



ROSE VISUAL
BIBLE STUDIES

6 SESSIONS

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Bible Study



THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Rose Visual
Bible Studies

The logo for Rose Publishing features the word "ROSE" in a large, serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a stylized rose. Below "ROSE" is the word "PUBLISHING" in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font.

ROSE
PUBLISHING

The Book of Daniel
Rose Visual Bible Studies
Copyright © 2025 Rose Publishing
Published by Rose Publishing
An imprint of Tyndale House Ministries
Carol Stream, Illinois
rose-publishing.com

ISBN 979-8-4005-0496-9

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Author: Titus O'Bryant, ThM, Senior Pastor, LifePoint Church, Reisterstown, MD

Scriptures are from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Scriptures marked NLT are from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright ©1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Photos used under license from Shutterstock.com.

Printed in the United States of America

May 2025, 1st printing

Contents



FAR FROM HOME

Daniel 1

Page 7



PROSPERING IN BABYLON

Daniel 2–3

Page 23



GOD REIGNS OVER ALL

Daniel 4–5

Page 37



BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

Daniel 6

Page 49



DANIEL'S PRAYER

Daniel 7–9

Page 63



A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

Daniel 10–12

Page 81



LEADER'S GUIDE

Page 97

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

Daniel 2:44

The Book of Daniel

Have you ever been far from home and felt the sharp pangs of homesickness? An old American folk song, first recorded by Dick Burnett in 1913, captures that lonesome, troubled feeling of being far from home. This song has been altered many times by various artists and is thought to have originated in Ireland more than two hundred years ago. One well-known version begins like this:

I am a man of constant sorrow,
I have seen trouble all my days.
I bid farewell to ol' Kentucky,
the place where I was born'd and raised.
For six long years I've been in trouble,
my pleasure here on Earth is done.
For in this world I have to ramble,
I have no friends to help me now.

The biblical prophet Daniel found himself carried away far from home with no prospects of ever seeing his homeland again. He could have written the words to that old folk song, bidding farewell to ol' Jerusalem and finding trouble for sixty-five long years. As a teenager, he was taken to Babylon as a political prisoner. He was pledged in service to the king who had devastated his homeland. His captors changed his name and tried to assimilate him into their way of life.

The book of the Bible that bears Daniel's name records several events from his life, along with messages about the future. The book is concerned with two main questions:

- How can believers in God live faithfully and effectively as exiles far from home?
- In a world that seems chaotic with rising and falling kingdoms, how is God still the sovereign king over all?

Daniel's book moves between these two questions, as it flows from telling the story of Daniel and his colleagues in Babylon to recording Daniel's prophetic visions and interpretations of the world's kingdoms and God's eternal kingdom.

By studying the twelve chapters of Daniel's writings, you can come away with a stronger faith in the God who oversees all human history to accomplish his purposes but who is also intimately connected with the events of our individual lives.



FAR FROM HOME

Daniel 1

Far from Home

When you're far from home, feelings of loneliness and longing for family and all that is familiar are very common. Daniel must've felt that way—and intensely so. He was a teenager when Babylonian forces invaded his homeland of Judah. His nation suffered a humiliating defeat, and he was taken nearly a thousand miles away to serve his conquerors. Young Daniel didn't know it then, but he would spend the rest of his life, about sixty-five years, in Babylon.

How could Daniel survive (and even thrive) in a land that didn't share his religion or respect his values and yet still maintain his faithfulness to God? The first test that Daniel and his fellow captives—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—faced was one concerning food and drink. They were told to consume the food and wine from the king's table, but for Daniel and his friends, doing this would have been “defiling” (Dan. 1:8). How Daniel handles this challenge in chapter one gives us insight into the kind of man he was and would continue to be as he faced even greater tests of integrity later in life.



Read It

Key Bible Passage

Read Daniel 1, which gives background information about the setting for the book of Daniel and introduces us to Daniel and his companions.

Optional Reading

Read 2 Chronicles 36:1–21, which describes Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion of Jerusalem and the fall of Judah.

Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king.

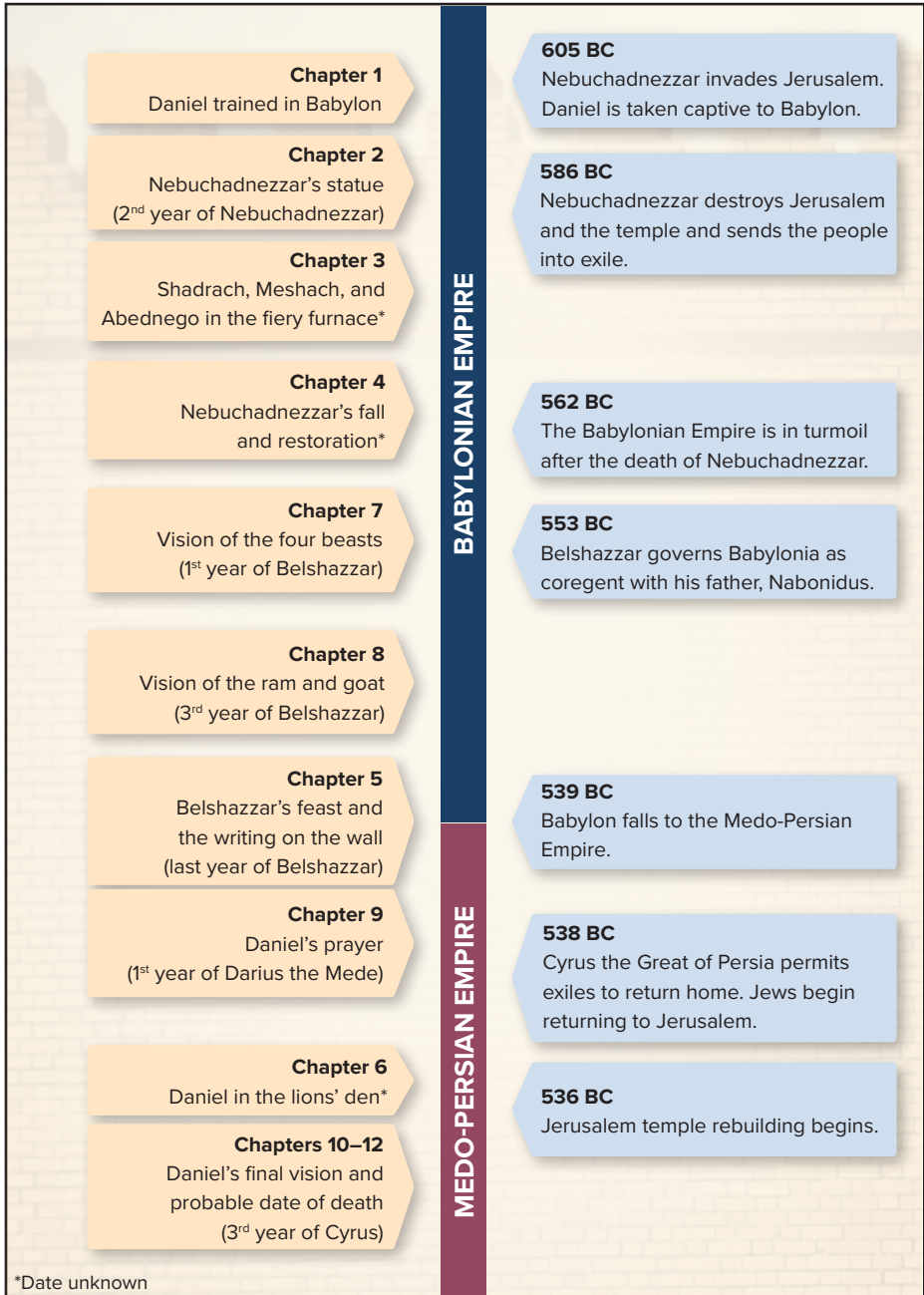
DANIEL 1:8 NLT





Explore It

Timeline of Daniel



*Date unknown

The Last Kings of Judah

During the volatile time period spanning from the fall of Assyria to the rise of Babylon, the final kings of Judah struggled to maintain their throne. Josiah reigned as Judah's sixteenth king from about 640 to 609 BC. He is best known for removing polytheistic practices from worship in Jerusalem and throughout the kingdom and returning to the worship of Yahweh, the one true God (2 Kings 22–23; 2 Chron. 34–35). Josiah's reforms followed many years of entrenched idol worship.

For about twenty years, the Babylonians and the Medes (from the kingdom of Media) joined forces in attacking the Assyrians, until finally breaking Assyrian dominance. Around 609 BC, an Egyptian army intending to aid the last of the Assyrians in Carchemish marched through Judah. King Josiah attempted to block Egypt but was defeated and died in the battle.

Josiah's successor lasted only three months. Then came King Jehoiakim who suffered defeat by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC and only retained his throne by pledging loyalty to Babylon. (Daniel and his friends were taken to Babylon as captives around this time.) Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, succeeded his father in 597 BC during a time of unrest. Judah had chosen to rebel against Babylon and faced swift retribution. Nebuchadnezzar's armies defeated Judah again, and Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon after reigning only three months.

Nebuchadnezzar selected another of Josiah's sons, Zedekiah, to be the next king in Jerusalem. His reign lasted about eleven years, until he also chose to revolt against Babylon. This time Nebuchadnezzar showed no mercy. In 586 BC, he ended Judah's ability to defend itself by tearing down their fortresses. He attacked their identity and religious life by destroying their temple. He burned their capital city of Jerusalem to the ground. He brutalized the people and exiled most of them to Babylonian territories. Zedekiah was forced to watch the execution of his children before being blinded and taken as a prisoner to Babylon (2 Kings 25; 2 Chron. 36:11–19).

Many of the people in Judah had led quiet lives of faithfulness to God, yet they still experienced the terrible consequences of their faithless and unwise leaders. Sometimes we, too, can get caught in the backwash of God’s judgment falling on others and experience painful consequences. The decisions others make can have a real impact on our lives. Yet we are called to faithfulness, whether we are experiencing the best in life or the worst.



The Flight of the Prisoners
(James Tissot, c. 1896–1902)

In the book of Daniel, we find accounts of how Daniel and his friends were rescued from seemingly certain death—more than once. (Though of course they still had to endure the trauma of being thrown into a furnace or a den of lions!) Many believers throughout history have also faced the prospect of death because of their faith, but not all were rescued from martyrdom. Consider how this New Testament perspective on the reality and expectation of persecution can help us cope with suffering:

Now we call him, “Abba, Father.” For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. (Rom. 8:15–17 NLT)

We must certainly distinguish between what God would like to see happen and what he actually does will to happen, and both of these things can be spoken of as God’s will.

I. HOWARD MARSHALL, IN *THE GRACE OF GOD, THE WILL OF MAN*



Zedekiah's Cave

Near the Damascus Gate of Old City Jerusalem is a natural entrance to a cave. This cave opens beneath the Old City and runs under the modern-day Muslim Quarter of the city. After passing through its entrance, visitors come upon a large cavern more than 300 feet (91 m) wide. Out of this large space, one can follow paths chiseled into the rock to explore galleries and caverns that circle back around to the same opening.

This large area is an ancient quarry. Josephus called it the Royal Caverns. Some people believe that Solomon had stones for his temple construction cut from this quarry. Herod the Great used this area as a quarry for his renovation of the temple. The stones that still stand in the Western Wall today are quite likely from this quarry.

According to one legend, Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, tried to escape from Babylonian soldiers through the tunnels of the quarry. A large deer running nearby attracted the attention of soldiers who followed the deer to the entrance of the cave, where Zedekiah emerged and was captured. The water that drips through the ceiling of the cavern is nicknamed Zedekiah's tears.

New Names in Babylon

In Daniel 1:7, the chief official gives Daniel and his friends new Babylonian names—one of several ways to try to strip them of their Judean identity and assimilate them into their new culture.

HEBREW NAME	MEANING	BABYLONIAN NAME	MEANING
Daniel	God is my judge	Belteshazzar	Bel, protect his life
Hananiah	Yahweh is gracious	Shadrach	Command of Aku
Mishael	Who is what God is?	Meshach	Who is what Aku is?
Azariah	Yahweh will help	Abednego	Servant of Nego [Nebo]

Bel, Aku, and Nebo are names of Babylonian gods.

When Was Daniel Written?

Traditionally, Daniel is regarded as the author of his book. However, some modern commentators argue that the book was written around 165 BC, during the tumultuous reign of Antiochus IV who attacked Jerusalem and desecrated the temple. They contend that Daniel was not a historical figure who lived during the times of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus in the sixth century BC, but instead a later author in the second century BC told a story about a character named Daniel and set it in an earlier time to encourage faithfulness to God during a season of adversity. Part of the motivation for this argument seems to be that it explains how the detailed prophecies in chapters 7–12 concerning Alexander, the Greek Empire, and the competing Greek kingdoms that followed Alexander's death in the fourth century BC could be possible; the prophet Daniel, after all, according to the book, lived two centuries before Alexander.

The book of Daniel itself repeatedly provides specific information about when events occurred:

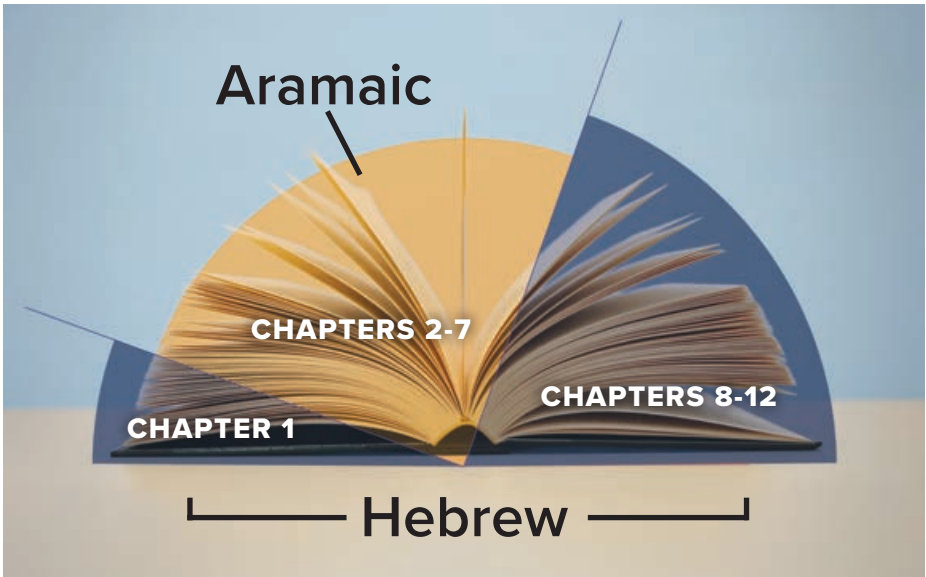
- Daniel’s story begins during “the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah” when “Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it” (Dan. 1:1). These events took place in 605 BC.
- The final verse of chapter 1 states that “Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus” (Dan. 1:21). Cyrus overcame Babylon and began his reign in 539 BC.
- Throughout the book, Daniel includes other references, but chapter 1 clearly makes the claim that his career extended from Nebuchadnezzar’s siege of Jerusalem until the victory of Cyrus over the Babylonians, an impressive career in public service for more than sixty-five years—and an even more impressive life of faithfulness.

As people of faith, we have no reason to doubt that God could work through Daniel to predict the future; so it seems best to take Daniel at face value and accept the date of his writing and ministry as he reports it.

How Was Daniel Written?

How the book was written is also interesting. The book is unusual because it was composed using two different languages. Chapter 1 is in Hebrew, while chapters 2–7 are in Aramaic, before returning to Hebrew for chapters 8–12.

Why would Daniel have composed his book in this way? Perhaps it was because chapters 2–7 present a cohesive unit about the kingdoms of the earth turning beastly and chapters 2 and 7 are closely connected because they essentially repeat the same predictions about rising and falling kingdoms. These predictions can also help us understand the remaining prophetic sections of the book (chapters 8–12) that describe cycles of behavior leading to the end of time when God establishes his kingdom.



Another way to look at the structure of Daniel is as two parts: chapters 1–6 contain narratives about select events, and chapters 7–12 are the prophetic visions given to Daniel.





Integrity

One characteristic that sets Daniel apart from the crowd is his integrity. Integrity means living a consistent life where what others see on the outside matches the character on the inside. It means living a life true to the values and beliefs that a person professes. Integrity is a quality that anyone can work to develop regardless of age, experience, or even past failures.

In engineering, structural integrity refers to the ability of a building or some other type of structure to bear its own weight, while resisting becoming bent or deformed, and to safely maintain its intended purpose and design. That's not a bad definition for what integrity looks like in the life of a believer. As our life is designed around the principles and qualities found in the Bible, through our obedience, we are able to carry our own weight in life and find the strength to bear up under pressure to complete God's intended purpose for us.

That's the kind of example we find in Daniel. He did what was right when he was carried away to Babylon. We don't know exactly why consuming the king's food and drink would've broken a boundary for Daniel. It may have been because it was offered to idols before being served to the king's household or because the food didn't meet Jewish dietary restrictions. Whatever the reason, the food from the king failed to meet the standards that God had called to Daniel to observe. At a time when no one would have chided Daniel for assimilating into Babylonian culture, he chose to live with integrity. Integrity requires doing what is right when no one is watching, when no one cares what you do, and also when others are watching and the stakes are high.

Here's one final thought about integrity: It's never too late to build a life of integrity. Near where I live, a bridge is undergoing repairs. Because of its age, it had to be stripped to its foundations and rebuilt. Even when we've failed, it's possible to begin again. When we submit ourselves to the Lord and obey his word, we may be stripped down to our foundations, but we can rebuild again—even after a failure.



Life Application Questions

1. Describe a time when you felt the weight and pressure of expectations or demands that went against your values. How did you respond?

2. What are you tempted to consume that could be “defiling” (Dan. 1:8), and how can you avoid those temptations?

3. Do you think that God’s sovereign control over everything eliminates the possibility of events taking place that God does not wish to happen? Why or why not?

4. Daniel and his friends continued trusting God, even when life was difficult and painful. Is your faith conditional on God doing what you think he should do? How can you know?

5. Think about an experience or season of life in which you faced adversity. How did it affect your faith in God?

6. Daniel and his friends needed one another during their exile. Is there someone you could encourage right now, or is this a time when you need some encouragement from a friend?