

KEYS TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL

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About a third of the Bible is prophecy. And much of it lies ahead ... yet to be fulfilled.

When the end-times do arrive ... it will be a “white-knuckle ride” — a roller-coaster. It is best to be mentally prepared — and ready.

The two main books — key books — of prophecy are the Books of Daniel and Revelation.

If we're going to understand prophecy and what lies ahead ... **we need to be as familiar as we can be with these books.**

Though I have covered them before — **I believe an “abbreviated review” of the Book of Daniel would be useful?** Certainly for me! 😊

Jesus Himself points us to Daniel!!

Matthew 24:3-5

3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples (*Peter and Andrew and James and John — just the four of them*) came to Him privately, saying, "**Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**"

4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "**Take heed that no one deceives you.**

5 **For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.**

Matthew 24:15-16, 21- 22

15 "**Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place**" (whoever reads, let him understand), (*we need to read — and understand — URGENT! DON'T STOP!*)

16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

When you see the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet.

Jesus expects us to know Daniel's prophecies. **It will be a matter of life and death** for some people.

Revelation 13:1-2, 7

1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon (*Satan the devil*) gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

7 It was granted to him (this Beast) to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. (*To make war with the saints — US!*)

This Beast is a composite of the 4 Beasts of Daniel Chapter 7.

Daniel is the major key to end-time prophecy. And to the book of Revelation itself.

So let's start!

Daniel 1:1-6

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. (605 BC)

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar

to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god. *(This was the first of 3 invasions)*

3 **Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles,**

4 **young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.**

(Chaldeans/Babylonians)

5 And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.

6 **Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.**

Off to Babylon!

Daniel ... Shadrach ... Meshach and Abednego are among the captives.

They were tested as to whether they would eat the king's delicacies (which were probably too rich and many unclean meats).

Daniel 1:17-21

17 **As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.**

18 Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 **Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king.**

20 **And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.**

21 **Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.**
(About 70 years later)

This is the story of believers who remained faithful to God in a difficult environment.

Compare them to Lot. He chose to live in Sodom — a notoriously wicked city ... he compromised voluntarily. He was given very little warning to get out of Sodom ... had no personal authority with his sons-in-law ... and lost everything ... including his wife. **HE WAS A COMPROMISER!**

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 1: Daniel and his friends remain faithful to God.

Daniel 2:1-6

1 **Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams;** and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.

2 **Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams.** So they came and stood before the king.

3 **And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."**

4 **Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."**

5 **The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap."**

6 **"However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."**

Nebuchadnezzar's dream — and threats!

God is dealing with Nebuchadnezzar in a special way. There will be more to come in Nebuchadnezzar's life.

Daniel 2:4 to the end of Chapter 7 is all written in the Aramaic language. The language of most countries.

The content of Daniel Chapters 2-7 was published for the whole world (of that time) to read — about the Great God of Israel.

Daniel prays to God for understanding. And God gives him that understanding.

Daniel 2:27-28

27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "**The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king.**

28 "**But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.**

THE LATTER DAYS

Daniel 2:31-36

31 "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! **This great image, whose splendour was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.**

32 "**This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,**

33 "**its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.**

34 "**You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.**

35 "**Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.**

36 "This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

THE GREAT IMAGE — 4 METALS AND STONE

Daniel 2:37-45

37 "**You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;**

38 "and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all--**you are this head of gold.**

39 "**But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze,** which shall rule over all the earth. *(Within the remit of the prophecy)*

40 "**And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.** *(Rome utterly fails to meet this criteria. Islam did!)*

41 "**Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.**

42 "And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

43 "As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

44 "**And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.** *(The Kingdom of God and the beginning of the Millennium)*

45 "Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold--the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. **The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.**"

THE INTERPRETATION:

GOLD = BABYLON EMPIRE (IRAQ TODAY)
SILVER = PERSIAN EMPIRE (IRAN)
BRONZE = “GREEK”/TURKEY EMPIRE (HELLENISTIC REALM)
IRON = ISLAMIC EMPIRE
STONE = JESUS CHRIST AT HIS RETURN

Why is “Iron” not the Roman Empire?

Verse 40 ... This Iron Kingdom will “Break in pieces” = Deqq (Aramaic) = Shatter ... Smash ... Pulverise. (“Beat to powder” — Brenton’s Septuagint)

The Iron Kingdom will break all of the others.

- (i) Rome NEVER conquered Babylon**
- (ii) Rome NEVER conquered Persia**
- (iii) Rome NEVER “pulverised” Greece — the language ... culture ... architecture ... religion ... literature — ALL REMAINED**

ROME COMPLETELY FAILS THE BIBLICAL TEST! ISLAM FITS!

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 2: God reveals to Nebuchadnezzar the 4 empires to dominate until Jesus returns and the establishment of God’s Kingdom.

In chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar erects a great image and requires that everybody worships it!

Shadrach ... Meshach and Abednego refuse. They will be faithful to God even if facing martyrdom.

How about you and me? Some believers will face “The Antichrist” — be threatened with beheading if they don’t accept the Mark of the Beast. Would we be as faithful?

Daniel 3:1, 6

1 **Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold**, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

6 and **whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.**"

Daniel 3:16-30

16 **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego** answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.

17 If that is the case, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace**, and **He will deliver us from your hand**, O king.

18 "But if not, *(if you don't throw us in!!)* **let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.**"

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.

20 And he commanded certain mighty men of valour who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

21 **Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.**

22 Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

24 **Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counsellors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"** They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

25 **"Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."**

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here.**" Then **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire.**

27 And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counsellors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

28 Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "**Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him**, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that **they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!**

29 "**Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this.**"

30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar is even more impressed by the God of Israel! Real evidence!

Nebuchadnezzar issues a decree (in Aramaic) to the "whole world" not to blaspheme or speak ill of the God of Israel.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 3: God reveals His power to Nebuchadnezzar as He delivers faithful Shadrach ... Meshach ... and Abednego from the fiery trial.

Nebuchadnezzar knows a lot more about the Most High God than he once did — he has (in a sense) preached about God to the whole world.

But ... he's still not changing! He is still proud and arrogant! But God's not finished yet!

God is going to intervene in a major way — condemning Nebuchadnezzar to 7 years of madness!

Daniel Chapter 4 is Nebuchadnezzar's personal testimony... written by himself. To the whole world — in Aramaic — there is no God like Jehovah!

Nebuchadnezzar has a frightening dream. A great tree is cut down ... only the stump and roots remaining. Daniel reveals the meaning.

Daniel 4:19-26

19 Then Daniel, whose name was Belshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. **So the king spoke, and said, "Belshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you."** **Belshazzar answered and said, "My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!**

20 **The tree that you saw**, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, 21 whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home--

22 it **is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.**

23 And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times (7 years) pass over him';

24 **this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:**

25 They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, **and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.**

26 And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, **your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you**

come to know that Heaven rules. (*Nebuchadnezzar is to be driven away for 7 years — but his kingdom “secured”*).

God gave him a year to repent. He didn't and he is now living in the wild like an animal for 7 years.

Daniel 4:28-31

28 All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.

29 **At the end of the twelve months** he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon.

30 The king spoke, saying, **“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”**

31 **While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!**

Daniel 4:34-35

34 **And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honoured Him who lives forever:**

**For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.**

35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;
He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And among the inhabitants of the earth.

**No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, "What have You done?"**

He has learned his lesson ... and now he praises and worships the true God.

Daniel 4:36-37

36 **At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendour returned to me.** My counsellors and nobles resorted to me, **I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me.**

37 **Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice.** And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

Nebuchadnezzar shares his personal testimony with the whole world.

Finally ... Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the True God.

We could speculate that he may even have fully turned to God? He is certainly in a better place than King Solomon? Or many other kings of Israel and Judah.

Daniel 4:1-3 (in Aramaic)

1 **Nebuchadnezzar the king,**

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

2 **I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.**

3 **How great are His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!**

His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,

And His dominion is from generation to generation.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 4: Nebuchadnezzar is humbled for 7 years and comes to God.

God often calls him "My servant Nebuchadnezzar".