

# DANIEL --EVIDENCE OF INSPIRATION

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The prophecies in Daniel are some of the most powerful evidences of inspiration in the Bible. These details are so precise as to clearly have required inspiration. To get around this, the rationalists are forced to try to prove that Daniel was written after the fulfillment. This paper is to show evidence in favor of inspiration and to answer objections against it.

The most difficult prophecies for skeptics to answer are found in Daniel 8 and 11. These chapters predict detailed events from the fall of Persia through the Grecian period. We will give special attention to chapter 11 in a separate study.

## I. EVIDENCE FOR ACCEPTANCE INTO THE SCRIPTURAL CANNON

- A. Matthew indicates that Jesus cited Daniel as a prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem.

*\*Matt 24:15. When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand), (ASV)*

Compare Luke 21:20-24

Matt 24:30; 26:64. see Daniel 7:13 The son of man coming in the clouds of heaven

Matt 24:21. see Dan. 12:1 Great tribulation

Luke 1:19-26. "Gabriel" found only in Dan.8:16; 9:21

Dan.7:8, 25. The little horn that magnified himself

See I Cor.6:2 The saints shall judge the world

Dan.11:36. The king that shall magnify himself above every god

2Thes.2:3. The son of perdition that sets himself above all gods

- B. The writer of Hebrews accepted it.  
Heb.11:33, 34. The fire and lions mentioned in the book were accepted by the writer as true.
- C. John's book of Revelation clearly accepted prophecies from it as authentic (Rev.11, 13, 17)  
Dan.7:25. 3 and 1/2 years  
Dan.12:7. 3 and 1/2 years  
Rev.11:2. 42 months  
Rev.11:3. 1,260 days

Rev.12:6. 1,260 days  
Rev.12:14. 3 and 1/2 years  
Rev.13:5. 42 months

Rev.13:1. Beast from the sea  
Dan.7:2-3. Four beasts came up from the sea

Rev.13:1. Ten horns  
Dan. 7:7. Ten horns

Rev.13:1. Names of blasphemy

Rev.13:2. Like a leopard  
Dan.7:6. Third beast like a leopard

Rev.13:2. Feet like a bear  
Dan.7:5. Second beast like a bear

Rev.13:2. Mouth like a lion  
Dan.7:4. First beast like a lion

Rev.13:5,6. Mouth speaking great things and blasphemies  
Dan.7:8, 25. Mouth speaking great things ..against the Most High

Rev.13:1; 17:12. Ten horns  
Dan.2:7, 24. The fourth beast had ten horns

Rev.13:7. Made war with the saints and overcome them  
Dan.7:21. Made war with the saints and overcame them

Rev.20:12. Judgment and books opened  
Dan.7:10, 21, 26. Judgment set and books opened

Rev.19:20. Beast cast into the lake of fire  
Dan.7:11. Beast slain and burned with fire

Rev.20:3, 8. Dragon bound  
Dan.7:12. Dominion taken away but lives prolonged

D. Ezekiel, three times referred to Daniel, twice comparing him with Noah and Job.

*Ezek. 14:14 though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord Jehovah. (ASV)*

*Ezek. 14:20 though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord Jehovah,*

*they should deliver neither son nor daughter; they should but deliver their own souls by their righteousness. (ASV)*

*Ezek. 28:3 behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that is hidden from thee;*

## **II. EVIDENCE THAT DANIEL WAS NOT WRITTEN AFTER THE EVENTS PROPHESED**

A. Ezekiel, writing during the captivity, speaks of Daniel as an important person.

Ezek. 28:3 speaks concerning the King of Tyre. *Ezek. 28:3 behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that is hidden from thee;*

OBJECTION: It is objected that is must have been another Daniel, perhaps the legendary figure in the Ras Shamara poems (forteenth century B.C.).<sup>1</sup>

ANSWER:

This claim is purely speculative. It is unreasonable to suppose that such a conservative Jewish priest would be citing some “Daniel” who was so little accepted that he is not even mentioned in any of the other sacred books prior to the time of the Babylonian captivity, nor since. Worse yet, it is utter nonsense that he would be citing a pagan in such a connection with Holy men such as Moses and Job.

OBJECTION: The name is spelled differently in Ezekiel than in the Book of Daniel.

ANSWER:

The spelling varies by one letter, a yod.

H1840 laYEnID' Daniye'l {daw-nee-yale'} in Ezekiel it is: laenID' Dani'el {daw-nee-ale'}

Such an objection carries little weight. Names of people are often spelled differently.

Daniel had been taken to Babylon (Dan. 1) in the third year of Jehoiakim, (about 606 B.C.), several years before Ezekiel, who was carried away (about 597 B.C.) in the reign of Jehoiachin. The events of chapter 2 had already made him a high official, renowned for his wisdom concerning “secret things.” Both Daniel and Ezekiel lived in the Babylonian environment and Ezekiel would surely have known of Daniel. Ezek. 28:3 perfectly describes the fame of Daniel stated in Dan. 2:47-48.

OBJECTION: Why would Nebuchadnezzar carry four youths to Babylon? (Dan. 1:3,4)

*Dan. 1:3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring in certain of the children of Israel, even of the seed royal and of the nobles; 4 youths in whom was no blemish, but well-favored, and skilful in all wisdom, and endued with knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability to stand*

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<sup>1</sup> Aqht, 170; 2Aqht, V.7, 8

*in the king's palace; and that he should teach them the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.*

ANSWER: It seems quite apparent that they were taken to further the purposes of the King of Babylon. This sounds much like the same thing that was done in the time of Jehoichin in Second Kings.

*2Kings 24:14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths; none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.*

OBJECTION: Daniel would have been too young to be spoken of as being “wise” (Ezek. 28:3).

ANSWER: A “youth” was not necessarily a child.

Joseph was called a “youth” (3206 yeled) (Gen. 37:30; 42:22) when he was seventeen years old (Gen. 36:43; 42; 37:2). The same word is used in Ruth 1:5 to describe Naomi’s two married sons who had died.

The second chapter of Daniel does not picture him as a child.

B. The books of Maccabees, speak of the events of Daniel as long accomplished facts.

1. Daniel, along with his three friends, was cited as a well-known historical character, along with other famous men in Jewish history.

*1Mac. 2: 57. David, because he was merciful, inherited the throne of the kingdom for ever. 58 Elijah because of great zeal for the law was taken up into heaven. 59 Hannaniah, Azariah, and Mishael believed and were saved from the flame. 60 Daniel because of his innocence was delivered from the mouth of the lions.*

*3Mac. 6:5. Sennacherib exulting in his countless forces, oppressive king of the Assyrians, who had already gained control of the whole world by the spear and was lifted up against your holy city, speaking grievous words with boasting and insolence, you, O Lord, broke in pieces, showing your power to many nations. 6 The three companions in Babylon who had voluntarily surrendered their lives to the flames so as not to serve vain things, you rescued unharmed, even to a hair, moistening the fiery furnace with dew and turning the flame against all their enemies. 7 **Daniel**, who through envious slanders was cast down into the ground to lions as food for wild beasts, you brought up to the light unharmed. 8 And Jonah, wasting away in the belly of a huge, sea-born monster, you, Father, watched over and restored unharmed to all his family.*

*4Mac. 16:20. For his sake also our father Abraham was zealous to sacrifice his son Isaac, the ancestor of our nation; and when Isaac saw his father's hand wielding a*

*sword and descending upon him, he did not cower. 21 And **Daniel** the righteous was thrown to the lions, and **Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael** were hurled into the fiery furnace and endured it for the sake of God.*

4Mac. 18:9. *In the time of my maturity I remained with my husband, and when these sons had grown up their father died. A happy man was he, who lived out his life with good children, and did not have the grief of bereavement. 10 While he was still with you, he taught you the law and the prophets. 11 He read to you about Abel slain by Cain, and Isaac who was offered as a burnt offering, and of Joseph in prison. 12 He told you of the zeal of Phineas, and he taught you about **Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael in the fire.** 13 He praised **Daniel in the den of the lions and blessed him.** 14 He reminded you of the scripture of Isaiah, which says, 'Even though you go through the fire, the flame shall not consume you.'*

2. Daniel's prophecies concerning Antiochus Epiphanes were cited in the books of Maccabees. These must have already been known and accepted by that time.

I Macc. 1:24. Antiochus "spoke very proudly"

Dan.7:8, 25. A mouth speaking great things.

I Macc. 9:27. Great affliction such as was not seen before

Dan.12:1. A time of trouble such as was not seen before

I Macc. 9:40. Many fell down dead.

Dan.11:26. Many shall fall down slain. (LXX Alexandrian version.)

- C. Josephus (Antiq.11: 8:5) says Alexander the Great was shown the book of Daniel by Jaddua the High Priest (332 B.C.), long before the time of Antiochus (165 B.C.).

To pass this off with the unfounded assertion that Josephus was in no position to know what took place with Alexander seems very lame. Josephus had a lot to say about Alexander and other world leaders and while he, like any historian, is fallible yet, as a historian he is generally regarded very highly. He certainly was in a position to better know than the arbitrary speculations of those who live 2000 years later.

- D. Daniel held an undisputed place in the Jewish Cannon, which was begun being translated into the LXX (Septuagint) in Alexandria during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 285 B.C.. All of it had been translated by the time of Antiochus in 165 B.C.

Scholars have found fragments of the book of Daniel among the Dead Sea Scrolls as early as 150 BC<sup>2</sup>

The objection that Daniel was placed in the Hagiographa ("Chetubim" or "writings"), between Esther and Ezra, rather than with the prophets, in no way indicates it was viewed

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<sup>2</sup> Unger's Bible Dictionary, Article: "Book of Daniel," Section: "The Danielic Authorship," 2.

as lacking inspiration. It was located there because Daniel was not regarded as holding formal office as a prophet. Only Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezekiel and Proverbs were questioned. All were deemed inspired.

E. Some of Daniel's prophecies were fulfilled long after the time of Antiochus.

Attempts to place the writing of Daniel around the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 BC) does not solve the problem confronting the skeptics. Daniel includes some notable events that took place far beyond the time of Antiochus.

1. Rome, the fourth great empire, was foretold.

Daniel told of the four great empires. During the fourth, God would set up a kingdom, (the church?), resulting in its destruction (chapters 2 and 7). This extends at least to the time fall of Rome in 476 A.D.. The end of the Roman Empire was brought about by the effects of Christianity.

The "little horn" that plucked up three may take us even farther forward to the time of establishment of the Holy Roman Empire through the crowning of Charlemagne as "Emperor of the Romans."

However these prophecies are interpreted, the descriptions he gives of the fourth kingdom can not be reconciled with the time of Antiochus. There is no similarity between the fourth kingdom with the ten kings, and the little horn that grew out of one of the four that followed the breaking of the "notable horn," who was king of Greece (Dan. 8).

The attempt to identify the 4<sup>th</sup> "kingdom" of Daniel with the Grecian period is based on the claim that the "little horn" is mentioned in both chapter 7, concerning the fourth beast, and in Daniel 8, concerning Greece. The problem with this is that the two are very different.

The fourth "beast" was a fourth kingdom that trampled down the previous THREE "beasts" (7:7, 19, 23). The Seleucid empire never trampled down Greece. It only covered a fourth of the Grecian Empire. The "little horn," "waxed great toward the south and toward the east, and toward the glorious land (8:9)," not towards the west where Greece was.

The "Ram" with two horns, one higher than the other (8:3), is defined as "the kings of Media and Persia (8:20). The "Goat" is defined as "the king of Greece" (8:21). This "ram" is clearly analogous to the second "beast" that was lifted up on one side (7:5). The "Goat" that had the four horns was the same as the third "beast" (7:6) that had the four heads. Thus the "little horn" of Daniel 7 was attributed to the *fourth* kingdom, not the third, spoken of in chapter 8.

The fourth kingdom “beast” had ten horns (7:7, 24). A “little horn” came up that plucked up three horns. (7:8, 24) The third kingdom “goat” had a “notable horn” between its eyes (8:5, 21). That horn was broken and four came up (8:8, 22). Out of one of those four horns (8:9) came a “little horn.” The little horn of chapter 8 did not pluck up three horns.

The “little horn” on the “goat” (or 3rd “beast” of chapter 8) took away the continual burnt offering (8:11, 12). No such thing is said about the “little horn” of the ten-horned beast.

The primary reason for trying to make out the Seleucid kingdom to be the forth “beast” lies in the bias inherent in wanting to get around the fact that Daniel so keenly prophesied future events. To get around the many things said about the coming of Antiochus, they date the book after his coming. To get around Daniel’s prediction of the future rise of Rome, they try to make the forth “beast” to refer to the Seleucid kingdom which was then in power.

2. Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks until the Messiah was fulfilled well beyond the time of Antiochus.

There is no way that from the command to rebuild Jerusalem 90 literal days could have any meaning with regard to Antiochus. However, 490 years from the post-captivity decrees places the beginning of the 70th “week” remarkably close to when Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit to begin His ministry (Luke 3:21, 22).

*Dan.9:24. “Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.”*

This is speaking of the prince, the anointed (Hebrew-”Messiah.” Greek –”Christ”) who was to be cut off. Jesus became “anointed” when the Holy Spirit came upon him (Acts 10:38). His death brought “reconciliation for iniquity,” and “everlasting righteousness.” He ended the old covenant, resulting in the termination of the sacrificial system and the oblations.

### **The 70 weeks**

Daniel gave the time-span as “seventy weeks.” As with some other prophetic dating, these must be viewed as weeks of YEARS. Ezekiel, who was contemporaneous with Daniel, used this system.

*Ezek. 4:4 “Then lie upon your left **side**, and I will **lay** the punishment of the house of Israel upon you; for the number of the days that you lie upon it, you shall bear their punishment. 5 For I assign to you a number of days, three hundred and*

*ninety days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment; so long shall you bear the punishment of the house of Israel. 6 And when you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah; forty days I assign you, a day for each year.*

For the 69 “weeks” to the time of Christ they must be viewed as weeks of years.  
Three score and two = 62 weeks + 7 weeks = 69 weeks.  
69 weeks x 7 = 483 weeks = 483 years.

The point of beginning was the command to restore and to build Jerusalem.

Dan. 9:25 “*Know therefore and discern that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks and three score and two weeks.”*

The fulfillment itself remarkably fits the nature of the prediction in Daniel. However, lining up the beginning date, while close, is not totally clear.

The problem is that the Bible lists four decrees. However, none of them seem to perfectly fit all points of the prediction. A reference work that seems to make things clear is the Bible Study Textbook on Daniel by Paul T. Butler (College Press, 1970).

a. THE FIRST DECREE

This was to rebuild the temple. It was given by Cyrus in his first year (536 B.C.?) (Ezra 1:1; 5:13; 6:3). (536 B.C. -483 years = about 53 B.C.)

The content of the decree may be found in Ezra 6:3-5 and 2Chron. 22, 23. We are told that Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation and put it in writing saying that the God of heaven charged him to build him a house in Jerusalem (1:2 cf. 1:2, 3, 4, 5). This would seem to be the logical time from which to begin such a momentous countdown, however, rebuilding of the city is not specified and the date would place the Messiah some 50 years too early.

Isaiah 44:28 says of Cyrus, “*He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and of the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.” In 45:13 it says, “He shall build my city...” If we accept the inspiration of Isaiah, this decree was, for all practical purposes, the beginning of Jerusalem being rebuilt. And, why not? The temple was the most important building of the city. There is some intimation also that work on the city wall by the temple may have begun. Ezra 4:12,13 (?); 5:3,9. Ezra's prayer after completion of the temple may likewise indicate the same (9:9).*

However, because their enemies had held them back and even brought the work to a halt until the reign of Darius, king of Persia, it appears that Daniel's countdown

did not begin with this decree.

b. THE SECOND DECREE (Ezra 6:1,6-12).

This was by Darius Hystaspis, the Persian, (518 B.C.).

(518 B.C. -483 years = about 35 B.C.)

It was given before the temple was completed in the 6th year of his reign (Ezra 6:14,15). This was a decree to uphold the decree of Cyrus. Because the temple work was resumed in the second year of Darius (Ezra 4:24), it is likely the time taken to alarm the locals, write a letter to Darius in Persia, have a search of the archives and make a decree, must have put it in the third or fourth year of Darius.

c. THE THIRD DECREE, (Ezra 7:1-26)

This was given by the Artaxerxes of Ezra, in the seventh year of his reign (457 B.C.?)

(457 B.C. subtracted from 483 = about 26 A.D. ) Since Christ was actually born about 4 B.C., the countdown takes us to about the time he began his ministry. He was crucified about 3 ½ years later, in the “midst” of the 70<sup>th</sup> “week” (Dan. 9:27).

This decree, though given after the completion of the temple construction, likewise pertains particularly to the temple, specifically with regard to refurbishing it (7:23). Accordingly, Ezra 6:14, 15 includes Artaxerxes as one of the kings sharing the decree to build and finish the house of God.

However, the details of his decree reveal far broader powers than just rebuilding the temple.<sup>3</sup> In 7:6 it says Ezra was a scribe of the Law of Moses and the king “granted him all his request.” In 7:10 it says, “*Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances.*” In 7:12 the words of the decree begin. In 7:18 they were authorized to use the rest of the silver and gold to do whatever seemed good after the will of God. In 7:21, it says, “*And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree...Whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done with all diligence.*” He specifies in verse 23 that whatever is commanded by the God of heaven for the house of God should be done exactly. He further expands this to appointing magistrates and judges, even to enforcing it by the death penalty. This authorizes far more than just rebuilding the temple. This actually begins the reconstruction of the political system of Jerusalem.

d. THE FOURTH DECREE (Neh. 2:1-8)

This was by Artaxerxes Longimanus in the 20th year of his reign (444 B.C.?)

(444 B.C., subtracted from 483 = 39 A.D. )

Nehemiah asked for authority to rebuild the city, which was granted by Artaxerxes (2:3, 5). The specifics of this, as pertaining to the city, make it the most apparent

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<sup>3</sup> K & D, p.690 Footnote: Auberlen, it is true remarks (p.138): --“The authority given to Ezra is so extensive that it essentially includes the rebuilding of the city...”

choice to begin the count. However, this would carry the count to after the death of Christ.

Barnes, on Daniel, Vol. II, p.164-174 “IV.” sets forth reasons why he believes this took place in or close to 454 B.C. (see p.174 “V” for his conclusion). If 454 B.C. is the correct date of this decree, the end of the 483 years brings us to about 29 A.D.. This seems a little late to meet the specifics of the prophecy.

The third decree is closest to the dating provided by the secular world. Building the temple may be viewed as the beginning of building the city. Giving power to reestablish the political structure and to use the money for whatever was needed, was a considerable broadening of the power to rebuild. but the specification of it beginning with “*the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem,*” seems to better fit the 4<sup>th</sup> decree.

The fourth decree is closest to the terminology but seems a little late by secular chronology so far as the apparent meaning of the phrase, “*in the midst of the week he shall make the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.*” Every other statement could be reconciled to a loose use of the time factors but this seems to refer to Christ ending the sacrificial system's validity by bringing in the new covenant. That would be through his death about 33 A.D. (Heb. 9:15-17).

All kinds of attempts have been made to reconcile the details. Some differ on which decree to accept. Some differ on the dating of the decrees. Some look to the closing date as the Birth of Jesus. Some relate it to John the Baptist. Others relate it to the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Some cite his triumphal entry. Others cite his death. Some even try to bring it to the fall of Jerusalem.

3. In any case, it seems to have been so close that the wise men appear to have accurately relied upon Daniel for the dating the coming of Christ. Matt 2 says that when Jesus was born, wise men from Persia came, saying they saw the star of the one born, King of the Jews. Herod gathered the chief priests and inquired where the Christ should be born. It appears that they had some information that would make such a star identifiable. The approximate time given in Daniel is the most likely answer. (Gal.4:4; Mk.1:15).
4. Another prophecy that reaches well beyond Antiochus concerns the destruction of Jerusalem that took place in 70 AD.

Dan. 9:26. ...*the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war; desolations are decreed.*

Antiochus destroyed neither the city nor the sanctuary. The Roman general, Titus did both, and wars against the Jews have continued unto this day. Note that Daniel indicates this was to follow the coming of the Messiah.

OBJECTION: Titus never made a covenant with many people for seven years (Dan 9:27).

ANSWER:

The Messiah, not Titus, was to confirm the covenant for “one week” (seven years). The scriptures clearly speak of Christ establishing a New Covenant (Heb. 9:15-17. cf. Mat. 26:28; 2Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:6-13). The seventieth week (seven years) begins with Christ’s ministry. In the midst of the week he caused the sacrificial system to be ended through the sacrifice of himself (Hebrews 9-10). The end of the “week” seems to have been around the time of the stoning of Stephen, followed by God turning to the Gentiles.

### III. OBJECTIONS TO THE INSPIRATION OF DANIEL

- A. OBJECTION: There was no siege of Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoiakim claimed by Daniel (Dan. 1:1)

ANSWER: Daniel says there was a siege in the reign of Jehoiakim, and other writers confirm it.

1. The first siege of Jerusalem was around 606 BC in reign of Jehoiakim (also known as Eliakim). (see Keil & Delitzsch. p.435)

Dan.1:1. *In the third year of Jehoiakim Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. The Lord gave Jehoiakim into his hand with part of the vessels of the house of God.*

2Kings 24:1. *In the days of Jehoiakim Nebuchadnezzar came up and Jehoiakim became his servant three years and then rebelled.* The Chaldeans then laid siege and he surrendered.

2Chron. 36:6-7. Nebuchadnezzar bound Jehoiakim and intended to carry him to Babylon. He also carried “of the vessels” of the house to Babylon. However, Jehoiakim died, or was killed, at Jerusalem and his body was carried to the gates and left unburied (Jer. 22:18-19; 36:30).

2. The second siege was in the reign of Jehoiachin, also known as Coniah (2Kings 24:8-16, 2Chron. 36:9, 10).

Jehoiachin ruled 8 years with his father. After his father died, he became full ruler in Jerusalem and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. He surrendered after only 3 months and was carried to Babylon “with the goodly vessels” at the turn of the year. Some have identified this with the siege in the days of Jehoiakim but it seems clear that his

father had been taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar earlier.

3. The third rebellion and Siege was in the days of Zedekiah, known also as Mattaniah (2Kings 24:20 and chapter 25; 2Chron. 36:12-20). In 586 BC Jerusalem fell and was destroyed by the Babylonians.

#### PROBABLE HARMONY OF EVENTS

It appears that when, after the battle of Carchamish, Nebuchadnezzar marched into Hamath in Syria, Jehoiakim submitted. When Nebuchadnezzar went to Babylon upon the death of his father, Jehoiakim rebelled. Nebuchadnezzar returned and laid siege to Jerusalem. Jehoiakim quickly surrendered and fast-talked and bribed his way out of further reprisals with “some” of the vessels of the temple. These things, plus some of the people, were then deported to Babylon. He then died, or was killed. It may be that because he had given up some of the vessels of the temple his body was thrown out in contempt and left unburied. His son then took the throne and with the people's backing, again rebelled, bringing on the second siege and deportation.

- B. OBJECTION: There is a conflict between Jeremiah and Daniel in dating of the siege.

Daniel dated Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem (1:1-3).

Dan.1:1. ... *“in the third year of Jehoiakim”* (606 B.C.)

Jer.46:2. *“in the fourth year of Jehoiakim”* Pharaoh was at Carchamesh --after Daniel's date for Jerusalem's siege.

#### ANSWER:

Daniel's statement that he “came” to Jerusalem in the third year may be clarified by recognizing that the Hebrew word, “booh” means “went to” from the perspective of Daniel writing from Babylon.

Also, it is quite possible that Daniel is writing of a point near the end of the year while Jeremiah is writing of the beginning of the next year. Historical calculations commonly differ according to the perspective of the writers. The apparent difference is so minor that a true conflict cannot be established.

- C. OBJECTION: Daniel was wrong about there being 70 years captivity. The captivity lasted only about 50 years from the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC to Babylon's fall in 536 BC.

ANSWER: As shown above, the Jews were captives of Babylon from the reign of Jehoiakim around 606 B.C.. That there was a 70-year period of captivity is confirmed by several writers.

Isaiah first prophesied of a period of 70 years captivity for Tyre.

*Isa. 23:15 In that day Tyre will be forgotten for **seventy years**, like the days of one king. At the end of **seventy years**, it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the harlot: 16 “Take a harp, go about the city, O forgotten harlot! Make sweet melody, sing many songs, that you may be remembered.” 17 At the end of **seventy years**, the LORD will visit Tyre, and she will return to her hire, and will play the harlot with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.*

Jeremiah, in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim, about 606 BC, prophesied:

*Jer: 25:11 This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. 12 Then after **seventy years** are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste.*

*Jer. 29:10 “For thus says the LORD: When **seventy years** are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfil to you my promise and bring you back to this place.*

Daniel, after the 70 years, cited Jeremiah’s prediction.

*2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years which, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, **seventy years**.*

2Chronicles, also written after the 70 years, cited Jeremiah. This passage deals with the land and seems to begin with the destruction of Jerusalem, down to the time the city was rebuilt.

*2Chron 36:19 And they burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious vessels. 20 He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the **land** had enjoyed its **sabbaths**. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfil seventy years. 22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing:*

This has to do with the period the land rested, not necessarily the period controlled by Babylon.

Zechariah, written after the captivity during the rebuilding of the temple, likewise says there were 70 years.

*Zec. 1: 12 Then the angel of the LORD said, `O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou have no mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these seventy years?'*

It appears from these prophecies that either there were two counts, one by the period they were subjects of Babylon (606 BC to the decree of Cyrus, 536 BC), and the other the period the land rested (586 BC to the rebuilding of the city), or that the 70 years included both.

As we have shown above, around 606 BC the Jews became subject to Babylon under Jehoiakim for three years (2Kings 24:1). The fact that he and the next two kings rebelled proves they were subject to Babylon for at least 70 years.

- D. OBJECTION: Nebuchadnezzar was not “king” in the third year of Jehoiakim (606 B.C.) as Dan 1:1 says.

ANSWER: He may have been co-regent with his father.

Jer.25:1 says the fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. This may be the common practice of writers referring to an official by his title, even though the events mentioned are before or after he took office. For example, one might say that King David killed Goliath with a stone. He was not yet “King” when he threw the stone.

- E. OBJECTION: Cyrus, not Darius, captured Babylon.

ANSWER: If Darius was king and Cyrus was under him, both may be said to have conquered Babylon. If Darius was the general of Cyrus, he also captured Babylon. Actually, Daniel nowhere says that Darius captured Babylon. Daniel 5:31 says Darius “received” the kingdom.

Some have assumed that this verse should relate directly to the previous statement concerning the fall of Babylon. Actually, it likely introduces the first verse of the next chapter. Chapter distinctions were not in the Bible at the time Daniel was written. Daniel 9:1 says he was “made king” over the realm of the Chaldeans. This suggests that Cyrus gave him his power. This seems to have lasted only a year or two.

- F. OBJECTION: There was no king named Darius the Mede (Dan. 5:31; 6:1, 6, 9, 28; 11:1).

ANSWER:

While there is no mention of Darius in what has survived of secular records, that does not prove he did not exist. A similar case was long used against the credibility of Daniel when for many years the critics claimed he was mistaken about the existence of Belshazzar because no records survived mentioning him. In time inscriptions were found naming him as the son of Nabonidus, who had been king of Babylon when the

Persians overthrew it.

The problem may lie in the fact that kings often had more than one name or title.

1. Keil and Delitzsch (Vol.6, p.546-548) suggests that Cyaxares II was Darius the Mede. (also see Barnes Notes lengthy discussion on Daniel 6)

According to Xenophon, Cyaxares II, brother of Mandane, succeeded Astyages to the Median throne.<sup>4</sup> Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, king of Persia by marriage to Mandane, daughter of Astyages.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the thrones of Media and Persia were joined by marriage. With special effort of Cyrus, Cyaxares cooperated in defeating Babylon. Since Cyrus functioned as the general in directing the campaign, the army came to regard Cyrus as king. Cyaxares was an old man at the time and had no son so he gave Cyrus his daughter, and the throne of Media, as dowry.

The name, Kuaxares, is the Median Uwakshatra, meaning autocrat; Ahstuages corresponds to the Median Ajisdahaka, the name of the Median dynasty, meaning the “biting serpent.” Xenophon uses the Median name and title of the last king. Daniel gives, the Persian name and title which Cyaxares, as king of the united Chaldean and Medo-Persian kingdom, received and bore.

According to this, Cyrus placed Darius the Mede, his father-in-law as ruler over Babylon for two years before he took the throne, perhaps on his death. This appears confirmed by Xenophon. The short duration of Darius's reign accounts for his rare mention in other historical documents.

The advantage of this view is that it places Darius first in the kingdom and Cyrus second, as appears to be what Daniel indicates (5:30, 31; 6:28). This Darius is called the “son of Ahasuerus, the seed of the Medes” (9:1; 11:1)

Daniel was closer to the situation and provides additional and more correct details. The fact that Daniel keeps turning out correct over the attacks of modern “scholars” indicates that he was everything claimed. Modern critics are not in as good position as Daniel to know the facts.

2. Others think Darius may have been another name for a general of Cyrus, (Gubaru?) who was appointed temporarily as a king over the conquered territory of Babylon (Dan. 6:28). This may explain why Daniel says Darius “received the Kingdom” (5:31 cf. 9:1)

We see many examples of such sub-kings in ancient empires. Three times, Nebuchadnezzar left a sub-king over Jerusalem. They were even given different names --Jehoiakim (Eliakim), Jehoiachin (Coniah) and Zedekiah (Mattaniah).

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<sup>4</sup> K & D, p.543, Xenophon, Cyropoedia, (i. 5. 2.)

<sup>5</sup> K & D, p.542, Herodotus (i. 96-103, 106 ff.)

This may explain why Darius only ruled a year or two. It is highly unlikely that some writer hundreds of years later, creating a fictitious account, would have chosen to make up such a short-term king as conquering Babylon. (See “Biblical Difficulties” by Archer p.288)

3. Some think that Darius was the son of Hystaspis. (See A Panorama of the Gospel Age, by Fred P Miller)

Miller maintains that “Ahasuerus” (Dan. 9:1) may be a hereditary name, or title, much like “Pharaoh.”

Concerning his Median heritage he says: *“The name, Darius the Mede, could easily have been ascribed by Daniel to Darius Hystaspis who was related to the Median royal family. In the same way Cyrus was born to a Median princess and raised in Media until he was about 12, yet he is called Cyrus the Persian. Beside ‘The Persian’ Herodotus also calls Cyrus ‘King of the Medes.’”* (I:205)

One objection to this is that Dan 5:31 seems to place Darius as the immediate successor of Belshazzar. This may not be the correct assumption. This verse may properly go with the opening of the statements in chapter 6. In the Massoretic and Septuagint texts Dan. 5:31 is the first verse of chapter six. The passage does not actually say that Belshazzar conquered Babylon. It says he “received” the kingdom.

A second objection is that Dan 1:21 indicates Daniel died in the first year of Cyrus. Miller suggests that the statement indicates only that he continued all through the captivity.

For my part, I find the evidence inadequate to make out the details with absolute certainty. It is not that there are not plausible explanations. The problem is that all lack sufficient evidence and it is not clear which is correct. I choose not to be so presumptuous as to insist on a particular explanation as the Johnny-come-lately detractors of Daniel have been.

The secular sources (Herodotus, and Xenophon) are conflicting and of questionable completeness. Indeed, because of his many apparent errors, Herodotus, who has been called “The Father of Ancient Historians” is commonly known as “The Father of Lies.”

- G. OBJECTION: Belshazzar was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 5:2).

ANSWER: In the Bible they did not have a term for great-grandfather. To refer even to a grandfather was done by saying, “father’s father” (Ex. 10:6 in the Hebrew). They commonly spoke of those of previous generations as “fathers” (Gen 15:15). It was their common linguistic style, rather than saying “father’s, father’s, father” etc.

- H. OBJECTION: Daniel made a mistake about the number of Satraps over the kingdom. He says there were 120 (Dan. 6:1), however Herodotus indicates that Persia only had 20 Satrapies.

ANSWER:

Dan 6:1 speaks of 120 satraps being appointed as governors at that time. It is pretty speculative what a different king might have done in choosing men to rule at a different time and place. Herodotus is speaking of Darius Hystaspes, years later.

The historian, M. Dunker indicates how the government changed. *“About the year 515 Darius [Hystaspes] established fixed government-districts in place of the vice-regencies which Cyrus and Cambyses had appointed and changed according to existing exigencies. He divided the kingdom into twenty satrapies.”* (Gesch. des Alterth. ii. p. 891) Compare Herodotus iii. 89 ff.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, Herodotus was not infallible. He made so many historical mistakes that he is known as “The Father of Lies.”

At the time of Esther (1:1) the kingdom covered 127 provinces. (Esther 8:9). With such a far-flung empire as from Greece to India and south to Etheopia, and given their slow modes of travel, it would not seem improbable that 120 Satraps might at some point be chosen. (cf. discussion in Keil and Delitsch, p.553)

- I. OBJECTION: Daniel misspelled Nebuchadrezzar’s name as Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadrezzar would never have misspelled his name (4:1, 4, 18). This indicates Daniel must have been influenced by the Greek usage after the time of Antiochus.

ANSWER: This spelling was common long before the time of Antiochus. We find it not only in Daniel but also 2Kings (24:1, 10, 11 etc), 2Chronicles (6:15; 36:6, 7, 10, 13), Ezra (1:7; 2:1 etc.), Nehemiah (7:6), Esther (2:6), and Jeremiah (27:6, 8, 20 etc). The reason for this spelling was that this was a translation from the Babylonian. The “r” was changed to an “n” as it would be spelled in Aramaic.

See, The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, “Nebuchadnezzar”

See, “The Aramaic of the Genesis Apocryphon Compared with the Aramaic of Daniel,” chap. 11 in Payne, New Perspectives.

- J. OBJECTION: There are a number of Greek words in Daniel. These point to it being written during the time of Antiochus during the Greek Empire.

ANSWER:

Gleason L. Archer, Encyclopedia of Biblical Difficulties, p. 282, says,

*“...we shall be centering our attention on the linguistic evidence in Daniel that tends to eliminate all possibility of dating the composition of Daniel any later than the Persian period. With the wealth of new data from the manuscripts of the Dead Sea*

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<sup>6</sup> K & D, p.542, 543

*caves (the Qumran literature), it is possible to settle this question once and for all. Now that we have at least one fairly extensive midrash originally composed in third-century B.C. Aramaic and several sectarian documents in second-century Hebrew, it has become possible to perform a careful linguistic comparison of the Aramaic and Hebrew chapters of Daniel and these unquestionably third- or second-century B.C. documents, which were close to the era of the Maccabean struggle.*

*“If Daniel had in fact been composed in the 160s [BC], these Qumran manuscripts should have exhibited just about the same general characteristics as Daniel in the matter of vocabulary, morphology, and syntax. Yet the actual test results show that Daniel 2-7 is linguistically older than the Genesis Apocryphon by several centuries. Hence these chapters could not have been composed as late as the second century or the third century, but rather--based on purely philological grounds--they have to be dated in the fifth or late sixth century; and they must have been composed in the eastern sector of the Aramaic-speaking world (such as Babylon), rather than in Palestine (as the late date theory requires).”<sup>7</sup>*

Barnes notes on Daniel give an excellent discussion of the claim that some words in Daniel are of late origin Greek (Vol. I, Introduction, pp. 19-23. --Baker Book House, 1957). He considers all of the words and shows that they may not have originated with the Greeks. Most of them are names of musical instruments, which would not be surprising since trade with the Greeks was common as early as the time of Babylon. Some of these same words can be found in other Old Testament books long before the time of Antiochus.

Here are the words, with the King James Version translation:

#6579 *partam* (Dan. 1:3), translated “princes” also in Esther 1:3 “nobles”; 4:9 “most noble.” Gesenius Lexicon says “It is of Persian origin.”

#6600 *pithgam* (Dan 3:16, 4:17), translated, “matter.” Also in Ezra 4:17; 5:11 “answer”; 5:7 “letter”; 6:11 “word”. Gesenius says, “The origin of the word is to be sought in the Persian...”

#3744 *keriwb* (Dan. 3:4), a “herald” Gesenius says, “The root is widely diffused in the Indo-European languages”

#7123 *qera* (Dan 3:4, 4:14; 5:7, 8, 12, 15, 16, 17), trans “cried” “read” and “called” Also in Ezra 4:18; 23 translated, “read.”

#7030 *qiytharos* (Dan. 3:5, 7, 10, 15), translated “harp.” This is the name of a Greek musical instrument.

#5443 *sabbeka* (Dan. 3:5; 3:7, 10, 15), Translated, “sackbut.” This is the name of a Greek musical instrument. Gesenius says that Strabo affirms that this word is of barbarian, i.e. of Oriental origin

#5481 *ciyphoneya* (Dan. 3:5, 10, 15), translated, “dulcimer,” a musical instrument.

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#6460 *picanteriyn* (Dan. 3:7, 5, 10, 15), translated, “psaltery,” a musical instrument.  
#6361 *pattiysh* (Dan. 3:21), translated “hosen.” Gesenius says it is “widely found in the Indo-European languages.”  
#5023 *nebizbah* (Dan. 2:6; 5:17), translated, “rewards”

## CONCLUSION:

While not every question about Daniel can be decisively answered, these difficulties are not sufficient reason to accept the unproven speculations of the rationalists 25 hundred years later. It is inevitable that there will be things that cannot be answered. Some may be copyist problems. Others may be due to unreliability of secular sources. Some things may be an inadequate understanding of all of the factors involved in the text. Some objections may be due to biases of those who reject the possibility of divine revelation and are determined make it appear that problems exist.

It is not valid to insist on rejecting statements of Daniel until every question is solved to their satisfaction. It is remarkable that there is so much evidence in favor of Daniel's reliability. Questions are inevitable but lack of an answer does not mean there is none.

Daniel itself is a historical document and should be given a voice as such, with the evidence weighed as a whole.

However, we are told, “The AUTHORITIES say...” or, “The SCHOLARS agree...” on this or that. Too often that is both a distortion of the facts and an unfair attempt to gain points through a biased assumption. “Authorities” make mistakes. “Scholar” does not guarantee accuracy. Many with advanced degrees have learned a lot about things that “ain’t so.” Crying “scholar” is often nothing but a substitute for evidence.

One is not a scholar just because he writes a book against the Bible, nor is a person discredited as a scholar just because he believes the Bible. The fact is that scholars often contradict each other. The role of being a scholar is not to sit above others as a voice of infallibility but to know and provide evidence upon which any sound conclusion must rest. Many scholars believe Daniel was written early. A few objectors do not outweigh the many on the other side.

The “solutions” of the detractors of Daniel leave far more problems than they solve. They like to sit back and pick at the Christian view but do not do so well when the same spotlight is turned on their claims. They can not remain aloof from the consequences of their decisions.

The bottom line is this, speculation by rationalists is not proof against the Bible. The final word will be by God Himself (Rom. 3:4)