

## THE PROPHETIC CONNECTION BETWEEN DANIEL AND REVELATION

The books of Daniel and Revelation occupy a distinctive place in the Bible as apocalyptic books. Both are filled with prophetic imagery and visions that offer profound insights into God's sovereign plan for humankind and the ultimate victory of good over evil.

Written during a time of great turmoil for the Jewish people, Daniel offered hope and guidance in the midst of their captivity in Babylon. Revelation, written by the apostle John, speaks to the early Christian communities under Roman oppression, offering a vision of hope and ultimate triumph. Although separated by centuries, these two books echo similar themes of divine sovereignty, judgment, and redemption.

Bible scholars have long recognized the value of studying these two books together. Each illuminates aspects of the other, deepening our understanding of the end times. Together, they offer a comprehensive and unified vision of what lies ahead.

It is no surprise that these books align because both are inspired by God, who does not contradict Himself (2 Peter 1:21). Jesus plays a central role in the prophecies of both books. Revelation is described as "the revelation of Jesus Christ" and concerns "things that must soon take place" (Revelation 1:1). Similarly, Jesus is central to the prophecies of Daniel (and the other biblical prophets). As noted in 1 Peter 1:10-11, "the prophets who prophesied" conveyed messages from "the Spirit of Christ in them."

Many, including myself, interpret 1 Peter 1:11 as a reference to Jesus Christ, while others understand “the Spirit of Christ” as the Holy Spirit. Both interpretations are valid. If “the Spirit of Christ” refers to the Holy Spirit, it’s important to remember that the role of the Holy Spirit is to uphold and expound the teachings of Jesus Christ (John 14:26). Therefore, whether “the Spirit of Christ” refers to Jesus Himself or to the Holy Spirit, the prophetic messages given to Daniel and other prophets are fundamentally rooted in the teachings of Jesus, whether delivered directly by Him or through the Holy Spirit.

The prophecies of Jesus are trustworthy because He is omniscient—He knows everything. The apostle John observed that Jesus didn’t need anyone to tell Him about people because He already knew their innermost thoughts (John 2:25). The disciples acknowledged, “Now we know that you know all things” (John 16:30). After His resurrection, when Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him, Peter replied, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you” (John 21:17). Jesus demonstrated His omniscience by knowing the exact location of fish in the water (Luke 5:4-6; John 21:6-11) and identifying the specific fish with a coin in its mouth (Matthew 17:27). He also has intimate knowledge of the Father, just as the Father knows Him (Matthew 11:27; John 7:29; 8:55; 10:15; 17:25). Because of Jesus’ complete knowledge, we can have confidence in the prophecies that come from Him.

### **THE PERSPECTIVE OF CHURCH HISTORY**

Since the early centuries of Christianity, the connection between Daniel and Revelation has captivated biblical interpreters. Here is a sampling of key historical figures who explored this relationship:<sup>1</sup>

- Irenaeus (AD 130–202), in *Against Heresies*, drew parallels between the visions of Daniel and Revelation, especially concerning the anti-christ and the end times.
- Hippolytus (AD 170–235), in his *Commentary on Daniel* and *Treatise on Christ and the Antichrist*, was among the first to link these two books explicitly. He emphasized their complementary messages about the end times, linking the beasts and kingdoms of Daniel with the apocalyptic imagery of Revelation.

- **Jerome (AD 342–420)** wrote extensive biblical commentaries that reflected a deep engagement with Daniel and Revelation, using one to illuminate the other.
- In his commentary on Revelation, **Victorinus of Pettau (died AD 303)** frequently referred to Daniel, highlighting the intertwined nature of these prophetic visions.
- **Augustine (AD 354–430)**, in his magnum opus *The City of God*, took a more allegorical approach, interpreting Daniel and Revelation as depictions of the spiritual struggle between good and evil.
- In his commentary on Revelation, **Bede the Venerable (AD 672–735)** incorporated Daniel’s insights and demonstrated their thematic connections.
- **Joachim of Fiore (AD 1135–1202)**, a medieval theologian, developed a theory of history heavily influenced by the apocalyptic visions of Daniel and Revelation, predicting an age of spiritual renewal.
- **Martin Luther (AD 1483–1546)**, a key figure in the Reformation, viewed Daniel and Revelation as prophetic critiques of the Roman Catholic Church, identifying the papacy as the antichrist.
- **Philip Melanchthon (AD 1497–1560)**, a close associate of Luther, explored Daniel and Revelation in his theological works, seeing them as offering insights into the church’s struggle and eventual triumph over its adversaries.
- **John Knox (AD 1514–1572)**, a Scottish reformer, believed that Daniel and Revelation contained prophecies about the church’s struggle with the antichrist, which he identified with the Roman Catholic papacy.
- **Jonathan Edwards (AD 1703–1758)**, an American theologian, wrote extensively, including on eschatology. He referred to Daniel and Revelation to discuss the end times and the second coming of Christ.

The tradition of studying Daniel and Revelation in parallel spans the history of the church. As countless scholars and theologians have discovered,

studying these two scriptural books together offers profound spiritual insights. We, too, can expect great rewards as we explore their intertwined messages.

### **YOU CAN TRUST DANIEL AND JOHN**

You can trust Daniel and John (the author of Revelation) because Jesus Himself validated both. In Matthew 24:15-16, Jesus spoke prophetically to His disciples: "When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains." Here, Jesus confirms Daniel as a true and trustworthy prophet.

Similarly, Revelation 1:1-2 states: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw." In this passage, Jesus recognizes John as a faithful and reliable witness to the truth.

### **A SURVEY OF PARALLELS BETWEEN DANIEL AND REVELATION**

Because Daniel and Revelation are the only apocalyptic books in the Bible, it is natural to expect numerous similarities between them. And indeed, the parallels abound! Here's a look at some of these striking connections:

- Both Daniel and Revelation present apocalyptic visions that reveal future events and God's ultimate plan for humanity.
- Scrolls and books appear in both Daniel and Revelation. Daniel 12:4 mentions a sealed book to be kept until the end times. Similarly, in Revelation 5, John sees a scroll with seven seals, which only the Lamb (Jesus) is worthy to open, revealing the events of the end times.
- God's complete and supreme authority over the universe is evident in both Daniel (chapters 3 and 6) and Revelation (1:5; 19:6).
- Daniel 7:9-10 depicts the Ancient of Days (God) seated on a throne,

accompanied by a host of angels. Likewise, in Revelation 4–5, John is transported to heaven, where he witnesses God’s throne surrounded by living creatures and elders in worship.

- The theme of repentance is central in Daniel (for example, 4:27) and is echoed in Revelation (2:5, 16, 21, 22; 3:3, 19; 9:20-21; 16:9, 11).
- God’s discipline of His children is a recurring theme. According to Daniel, Israel faces severe punishment when the Jews are taken into captivity in Babylon (1:1-2). Similarly, Revelation shows the Lord disciplining those He loves (3:19).
- The archangel Michael plays a pivotal role in God’s prophetic plan, as seen in Daniel 10:13 and Revelation 12:7.
- Angels are instrumental in delivering God’s end-time revelations to humankind in both Daniel (8:15-27) and Revelation (1:1).
- A cosmic struggle between good and evil angels for control of the nations is portrayed in Daniel 10:13, 20 and Revelation 12:7; 20:3.
- God’s power to protect His people from danger is displayed in Daniel 3:19-25; 6:18-23 and Revelation 3:7.
- The tribulation will be a time of unprecedented trouble, as described in Daniel 12:1 and Revelation 3:10; 6; 8–9; 16.
- Daniel saw a vision of four beasts coming up out of the sea, representing successive world empires (Daniel 7:1-8). John saw one beast coming out of the sea and another out of the earth, symbolizing the rise of the antichrist and the false prophet (Revelation 13:1-5, 11-18).
- In the end times, a Roman Empire will arise with ten principal rulers (Daniel 7:7, 20, 24; Revelation 13:1-2).
- The antichrist will lead the Roman Empire, as described in Daniel 7:8, 20 and Revelation 13:1-10.
- The antichrist is characterized by arrogance and conceit (Daniel 7:8, 25; Revelation 13:5-6).

- The antichrist will speak against God, exalting himself above all gods and blaspheming the Supreme God (Daniel 11:36; Revelation 13:5-8).
- The antichrist will wage war against the saints and prevail over them (Daniel 7:21, 25; Revelation 13:7).
- The antichrist's reign will bring great destruction upon the earth during the tribulation period (Daniel 7:23; Revelation 4-18).
- God humbles the rulers of the world, as seen in Daniel 4:28-33 and Revelation 18:9-20.
- Jesus will return in glory, fulfilling the prophetic visions of Daniel 7:13 and Revelation 19:11-16.
- God's everlasting kingdom will triumph (Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45; 4:34-35; Revelation 20:1-6; 21-22).
- Good will ultimately prevail over evil (Daniel 2:44-45; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:1).
- God's people will enter Christ's millennial kingdom (Daniel 7:27; Revelation 20:4-5; 21:1-4).
- Jesus Christ, the divine Messiah, will reign forever (Daniel 7:14; Revelation 19:16; 20:4, 6).
- Some will be resurrected to eternal life, while others will rise to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2; Revelation 20:5-6).

Such parallels reveal the deep interconnectedness of Daniel and Revelation, with both books offering a complementary prophetic vision of the culmination of God's plan for the world.

### **THE WISDOM OF STUDYING DANIEL AND REVELATION TOGETHER**

It is wise to study the books of Daniel and Revelation together. Here's why:

- *Two Apocalyptic Books.* Daniel and Revelation are the only apocalyptic

texts in the Bible, and both are rich in end-times prophecy. Studying them side by side makes perfect sense.

- *Comprehensive Understanding.* Studying these books together provides a more complete understanding of Bible prophecy. Daniel's visions lay a foundation that Revelation expands upon, offering detailed insights into world empires, the rise of the antichrist, and the last days.
- *Same Source.* Although written 500 years apart, Daniel and Revelation share parallel teachings, underscoring their divine origin in God (or Jesus Christ).
- *Enhanced Understanding of Prophetic Imagery.* Both books employ similar symbols and imagery. By comparing these elements, readers can more accurately interpret the prophetic messages they contain.
- *Scripture Interprets Scripture.* Analyzing these texts together conforms to the timeless principle that "Scripture interprets Scripture," providing deeper clarity.
- *Chronological Sequence.* Studying Daniel and Revelation together helps clarify the sequence of end-time events. For instance, both books affirm that God's everlasting kingdom will triumph after the fall of the antichrist's kingdom (Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45; 4:34-35; Revelation 20:1-6; 21-22).
- *Key Prophetic Themes.* Together, Daniel and Revelation clarify the major components of prophecy—the tribulation period, the person and work of the antichrist, and the persecution of the saints, to name a few.
- *A Core Framework.* The combined study of these books provides a core framework for understanding end-time prophecies found in other books of the Bible (for example, in Matthew, John, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians).
- *Strengthened Faith.* Daniel's stories of unwavering faith—such as Daniel in the lion's den and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in

the fiery furnace—combined with Revelation's promises to those who persevere, inspire faith and commitment in believers of all ages.

- *Deepening Confidence in God's Sovereignty.* Daniel highlights God's control over history, empires, and their leaders, while Revelation reveals His ultimate victory over evil and His sovereign rule over all creation. Together, these books strengthen our confidence in God's sovereign plan.
- *Increased Awareness of Spiritual Warfare.* Daniel highlights the conflict between God's people and demonic powers (Daniel 10:13-14). Revelation describes the cosmic battle between good and evil, including the efforts of Satan and demons against believers (Revelation 11:7; 12:17; 20:8-9). Therefore, a study of Daniel and Revelation helps to increase our awareness of the spiritual battles we may face and the assurance of God's triumph over all evil.
- *Increased Devotion.* Daniel's example of prayer and fasting (Daniel 9) and Revelation's portrayal of heavenly worship (Revelation 4-5) inspire deeper personal devotion to Christ.
- *Call to Holiness.* Daniel models holy living in a corrupt world (Daniel 1:8-21), and Revelation calls believers to purity and readiness for Christ's return (Revelation 2-3; 19:7-8). Studying these texts together encourages a life of holiness and sanctification.
- *Longing for the Kingdom.* Daniel foretells the establishment of God's everlasting kingdom (Daniel 2:44), while Revelation describes its ultimate fulfillment with the new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21-22). Together, these books deepen our longing for God's kingdom.

In conclusion, the combined study of Daniel and Revelation is wise because it provides a rich and rewarding experience that deepens our understanding of Bible prophecy, strengthens our faith, and provides practical insights for daily living.

## HOW TO READ THIS TWO-IN-ONE BOOK

I recommend starting with *40 Days Through Daniel* while making a few detours into key verses in Revelation along the way. Throughout *40 Days Through Daniel*, I provide some key cross-references that show important parallels between Daniel and Revelation. Throughout *40 Days Through Revelation*, I provide helpful Scripture quotes from Daniel. Be sure to consider these references.

Once you've finished Daniel, continue with *40 Days Through Revelation*. You will find that Daniel provides a prophetic foundation, and Revelation expands on that foundation.

Between the two books, you'll find a chapter entitled "Bridging Daniel and Revelation." This chapter offers additional insights into studying these prophetic books together.

Whether you are studying Daniel or Revelation, be sure to pray:

*Lord, open my eyes to see the wonderful spiritual truths in the prophetic Scriptures. And please transform my life through this study of Your Word.*