

DANIEL

Three main interpretations:

A. Liberal - Daniel was written during the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175 - 164 BC) in Judea. He pretended to write as if it was in the time of Nebuchadnezzar (@ 600 BC). Liberal problem: liberals cannot accept the idea that God is sovereign. Because Daniel predicted the fall of the Babylonian empire, the rise of the Medes, and their subsequent defeat by Alexander the Great, the prophecies had to be written afterwards. Daniel is labeled an "allegory." Webster's definition of allegory is "the expression by means of *symbolic fictional* figures and actions of truths or *generalizations* about human existence."

IF Daniel wrote his book in Judea and not in Babylon, then he is a liar.

E. B. Pusey: "The book of Daniel is especially fitted to be a battleground between faith and unbelief. It admits no half-way measures. It is either divine or an imposture."

B. Christian with emphasis on the future. In Google, I typed in "prophecy Daniel future" - and over seven million hits. (Pre-millennial view)

Some titles in the first page:

- The Book of Daniel is unsealing - Middle East and Prophecy!
- Truth of Biblical Prophecy: Fulfilled and Future - Final Book of Daniel
- Daniel's Amazing Prophecies
- Daniel 11 - Prophecy Fulfilled! - Here a little, there a little - Prophecy
- The Prophecy of The Ten-Nation Confederacy
- Chapter 11 (Prophecies in Daniel), Part III (FUTURE RAMIFICATIONS)
- End Times Prophecies and the Future of Israel

Daniel is a puzzle that is being fulfilled in our time!

C. Christian with an emphasis on now - Daniel describes God's sovereignty and is a comfort in our times (Reformed view)

John Calvin: Dedicated his commentary "To ALL THE PIOUS WORSHIPPERS OF GOD WHO DESIRE THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST TO BE RIGHTLY CONSTITUTED IN FRANCE."

1561 - Protestants were under severe attack by the Catholics

"yet it would be in no degree pleasing or desirable to me to dwell in a region [France] from which the Truth of God, pure Religion, and the doctrine of eternal salvation are banished, and the very kingdom of Christ laid prostrate! Hence, I have no desire to return to it;"

Calvin, like Daniel, was forced into exile. "A most excellent opportunity has been providentially afforded to me; for in publishing the Lectures which contain my Interpretation of the Prophecies of Daniel, I have the very best occasion of showing you, beloved brethren, in this mirror, how *God proves [tests] the faith of his people in these days by various trials*; and how with wonderful wisdom he has taken care to strengthen their minds by ancient examples, that *they should never be weakened by the concussion of the severest storms and tempests*; or at least, if they should totter at all, that they should never finally fall away. For although the servants of God are required to run in a course impeded by many obstacles, yet whoever diligently reads this Book will find in it whatever is needed by a voluntary and active runner to guide him from the starting-post to the goal; while good and strenuous wrestlers will experimentally acknowledge that they have been sufficiently prepared for the contest."

1. "so that we ought not to consider it a grievance to be thrown into the furnace of trial, while profane men enjoy the calmness of repose."

2. "the indefatigable constancy of holy men in the pursuit of piety, invites us; with a loud voice to imitate them."

3. "For God shows how all earthy power which is not founded on Christ must fall; and he threatens speedy destruction to all Kingdoms which obscure Christ's glory by extending themselves too much."

Theme of Daniel: God is Lord of lords and King of kings

Our God Reigns

James Montgomery Boice's commentary *Daniel* (1989!!): "Daniel gives the meaning of history more clearly than any other portion of the Bible and, what is more, it tells us how to live for God in ungodly times-like our own." (p. 9)

1. Daniel was a godly man sent to live in ungodly Babylon.
2. The Babylon of Daniel's day was a type of all kingdoms that do not acknowledge God or think they can dispense with Him.
3. Daniel . . . was under tremendous pressure to conform.
4. The world seems to be winning.
5. God is in control of history. (p. 10)

Daniel 1:1 *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.*

A. Chronology

1. All dates BC
- 1446 Exodus
- 1406 Joshua begins conquest of the land
Ruth and Judges
- 1050 Saul becomes king
- 1010 David becomes king
- 970 Solomon becomes king
- 966 Construction of temple begins
- 723 Israel, northern kingdom, destroyed by Assyrians
- 701 Assyrian King Sennacherib threatens Jerusalem
- 700? Babylonian envoys arrive - Isaiah 39



Figure 1: map from http://www.biblehistory.com/maps/assyrian_expansion.html accessed on 29 Dec 12

Theme of Daniel: God is Lord of lords and King of kings

Our God Reigns

- 614 Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar destroys Ashur, a key Assyrian city
- 612 Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar destroys Nineveh - end of Assyrian Empire
- 609 Pharaoh Neco kills Josiah at Meggido (II Chron. 35:20-25) and Jehoahaz becomes king (II Chronicles 36:2). Pharaoh Neco reaches the Euphrates
- 608 Pharaoh Neco returns to Jerusalem and deposes Jehoahaz and puts Jehoiakim on the throne and returns to Egypt.
- 605 Pharaoh Neco returns to Carchemish where he is defeated by Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar. Then Nebuchadnezzar marches south and besieges, but does not conquer, Jerusalem; Daniel and his three friends sent into captivity.



Figure 2: http://www.usbible.com/god/evolution_of_god.htm accessed on 20 Apr 13

- B. Daniel 1:1: *In the 3rd year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon*
Jeremiah 25:1: *In the 4th year of the Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah . . . 9 I will summon my servant Nebuchadnezzar*
1. Is there a conflict? Daniel says 3rd year of the reign of Jehoiakim, and Jeremiah says it is the 4th year. So are there errors in the Bible?
 2. What year is it?
 - a. If you are Christian it is 06 January 2013
 - b. If you are Muslim it is 23 Safar 1434
 - c. If you are Jewish it is 24 Tevet 5773
 - d. If you are Chinese it is the 11th month of 4709
 3. Babylonians and Jews use different calendars:
 - a. Babylonians counted the first year of the king's reign as the year of ascension. The first full year would be the first year.
 - b. The Jews counted the first year of the king's reign, no matter how short or how long, as the first year.

Babylonian	Scripture	Jewish	Scripture
Year of Ascension	II Kings 25:27: <i>"In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, <u>in the year Awel-Marduk became king of Babylon</u> . . .</i>	1 st year	
1 st year		2 nd year	
3 rd year	Daniel 1:1: <i>In the <u>3rd year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah,</u></i>	4 th year	Jeremiah 25:1: <i>In the <u>4th year of the Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah</u> . . .</i>
7 th year	Jeremiah 52:28: <i>This is the number of the people <u>Nebuchadnezzar</u> carried into exile: in the <u>seventh year</u>, 3,023 Jews;</i>	8 th year	II Kings 8:24: <i>In the <u>eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon</u>, he took Jehoiachin prisoner.</i>
18 th year	Jeremiah 52:18: <i>in <u>Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year</u>, 832 people from Jerusalem;</i>	19 th year	II Kings 25:18: <i>On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the <u>nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon</u>, Nebuzaradan . . . came to Jerusalem.</i>

C. "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it"

1. Problem: Nebuchadnezzar at this point is not king, but only crown prince. After he goes to Jerusalem, and gets some treasures, he returns to Babylon quickly because of the death of his father Nabopolassar and is crowned king. So is the Bible in error?
2. Solution: Saying that he is king is no different than us using a current title for a past event. Example: President Obama attended Harvard College. President Obama was not president when he went to Harvard, but we say President Obama went to Harvard. Same thing here: (future) King Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem.

Daniel 1:2 *And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.*

Thought Questions:

1. John Calvin writes: "Where is God, if he does not defend his own temple?" Why does God allow Nebuchadnezzar to carry off some articles of the temple? Remember how seventy Jews were killed for just looking inside the ark? (I Sam. 6:19) God struck down Uzzah for touching the ark when it was about to fall? (II Sam. 6:7) And now Nebuchadnezzar carries off holy vessels and places them in the temple of his god, Marduk, the chief Babylonian god, the god of thunderstorms, later known as Bel. Why does God permit such evil?

2. Jehoiakim is delivered into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar but he, Jehoiakim, will continue to reign. Apparently, the people opened the gates and let Nebuchadnezzar in. According to Daniel 1:2 Nebuchadnezzar took some captives and the articles of the temple back to Babylon. Why did God send the righteous people, Daniel and his three friends into captivity, and left Jehoiakim, an evil doer, in Jerusalem?

II Kings 23:37 *And he did evil in the eyes of the Lord, just as his predecessors had done.*

3. Why is a righteous Daniel ministering to the pagan Babylonians? Shouldn't he be ministering to the chosen people, the Jews?