

History Repeating Itself?

Series: The Book of Daniel

Daniel 1

June 6, 2021

Welcome again to worship. It's so good to be together.

INTRODUCTION

You see in the bulletin some basic information about the book:

- Author: Daniel, a young Jewish man who would serve for 70 years in the governments of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus.
- Time in History: between 605-536 B.C.
- Setting: The Israelite captivity in Babylon.
- Original Audience: The other captives in Babylon
- Date Written: Approximately 536 B.C.

There are 5 Keys to Understanding the Book of Daniel:

First, it is the story of 2 parts. The book is 12 chapters long, and it's divided in half:

Part A is about **Daniel and his friends**.

Chapters 1-6 tell the story of Daniel and his three friends. Daniel 1:7:

The chief of staff renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Beltshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego.¹

Part B is about **Daniel and his visions**. Chapters 7-12 are a series of visions received during the reigns of three rulers² that dramatically outline God's future plans, beginning with Babylon and continuing to the end of the age.

Second, it is the story of living under pagan and evil governments.

The king of the opening chapters is Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon who came to Jerusalem, besieged it, and destroyed the Temple, but not before taking some of the sacred objects from the Temple and putting them in the treasure-house of his god.

But they were not only pagan, but they were evil. In the Book of Revelation, the evil government of the antichrist is called Babylon.

Third, it is a story of the power of God when the world comes at you.

The Book of Daniel is about Daniel and his friends, but in each story, it is recalling what Daniel and his friends did in reaction to what the evil people around them were trying to do to them.

The story of Daniel and the lion's den is a perfect example. The other rulers hated Daniel, so they tried to use his religion against him. And when he was loyal to his faith, they threw him in the lion's den. He did nothing wrong to anyone, but was punished anyway. Same way with the fiery furnace.

But in each instance, the power of God came through, so the book gives us faith when an evil world comes at us.

Fourth, it is a story of the past that prepares us for living in the future.

¹ Daniel 1:7 (NLT2)

² Belshazzar (chapters 7-8), Darius (chapter 9), and Cyrus (chapters 10-12)

The second half of the book has visions that detail Daniel's future. Some of them have already been fulfilled and are in our history, but there are others who have yet to be fulfilled.

Therefore, when you read Daniel, you learn about faith in the past that gets us ready with the faith we will need in the future.

Finally, it is a story of looking to the Lord alone for deliverance.

We saints must be patient and faithful amid a hostile world, and when the world comes after us, we must look to God and God alone for deliverance.

My friends, I believe we are in the Last Days, when people will trade the truth for lies.

The history of Daniel living in evil times is repeating itself today.

I pray as we study this book over the next several weeks, we will be guided and strengthen in our faith, and realize that God will get us through.