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The Book of Daniel: Kingdoms of Men and THE KINGDOM OF GOD



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #90 ~

Without a doubt, Daniel is one of the most important books on prophecy in the entire Bible. It talks about the kingdoms of man and the kingdom of God. Specifically, it tells us about the times of the Gentiles, starting with Israel's defeat in Jerusalem in 586 BC, going through the church age, and finishing at the end of Daniel's 70th week. The purpose for this book of Daniel was to encourage exiled Jews by revealing God's long-range plans for them, from the rule of Gentile kings to the return of Jesus Christ, the Jewish king.

For centuries, the Jews had been living in Israel, and rebelling against God, and finally, in 605 BC, His punishment of them began. Many Jews were exiled to Babylon, including young, innocent Daniel and his three friends. Daniel lived for another 65 years, serving God through the reigns of four kings, and writing down a number of visions about the kingdoms of man and the future kingdom of God. Just before his death,

God told Daniel, *"Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time"* (Daniel 12:9). After another and longer exile, the Jews are again back in their land, and now we are blessed to be living in the *"end-time."* That means these words of Daniel are no longer sealed up. They are for Christians, for you and me in this *"end-time",* to read, understand, and believe.

Many valuable and relevant truths are contained in this prophetic book of Daniel:

1. God's sovereignty. Clearly seen in the book of Daniel is God's sovereign control over the affairs of rulers, nations and all people. Even during the times of the Gentiles, God is still in charge, carrying out His eternal plans. *"His kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as He pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth."* Daniel 4:35, Daniel 2:20-21

2. God's work with people. You observe God's work with countries, but you can also see and be encouraged by how He works with and through individual people, like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, and even Arioch. Daniel 1:8-17, 2:14-25, 3:12-27, 6:1-23

3. God works through leaders. In ways we cannot see, God works through leaders and kings, even if, at times, they are proud and are unrighteously governing a country. The book of Daniel gives us confidence and hope, for we see God carrying out His plans through a number of rulers: Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and Darius (Daniel 2, 4, 5, 6).

4. God works through the Antichrist. There is more said in the book of Daniel about the Antichrist than any other book in the Bible. This means that God wants us to know some of the details about his devilish life, and his evil influence over the world in the end-times. Daniel 7:8, 11, 20-22, 24-26; 8:23-25; 9:26-27; 11:32-45

5. The kingdom chronology: God gives us a divine time frame, Daniel's 70 weeks, which helps us to more clearly understand His prophetic schedule (Daniel 9:24-27). These 70 weeks are 490 years. The first 69 weeks, 483 years, take us from the rebuilding of the temple (445 BC) to the crucifixion of Christ. Then there's a long gap of time

between the 69th and 70th weeks, and for the most part, this is the church age. This 70th week will soon begin, for we now live in the end-times. In the middle of this week, the Antichrist is revealed, and at the end of the week, Christ is reigning, for *"the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ."* Revelation 11:15

6. Spiritual warfare. In the book of Daniel, God pulls back the curtain, letting us know that the forces of God and of the devil are battling it out, fighting for control of countries and kingdoms. Revelation 12:7 also speaks about this spiritual warfare: *"There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon (devil). And the dragon and his angels waged war."* More than we realize, spiritual battles between invisible forces have been and will be taking place. Daniel 10:13, 20; Ephesians 6:10-13

7. God's plans for the Jews. During the times of the Gentiles, there will be no divinely appointed king reigning over Israel, but instead, she will be ruled by kings from Gentile nations: Babylon (605-539 BC), Medo-Persia (539-331 BC), Greece (331-146 BC), Rome (146 BC-476 AD) … Rome (end-times). But in the end, God prevails: *"In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed… it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever."* Daniel 2:44

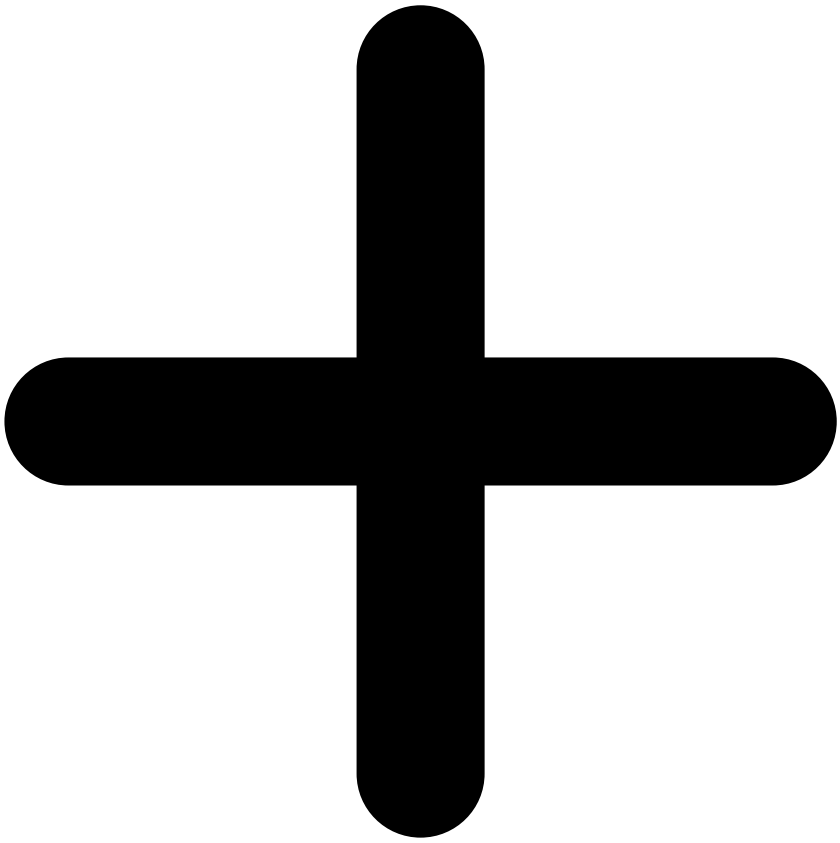
8. The coming of Christ the King. After this evil age is over, when Daniel's 70th week comes to a close, then Jesus Christ will return and establish His glorious kingdom on earth. This is our hope, and what we must look for and long for, seeing Jesus, our Lord and King, reigning on this earth. *"His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey Him."* Daniel 7:27, Philippians 2:9-11

9. Christians need insight. *"Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many"* (Daniel 11:33). The prophet Daniel predicted what would be taking place in the end-times. And now, over 2500 years later, we are actually beginning to see his prophecies come true. What a privilege to be alive at this time in history, and be used by God to tell others about Jesus, our blessed Savior and King.

This is only a brief summary of the book of Daniel, which are some of

God’s end-time instructions for us. I encourage you to read and study this book yourself, and pass on to others the truths you learn from it. *“He is the living God and He endures forever; His kingdom will not be destroyed; His dominion will never end.”* Daniel 6:26

P.S. I just finished a needed article about the difficulties of life during the time of great tribulation and the Antichrist. It’s something you, your family, and your friends need to know: “A Little Suffering and a Lot of Glory.” There are two other posts I want to encourage you to read that relate directly to this post on the book of Daniel: “The Divine Timetable, Daniel’s 70 Weeks”, and “Daniel’s 70th Week, One of the Keys to Unlocking the End-Times.”



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