

THE R.U.S.H. BIBLE STUDY

DANIEL



KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT FAST



WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY FIRST EDITION 2020 VER.26

DAVID HOBRATH

Dedicated to my dear friend and fellow laborer in the Lord, the one and only Dana Shaw

Daniel

Daniel becomes a wise man and advisor in the Babylonian and Persian empires, and has prophetic visions concerning Israel's future. Stories include, the Lion's Den, The Fiery Furnace, The Handwriting on the Wall, Angels, and the resurrection of the dead in 12:2.

Author: Daniel (with other contributors) Like Ezekiel, his ministry was in Babylon.

In Daniel – Jesus is the Fourth Man in the Furnace

Daniel 4:34 "I... raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored."



TEACHER: 12 CHAPTERS

In church, Daniel and Genesis are the 2 most often taught Books from the Old Testament. Genesis because of the scientific debates on creation and all the popular stories, and Daniel for 2 reasons. The children's love for the Lion's Den and the Fiery Furnace stories, and the Scholars love for end-times prophesy, also called eschatology. Daniel was a younger prophet, and served the Lord in the Babylonian Captivity. He was a descendant of King David. His ministry was during the same time as Ezekiel's ministry, and Ezekiel mentions him on par with Noah and Job in Ezekiel 14. Jesus also quotes Daniel in Matthew 24:15 making Daniel a heavyweight. This is important because the Book of Daniel is written in 3 different languages in every ancient text we have. Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. This is true of the Dead Sea Scrolls version, and I believe that it predates inclusion into canon at 400 B.C. or sooner, as it was included in the Masoretic text. Daniel was taken by Nebuchadnezzar into Babylon at a young age as a Jewish noble who adhered strictly to the Mosaic Law. Daniel is a son of David according to 1 Chronicles 3, and Ezra mentions that Daniel returned with him to Jerusalem as a priest. Daniel and his friends were taken to serve in the palace in Babylon because of their wisdom and beauty.

CH. 1

=====

STUDENT:

In the third year that Jehoiakim was king of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia attacked Jerusalem and surrounded the city. ² The Lord let him capture King Jehoiakim and seize some of the Temple treasures. He took some prisoners back with him to the temple of his gods in Babylon, and put the captured treasures in the temple storerooms. ³ The king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief official, to select from among the Israelite exiles some young men of the royal family and of the noble families. ⁴ They had to be handsome, intelligent, well-trained, quick to learn, and free from physical defects, so that they would be qualified to serve in the royal court. (GNT)

=====

TEACHER:

Babylon captures Jerusalem and guts it. The education and wealth of Israel all belong to Babylon now, including Daniel. The captives in the palace had 3 years to get up to snuff and prepare for their royal debut before Nebuchadnezzar. The main reason for the 3 years is language school/palace etiquette training.

=====

STUDENT:

Ashpenaz was to teach them to read and write the Babylonian language. ⁵ The king also gave orders that every day they were to be given the same food and wine as the members of the royal court. After three years of this training they were to appear before the king. ⁶ Among those chosen were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, all of whom were from the tribe of Judah. ⁷ The chief official gave them new names: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. (GNT)

=====

TEACHER:

You will remember from our study in Jeremiah, these captives were warned to do well in Babylon, as God had ordered this to happen as a result of Israel's back-sliding. Daniel had purposed in his heart that he would represent God well. Many in Israel had made God ashamed of them, but Daniel would make Him proud.

=====

STUDENT:

⁸ Daniel made up his mind not to let himself become ritually unclean by eating the food and drinking the wine of the royal court, so he asked Ashpenaz to help him, ⁹ and God made Ashpenaz sympathetic to Daniel. ¹⁰ Ashpenaz, however, was afraid of the king, so he said to Daniel, "The king has decided what you are to eat and drink, and if you don't look as fit as the other young men, he may kill me." (GNT)

=====

TEACHER:

Daniel makes Ashpenaz an offer that not only works, but reveals his wisdom to the guard as well.

=====

STUDENT:

So Daniel went to the guard whom Ashpenaz had placed in charge of him and his three friends. ¹² "Test us for ten days," he said. "Give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ Then compare us with the young men who are eating the food of the royal court, and base your decision on how we look." ¹⁴ He agreed to let them try it for ten days. ¹⁵ When the time was up, they looked healthier and stronger than all those who had been eating the royal food. ¹⁶ So from then on the guard let them continue to eat vegetables instead of what the king provided. ¹⁷ God gave the four young men knowledge and skill in literature and philosophy. In addition, he gave Daniel skill in interpreting visions and dreams. (GNT)

=====

TEACHER:

After the 3 years are up its time for all the young men to appear before King Nebuchadnezzar. The 4 men stand out to the king and become his servants.

STUDENT:

²⁰ Every time the king asked them about something important, they showed much wisdom and understanding. They were ten times better than all the fortune-tellers and magicians in his kingdom! ²¹ So Daniel continued to be the king's servant until the first year Cyrus was king. (NCV)

TEACHER:

He lived through the entire captivity. He worked as an advisor, and counselor, to all the kings of Babylon until Cyrus the Great took control of the land of Babylon. In chapter 2 the king has 2 dreams that greatly troubled him. He calls all his fortune tellers, wise men, magicians and wizards to interpret the dream.

STUDENT:

CH. 2

Then the king said to them, "I had a dream that bothers me, and I want to know what it means." ⁴ The wise men answered the king in the Aramaic language, "O king, live forever! Please tell us, your servants, your dream. Then we will tell you what it means." ⁵ King Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "I meant what I said. You must tell me the dream and what it means. If you don't, I will have you torn apart, and I will turn your houses into piles of stones. ⁶ But if you tell me my dream and its meaning, I will reward you with gifts and great honor. So tell me the dream and what it means." (NCV)

TEACHER:

The wise men stall and ask what he had dreamt again, but he calls them on it.

STUDENT:

King Nebuchadnezzar answered, "I know you are trying to get more time, because you know that I meant what I said. ⁹ If you don't tell me my dream, you will be punished. You have all agreed to tell me lies and wicked things, hoping things will change. Now, tell me the dream so that I will know you can tell me what it really means!" (NCV)

TEACHER:

The wise men respond by saying no one on Earth can perform such a feat, and the king orders them all killed. Daniel and his friends were not at the meeting so the guards were sent to fetch them, to have them killed, as they were members of the same group. The commander of the guard, Arioch, approached Daniel.

STUDENT:

But Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and skill, ¹⁵ saying, "Why did the king order such a terrible punishment?" Then Arioch explained everything to Daniel. ¹⁶ So Daniel went to King Nebuchadnezzar and asked for an appointment so that he could tell the king what his dream meant.

¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house and explained the whole story to his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ¹⁸ Daniel asked his friends to pray that the God of heaven would show them mercy and help them understand this secret so he and his friends would not be killed with the other wise men of Babylon. (NCV)

TEACHER:

God answers the young men's prayers, and Daniel worships the Lord. Daniel halts the commander of the guard from killing the other wise men, and says he is ready to interpret the dream. Arioch rushed him to the king. Think about that, the guy who has been guarding these captives, now is obeying Daniel. That is a testimony.

STUDENT:

The king asked Daniel, who was also called Belteshazzar, "Are you able to tell me what I dreamed and what it means?" ²⁷ Daniel answered, "No wise man, magician, or fortune-teller can explain to the king the secret he has asked about. ²⁸ But there is a God in heaven who explains secret things, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at a later time. This is your dream, the vision you saw while lying on your bed: ²⁹ O king, as you were lying there, you thought about things to come. (NCV)

TEACHER:

Before Daniel declares the dream he makes sure the King knows where the credit belongs. Daniel explains that it is God who revealed the interpretation to Daniel, not Daniel's own wisdom. Then he declares the dreams.

STUDENT: *The dream of the statue made of gold, silver, bronze, iron and an iron clay mix.*

"O king, in your dream you saw a huge, shiny, and frightening statue in front of you. ³² The head of the statue was made of pure gold. Its chest and arms were made of silver. Its stomach and the upper part of its legs were made of bronze. ³³ The lower part of the legs were made of iron, while its feet were made partly of iron and partly of baked clay. ³⁴ While you were looking at the statue, you saw a rock cut free, but no human being touched the rock. It hit the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. ³⁵ Then the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold broke to pieces at the same time. They became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summertime; the wind blew them away, and there was nothing left. Then the rock that hit the statue became a very large mountain that filled the whole earth. (NCV)

TEACHER:

We will read the entire interpretation, 1 segment after another, and then explain it in its historical, and prophetic context.

STUDENT: *The interpretation of the statue dream. Part 1 Babylon*

"That was your dream. Now we will tell the king what it means.

³⁷ O king, you are the greatest king. God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory. ³⁸ Wherever people, wild animals, and birds live, God made you ruler over them. King Nebuchadnezzar, you are the head of gold on that statue. (NCV)

STUDENT: *The interpretation of the statue dream. Part 2 Persia*

^{39a} "Another kingdom will come after you, but it will not be as great as yours. (NCV)

STUDENT: *The interpretation of the statue dream. Part 3 The Greeks*

^{39b} "Next a third kingdom, the bronze part, will rule over the earth." (NCV)



STUDENT:

The interpretation of the statue dream. Part 4 Roman

⁴⁰ Then there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron. In the same way that iron crushes and smashes things to pieces, the fourth kingdom will smash and crush all the other kingdoms. "You saw that the statue's feet and toes were partly baked clay and partly iron. That means the fourth kingdom will be a divided kingdom. It will have some of the strength of iron in it, just as you saw iron was mixed with clay. ⁴² The toes of the statue were partly iron and partly clay. So the fourth kingdom will be partly strong like iron and partly breakable like clay. ⁴³ You saw the iron mixed with clay, but iron and clay do not hold together. In the same way the people of the fourth kingdom will be a mixture, but they will not be united as one people. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT *The interpretation of the statue dream. Part 5 Future Eternal Kingdom*

"During the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up another kingdom that will never be destroyed or given to another group of people. This kingdom will crush all the other kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will continue forever. ⁴⁵ "King Nebuchadnezzar, you saw a rock cut from a mountain, but no human being touched it. The rock broke the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold to pieces. In this way the great God showed you what will happen. The dream is true, and you can trust this explanation." (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

Nebuchadnezzar received from God a global view of His plan for mankind. Starting with the Babylonian empire, all the way to a kingdom made without hands. "The stone never touched by human hands." Looking back at history over the last 2500 years, much of this vision is obvious. The Babylonian Empire, followed by the Persian Empire, followed by the Greeks, and then the Great Roman Empire. Throughout this time God would be preparing an eternal kingdom. This eternal kingdom had the symbol of a "rock never touched by humans." This rock is the rock that would destroy all those kingdoms. The symbolic nature of "not touched by human hands," shows that God is doing this, not people. The final kingdom is God's eternal kingdom, and will rule the entire world, and no trace of the old world kingdoms will survive into this final kingdom. The rock itself is the Rock of Faith in Christ. Another point I would like to raise, is why did God give Nebuchadnezzar the dream, and Daniel the interpretation?

=====

"God gives someone else the answers to our problems, often, so we may learn who we can rely on.

Knowing who will be honest with you is valuable." DH

Finishing chapter 2 the king promotes Daniel.

=====

STUDENT:

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell face down on the ground in front of Daniel. The king honored him and commanded that an offering and incense be presented to him. ⁴⁷ Then the king said to Daniel, "Truly I know your God is the greatest of all gods, the Lord of all the kings. He tells people about things they cannot know. I know this is true, because you were able to tell these secret things to me."

⁴⁸ Then the king gave Daniel many gifts plus an important position in his kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar made him ruler over the whole area of Babylon and put him in charge of all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ Daniel asked the king to make Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego leaders over the area of Babylon, so the king did as Daniel asked. Daniel himself became one of the people who stayed at the royal court. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

Forget the guard, now the king obeys Daniel! Daniel takes his seat at the royal table. It is wonderful when you realize it all started when a young man who lost his title, home, wealth, his pedigree and freedom, but even so, purposed not to sin against God by breaking his commitment to God's Law, by eating food he was forbidden by God to eat. I must wonder how far I could go if I served God with the same dedication. I plan on finding out!

=====

CH. 3

STUDENT:

King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet high and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the area of Babylon. ² Then he called for the leaders:...

He wanted them to come to the special service for the statue he had set up. ³ So they all came for the special service and stood in front of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴ Then the man who made announcements for the king said in a loud voice, "People, nations, and those of every language, this is what you are commanded to do: ⁵ When you hear the sound of the horns, flutes, lyres, zithers, harps, pipes, and all the other musical instruments, you must bow down and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ Anyone who doesn't bow down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace." (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

So everything goes according to plan, and people visiting the city where the statue was set up, would worship it whenever they heard the music playing. The loyal servants of God would never bow to an idol, and this upset the pagans who sought an advantage over the Judean captives in the royal court. They turned them in to the king. What pops into my head? "SNITCHES GET STICHES"

=====

STUDENT:

Nebuchadnezzar became very angry and called for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. When they were brought to the king, ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is it true that you do not serve my gods nor worship the gold statue I have set up? ¹⁵ In a moment you will again hear the sound of the horns, flutes, lyres, zithers, harps, pipes, and all the other musical instruments. If you bow down and worship the statue I made, that will be good. But if you do not worship it, you will immediately be thrown into the blazing furnace. What god will be able to save you from my power then?" (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

Daniel's 3 companions didn't flinch. Think about this. 1,000 miles from home, at the mercy of a foreign pagan king, and rather than take the easy way out, they chose death with God over life, in a palace, without Him.

=====

STUDENT:

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, saying, "Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves to you. ¹⁷ If you throw us into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from the furnace. He will save us from your power, O king. ¹⁸ But even if God does not save us, we want you, O king, to know this: We will not serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up." (NCV) "BOOM" DH

=====

TEACHER:

Nebuchadnezzar was furious and the 3 men were tied up by the strongest men in the Army. He ordered that the furnace was heated to 7 times the normal level and they be thrown in.

=====

STUDENT:

So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were tied up and thrown into the blazing furnace while still wearing their robes, trousers, turbans, and other clothes. ²²The king's command was very strict, and the furnace was made so hot that the flames killed the strong soldiers who threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace. ²³Firmly tied, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell into the blazing furnace. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

Notice if you will, that they "fell into the blazing furnace." It is most likely this was a royal incinerator. We know from archaeology garbage was burned in those days in pits. Imagine, for example, a ditch dug in the ground, 20 x 20 yards square, 20 feet deep. Garbage would be thrown in and occasionally set on fire, and then another layer of garbage and so on. Once the pit becomes too shallow, the top is filled with top soil and trampled flat, and a new pit is dug. The flames in this instance are hotter than ever before. The men died who threw in the 3 men. Imagine standing there, tied up with your toes dangling over the edge. All they had to do was say they would worship the idol. In they went. They would rather obey God in the fire, than dis-obey God without the fire.

=====

STUDENT:

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was so surprised that he jumped to his feet. He asked the men who advised him, "Didn't we tie up only three men and throw them into the fire?"

They answered, "Yes, O king."

²⁵The king said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire. They are not tied up, and they are not burned. The fourth man looks like a son of the gods."

²⁶Then Nebuchadnezzar went to the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, come out! Servants of the Most High God, come here!"

So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire. ²⁷When they came out, the governors, assistant governors, captains of the soldiers, and royal advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies. Their hair was not burned, their robes were not burned, and they didn't even smell like smoke! (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

They come out unscathed, and testimony intact. The 4th man in the furnace with them who looked divine was no doubt Jesus, and soon the world would know about their God.

=====

STUDENT:

Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Their God has sent his angel and saved his servants from the fire! These three men trusted their God and refused to obey my command. They were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god other than their own. ²⁹So I now give this command: Anyone from any nation or language who says anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will be torn apart and have his house turned into a pile of stones. No other god can save his people like this." ³⁰Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the area of Babylon. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

In chapter 4 we read of another dream.

=====

STUDENT: *Dream part 1*

These are the visions I saw while I was lying in my bed: I looked, and there in front of me was a tree standing in the middle of the earth. And it was very tall. ¹¹ The tree grew large and strong. The top of the tree touched the sky and could be seen from anywhere on earth. ¹² The leaves of the tree were beautiful. It had plenty of good fruit on it, enough food for everyone. The wild animals found shelter under the tree, and the birds lived in its branches. Every animal ate from it. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *Dream part 2*

¹³ “As I was looking at those things in the vision while lying on my bed, I saw an observer, a holy angel coming down from heaven. ¹⁴ He spoke very loudly and said, ‘Cut down the tree and cut off its branches. Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals under the tree run away, and let the birds in its branches fly away. ¹⁵ But leave the stump and its roots in the ground with a band of iron and bronze around it; let it stay in the field with the grass around it. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *Dream part 3*

“Let the man become wet with dew, and let him live among the animals and plants of the earth. ¹⁶ Let him not think like a human any longer, but let him have the mind of an animal for seven years. ¹⁷ “the observers gave this command; the holy ones declared the sentence. This is so all people may know that the Most High God rules over every kingdom on earth. God gives those kingdoms to anyone he wants, and he chooses people to rule them who are not proud.’ ¹⁸ “That is what I, King Nebuchadnezzar, dreamed. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

Nebuchadnezzar asks Daniel what the dream means. The dream frightens Daniel, and the king knows it. He tells Daniel not to worry, or let the interpretation frighten him. Daniel (called Belteshazzar, his Babylonian name) interprets the dream. It isn't pretty.

=====

STUDENT: *Interpretation part 1*

Belteshazzar answered, “My master, I wish the dream were about your enemies, and I wish its meaning were for those who are against you! ²⁰ You saw a tree in your dream that grew large and strong. Its top touched the sky, and it could be seen from all over the earth. ²¹ Its leaves were beautiful, and it had plenty of fruit for everyone to eat. It was a home for the wild animals, and its branches were nesting places for the birds. ²² O king, you are that tree! You have become great and powerful, like the tall tree that touched the sky. Your power reaches to the far parts of the earth. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *Interpretation part 2*

“O king, you saw an observer, a holy angel, coming down from heaven who said, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it. But leave the stump and its roots in the ground with a band of iron and bronze around it; leave it in the field with the grass. Let him become wet with dew and live like a wild animal for seven years.’ (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *Interpretation part 3*

“This is the meaning of the dream, O king. The Most High God has commanded these things to happen to my master the king: ²⁵ You will be forced away from people to live among the wild animals. People will feed you grass like an ox, and dew from the sky will make you wet. Seven years will pass, and then you will learn this lesson: The Most High God is ruler over every kingdom on earth, and he gives those kingdoms to anyone he chooses. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *Interpretation part 4*

"Since the stump of the tree and its roots were left in the ground, your kingdom will be given back to you when you learn that one in heaven rules your kingdom. ²⁷ So, O king, please accept my advice. Stop sinning and do what is right. Stop doing wicked things, be kind to the poor. Then you might continue to be successful." (NCV)

TEACHER:

Nothing happens to Nebuchadnezzar for 1 year. The king ignores Daniels admonition to stop sinning, and the day of reckoning has arrived. All triggered by his pride.

STUDENT:

Twelve months later as he was walking on the roof of his palace in Babylon, ³⁰ he said, "I have built this great Babylon as my royal home. I built it by my power to show my glory and my majesty."

³¹ The words were still in his mouth when a voice from heaven said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, these things will happen to you: Your royal power has been taken away from you. ³² You will be forced away from people. You will live with the wild animals and will be fed grass like an ox. Seven years will pass before you learn this lesson: The Most High God rules over every kingdom on earth and gives those kingdoms to anyone he chooses."

³³ Immediately the words came true. Nebuchadnezzar was forced to go away from people, and he began eating grass like an ox. He became wet from dew. His hair grew long like the feathers of an eagle, and his nails grew like the claws of a bird. (NCV)



TEACHER:

Nebuchadnezzar lost 7 years of his life. He had been told several times already in his few dreams that God sets up kings, and gives power to whom He chooses. 7 years wasted. Think for a moment, what does it cost you to give glory to God? To say to the world, God did this. He is responsible for the blessings I have. He is a good Father, and not because I am a good son/daughter. It costs you nothing to tell this truth. Nothing. 7 years pass.

"What does it cost you to acknowledge God? To say God did this? Nothing.

Give God the glory and He will direct your paths." DH

STUDENT:

At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up toward heaven, and I could think normally again! Then I gave praise to the Most High God; I gave honor and glory to him who lives forever....

³⁶ At that time I could think normally again, and God gave back my great honor and power and returned the glory to my kingdom. The people who advised me and the royal family came to me for help again. I became king again and was even greater and more powerful than before. ³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, give praise and honor and glory to the King of heaven. Everything he does is right and fair, and he is able to make proud people humble. (NCV)

TEACHER:

Our best guess is we have now fast forwarded 30 years to the time when Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, or step-grandson is on the throne. The time is c. 539 B.C. and Belshazzar is on the throne. He is the 4th consecutive ruler over Babylon, and Daniel's testimony still commands respect.



CH. 5

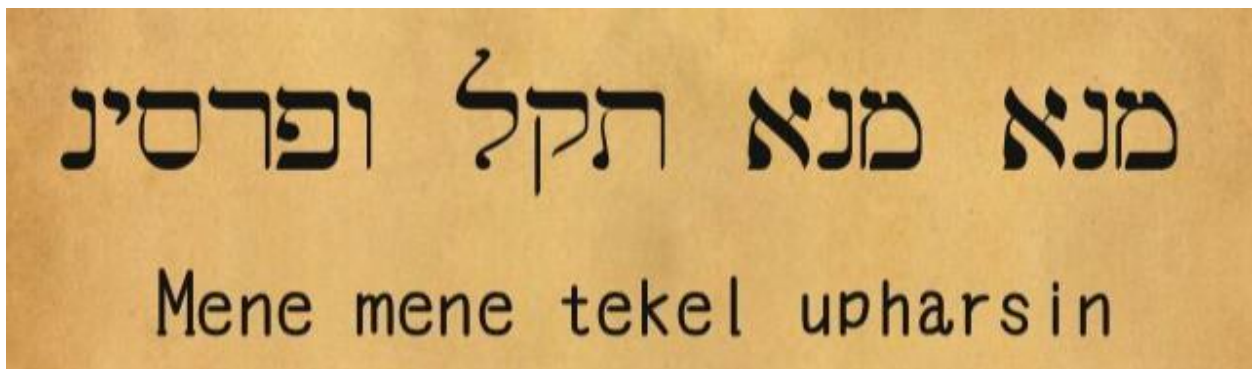
STUDENT:

King Belshazzar gave a big banquet for a thousand royal guests and drank wine with them. ² As Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring the gold and silver cups that his ancestor Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. This was so the king, his royal guests, his wives, and his slave women could drink from those cups. ³ So they brought the gold cups that had been taken from the Temple of God in Jerusalem. And the king and his royal guests, his wives, and his slave women drank from them. ⁴ As they were drinking, they praised their gods, which were made from gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. (NCV)

TEACHER:

For 3 decades they have ignored the Lord God. Finally the Babylonians hand God the last straw. They use cups and utensils, meant for sacred sacrifices, to get drunk with. Utensils intended for the Levites to use in Temple worship alone.

God has had enough.



STUDENT:

⁵ Suddenly the fingers of a person's hand appeared and began writing on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote.

⁶ King Belshazzar was very frightened. His face turned white, his knees knocked together, and he could not stand up because his legs were too weak. ⁷ The king called for the magicians, wise men, and wizards of Babylon and said to them, "Anyone who can read this writing and explain it will receive purple clothes fit for a king and a gold chain around his neck. And I will make that person the third highest ruler in the kingdom." (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

One interesting bit of trivia. The reason the king promised the 3rd highest position in the land was that Belshazzar co-ruled the empire with his father. They held the top 2 positions, hence the 3rd was promised. When all the king's wise men couldn't interpret the writing, Nebuchadnezzar's daughter, the queen mother, remembered Daniel who often helped her father out with these types of issues.

=====

STUDENT:

Then the king's mother, who had heard the voices of the king and his royal guests, came into the banquet room. She said, "O king, live forever! Don't be afraid or let your face be white with fear! ¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, this man showed understanding, knowledge, and wisdom like the gods. Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, put this man in charge of all the wise men, fortune-tellers, magicians, and wizards. ¹² The man I am talking about is named Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. He was very wise and had knowledge and understanding. He could explain dreams and secrets and could answer very hard problems. Call for Daniel. He will tell you what the writing on the wall means." (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

Daniel is summoned and the king tells Daniel that he can hold the 3rd position in the kingdom and a wardrobe etc. if Daniel can interpret the message from the hand of God.

=====

STUDENT:

Then Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself, or you may give those rewards to someone else. But I will read the writing on the wall for you and will explain to you what it means.

¹⁸ "O king, the Most High God made your father Nebuchadnezzar a great, important, and powerful king....

²⁰ "But Nebuchadnezzar became too proud and stubborn, so he was taken off his royal throne. His glory was taken away. ²¹ He was forced away from people, and his mind became like the mind of an animal. He lived with the wild donkeys and was fed grass like an ox and became wet with dew. These things happened to him until he learned his lesson... (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

After Daniel gives Belshazzar a short history lesson, he gets to the point.

=====

STUDENT:

²² "Belshazzar, you already knew these things, because you are a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar. Still you have not been sorry for what you have done. ²³ Instead, you have set yourself against the Lord of heaven. You ordered the drinking cups from the Temple of the Lord to be brought to you. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT:

Then you and your royal guests, your wives, and your slave women drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone that are not really gods; they cannot see or hear or understand anything. You did not honor God, who has power over your life and everything you do. ²⁴ So God sent the hand that wrote on the wall.

²⁵ “These are the words that were written on the wall: ‘Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin.’ (NCV)

TEACHER:

Next Daniel gives Belshazzar a literal “word for word” translation, and what the result would be upon fulfillment of the message from God.

STUDENT:

²⁶ “This is what the words mean: Mene: God has counted the days until your kingdom will end. ²⁷ Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found not good enough. ²⁸ Upharsin: Your kingdom is being divided and will be given to the Medes and the Persians.”

²⁹ Then Belshazzar gave an order for Daniel to be dressed in purple clothes and to have a gold chain put around his neck. And it was announced that Daniel was the third highest ruler in the kingdom. ³⁰ That very same night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonian people, was killed. ³¹ So Darius the Mede became the new king when he was sixty-two years old.

TEACHER:

The Medo-Persian Empire took over Babylon, and their armies marched in without any resistance. Darius became king and decided to divide up the kingdom into state-like regions with local leadership reporting to 1 of 3 different supervisors of which Daniel was the best. Daniel proved himself to be the best of the 3, and jealousy consumed the other 2. Even his enemies had to acknowledge his testimony.

CH. 6

STUDENT:

But they could not find anything wrong with him or any reason to accuse him, because he was trustworthy and not lazy or dishonest. ⁵ Finally these men said, “We will never find any reason to accuse Daniel unless it is about the law of his God.” (NCV)

TEACHER:

The other 2 supervisors went to Darius with their scheme. They asked Darius to sign a law saying “for the next 30 days nobody can worship any god or man except Darius. Anyone breaking this law would be thrown into the lion’s den. Darius signed the law, even though he wouldn’t be able to over-turn the law because of the regulations in Persia at the time.

STUDENT:

¹⁰ Even though Daniel knew that the new law had been written, he went to pray in an upstairs room in his house, which had windows that opened toward Jerusalem. Three times each day Daniel would kneel down to pray and thank God, just as he always had done. (NCV)

STUDENT:

¹¹ Then those men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. ¹² So they went to the king and talked to him about the law he had made. They said, “Didn’t you sign a law that says no one may pray to any god or human except you, O king? Doesn’t it say that anyone who disobeys during the next thirty days will be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “Yes, that is the law, and the laws of the Medes and Persians cannot be canceled.” (NCV)

TEACHER:

The other supervisors throw Daniel under the bus, knowing the law would stand, there-by removing their competition.

STUDENT:

Then they said to the king, “Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is not paying attention to you, O king, or to the law you signed. Daniel still prays to his God three times every day.” ¹⁴ The king became very upset when he heard this. He wanted to save Daniel, and he worked hard until sunset trying to think of a way to save him. (NCV)

TEACHER:

Darius gives the order after talking to Daniel.

STUDENT:

So King Darius gave the order, and Daniel was brought in and thrown into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May the God you serve all the time save you!” ¹⁷ A big stone was brought and placed over the opening of the lions’ den. Then the king used his signet ring and the rings of his royal officers to put special seals on the rock. This ensured that no one would move the rock and bring Daniel out. ¹⁸ Then King Darius went back to his palace. He did not eat that night, he did not have any entertainment brought to him, and he could not sleep. (NCV)

TEACHER:

The next morning.



STUDENT:

¹⁹ The next morning King Darius got up at dawn and hurried to the lions’ den. ²⁰ As he came near the den, he was worried. He called out to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God! Has your God that you always worship been able to save you from the lions?”

²¹ Daniel answered, “O king, live forever! ²² My God sent his angel to close the lions’ mouths. They have not hurt me, because my God knows I am innocent. I never did anything wrong to you, O king.” (NCV)

=====

STUDENT:

²³ King Darius was very happy and told his servants to lift Daniel out of the lions' den. So they lifted him out and did not find any injury on him, because Daniel had trusted in his God. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

The king was so furious that he had been set-up by the other supervisors that he fed them to the lions, along with their wives and children. He also spread the fame of Daniel commanding that everyone serve the God of Daniel.

=====

STUDENT:

I am making a new law for people in every part of my kingdom.
All of you must fear and respect the God of Daniel. Daniel's God is the living God; he lives forever.
His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end.
²⁷ God rescues and saves people and does mighty miracles in heaven and on earth.
He is the one who saved Daniel from the power of the lions.
²⁸ So Daniel was successful during the time Darius was king and when Cyrus the Persian was king. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

We now enter a portion of Daniel that deals with the purely prophetic. This next chapter happens for instance before the end of chapter 5 (the writing on the wall). It is assumed by every commentator I researched that the chronological history was given in Daniel 1-6, and now some extra details have been added.
Chapter 7 starts with a dream of Daniels. He was staring at the evening sky, and the 4 great winds were stirring up the sea. All of a sudden 4 great beasts rose from the churning sea.

=====

STUDENT: *1st beast (Babylon, the 1st global empire)*

"The first animal looked like a lion, but had wings like an eagle. I watched this animal until its wings were torn off. It was lifted from the ground so that it stood up on two feet like a human, and it was given the mind of a human. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *2nd beast (Medo-persian, the 3 ribs would be their 3 conquests of Babylon, Egypt, & Lybia)*

⁵ "Then I saw a second animal before me that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat all the meat you want!' (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *3rd beast (Greek, with the 4 heads referring to the empire dividing into 4 parts after Alexander the Great died. The 4 parts being Casander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy)*

⁶ "After that, I looked, and there before me was another animal. This animal looked like a leopard with four wings on its back that looked like a bird's wings. This animal had four heads and was given power to rule. (NCV)

=====

STUDENT: *4th beast (Roman, the 10 horns many think, are 2 horns with 10 tines. Like a 10 point buck. This would symbolize the Romans power. They must mean something more as they coincide with the 10 toes of the Statue in chapter 2)*

⁷ "After that, in my vision at night I saw in front of me a fourth animal that was cruel, terrible, and very strong. It had large iron teeth. It crushed and ate what it killed, and then it walked on whatever was left. This fourth animal was different from any animal I had seen before, and it had ten horns.

⁸ "While I was thinking about the horns, another horn grew up among them. It was a little horn with eyes like a human's eyes. It also had a mouth, and the mouth was bragging. The little horn pulled out three of the other horns. (NCV)

TEACHER:

The major schools of thought on these 4 animals assign them to the 4 empires from the previous vision of Daniel. If the interpretation is accurate then the next question would be, what or who the "little horn" is. Knowing the other prophetic words in scripture, 1 possibility is that in the end times, the Anti-Christ might fit the bill. The horn brags, and is thrown into the burning flame, like the beast and Anti-Christ in Revelations. Let's read more of the vision.

STUDENT: *The Throne of God*

"As I looked,

Thrones were put in their places, and God, the Eternal One, sat on his throne.

His clothes were white like snow, and the hair on his head was white like wool.

His throne was made from fire, and the wheels of his throne were blazing with fire.

¹⁰ A river of fire was flowing from in front of him.

Many thousands of angels were serving him, and millions of angels stood before him.

Court was ready to begin, and the books were opened. (NCV)

TEACHER:

The vision also seems to correlate with the Book of Revelations in the Great White Throne Judgement, and the sentence to hell there-after.

STUDENT:

¹¹ "I kept on looking because the little horn was bragging. I kept watching until finally the fourth animal was killed. Its body was destroyed, and it was thrown into the burning fire. ¹² (The power and rule of the other animals had been taken from them, but they were permitted to live for a certain period of time.) (NCV)

TEACHER:

The vision next reveals Christ at the Second Coming.

STUDENT:

¹³ "In my vision at night I saw in front of me someone who looked like a human being coming on the clouds in the sky. He came near God, who has been alive forever, and he was led to God. ¹⁴ He was given authority, glory, and the strength of a king. People of every tribe, nation, and language will serve him. His rule will last forever, and his kingdom will never be destroyed. (NCV)

TEACHER:

The dream explained to Daniel.

STUDENT: *The 4 animals.*

¹⁷ 'The four great animals are four kingdoms that will come from the earth. ¹⁸ But the holy people who belong to the Most High God will receive the power to rule and will have the power to rule forever, from now on.'

¹⁹ "Then I wanted to know what the fourth animal meant, because it was different from all the others. It was very terrible and had iron teeth and bronze claws. It was the animal that crushed and ate what it killed and then walked on whatever was left. ²⁰ I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the little horn that grew there. (NCV)

STUDENT: *The little horn*

As I watched, the little horn began making war against God's holy people and was defeating them ²² until God, who has been alive forever, came. He judged in favor of the holy people who belong to the Most High God; then the time came for them to receive the power to rule. (NCV)

STUDENT: *The 4th kingdom, and 10 horns*

'The fourth animal is a fourth kingdom that will come on the earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will destroy people all over the world. It will walk on and crush the whole earth. ²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this fourth kingdom. After those ten kings are gone, another king will come. He will be different from the kings who ruled before him, and he will defeat three of the other kings. ²⁵ This king will speak against the Most High God, and he will hurt and kill God's holy people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The holy people that belong to God will be in that king's power for three and one-half years. (NCV)

STUDENT: *Judgement and the 1000 year millennium*

The power of the king will be taken away, and his kingdom will be completely destroyed. ²⁷ Then the holy people who belong to the Most High God will have the power to rule. They will rule over all the kingdoms under heaven with power and greatness, and their power to rule will last forever. People from all the other kingdoms will respect and serve them.' (NCV)

TEACHER:

Does anybody have any thoughts? Jump 2 years forward and Daniel has another vision. This vision is in the 3rd year of Belshazzar's reign. I am not sure if there is an eternal purpose in this bit of trivia I am going to share or not, but in the most ancient manuscripts, the original language changes here. The 1st chapter is in Hebrew, then 2-7 are in Aramaic, and now we are back to Hebrew. It is possible that he had 2 different scribes taking dictation, or that at 1 point he wrote himself, and the other with a scribe. I thought I would include that information in case someone had a thought on it. On to chapter 8 of the 12 chapters in the Book of Daniel.



Daniel has a vision of the picture above. A ram, fights a goat that has an almost unicorn like extra horn that makes the goat very formidable. The ram had conquered much of the world, until the goat comes from the west with great speed. He says it was moving so fast that it hardly touched the ground. The goat also was filled with rage. The ram is no match for the goat, and is defeated. The goat walks all over the ram, and no one can help the ram. This goat becomes very powerful as a result. At the height of its power, the goat's horn breaks off, and 4 horns grow up in its place. Let's look at chapter 8 to hear the interpretation.

CH. 8

STUDENT:

I, Daniel, saw this vision and tried to understand what it meant. In it I saw someone who looked like a man standing near me. ¹⁶ And I heard a man's voice calling... "Gabriel, explain the vision to this man."

¹⁷ Gabriel came to where I was standing. When he came close to me, I was very afraid and bowed face down on the ground. But Gabriel said to me, "Human being, understand that this vision is about the time of the end."

¹⁸ While Gabriel was speaking, I fell into a deep sleep with my face on the ground. Then he touched me and lifted me to my feet. ¹⁹ He said, "Now, I will explain to you what will happen in the time of God's anger. Your vision was about the set time of the end. (NCV)

STUDENT:

²⁰ "You saw a male sheep with two horns, which are the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹ The male goat is the king of Greece, and the big horn between its eyes is the first king. ²² The four horns that grew in the place of the broken horn are four kingdoms. Those four kingdoms will come from the nation of the first king, but they will not be as strong as the first king. (NCV)

STUDENT:

²³ "When the end comes near for those kingdoms, a bold and cruel king who tells lies will come. This will happen when many people have turned against God. ²⁴ This king will be very powerful, but his power will not come from himself. He will cause terrible destruction and will be successful in everything he does. He will destroy powerful people and even God's holy people. ²⁵ This king will succeed by using lies and force. He will think that he is very important. He will destroy many people without warning; he will try to fight even the Prince of princes! But that cruel king will be destroyed, and not by human power. (NCV)

TEACHER:

The vision's revelation of a future king refers to the Anti-Christ. It describes him as very strong, successful, destructive, a liar and prideful. He attacks when people don't expect it. He even will challenge the Lord. The vision says he will be destroyed without human power. Part of the reason we believe this vision is of the end times is the closing verses of chapter 8.

STUDENT:

²⁶ "The vision that has been shown to you about these evenings and mornings is true. But seal up the vision, because those things won't happen for a long time."

²⁷ I, Daniel, became very weak and was sick for several days after that vision. Then I got up and went back to work for the king, but I was very upset about the vision. I didn't understand what it meant. (NCV)

TEACHER:

Chapter 9 of Daniel shows us how a prophet spends his time, when he is alone with God. The result is a vision. The 1st thing he does is he studies the Word of God. The same thing you are doing today....

CH. 9

=====

STUDENT:

² During Darius' first year as king, I, Daniel, was reading the Scriptures. I saw that the LORD told Jeremiah that Jerusalem would be empty ruins for seventy years. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

2nd He turns to God in prayer.

=====

STUDENT:

³ Then I turned to the Lord God and prayed and asked him for help. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

3rd He fasted and showed his sorrow.

=====

STUDENT:

To show my sadness, I fasted, put on rough cloth, and sat in ashes. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

5th He confessed the sins he committed and his nation committed.

=====

STUDENT:

⁴ I prayed to the LORD my God and told him about all of our sins. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

6th He praises God.

=====

STUDENT:

I said, "Lord, you are a great God who causes fear and wonder. You keep your agreement of love with all who love you and obey your commands. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

He confesses. He confesses again. In fact he confesses 26 times in the 1st 19 verses of chapter 9. And he confesses his own sins, and also for everybody else's sins. 33 times he uses the word we or us. He has assumed the responsibility of confession for his nation and people. He praises God 17 times. Finally he asks God for help 15 times. So to re-state, so you see the pattern.

He reads the Bible. He prays and fasts. He confesses to God 26 times. He praises God 17 times. He requests something 15 times.

That is how a prophet spends time with God. Daniel's prayer, if prayed today, might go something like this. Listen as I read.

Pastor Joe Wright was asked to open the new sessions of the Kansas Senate in January 1996 in prayer.

This was his prayer:

Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask Your forgiveness and to seek Your direction and guidance.

We know Your Word says, "Woe to those who call evil good," but that is exactly what we have done.

We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values. We confess:

We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it Pluralism.

We have worshipped other gods and called it multiculturalism.

We have endorsed perversion and called it alternative lifestyle.

We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery.

We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare.

We have killed our unborn and called it choice.

We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable.

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem.

We have abused power and called it politics.

We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition.

We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.

We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, Oh God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free.

Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent to direct us to the center of your will. I ask it in the Name of Your Son, the living Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

That prayer gives me chills. I confess my prayers are not so well thought out, I repent, please Father, forgive me.

As Daniel prays, the Angel Gabriel visits him.

=====

STUDENT:

²⁰ While I was saying these things in my prayer to the LORD, my God....

²¹ Gabriel came to me. (I had seen him in my last vision.) He came flying quickly to me about the time of the evening sacrifice, while I was still praying. ²² He taught me and said to me, "Daniel, I have come to give you wisdom and to help you understand. ²³ When you first started praying, an answer was given, and I came to tell you, because God loves you very much. So think about the message and understand the vision. (NCV)

=====

TEACHER:

The angel Gabriel comes to give him wisdom, and help him understand. Notice Gabriel said that he came when Daniel 1st started praying in verse 23. He points out that when he 1st started praying, the answer was given. I pray we are as eager to pray as God is to answer. God reveals to Daniel through His angel the future again.

=====

STUDENT: 70 x 7 (*seventy weeks*)

²⁴ "Seventy weeks 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.

²⁵ "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;
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times. (NKJV)

TEACHER: (A special tip of the hat to Dana Shaw who actually understands this)

This prophecy is a word between God and the nation of Israel. This does not involve the church. 70 weeks, or 490 years are the time frame set up by God to finish God's work with Israel. When the 490 years are completed the Messiah will be rejected, the payment for sins will have been made, the righteous will be reconciled with God, righteousness will be eternal, the prophesy of the Messiah will be fulfilled, and He will be anointed as King.

Let's do the math now. Gabriel explains the 490 years in greater detail. He breaks it down into:

7 sevens, 62 sevens, and 1 seven remaining. Totaling 70 sevens. (490).

The 69 sevens are the time of the rebuilding of the Temple and Jerusalem, all the way to the Messiah.

The 1st 7 sevens of those 69 are the rebuilding period, the rest would be God setting the stage for Christ up to and including the Crucifixion.

That is 483 years from Artaxerxes decree in Nehemiah 2 (c. 444 B.C.) to Jesus resurrection. (c. 33 A.D.)

The remaining period of the original 70 sevens we must conclude is the seven year tribulation.

=====

STUDENT:

²⁶ "And after the sixty-two weeks

Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;

And the people of the prince who is to come

Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

The end of it *shall be* with a flood,

And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;

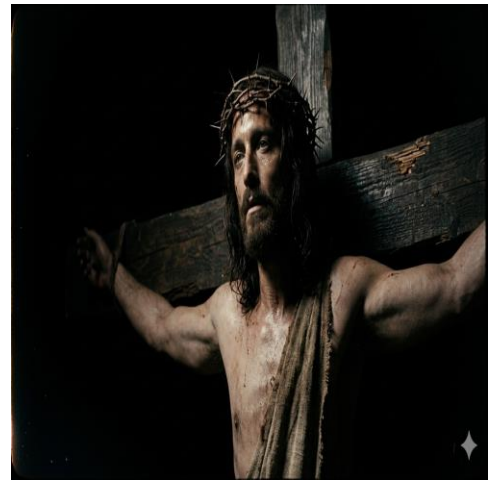
But in the middle of the week

He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.

And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,

Even until the consummation, which is determined,

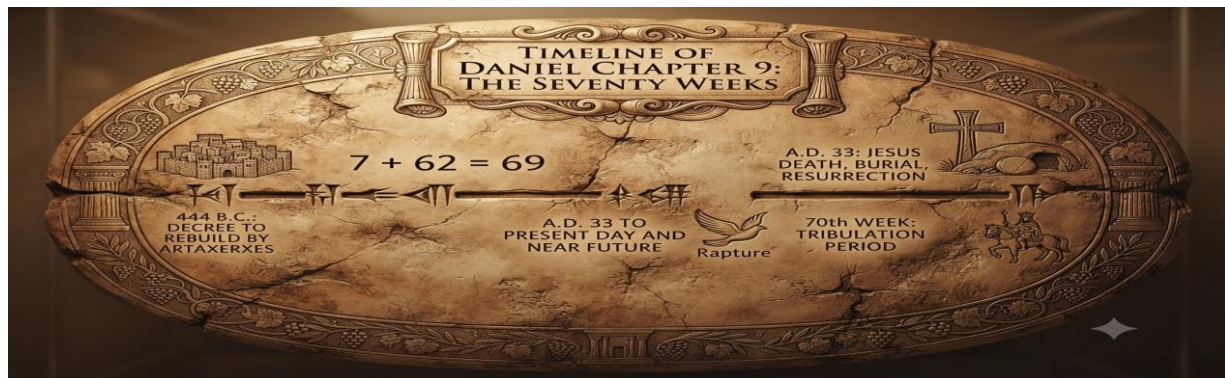
Is poured out on the desolate." (NKJV)



=====

TEACHER:

The passage we just read said after the 62 weeks, which we know comes after the 1st 7 weeks. So concluding at the end of a total 483 years, the Messiah would be cut off, Jerusalem would be leveled, and earth would be subjected to one war after another until the Messiah returns to finish the job. That would be through the final week, The 7 year tribulation. Some people would prefer a picture, (my wife), so here you go.



TEACHER:

Daniel chapter 10 concerns the vision of the Glorious Man. The vision came after Daniel was on what many call "The Daniel Fast." No meat, no wine, nothing exquisite, and no perfume. This he did for 21 days of mourning. Daniel explains something similar to what Paul would experience on the road to Damascus. He saw the vision, but no one else with him saw it, however they were all so terrified, that they fled. The vision was a man clothed in linen, with a golden belt around his waist. His body looked like it was made of beryl. (Beryl is a mineral family that includes aquamarine and emeralds). His face looked like lightning, and his eyes looked like torches. His arms as if they were made of bronze, with a voice like a multitude. Daniel immediately fell on his face terrified. This vision was explained by a messenger from God.

CH. 10

STUDENT:

Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." (NKJV)

TEACHER:

The 1st thing he is told is, "Daniel, you are greatly loved."

STUDENT:

"Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. (NKJV)

TEACHER:

The 2nd thing this angel tells him is "from the 1st day you set yourself to know the Lord, you were heard."

STUDENT:

¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers to many days yet to come.*" (NKJV)

TEACHER:

The 3rd thing he tells Daniel before he starts to interpret the vision is, "there are battles in the spiritual realm of the angels that don't want you to know God's plans." Daniel is overcome. He felt he may have bit off more than he could chew, so to speak. Someone who appears as a son of man touched his lips so he could speak. He confesses he is too sorrowful to be of any use. Then he is touched again.



STUDENT:

¹⁸ Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹ And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!"

So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."

²⁰ Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. ²¹ But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. (NKJV)

=====

TEACHER:

The angel explains the vision as the Medo-Persian/Greek conflict on the horizon, including the reign of Alexander the Great, and the divided Greek empire after Alexander dies.

=====

CH. 11

STUDENT:

The angel said, "Three more kings will rule over Persia, followed by a fourth, who will be richer than all the others. At the height of his power and wealth he will challenge the kingdom of Greece.

³ "Then a heroic king will appear. He will rule over a huge empire and do whatever he wants. ⁴ But at the height of his power his empire will break up and be divided into four parts. Kings not descended from him will rule in his place, but they will not have the power that he had. (GNT)

=====

TEACHER:

The messenger next continues the narrative to explain the 4 divisions of the Greek kingdom after Alexander the Great dies.

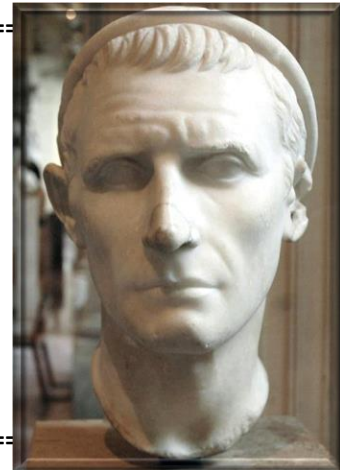
Then after the global picture settles among these 4 kingdoms,

1 man rises to the top. The Evil Antiochus Epiphanies. A Syrian by birth.

He was in love with himself, so we have quite a few statutes, made in his likeness, which have survived. He is the man who commits the Abomination of Desolation by setting up the Statute of Zeus in the Temple and forcing its worship in God's House. He is the type of Anti-Christ. Not a type. The type.

As a result, we have the Maccabean revolt. But back to the vision.

=====



STUDENT:

"The next king of Syria will be an evil man who has no right to be king, but he will come unexpectedly and seize power by trickery. ²² Anyone who opposes him, even God's High Priest, will be swept away and wiped out. ²³ By making treaties, he will deceive other nations, and he will grow stronger and stronger, even though he rules only a small nation. ²⁴ He will invade a wealthy province without warning and will do things that none of his ancestors ever did. Then he will divide among his followers the goods and property he has captured in war. He will make plans to attack fortresses, but his time will soon run out. (GNT)

=====

TEACHER:

The vision is in such great detail it is stunning. The next several hundred years go exactly as Daniel says it would.

=====

STUDENT:

"The king of Syria will do as he pleases. He will boast that he is greater than any god, superior even to the Supreme God. He will be able to do this until the time when God punishes him. God will do exactly what he has planned. ³⁷ The king will ignore the god his ancestors served, and also the god that women love. In fact, he will ignore every god, because he will think he is greater than any of them. ³⁸ Instead, he will honor the god who protects fortresses. He will offer gold, silver, jewels, and other rich gifts to a god his ancestors never worshiped. ³⁹ To defend his fortresses, he will use people who worship a foreign god. (GNT)

TEACHER:

The vision ends with Antiochus death, alone, with no one there to help him. The dual nature of prophecy is here again revealed. There is an immediate fulfillment, and often a longer, greater meaning to prophecy. A pattern of revelation. The physical revelation, often has a spiritual revelation as well. In this vision, it is spelled out as the end of the church age, the rapture, and our reign with Christ.

CH. 12

STUDENT:

The angel wearing linen clothes said, "At that time the great angel Michael, who guards your people, will appear. Then there will be a time of troubles, the worst since nations first came into existence. When that time comes, all the people of your nation whose names are written in God's book will be saved. ² Many of those who have already died will live again: some will enjoy eternal life, and some will suffer eternal disgrace. ³ The wise leaders will shine with all the brightness of the sky. And those who have taught many people to do what is right will shine like the stars forever." (GNT)

TEACHER:

The next passage makes me feel better as it shows, just like me, Daniel wonders when will the Lord finish his plan on the earth. Daniel would like a date. So would I. Daniel receives the same answer I do. No. You do your job, God will do His.

STUDENT:

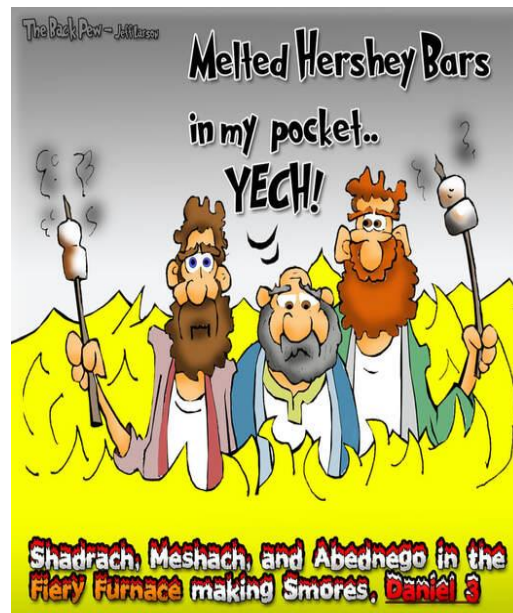
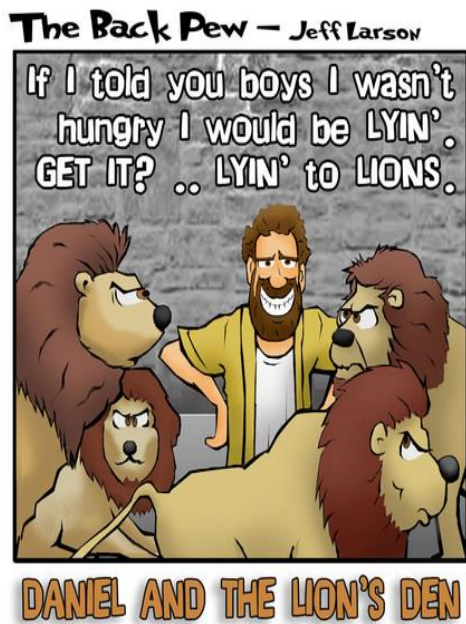
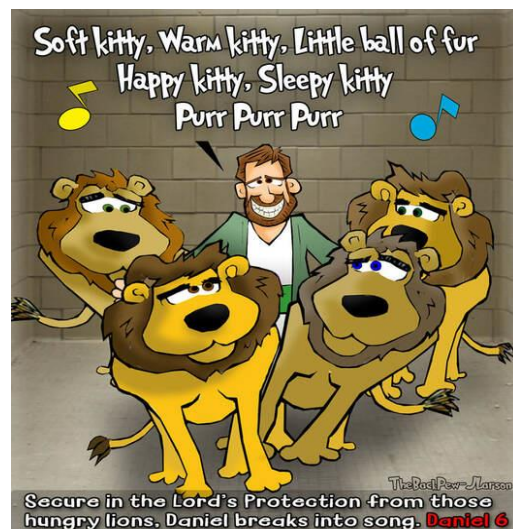
"And now, Daniel, close the book and put a seal on it until the end of the world. Meanwhile, many people will waste their efforts trying to understand what is happening." ...I heard what he said, but I did not understand it. So I asked, "But, sir, how will it all end?" ⁹ He answered, "You must go now, Daniel, because these words are to be kept secret and hidden until the end comes. ¹⁰ Many people will be purified. Those who are wicked will not understand but will go on being wicked; only those who are wise will understand.... "And you, Daniel, be faithful to the end. Then you will die, but you will rise to receive your reward at the end of time." (GNT)

NEXT LESSON HOSEA

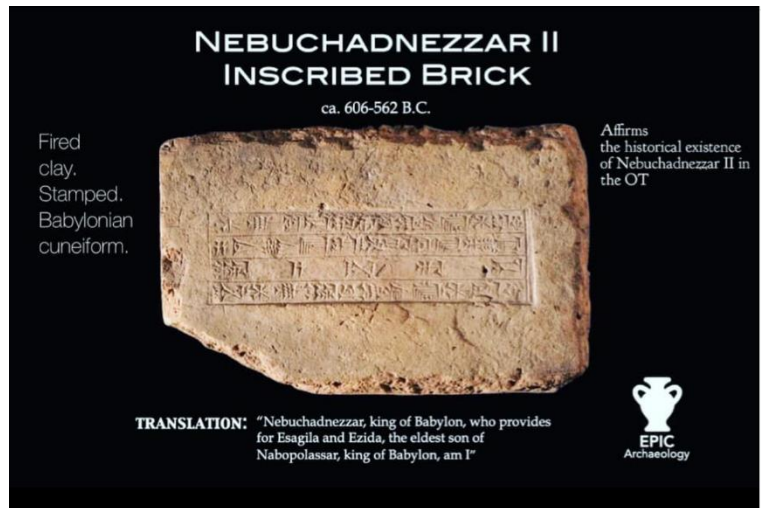
"The wise leaders will shine with all the brightness of the sky. And those who have taught many people to do what is right will shine like the stars forever."

Daniel 12:3

Daniel in the Lion's Den By Peter Paul Rubens
c. 1615
The famous painting hangs in the
National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C.



This stamped brick was excavated from the ancient Neo-Babylonian city of Babylon mentioned throughout the Old Testament. It is inscribed with the name of



An engraving on an eye stone of onyx with an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar II.



Both the Bible and archaeology record Babylonian monarchs from a time after the Babylonian kingdom eclipsed the Assyrians (and even before). Best known is Nebuchadnezzar (actually Nebuchadnezzar II, more accurately spelled Nebuchadrezzar). It was he who destroyed Solomon's Temple in 586 B.C.E. and exiled the Jews to Babylonia.

I love this carved relief to the right. It shows Nebuchadnezzar forgiving some guy his taxes.



