

Bible Study: Lessons from Daniel

Lesson 4 – December 22, 2020

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**Lessons from Daniel (chapters 7-12)**

***The Kingdom is the Goal***



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**The Liberty and Captivity Models**

God's goal is the Liberty Model

- ∞ Requires the responsibility for *maintaining* self-government
- ∞ Less than 5% of all nations have had liberty in world history
- ∞ For four hundred years Israel had a Republic – 1450 – 1050 BC
- ∞ Israel chose a King; and after a civil war, Israel (722) to Assyria and Judah (586) to Babylon

God still rules in Captivity Model

- ∞ God deals with the heart of His people to serve and love captors
- ∞ 95% of all nations in history have had monarchy/tyranny
- ∞ Israel failed to maintain self-government, going into captivity
- ∞ Daniel provides a model of how God prepares His people to serve their captors to produce liberty

*The same principles required to produce liberty are required to maintain it*

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## Lessons 1-3 – *God's Judgment Redemptive / Influence is better / Character is Legacy*

- ⌘ Daniel, from age 14 to 86, *served* Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Meroduch, Neriglissar, Laborosoardel, Nabonedius, Belshazzar, Darius of Persia; *without violating his faith!*
- ⌘ Daniel *understood* God's Word and Babylonian rule
- ⌘ Daniel and his friends worked in humility, sometimes for decades without any outward manifestation of His power
- ⌘ Daniel's *influence* was greater than any power he held
- ⌘ Daniel's *character and integrity* was his legacy

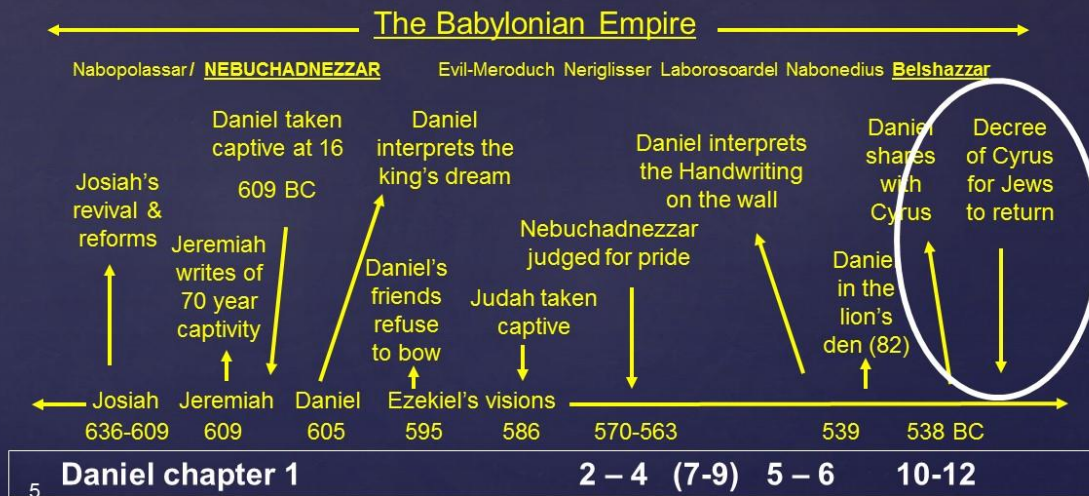
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## Biblical Attitudes held by Daniel & his Friends

- ⌘ God sends His people into captivity (Pr. 29:23)
- ⌘ The primary problem is not the evil around us, but the proud heart (evil) within us (1<sup>st</sup> John 4:4)
- ⌘ God's people are called to influence their culture, not isolate themselves or assimilate with it (John 17:15-18)
- ⌘ Believers can't participate in evil acts, but are to shine as lights in the world (Philippians 2:15)
- ⌘ God's people don't need freedom to be faithful, but generations of faithfulness leads to freedom (Col. 4:5-6)

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# The Babylonian Empire "An Empire of Pride"



## Daniel 7 – (1) *The Nature of God's Kingdom*



### Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

- (1) Head of Gold *Babylon*
- (2) Chest of Silver – *Persian*
- (3) Belly of Brass – *Greek*
- (4) Legs of Iron/Toes of Clay – *Roman Empire*



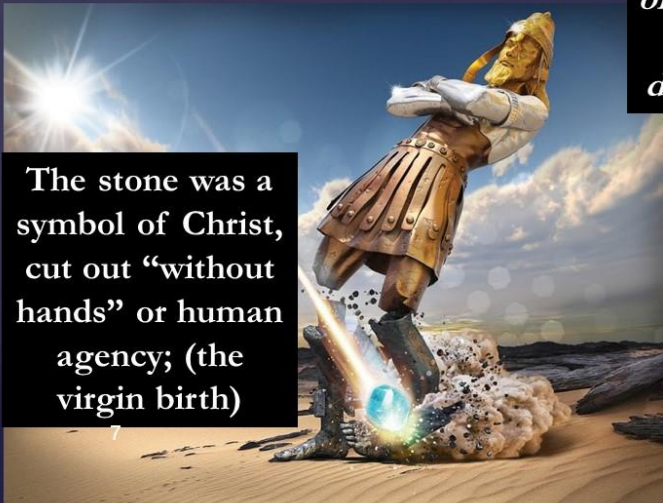
### Daniel's Dream in chp. 7

- (1) Lion with Eagle's Wings
- (2) A Bear to devour
- (3) Leopard with four wings
- (4) Strong Empire with huge teeth and ten horns

*All the kingdoms of man are centered in power and control*

The “Ancient of Days” in Daniel is the pre-existent Christ

*Daniel 7:27 and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.*



The stone was a symbol of Christ, cut out “without hands” or human agency; (the virgin birth)

The Kingdom of God is built distinctly different, from the bottom up, and it will surpass all other kingdoms and fill the whole earth!

*Alexander built the largest ancient Empire in only 13 years; 336-323 B.C.!*



(2) The Power of God's Kingdom

**Daniel 8 – Alexander the Great**

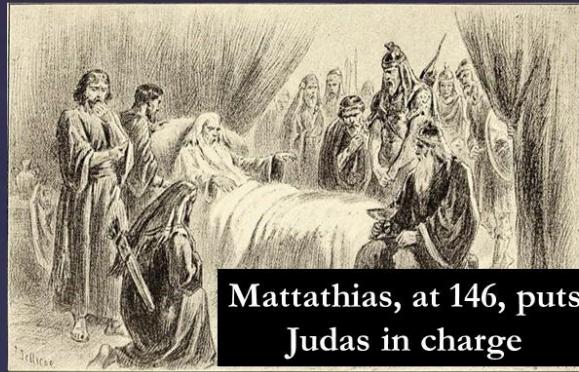
*Daniel 8:5 – Suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground...*

## Daniel's prophecy of Antiochas IV

⌘ Daniel 8:9-11; 13-14 – *and out of one of them (Greek powers) came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious land (Israel)... He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away... Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, 'how long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation... and he said to me, 'for two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.'"* (six years, three months, 18 days)

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*"Alas! Why was I born to see this, the ruin of my people, the ruin of the holy city, and to dwell there when it was given over to the enemy?"* When one attempted to bribe him to defect, he said, *"Even if all the nations that live under the rule of the king...depart... each one from the religion of his fathers, yet I and my sons and my brothers will live by the covenant of our fathers.... We will not obey the king's words by turning aside."*



**Mattathias, at 146, puts Judas in charge**

*"Arrogance and reproach have now become strong; it is a time of ruin and furious anger. Now, my children, show zeal for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of our fathers. Remember the deeds of the fathers, which they did in their generations; and receive great honor and an everlasting name."*



Hanukkah

The Feast of  
Dedication –  
John 10:22-39

Against all odds, Judas, with 5,000 men, defeated over 60,000! He charged his troops: *It is easy for many to be hemmed in by few, for in the sight of Heaven there is no difference saving by many or by few. It is not on the size of the army that victory in battle depends, but strength comes from Heaven.*

Daniel 11:32 – *Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.*  
*The power of the Kingdom (rule) of God will ultimately defeat evil*

(3) The Kingdom is the Goal

*... for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him*  
Matthew 2:2



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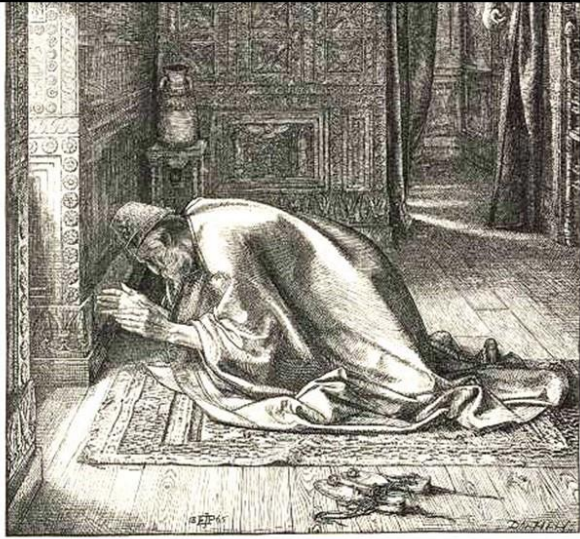
*“there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.” – Matthew 2:1*

## Who were the Wise Men?

- ⌘ Daniel 2:48 – *Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief (captain) administrator (governor) over all the wise men (magi) of Babylon.*
- ⌘ Daniel likely held this position of leadership over the Magi again and again his entire life, for over 70 years!
- ⌘ Though only 2.5% of the Jews in Babylon returned to Jerusalem beginning at the decree of Cyrus, godly Jews remained, following the example of Daniel and his friends, and some of them were students of Daniel (Magi), impacting generations!
- ⌘ The Wise men would have known of Daniel's 70 week prophecy and were watching for the Messiah's coming!

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## Daniel Prays for his People (chapter 9)



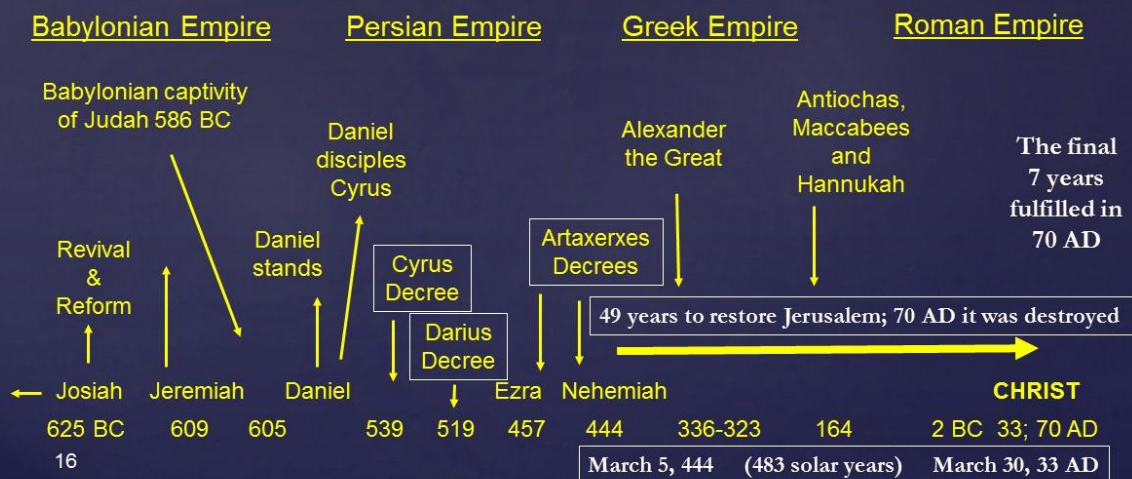
- ⌘ Daniel knew that 70 years of captivity was ending
- ⌘ Daniel confessed “we have sinned” – *ekklesia prayer*
- ⌘ Daniel 9:9 *To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.*
- ⌘ He appealed to God's covenant promises

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# Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks

- ⌘ Daniel had a visitation from the angel Gabriel...
- ⌘ Daniel 9:24-26 – *Seventy weeks (490 years) are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks (483 years); the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself...*

## The Seventy Week Prophecy of Daniel





## What was *His Star in the East?*

Numbers 24:17 – *a star shall come out of Jacob, a sceptre shall rise out of Israel*

- ⌘ Jacob was part of the tribe of Judah
- ⌘ Jesus' lineage was from Judah
- ⌘ The “star” could be supernatural
- ⌘ It could have been a conjunction, timed by God to lead wise men
- ⌘ At that time, “wise men” were not kings, or astrologers, but court astronomers who would travel in a caravan of 24, with at least 12 magi, and visited Jesus at 18 months old when lived in a house

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## What did these Wise Men know?

- ⌘ The heavens were “signs” or confirmations of what God was doing, declaring God's Glory (Genesis 1:14; Psalm 19:1-4)
- ⌘ They were *not* the cause of our personality (or astrology)
- ⌘ The twelve constellations told a story of redemption, and the key was to focus on Virgo (the Virgin) and Leo (the Lion)
- ⌘ It is a circular book starting with Virgo and ending with Leo
- ⌘ Regulus (brightest star in Leo meaning “treading under foot” or kingship); coupled with Jupiter (sign of the kings)
- ⌘ Virgo (with its brightest star meaning “the branch” – Zech. 3:8), coupled with the planet Venus (meaning motherhood)
- ⌘ If these stars and planets came together in some way, they would interpret it as *a Jewish King was to be born of a virgin!*

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## Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:20

- ⌘ *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork.*
- ⌘ *Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.*

- ⌘ *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*
- ⌘ *Even his eternal power and Godhead... the invisible things of him are clearly seen*

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## The Conjunction at the time of Christ's Birth

- ⌘ Computers can tell us what the sky looked at any time
- ⌘ Jupiter and Regulus had a conjunction in Leo in Sept. 3 BC
- ⌘ In early 2 BC, another conjunction of Jupiter and Leo
- ⌘ June of 2 BC, Jupiter's retrograde motion made it appear to dance around Regulus for the third time, and then join Venus
- ⌘ Virgo was also clearly seen, "*the desire of all nations shall come*"
- ⌘ In Rome, the same signs were interpreted (750<sup>th</sup> year of Rome's founding and Caesar Augustus' 25<sup>th</sup> year, he was "prince of peace"
- ⌘ To a trained court astronomer skilled in Jewish prophecy, it meant *a Jewish king was to be born of a virgin; the fulfillment of prophecy*

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## Lessons from Daniel

- ⌘ (1) The judgment of God is redemptive – *the captivity of God's people has a divine purpose of purifying God's people to produce liberty*
- ⌘ (2) Influence is greater than power – *building relationships with people (even tyrannical ones) is good leadership*
- ⌘ (3) Your Character is your legacy – *integrity, faithfulness and humility (serving behind the scenes) has long lasting impact*
- ⌘ (4) The Kingdom is the goal – *God times all events in the interests of his Kingdom filling the whole earth – and Daniel's eyes were on the Kingdom which was larger than just Israel*

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### Daniel's legacy and life:

Daniel 12:3 – *those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever*

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## Suggested “homework”

- ⌘ Read Daniel, chapters 7-12
  - ⌘ Read *The Miraculous Story of Hanukkah*
  - ⌘ Read *His Star in the East*
- ⌘ How might God be maturing His Church during these difficult times, with the goal of a greater advance of His Kingdom!