

A close-up photograph of a lion's face, showing its eye, nose, and mane. The lion is looking slightly to the left. The background is dark.

— THE BOOK OF —
DANIEL

INTRODUCTION

Outline of Daniel

- Daniel falls neatly into two major divisions:
 - **Chapters 1–6** record events in the lives of Daniel, his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed–Nego, and their interactions with various kings.
 - **Chapters 7–12** relate the dreams and visions of Daniel.
- Of these two divisions, which would you say is the more difficult to understand?
 - A large amount of symbolism is used in these visions.

Time Frame for Daniel

- Daniel's life and work covers the entire period of captivity (606–536 B.C.), and slightly beyond.
- Daniel served as an official under the Babylonians, and then later the Medes and Persians.

Succession of Kingdoms

- We need to get this fixed in our minds, because many of the prophecies relate in some way to the following succession of kingdoms:
- **Babylon** is the world power when Daniel begins his work, followed by the **Medes and Persians** (Medo-Persian Empire), the **Grecian** empire, and the **Roman Empire**.

References to Daniel in Ezekiel

- “Even if these three men, Noah, **Daniel**, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,” says the Lord GOD (Ezekiel 14:14).
- “Even though Noah, **Daniel**, and Job were in it...they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness” (Ezekiel 14:20).
 - How, then, did God regard Daniel?
- “Behold, you are wiser than **Daniel!**” (Ezekiel 28:3).
 - What God said sarcastically to the king of Tyre.

A Reference to Daniel by Jesus

- “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by **Daniel the prophet**, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand) (Matthew 24:15).
 - Nearly identical quotation found in Mark 13:14.
 - Language used by Jesus in Matthew 24:30 is nearly identical to that used in Daniel 7:13–14.
 - Critics have a hard time acknowledging Daniel as a prophet, but Jesus didn’t!

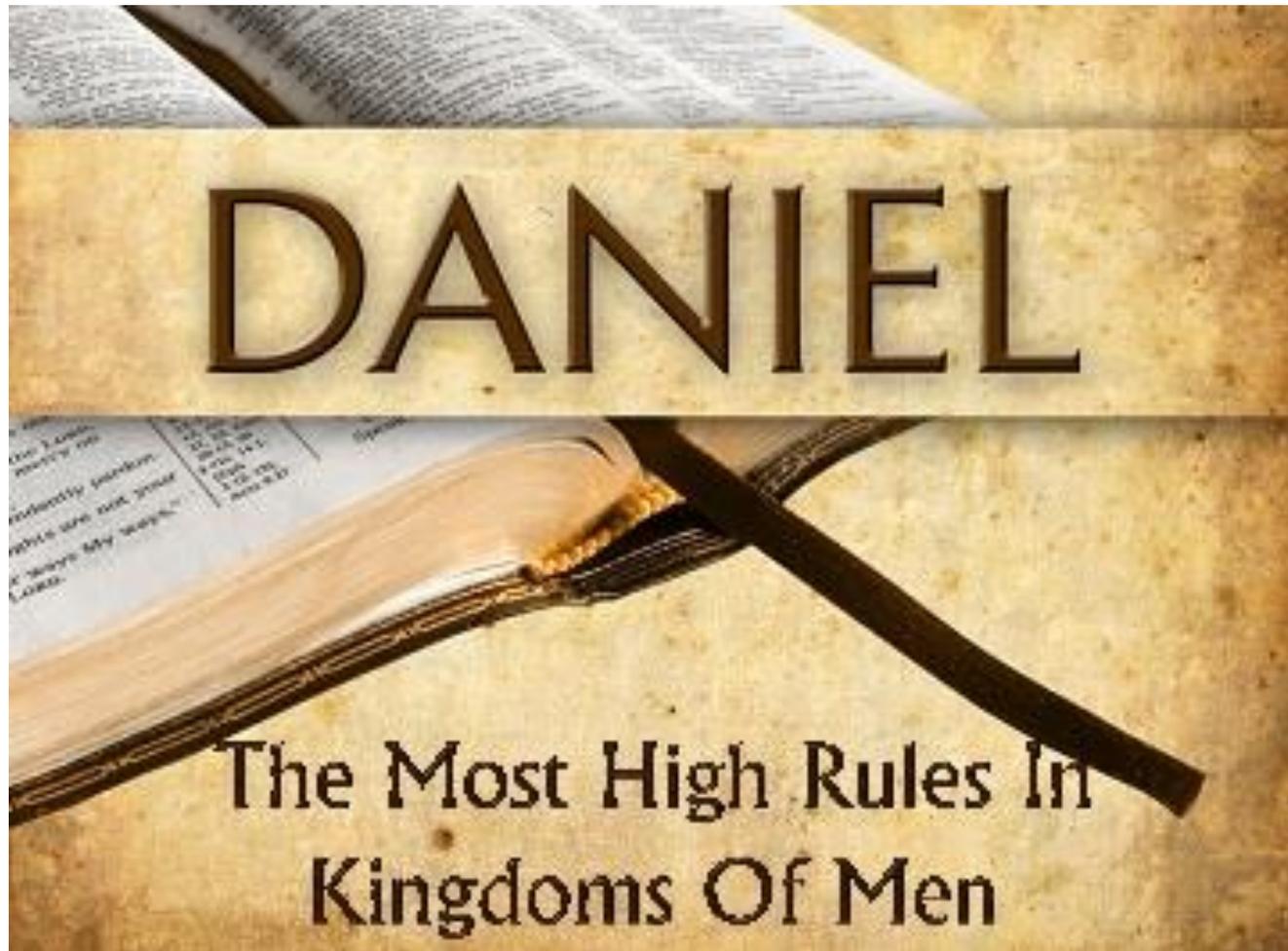
Another N.T. reference to Daniel?

- “Who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, **stopped the mouths of lions**” (Hebrews 11:33).
 - It may or may not be a specific reference to Daniel, but that is exactly what He did by faith.
 - “My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths...” (Daniel 6:22).
 - Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God (Daniel 6:23).

The Book of Revelation

- We will see a close connection between the events foretold in **Daniel**, and the events described in **Revelation**.
- We saw last quarter how **Ezekiel** helps us in our understanding of **Revelation**; the same will be true of **Daniel**.

Major Theme in Daniel



God rules in the kingdoms of men

- ‘This decision is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones, in order **that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men**, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men’ (Daniel 4:17).
- “They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, **till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men**, and gives it to whomever He chooses” (Daniel 4:25).

God rules in the kingdoms of men

- “They shall drive you from men, and your dwelling place shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, **until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdoms of men, and gives it to whomever He wishes**” (Daniel 4:32).
- Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, **till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses** (Daniel 5:21).

God rules in the kingdoms of men

- Different wording in this one, but the same idea:
 - “And He [God] changes the times and the seasons; He **removes kings and raises up kings**; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding” (Daniel 2:21).

Does He also rule in individual lives?

- We need to pay close attention to what God does for Daniel, and for his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.
- Mark each occasion, each thing God does for these four men, to see how active He is in their lives.

Another Major Theme in Daniel

An Everlasting Kingdom

Daniel 7:13-14

"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the ancient of days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom is one that shall not be destroyed."



God's Everlasting Kingdom

- We need to pay special attention to the prophecies concerning this everlasting kingdom (beginning in chapter 2).
- The message concerning this kingdom is clear: Other kingdoms come and go, but not this one—not this heavenly kingdom. Those who seek to destroy it will be sorry they did.

Snapshots of Daniel's Life and Work

- “Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself...” (1:8).
- “As for these four young men, **God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams**” (1:17).
- “Then **with counsel and wisdom** (ESV--“prudence and discretion”) Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard...” (2:14).

Snapshots of Daniel's Life and Work

- “Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So **Daniel blessed the God of heaven**” (2:19).
- “Then the **king promoted Daniel** and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon” (2:48).

Snapshots of Daniel's Life and Work

- Daniel to King Belshazzar: “The God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified” (5:23).
- “Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain a gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom” (5:29).

Snapshots of Daniel's Life and Work

- “Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps...the king [Darius] gave thought to setting him over the whole realm” (6:3).
- “They could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error found in him” (6:4).
- “Daniel...knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days” (6:10).

Snapshots of Daniel's Life and Work

- “Then Daniel said to the king, ‘O king, live forever’” (6:21).
- “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed...” (7:2).
- “And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession...we have sinned and committed iniquity...” (9:4).

Snapshots of Daniel's Life and Work

- “I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength” (10:8).
- “Then he said to me, ‘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’ (10:12).

So what do we see in Daniel?

- Humility, faith, love, courage, consistency, wisdom, integrity, respect for others, etc.