Daniel;
 - 7.2 Chapters 7-12, the Prophecies of Daniel.
8. Ezekiel and Daniel were written in the Exile, a name customarily given to that period during which the Jews of the Judah were displaced by Nebuchadnezzar.

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

10. Now let's continue our study of Judah's late 6th and early 5th century destruction.

11. This destruction came in three stages:

11.1 First, in 606 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar brought Jehoiakim (a son of Josiah) to his knees and carried off hostages, among them Daniel and some 70 other young men. Nebuchadnezzar put Jehoiachin (a grandson of Josiah) on the throne in place of Jehoiakim.

11.2 Later, in 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar returned in force to punish several rebellious acts of Jehoiachin, Judah's then king. Nebuchadnezzar put Zedekiah (another son of Josiah) on the throne in place of Jehoiachin, also called Coniah. 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).

11.3 Finally, in 586 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). Zedekiah was removed and Judah was effectively a nonentity; the fifth cycle of discipline had prevailed.

12. Restoration to the land began in 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 (2Ch 36:22,23; Ezr 1:1-4).

12.1 Isaiah some 150 plus years earlier had predicted Cyrus' actions by name in Isa 44:28 and Isa 45:13.

13. The Temple was finally restored in about 516 B.C.

13.1 Zerubbabel and Joshua, his high priest, led this first return to rebuild the Temple.

14. Many Jews remained in exile even years after permission to return had been (indeed, many never returned).

15. Jeremiah's prophecy of "seventy years," related to the period of servitude to Babylon and has been variously computed.

15.1 Certainly 606 B.C. to 536 B.C. would seem most probable in my view.

16. This period from 606 to 536, in round numbers, is "seventy years".

17. Many cultural and religious changes were thrust upon the Jews in their exile.

18. Among these were the rise of synagogue worship in lieu of temple worship, and the adoption of a second language - Aramaic (also called Syriac or Chaldee).

19. A number of evidences lead to the conclusion that Abram's language was originally Aramaic (e.g., Moabite Stone, Ras Shamra tablets) these demonstrate that the Canaanites spoke a language almost identical with Hebrew.

20. So the Jews, ages earlier, even before the settlement in Canaan, had adopted a language similar to that spoken in Mesopotamia and which, with minor evolution, became Hebrew.

21. That many men of nobility knew the language of Canaan, an apparent language of diplomacy, was evident (note Isa 36:11-13).

Isa 36:11 Then Eliakim, Shebna and Joah said to the field commander, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, since we understand it. Don't speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people on the wall."

Isa 36:12 But the commander replied, "Was it only to your master and you that my master sent me to say these things, and not to the men sitting on the wall--who, like you, will have to eat their own filth and drink their own urine?"

Isa 36:13 Then the commander stood and called out in Hebrew, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria!"

21.1 So, no wonder then the Jews later picked up the Aramaic, a language very similar to Hebrew (although not identical with it by any means).

22. Daniel is the first great book of Apocalypse.

22.1 The word apocalypse is simply a translation of a Greek word meaning "unveiling" or "revelation".

22.2 It is therefore quite properly a name for all of Scripture, especially the predictive portions.

22.3 It is customary for theologians now to apply it exclusively to a certain type of literature of which Daniel is an Old Testament example.

23. An outline of Daniel published in the Wycliffe Commentary is:

I. The historical introduction. 1:1-2:4a.

II. The nations of earth - their character, relations, succession, and destiny. 2:4b-7:28.

A. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a great image: A prophecy of "the times of the Gentiles." 2:1-49.

B. Nebuchadnezzar's trial of the confessors of the faith: a lesson in steadfast faith. 3:1-30.

C. Nebuchadnezzar's vision of a high tree: A lesson in humility. 4:1-37.

D. Belshazzar's feast: A lesson in sin and its punishment. 5:1-31.

E. Darius the Mede in the role of religious prosecutor: A lesson in faith and prayer. 6:1-28.

F. A vision of four beasts, the Ancient of Days, and the Son of man: The conflict of Christ with AntiChrist. 7:1-28.

III. The Hebrew nation, its relation to Gentile dominion, and its future in the plan of God. 8:1-12:13.

A. A ram, a goat, and a little horn: Israel in conflict with the Old Testament AntiChrist. 8:1-27.

B. The prophecy of seventy weeks: Israel's future in the plan of God. 9:1-27.

C. Final vision: Israel through the centuries and at the consummation in the hands of enemies and in the hands of God. 10:1-12:13.

24. As noted Daniel can be divided in two sections: chapters 1-6 which are mostly historical in nature and chapters 7-12 which are virtually all prophetic in nature.

25. The book cannot be read chronologically however, for as we will see there are many cases where such an attempt will prove to be nothing but a source of confusion.

26. It has been said as a general rule that chapters 7-12 can be overlaid on chapters 1-6 for chronological sense.

27. It has also been said that chapters 1-6 is Daniel's revelation to the kings of the world and chapters 7-12 represent God speaking his message usually by an angel to Daniel.

27.1 I think now we are ready to see how a fifteen year old boy will live and prosper under four great kings. He will die at the age of approximately 85 a period of some 70 years.

28. Doctrine of The Babylonian Kings in Summary:

- (1) Nebuchadnezzar was the son of Nabopolassar an Assyrian nobleman.
- (2) Nebuchadnezzar died and rulership fell to Abel or Evil Marduk (often written Mardok) who ruled for two years.
- (3) Evil Marduk was assassinated by his brother Neriglissar who exiled all the magicians (probably to include Daniel from the Kingdom).
- (4) At the death of Neriglissar a commoner soldier by the name of Labashi Marduk took the throne.
- (5) At the demise of Labashi Marduk a co-regency consisting of Nebuchadnezzar's son-in-law Nabonidus and Nabonidus' son Belshazzar was in place.
- (6) Nabonidus was an adventurer who loved to lead his military in the field thus he was often away from the capital; he spent most of his time leading the army against the Medes and the Persians.
- (7) While Nabonidus was away, Belshazzar ruled the Kingdom.
- (8) Belshazzar was the resident ruler in Babylon when Darius the Mede (the general who led the siege against the city) conquered the city. His victory was a fulfillment of prophecy found written on the wall.
- (9) The Medes will rule for a short time; they will give way to Persia under Cyrus the Great.

29. The Historical Background of Chaldea:

29.1 In 625 B.C. Nabopolassar, suddenly appeared out of nowhere. He organized scattered forces and took over Babylonia, which was then under Assyrian rule.

29.1.1 Before the arrival of Nabopolassar the Chaldeans divided into five main clans with their own clan chieftains.

29.2 One of the chieftains was a genius named Merodach-Baladan, a man mentioned in 2Ki 20:12 and Isa 39:1.

2Ki 20:12 At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of Hezekiah's illness.

Isa 39:1 At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of his illness and recovery.

29.2.1 Merodach-Baladan was a primary harasser of the Assyrian empire.

29.3 Nabopolassar pulled the Chaldean clans together into what would become a "world empire."

29.4 During the struggles with Assyria, Nabopolassar united with Cyaxares, King of Media, and the Scythians for a final successful assault on Nineveh in 612 BC.

End Lesson Taught 6-25-2000