



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

## BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

# Daniel

## Faithful in Exile - Living for God When the World Around You Does Not

### The Short Answer

Daniel was a young Jewish exile who spent most of his life serving within powerful pagan empires. He lived under foreign kings, surrounded by idolatry, political pressure, and values that often conflicted with his faith. Yet Daniel remained remarkably faithful to God. He learned Babylonian culture without surrendering his identity. He served pagan rulers without worshiping them. He spoke truth without becoming needlessly hostile. He prayed when prayer became dangerous. And when God showed him visions of terrifying kingdoms and future events, Daniel learned that human empires rise and fall - but God's kingdom ultimately triumphs. Daniel's story is not primarily about becoming influential, surviving lions, or decoding prophecy. It is about belonging to God in a world that does not.

### Daniel 1-12

### Opening Memory Anchor

**Daniel lived inside Babylon without allowing Babylon to live inside him.**



# WELCOME

## This guide is meant to send you back to Scripture

Daniel's story spans twelve chapters and two very different kinds of biblical writing. Part One follows Daniel's life in exile through Babylon and into the Medo-Persian period. Part Two addresses the visions, historical questions, and interpretive debates while keeping the main message in view: God remains sovereign, His kingdom endures, and His people are called to faithful presence.

### Foundational truth

**Daniel lived inside Babylon without allowing Babylon to live inside him. The study of Daniel should strengthen trust in God, not fascination with human empires or speculative timelines.**

## How to use this study

- Open and read the cited passages rather than relying only on summaries.
- Distinguish what Scripture explicitly teaches from theological or historical inference.
- Use the Memory Anchors to retain major ideas.
- Where Scripture leaves mystery, do not manufacture certainty.

## PART ONE

# BEGINNER GUIDE

Start by reading: Daniel 1-6.

## 1. WHO WAS DANIEL?

Daniel was a Jewish young man from Judah who was taken to Babylon after King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem. Read Daniel 1:1-7. The Babylonian conquest of Judah occurred in stages. Daniel appears to have been taken during the early Babylonian campaign associated with 605 BC, long before Jerusalem and the temple were finally destroyed in 586 BC.

Daniel 1 describes Daniel and other young Israelites as coming from the royal family or nobility. They were selected because they were intelligent, capable, physically impressive, and suitable for service in the Babylonian government. Daniel was probably still quite young - perhaps a teenager - when everything familiar was taken from him.

He lost his homeland, was separated from the temple in Jerusalem, was placed inside a pagan empire, was educated in Babylonian language and literature, and even his name was changed.

Daniel's Hebrew name means something like "God is my judge." The Babylonians renamed him Belteshazzar, a name connected with Babylonian religion. His friends were renamed as well: Hananiah became Shadrach, Mishael became Meshach, and Azariah became Abednego. Their Hebrew names were connected with Israel's God. Their Babylonian names reflected the culture into which they had been absorbed.

Babylon could change their names, education, surroundings, and responsibilities. It could not determine whom they worshiped.

## A NOTE ABOUT EZEKIEL AND DANIEL

The prophet Ezekiel, who also ministered among the exiles, mentions a figure named Daniel in connection with extraordinary righteousness and wisdom (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3). The traditional Jewish and Christian understanding has often identified this figure with the Daniel of this book. Some scholars question that identification because the Hebrew spelling differs slightly and have proposed that Ezekiel may refer to another ancient figure named Danel. Scripture does not explicitly settle that identification. If Ezekiel is referring to this Daniel, the passages suggest that Daniel's reputation for wisdom and faithfulness became widely known during his own lifetime.

## 2. WHY DID GOD ALLOW DANIEL AND JUDAH TO BE TAKEN INTO EXILE?

Read Daniel 1:1-2. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem - but Daniel says that the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand. Babylon's victory did not mean Babylon's gods had defeated Israel's God.

Judah had repeatedly rebelled against God, embraced idolatry, ignored His warnings, and violated the covenant. God had sent prophets calling the nation to repentance. Eventually judgment came. See also 2 Kings 24-25; 2 Chronicles 36:15-21; Jeremiah 25:1-14; Psalm 137.

Daniel therefore begins with a major theme that continues throughout the book: God remains sovereign even when circumstances appear completely out of control. Nebuchadnezzar believed he was building an empire. Daniel knew that history ultimately belonged to God.

### Memory Anchor

**Earthly kingdoms may appear to control history. God remains Lord over history.**

## 3. WHY DID DANIEL REFUSE THE KING'S FOOD?

Read Daniel 1:8-16. Daniel "determined" not to defile himself with the king's food and wine. Scripture does not explicitly identify every reason the food would have defiled him. Possible concerns include Israel's dietary laws, food associated with pagan worship, or some combination of these factors.



The central point is clear: Daniel recognized a boundary he believed faithfulness to God required, and he resolved not to cross it. He did not begin with hostility. He respectfully asked the official for permission. When the official was afraid, Daniel proposed a limited test.

Daniel possessed both conviction and wisdom. Faithfulness does not require unnecessary combativeness. There are times when God's people must refuse to compromise. But Daniel demonstrates that strong conviction can be expressed with humility, respect, and practical wisdom.

God honored Daniel and his friends and gave them knowledge and understanding. Daniel received an additional gift: understanding visions and dreams.

#### **4. WHAT MADE DANIEL DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER WISE MEN OF BABYLON?**

Daniel did not possess secret wisdom because he was naturally superior. His wisdom came from God. This becomes especially clear in Daniel 2.

Nebuchadnezzar demanded that his wise men tell him both his dream and its interpretation. When they could not, their lives were threatened. Daniel responded by seeking God. Read Daniel 2:17-23. Daniel asked his friends - Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah - to pray with him. God revealed the mystery. Daniel's first response was worship.

He praised God as the One who possesses wisdom and power, changes times and seasons, removes kings and establishes kings, and reveals deep and hidden things. When Daniel appeared before Nebuchadnezzar, he refused to take credit. Read Daniel 2:27-30. No human wise man could do this, Daniel explained, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.

Daniel's influence grew, but Daniel repeatedly redirected attention toward God. That is one of the most important characteristics of his life.

#### **AN INTERESTING FEATURE OF DANIEL**

The book of Daniel is written in two biblical languages. Daniel 1:1-2:4a and chapters 8-12 are primarily in Hebrew. Daniel 2:4b-7:28 is written in Aramaic, a widely used international language of the ancient Near East. Scholars have proposed different reasons for this structure, but the language shift is part of the biblical text itself. The Aramaic section notably focuses heavily on kings, kingdoms, God's rule over the nations, and the preservation of His people.

#### **5. WHAT DID NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S GREAT STATUE REPRESENT?**

Read Daniel 2:31-45. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of an enormous statue: a head of gold; chest and arms of silver; belly and thighs of bronze; legs of iron; and feet partly iron and partly clay. A stone then struck the statue, destroyed it, and became a great mountain filling the earth.

Daniel explicitly identified Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom with the head of gold. The remaining sections represented kingdoms that would follow. Christians have debated some details of the kingdom sequence, but a historically common interpretation identifies them broadly with Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

The most important message does not depend upon resolving every prophetic detail. Every human empire eventually falls. The kingdom established by God will not. Read Daniel 2:44. The stone becomes a major picture of God's victorious kingdom. Daniel begins directing the reader beyond Babylon - and ultimately toward the eternal reign of God.

#### **6. WHERE WAS DANIEL DURING THE FIERY FURNACE?**

Daniel 3 tells the famous story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refusing to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden image. Daniel is not mentioned. Scripture does not explain where he was. Therefore it is best not to speculate.

What matters is that Daniel's friends demonstrated the same kind of uncompromising allegiance to God that Daniel displayed elsewhere. Read Daniel 3:16-18. They believed God could rescue them. But their obedience did not depend upon receiving rescue.

God can deliver us. Even if He does not, we will not worship your gods. Faith does not say, "God must give the outcome desired." Faith says, "God is worthy of obedience regardless of the outcome."

#### **7. WHAT DID DANIEL TEACH NEBUCHADNEZZAR ABOUT PRIDE?**

Daniel 4 records another dream. Nebuchadnezzar saw an enormous tree that was eventually cut down. Daniel understood that the tree represented the king. The message was uncomfortable: Nebuchadnezzar's greatness had produced pride, and God was going to humble him.

Daniel urged the king to turn away from sin and practice righteousness and mercy. Read Daniel 4:19-27. The judgment eventually occurred. Nebuchadnezzar was driven from ordinary human society until he learned a central lesson: "the Most High rules over human kingdoms" (see Daniel 4:17, 25, 32). Afterward, Nebuchadnezzar praised the God of heaven.

Daniel 4 presents one of the book's clearest warnings: human power easily creates the illusion of self-sufficiency. But every ruler remains a creature under God's authority.

## 8. WHAT WAS THE “WRITING ON THE WALL”?

Years later, Babylon was ruled by Belshazzar. During a great feast, Belshazzar used vessels that had been taken from the Jerusalem temple while praising pagan gods. Suddenly a mysterious hand wrote on the wall. Read Daniel 5.

Daniel was summoned to interpret the message. By this point Daniel was no longer the young exile of chapter 1. He had lived through decades of political change. Daniel reminded Belshazzar what had happened to Nebuchadnezzar. Belshazzar knew the story. Yet he refused to humble himself.

The message announced judgment. Belshazzar had been weighed and found wanting, and his kingdom would be given to the Medes and Persians. That very night Belshazzar was killed. Babylon - the empire that once appeared invincible - fell. Daniel remained. Kings changed. Empires changed. Daniel's God did not.

### WAS BELSHAZZAR REALLY A HISTORICAL RULER?

For a time, some critics questioned Daniel's reference to Belshazzar because ancient king lists identified Nabonidus as Babylon's final king. Later ancient inscriptions confirmed that Belshazzar was Nabonidus's son and exercised royal authority in Babylon while his father was absent for extended periods.

This makes an otherwise curious detail in Daniel 5 especially interesting. Belshazzar repeatedly offered Daniel the position of “third ruler in the kingdom” (Daniel 5:7, 16, 29). If Nabonidus held first authority and Belshazzar functioned under him, third place would have been the highest position Belshazzar could offer.

Archaeology does not prove every claim in Daniel, but this discovery showed that an apparent historical problem could change significantly when additional ancient evidence came to light.

## 9. WHY WAS DANIEL THROWN INTO THE LIONS' DEN?

Daniel continued serving under the new government. Daniel 5:31 identifies the new ruler as Darius the Mede. Read Daniel 6:1-5. His opponents tried to find corruption in his work. They could not. Daniel was trustworthy.

So they attacked the one area they knew he would never compromise: his relationship with God. They manipulated Darius into issuing a decree forbidding prayer to anyone except the king for thirty days. Daniel learned about the decree. Then he went home and prayed. Read Daniel 6:10.

Daniel did not suddenly begin praying as a public protest. He simply continued what he had already been doing. Three times a day he prayed and gave thanks to God. Daniel's crisis revealed a habit that had been formed long before the crisis arrived.

### WHO WAS DARIUS THE MEDE?

Daniel identifies Darius the Mede as ruling after Babylon's fall. The precise extrabiblical identification of this ruler remains debated. No independently attested ruler bearing exactly the title “Darius the Mede” has yet been universally identified in surviving ancient records for this period.

Proposals have included Cyrus the Great under another designation, a regional ruler or governor associated with the Persian conquest, and figures sometimes identified with names such as Gubaru or Ugbaru. Each proposal has strengths and difficulties, and no identification commands universal agreement.

The careful conclusion is simple: Scripture names Darius the Mede; his precise relationship to the rulers known from other ancient records remains an unresolved historical question.

#### Memory Anchor

**Faithfulness in the crisis is usually built through faithfulness before the crisis.**

## 10. WHY DIDN'T DANIEL SIMPLY PRAY SECRETLY?

Daniel could perhaps have avoided danger by changing his routine temporarily. But the decree was designed specifically to force him to choose between obedience to the king and allegiance to God. Daniel would not allow human authority to replace God's authority.

This does not mean Christians should deliberately provoke authorities. Scripture normally calls believers to respect governing authorities (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17). But when human authority directly requires disobedience to God, Scripture gives a higher principle: “We must obey God rather than people.” - Acts 5:29

Daniel respectfully served pagan governments for decades. But his cooperation had a boundary. He would serve kings. He would not treat them as God.

## 11. DID GOD RESCUE DANIEL FROM THE LIONS?

Yes. Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, and the entrance was sealed. The king spent the night fasting and unable to sleep. Early the next morning he hurried to the den. Daniel was alive. Read Daniel 6:19-23. Daniel said God had sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths.

The story demonstrates God's power to rescue His servant. But Scripture never promises that every faithful believer will be physically rescued from persecution. Daniel's friends had already expressed the proper perspective in chapter 3: God is able to deliver. Faithfulness remains required even if He does not.



Throughout Scripture some faithful believers are miraculously rescued, while others suffer and die. Hebrews 11 deliberately includes both. Biblical faith is not confidence that God will always prevent suffering. It is confidence that God remains faithful through suffering.

## 12. WHAT CAN DANIEL TEACH ABOUT LIVING IN A CULTURE THAT DOES NOT SHARE BIBLICAL BELIEFS?

Daniel offers an unusually balanced example. He did not withdraw completely from Babylon. He worked within its government. He learned its language. He received its education. He served multiple rulers. He became highly competent. But he never confused cultural participation with spiritual surrender.

Daniel shows that believers can work alongside people who do not share their faith, serve institutions that are not explicitly Christian, learn from the surrounding culture, treat authorities respectfully, pursue excellence, and contribute to society while still maintaining clear boundaries where obedience to God is involved.

That principle can matter in ordinary modern settings too. A Christian may work faithfully in a workplace with values different from Scripture. A student may learn within an educational environment without accepting every worldview presented there. A believer may serve in government or civic institutions while refusing corruption or idolatrous loyalty. Digital culture may continually pressure people toward outrage, compromise, or conformity, yet Christians can participate without allowing those patterns to form their identity.

Daniel was neither culturally absorbed nor needlessly antagonistic. He was faithfully present. The New Testament uses similar exile language for Christians. Read 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11-12. Christians are not exiles in precisely the same historical sense as Daniel, but they too are called to live faithfully within societies that are not their ultimate home.

### PART TWO

## WANT TO GO DEEPER?

### INTERMEDIATE

Daniel 1-6 primarily follows events in Daniel's life. Daniel 7-12 shifts heavily toward prophetic visions. But these are not two unrelated halves of the book.

The stories and the visions teach the same central truths from different directions. In chapters 1-6, readers watch kingdoms rise, rulers boast, God's servants face pressure, and God preserve His purposes. In chapters 7-12, Daniel sees those same realities on a larger prophetic scale: kingdoms rise and fall, arrogant rulers oppose God, God's people suffer, and God's kingdom ultimately triumphs.

The narrative shows how to live faithfully inside temporary kingdoms. The visions show why that faithfulness makes sense. God remains sovereign over them all. These chapters are among the most discussed and debated prophetic passages in Scripture.

#### Interpretive posture

**You do not need to master every prophetic detail to understand Daniel's central message. Where Scripture speaks clearly, believe it. Where Christians draw inferences, identify them as inferences. Where Scripture leaves mystery, trust God's character and obey what He has made clear.**

## 13. WHAT IS THE MAIN MESSAGE OF DANIEL'S VISIONS?

Human kingdoms rise. Human kingdoms boast. Human kingdoms persecute. Human kingdoms fall. God remains sovereign. God's kingdom ultimately wins.

Daniel 7 parallels some of the kingdom themes found in Daniel 2, but instead of a glorious statue, Daniel sees frightening beasts. The imagery exposes another side of human empire. Kingdoms may appear magnificent from a human perspective. From heaven's perspective, rebellious power can become beastly.

But Daniel then sees God's throne. Read Daniel 7:9-14. The "Ancient of Days" sits in judgment. Then someone described as "one like a son of man" comes with the clouds of heaven and receives everlasting dominion. The beasts do not get the final word. God does.

### DOES DANIEL HAVE A LITERARY PATTERN?

Many scholars have noticed that Daniel 2-7 - the Aramaic section - appears to contain a roughly parallel structure: Daniel 2, four kingdoms and God's everlasting kingdom; Daniel 3, God's servants delivered from death; Daniel 4, a proud king humbled; Daniel 5, a proud king judged; Daniel 6, God's servant delivered from death; Daniel 7, four kingdoms and God's everlasting kingdom.

This kind of mirrored arrangement is sometimes called a chiastic or concentric structure. Readers do not need to master the term. The important observation is that Daniel appears deliberately organized around repeated themes. The stories are not simply a random collection of memorable events. Together they repeatedly emphasize the same truth: God rules kings, kingdoms, history, and the destiny of His people.

## 14. WHO IS THE "SON OF MAN" IN DANIEL 7?

Daniel 7:13-14 is one of the most important Old Testament passages for understanding Jesus. Daniel sees "one like a son of man" coming with the clouds of heaven. He receives authority, glory, and sovereign power, and people from every nation and language serve Him. His dominion is everlasting.



Jesus repeatedly called Himself “the Son of Man.” The connection becomes especially clear during His trial. Read Mark 14:61-64. When the high priest asked whether Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus answered using imagery from Daniel 7 and Psalm 110. His audience understood the magnitude of the claim.

Jesus was not merely emphasizing His humanity. He was identifying Himself with Daniel's heavenly Son of Man who receives everlasting authority. Daniel's visions therefore point beyond temporary earthly kingdoms toward the reign of Christ.

Memory Anchor

**Babylon passes away. God's kingdom does not.**

## 15. WHO WERE THE FOUR BEASTS OF DANIEL 7?

Daniel sees four beasts emerging from the sea. An angel explains that they represent kings or kingdoms. Many interpreters understand Daniel 7 as paralleling the sequence of kingdoms in Daniel 2. A common traditional Christian interpretation identifies them with Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

The fourth beast receives special attention, including a mysterious “little horn” who speaks arrogantly and persecutes God's people. Interpretations become more disputed at this point. Some understand portions of the prophecy primarily in relation to ancient rulers and events. Others see an additional or ultimate fulfillment involving a future Antichrist. Still others understand the imagery through broader patterns of oppressive kingdoms that culminate in final opposition to God.

These approaches overlap with larger interpretive frameworks sometimes described as preterist, futurist, historicist, or idealist, though Christians define and combine those categories in different ways. Christians should distinguish these interpretive frameworks from what Daniel explicitly states. What Daniel clearly teaches is that arrogant human power will oppose God and His people - but God will judge it.

## 16. WHO WAS ANTIOCHUS IV EPIPHANES, AND WHY DOES HE MATTER?

Daniel 8 and 11 contain detailed descriptions of conflict involving kingdoms that arise after Daniel's time. Much of the imagery corresponds strikingly with events surrounding Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a Seleucid ruler who reigned during the second century BC.

Antiochus aggressively attempted to suppress Jewish worship and identity. He desecrated the Jerusalem temple and persecuted Jews who remained faithful to God's covenant. These events eventually contributed to the Maccabean revolt. Antiochus therefore became a historical example of the arrogant, persecuting ruler portrayed in Daniel.

Some Christians believe portions of Daniel's language also anticipate a final Antichrist. Others understand the relevant passages primarily through Antiochus and the historical events surrounding him. The important theological pattern remains: human rulers may exalt themselves against God. Their power remains temporary. God's authority does not.

### WHEN WAS THE BOOK OF DANIEL WRITTEN?

The dating of Daniel is one of the major scholarly debates surrounding the book. The book presents Daniel as living during the sixth century BC, beginning under Babylon and continuing into the Medo-Persian period. The traditional Jewish and Christian understanding has therefore generally regarded Daniel himself as the source of the book's core material.

Many modern critical scholars argue instead that the book reached its final form in the second century BC, during the persecution associated with Antiochus IV Epiphanes. One major reason is the extraordinary detail with which portions of Daniel - especially chapter 11 - correspond to events leading up to and during Antiochus's reign. Scholars holding a later date commonly interpret those passages as descriptions written during or near the events.

Conservative scholars argue that this conclusion depends partly upon whether genuine predictive prophecy is allowed as a possibility and point to linguistic, historical, structural, and textual considerations in favor of an earlier setting or composition. The debate involves more evidence than can be responsibly settled in a short study.

What should be distinguished clearly is this: Daniel presents the visions as divine revelation concerning events beyond Daniel's own time. Whether a scholar accepts that presentation as genuine predictive prophecy often significantly affects how the dating evidence is interpreted. Readers interested in this question should examine the arguments carefully rather than assuming that either side has no evidence to consider.

## 17. WHAT IS THE “ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION”?

Daniel refers to an “abomination that causes desolation” in Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11. The language has an important historical connection with the desecration of the Jerusalem temple during the reign of Antiochus IV.

But Jesus later used Daniel's language when speaking about events still future from His own earthly ministry. Read Matthew 24:15. For that reason, many Christians understand the prophecy as having a pattern in which an earlier historical event foreshadows a later or ultimate fulfillment.

Christians differ over precisely how Jesus' prophecy relates to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and to events surrounding Christ's future return. The study should not manufacture certainty where the biblical evidence has produced genuine interpretive disagreement. The central warning remains clear: human rebellion may reach terrifying levels, but desecration and persecution will not defeat God's purposes.



## 18. WHAT ARE DANIEL'S "SEVENTY WEEKS"?

Read Daniel 9:20-27. After Daniel's prayer, Gabriel gives him a prophecy concerning "seventy weeks" or "seventy sevens." The Hebrew expression refers to units of seven, and many interpreters understand these as symbolic or prophetic periods corresponding to years.

This passage has produced several major Christian interpretations. Questions include: When do the seventy weeks begin? How should the periods be calculated? Who is the "anointed one"? What events fulfill the final week? Is there a chronological gap before the final period? How does the prophecy relate to Jesus, Jerusalem, AD 70, or future end-times events?

Many evangelical interpreters see a strong messianic connection to Jesus. Some futurist interpretations understand the final "week" as separated from the first sixty-nine and connected with a future tribulation. Other Christians understand the seventy weeks as a continuous prophetic period culminating in Christ's work and events surrounding Jerusalem.

These disagreements should not obscure what is easier to see: Daniel 9 anticipates God's decisive action regarding sin, righteousness, atonement, judgment, and His redemptive purposes. The prophecy ultimately directs attention toward God's plan rather than human speculation.

## 19. WHY WAS DANIEL PRAYING IN DANIEL 9?

Daniel had been studying Jeremiah's prophecy concerning Jerusalem's seventy years of desolation. Read Daniel 9:1-3 and Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10. This is remarkable. Daniel received visions directly from God. Yet Daniel still studied Scripture. Prophetic revelation did not make ordinary Bible study unnecessary.

When Daniel understood that Jeremiah's promised period was approaching completion, he responded with prayer, fasting, confession, and repentance. Daniel 9 contains one of Scripture's great prayers of confession. Daniel repeatedly says: "We have sinned." Yet Daniel himself is consistently portrayed as faithful.

He identifies himself with God's people rather than standing above them in self-righteous judgment. This kind of corporate confession also appears in passages such as Ezra 9 and Nehemiah 9, where faithful leaders acknowledge the sins of God's covenant people and appeal to God's mercy.

Daniel does not excuse sin. He does not pretend every individual bears identical responsibility. But neither does he pray as though Israel's failures belong only to "those other people." He stands among God's people and pleads for mercy. Daniel appeals not to Israel's goodness but to God's character. That is a profound model for intercessory prayer.

## 20. WHAT CAN DANIEL TEACH ABOUT PRAYER?

Prayer appears throughout Daniel's life. Daniel prayed when his life was threatened, when he needed wisdom, as part of his regular daily rhythm, when prayer became illegal, while studying Scripture, while confessing sin, and while seeking understanding.

Daniel's prayer life was not merely an emergency response. It was a way of life. Perhaps most strikingly, Daniel 6:10 says that after learning about the decree that threatened his life, Daniel prayed and gave thanks. The crisis changed Daniel's circumstances. It did not change Daniel's God.

## 21. DOES DANIEL TEACH ABOUT ANGELS AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE?

Yes, particularly in Daniel 10. Daniel receives a vision after a period of mourning and fasting. A heavenly messenger describes opposition involving the "prince of the kingdom of Persia" and mentions Michael. Many Christians understand this passage as revealing spiritual conflict occurring behind earthly events.

However, Scripture gives relatively limited information about the mechanics of this unseen conflict. Daniel 10 should therefore encourage awareness of spiritual realities without encouraging speculation beyond Scripture. The passage does not teach believers to identify territorial spirits, construct elaborate angelic hierarchies, or attempt to control unseen powers through special techniques.

The safest response is the biblical one: pray, remain faithful, trust God, and recognize that reality includes more than what human eyes can see.

## 22. DID DANIEL PREDICT THE RESURRECTION?

Daniel 12 contains one of the Old Testament's clearest statements about resurrection. Read Daniel 12:1-3. Daniel is told that many who sleep in the dust will awake. Some will rise to everlasting life. Others to shame and everlasting contempt.

The passage anticipates a final reckoning beyond physical death. The New Testament develops this truth more fully (John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 20:11-15). Daniel's hope therefore extends far beyond surviving Babylon. God's victory ultimately reaches even beyond the grave.

## 23. WHY DID GOD NOT EXPLAIN EVERYTHING TO DANIEL?

Daniel repeatedly struggled to understand what he saw. Sometimes explanations were provided. Sometimes Daniel remained confused or deeply troubled. At the end of the book, Daniel asks for more understanding. God does not explain everything. Read Daniel 12:8-13.



Daniel is essentially told to continue faithfully and trust God with what remains unresolved. That is significant for anyone studying biblical prophecy. If Daniel himself did not understand every detail of Daniel's visions, modern readers should approach them with humility.

Prophecy was never intended merely to satisfy curiosity. It calls God's people to trust Him.

Memory Anchor

**God does not reveal everything - but He reveals enough to trust Him.**

## 24. WHY DO SOME BIBLES CONTAIN ADDITIONAL STORIES ABOUT DANIEL?

Readers may encounter versions of Daniel containing material not found in most Protestant Bibles. Ancient Greek forms of Daniel include additional sections traditionally known as The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon.

Catholic and Orthodox Christian traditions include these materials within their Old Testament collections, although their placement and canonical classification can differ by tradition. These writings are often described in Catholic usage as deuterocanonical, meaning books or portions received as Scripture within that tradition but not contained in the Hebrew Jewish canon followed by Protestant Old Testaments.

Protestant Old Testaments follow the shorter Hebrew-Aramaic form of Daniel and therefore do not include these additions as part of Daniel. The existence of these different traditions should not be hidden, but neither does this brief study need to settle the larger canonical debate. Readers should simply understand why one Christian Bible may contain additional material associated with Daniel while another does not.

## 25. WAS DANIEL PERFECT?

No. Scripture presents Daniel unusually positively and records no specific personal moral failure comparable to those recorded about many other biblical figures. But absence of a recorded sin does not mean Daniel was sinless. Romans 3:23 teaches that all have sinned. Daniel himself participated in corporate confession and depended upon God's mercy.

Only Jesus lived completely without sin. Daniel is therefore an example of remarkable faithfulness - not a substitute for Christ. Biblical heroes should inspire faithfulness, but they ultimately point beyond themselves to the One truly faithful Man.

## 26. HOW DOES DANIEL POINT TO JESUS?

Daniel connects to Jesus most clearly through the kingdom of God and the Son of Man. Daniel watched human kingdoms rise and fall. Jesus announced: "The kingdom of God has come near." - Mark 1:15 Daniel saw the Son of Man receiving everlasting dominion. Jesus repeatedly identified Himself as the Son of Man.

Daniel saw arrogant rulers persecute God's people. Jesus Himself was rejected by earthly authorities, crucified, and raised from the dead. Daniel anticipated resurrection and final judgment. Jesus declared that the dead will rise and that He possesses authority to judge.

Daniel's message ultimately moves toward a kingdom that cannot be destroyed. The New Testament reveals its King: Jesus Christ.

The Gospel is not that Christians escape every Babylon. The Gospel is that Jesus entered this fallen world, bore sin at the cross, rose from the dead, reigns as Lord, and will ultimately establish His kingdom in its fullness. Those who belong to Christ can therefore live faithfully even when earthly kingdoms appear powerful. They already belong to another King.

## DANIEL'S LIFE IN ONE VIEW

| DANIEL'S LIFE                                          | WHAT IT SHOWS                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Taken from Judah - Daniel 1                            | Remained faithful in exile.                              |
| Educated in Babylon - Daniel 1                         | Learned the culture without surrendering to it.          |
| Interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream - Daniel 2          | Gave God the credit.                                     |
| Served powerful rulers - Daniel 2-6                    | Combined excellence with conviction.                     |
| Watched Babylon fall - Daniel 5                        | Saw that earthly kingdoms are temporary.                 |
| Thrown into the lions' den - Daniel 6                  | Continued praying despite the cost.                      |
| Studied Jeremiah and confessed Israel's sin - Daniel 9 | Combined Scripture with prayer.                          |
| Received prophetic visions - Daniel 7-12               | Saw God's sovereignty over history.                      |
| Saw the Son of Man - Daniel 7                          | Anticipated the everlasting kingdom fulfilled in Christ. |

## WHAT DANIEL TEACHES ABOUT FAITHFULNESS

Daniel's life challenges two opposite mistakes.

One is compromise: "If the surrounding culture believes it, accepts it, or requires it, God's people should simply adapt." Daniel rejected that approach.



The other is unnecessary hostility: “If the surrounding culture does not honor God, God’s people should treat everyone within it as an enemy.” Daniel rejected that approach too.

He served. He worked. He learned. He advised kings. He pursued excellence. He showed respect. But when obedience to human authority conflicted with obedience to God, Daniel remained faithful to God.

Biblical faithfulness therefore requires discernment. Not every cultural difference requires resistance. Not every command deserves compliance. The question is always: What does faithfulness to God require here?

## FIVE LESSONS FROM DANIEL

1. GOD IS SOVEREIGN EVEN WHEN HISTORY LOOKS CHAOTIC. Jerusalem fell. Babylon rose. Babylon fell. Persia rose. Other kingdoms would follow. God remained King.
2. CONVICTIONS SHOULD BE FORMED BEFORE THE CRISIS. Daniel did not invent his faith when the lions appeared. His daily life had already formed it.
3. FAITHFULNESS AND WISDOM BELONG TOGETHER. Daniel was courageous without being needlessly combative. He knew when to cooperate and when he could not compromise.
4. PRAYER SHOULD BE A RHYTHM, NOT ONLY AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE. Daniel prayed before, during, and after crises.
5. HUMAN KINGDOMS ARE TEMPORARY. CHRIST’S KINGDOM IS NOT. This is the great horizon of Daniel. History is moving toward God’s appointed conclusion.

## REVIEW & RETENTION

1. Why was Daniel in Babylon? Judah had come under God’s covenant judgment, and Daniel was taken into exile during Babylon’s conquest.
2. What did Daniel refuse to surrender? His allegiance to God.
3. Where did Daniel’s wisdom come from? God.
4. What major theme connects both halves of Daniel? God rules over human kingdoms, His people are called to faithfulness, and His kingdom will ultimately triumph.
5. What habit prepared Daniel for the lions’ den? Consistent prayer.
6. Who is the “Son of Man” ultimately connected with in the New Testament? Jesus Christ.
7. Does Daniel explain every detail of biblical prophecy? No. Some interpretations remain disputed, and Daniel himself did not understand everything revealed to him.
8. What should unresolved prophecy produce? Not obsession or fear, but humility, faithfulness, hope, and trust in God.

## FINAL MEMORY ANCHORS

- Daniel lived inside Babylon without allowing Babylon to live inside him.
- Earthly kingdoms may appear to control history. God remains Lord over history.
- Faithfulness in the crisis is usually built through faithfulness before the crisis.
- God does not reveal everything - but He reveals enough to trust Him.
- Babylon passes away. God’s kingdom does not.



## CONTINUE IN SCRIPTURE

Daniel 1 - Faithfulness in a new culture  
Daniel 2 - God reveals mysteries and rules kingdoms  
Daniel 3 - Faithfulness regardless of the outcome  
Daniel 4 - God humbles human pride  
Daniel 5 - The fall of Babylon  
Daniel 6 - Daniel's prayer and the lions' den  
Daniel 7 - The Ancient of Days and the Son of Man  
Daniel 8 - Kingdoms and persecution  
Daniel 9 - Daniel's prayer and the seventy weeks  
Daniel 10-11 - Spiritual conflict and earthly kingdoms  
Daniel 12 - Resurrection, judgment, and hope.

## CLOSING THOUGHT

Daniel began his story as a young exile whose world appeared to have collapsed. Jerusalem had been conquered. The temple vessels had been carried into Babylon. A pagan king appeared to control Daniel's future. But Daniel knew something Babylon did not: God was still King.

Daniel spent decades watching rulers boast, kingdoms change, conspiracies develop, laws threaten his faith, and visions reveal frightening events still to come. Through all of it, the calling remained remarkably simple: know God, trust God, pray, serve faithfully, refuse idolatry, speak truth, and leave history in God's hands.

Daniel did not need to control Babylon in order to remain faithful within Babylon. Neither do God's people today. And Daniel's final hope was much greater than surviving exile. He was promised resurrection. He saw the Son of Man. He saw a kingdom that would never be destroyed.

The kingdoms of this world are temporary. Jesus Christ is not.

The purpose of studying Daniel is not merely to understand Daniel. It is to know more clearly the God Daniel trusted - and to follow the King Daniel saw coming.

Final Memory Anchor

**Babylon passes away. God's kingdom does not.**