

# HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

## Daniel 7 - 12

Work book

# Hearing the Word Daniel 7 - 12 Work Book

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Published by Nigel Barge, Torrance

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## Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Phil and June Malloch, whose tireless editing, reviewing and pulling together of materials has enabled the ‘Hearing the Word’ resource to be shared with the wider church.

*Nigel Barge, January 2014*

## Scripture Quotations taken from

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## Resources

The *New Bible Dictionary* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published by Inter Varsity Press  
The *New Bible Commentary* 21<sup>st</sup> century edition. A commentary on every Bible book, IVP

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

# *Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading*



## **LOOK** – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
  - a) What questions does it raise - *Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?*
  - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
  - a) the surrounding text
  - b) the Book of the Bible
  - c) the whole Bible
  - d) the place in the Bible Story



## **LEARN** – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



## **LISTEN** – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



## **LIVE** – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God,  
(Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace\*
  - c) Jesus / his salvation\*\*
- 2) What should I do?

\* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

\*\* The Bible, from 'the fall' onwards, describes God's plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27)

## **Reading Apocalyptic literature**

Apocalyptic literature (from the Greek *apokalupsis*, literally, *uncovering*) describes what God has *revealed* to people about the end times. Eschatology (from the Greek *eschatos* meaning *last*) is the part of theology that studies

death, judgment and the final destiny of the soul and humankind. English now tends to use 'The Apocalypse' to mean the final, calamitous *destruction* of the world, but the 'end times' has a wider meaning than that.

Apocalyptic literature (in the Bible, e.g. Daniel 7-12 and Revelation) has several distinct features:

- a) It looks beyond the 'here and now' to the end of time.
- b) The focus is on the reality behind earthly people and events. This exposes the struggle between good and evil in which good will inevitably triumph.
- c) It deploys imagery of animals to depict its message.
- d) Numbers have symbolic rather than arithmetic meanings, e.g.
  - 3 is the number of the divine revelation to man
  - 4 is the number of the earth,
  - 7 is the perfect divine number,
  - 10 is a large but unspecified number symbolising completeness.
  - 12 is the number that describes God's people

Apocalyptic literature is a type of prophecy. To read prophecy we need a tri-focal lens! A text may be referring to

- a) the immediate time frame,
- b) the coming of Jesus made flesh among us or
- c) his coming as judge at the end of time.

The difficulty for us in reading prophecy is that these may all be included but they are mixed up- apparently randomly!

Nowadays, we are not used to reading apocalyptic literature. However, if we take it slowly, use our imaginations and interpret the signs given as the writer intended, we need not be daunted!

## Reading Daniel

### The context of the book

God's plan was to bless the world. He chose Abraham and his descendants to be his tools to bring this about (Genesis 12:1-3). He committed himself to them in an everlasting 'covenant' (Genesis 17:1-27).

He gave them a land of their own – Canaan. Abraham’s grandson, Jacob, also known as Israel, had 12 sons, whose families grew to become known as the 12 tribes of Israel. God warned Israel there would be consequences if they failed to be faithful to their side of the covenant. Such failure would ultimately result in exile from their land. (Deuteronomy 28:15,36).

After the reigns of David & Solomon, the Kingdom divided into two unequal parts. The ten northern tribes were still called Israel; the south was known as Judah. The Lord continued to warn them through his prophets but they took no heed. This led to the exile first of the northern Kingdom, Israel, to Assyria in 721 BC. In 605 BC, however, the Babylonians overran Assyria, captured Jerusalem and started to take the southerners, Judah, including Daniel, to Babylon.

In exile, the 10 northern tribes of Israel were dispersed through the Assyrian empire and remained ‘lost’. The Jews of Judah, however, kept their identity during their 70 years’ in Babylon. When a Persian King, Cyrus, conquered the Babylonian Empire in 539BC, he allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem, and rebuild the Temple (2 Chronicles 36:15-23; Ezra; Nehemiah).

## Historical background to Daniel

Babylon, a city on the river Euphrates (80km south of modern Baghdad) became the capital of Babylonia (modern South Iraq) and the empire and civilisation based on it. Babylon is first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis 11, where it is called Babel.

By 625BC, Babylonia broke free from Assyria. In 605BC, Babylon’s crown prince, Nebuchadnezzar, sacked Carchemish, at that time run by Egypt, and annihilated the Egyptian army. Jehoia<sup>*kim*</sup>, king of Judah, submitted to him; he carried off hostages (including Daniel) and some articles from the Temple. While he was in Palestine, Nebuchadnezzar’s father died and he became king.

In December 598BC he besieged Jerusalem. Read about the fall of the city (16 March 597BC), the capture of king Jehoia<sup>*chin*</sup> and the start of the exile for Judah, in 2 Kings 24:10-17 and 2 Chronicles 36:8-10.

Jerusalem was totally destroyed in 587BC. There was further deportation in 581BC (2 Kings 25:8-21). Nebuchadnezzar died in 562BC.

Nabonidus was king of Babylon 556-539BC. His son Belshazzar ruled as co-regent in Babylon while his father campaigned in Arabia. Belshazzar was killed in 539BC when Darius the Mede captured Babylon. ‘Darius the Mede’ and ‘Cyrus the Persian’ are likely to be the same person.

## Date and Authorship of Daniel

In the book of Daniel, the narrative starts in 605BC when Nebuchadnezzar deported Daniel and his friends to Babylon (1:1-3). The last recorded date in the book is 536BC (10:1) when Cyrus is in the third year of his reign.

The visions (chs7-12) look forward to the 'abomination that causes desolation', the desecration of the Temple during the rule of Antiochus 1V (Epiphanes)(167 -164 BC) some 360 years later.

Most commentators agree with the historical accuracy of the events described until (11:35) which is set during the occupation of the Temple. Some therefore hold that it was written during that time with the events of 11:36ff being future speculation.

(If that is so, the question is - Why did they not wait and write definitively what happened when the Temple was reconsecrated in 164 BC? Is not history always written by the victors?!)

The Word of God says that 'the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing it to His servants the prophets.' (Amos 3:7). Therefore we believe it is reasonable to say that it was written by Daniel himself: chapters 7-12 are in the first person. ( Jesus said that 'the abomination that causes desolation' (Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) was 'spoken of through the prophet Daniel' (Matt 24:15).

Chapters 1–2:4a and 8–12:13 are written in *Hebrew* (like the rest of the OT) while chapters 2:4b–7:28 are written in *Aramaic*, a more widely spoken language. The reason is not known; one suggestion is that chapters 2-7 are the parts of most interest to non-Jewish readers.

This study looks at chapters 7 to 12 - Daniel's visions of how in the latter days the God of heaven will erect a kingdom that will never be destroyed. (A separate Hearing the Word study, *Daniel 1-6*, looks at the historical section.)

## The Message of Daniel

'Daniel' means 'God is my judge'.

Daniel, one of the Jewish nobility, is carried into exile in Babylon. During his long life in exile he remains true and faithful to the God of Israel. (chs1-6)

Toward the end of his life he is given visions (ch 7-12) of a day of the desecration of the Temple and a seeming triumph of evil. His eyes are then raised (11:36ff) and he sees God's rule, the day of judgement and the eternal inheritance of the wise / the faithful..

Daniel acknowledges that, even in the exile of his people, the Lord is sovereign giving kingdoms to those he wishes (4:25; 5:21; 7:14)- the Lord is indeed ‘judge of all’!

## Dates in Daniel

*All dates are BC – Before Christ. Neb’ stands for Nebuchadnezzar*

Chapter	Year	Topic
<i>Historical narrative, chapters 1-6</i>		
1	605	Neb took Jews into exile inc. Daniel and royal youth.
2	604	Nebuchadnezzar’s 1 <sup>st</sup> dream
3	?	Image of gold and the fiery furnace
4	587?	Neb’s 2 <sup>nd</sup> dream - (? the year of Jerusalem’s fall)
5	539	Neb died 562 BC, son (Nabonidus) away fighting (?) so Neb’s grandson, Belshazzar, in charge.
6	c539	Darius (Cyrus) and the lions’ den
<i>Apocalyptic literature, chapters 7-12</i>		
7	552	Belshazzar’s 1 <sup>st</sup> year, <i>before</i> Daniel 5:1. D’s 1 <sup>st</sup> vision
8	550/49	Belshazzar’s third year. Daniel’s 2 <sup>nd</sup> vision
9	539	Cyrus’s first year. Daniel’s prayer
10	536	Cyrus’s third year. Intro to Daniel’s 3 <sup>rd</sup> vision. . .
11		. . . which includes Kings of the South and North,
12		and The End times

## Empires in Daniel

For scholars who take the book of Daniel as written in the second century, it would therefore be ‘history’ with some contemporary comment. (The four Kingdoms in Daniel 2:31-43; 7:47 referring to Babylon, Media, Persia and Greece.)

For others who believe it was written in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century, predominantly by Daniel as ***a prophetic book.***, the four kingdoms mentioned are taken as referring forward to Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome.

There is a third view. Given that apocalyptic literature does not adhere to a linear timescale and that it uses the number four to represent the earth, the beasts may not be specific(they do not correspond with the named empires



of 8:3-5, 21,22) Instead, they represent all the kingdoms of man with the little horn (7:8), the devil, being the most powerful on earth.cf Jn12;31;14:30; 16:11

The kingdom that will never be destroyed in Daniel (2:44 ; 7:14) is the reign of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God.

### **Assyria** *All dates are BC – Before Christ*

721BC 10 Northern tribes of Israel dispersed among the Assyrian Empire

621BC Nineveh, capital of Assyria, falls to the Babylonians

### **Babylon**

605 Babylon defeats Egypt at Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar, Emperor of Babylon, annexes Judah, carries off some Temple vessels and youth of nobility (including **Daniel**)

597 Jehoiakim, King of Judah, rebels. Succeeded by son Jehoiachin for 3 months. Nebuchadnezzar returns and crushes the revolt, removing the leaders and the professional classes.

Zedekiah placed as a puppet King

587 Zedekiah rebels, Jerusalem crushed and destroyed. Mass deportation of population to Babylon. See 2 Kings 25.1-12.

539 Darius the Mede captures Babylon

### **Persia**

539 Cyrus allows the Jews to return to Jerusalem

486 Xerxes 1 (known as Ahasuerus in the book of Esther)

331 Darius III

### **Greece**

334/33 Alexander the Great of Greece conquers Persian Empire. Dies 323.

323 Four of his generals fight each other for parts of the empire: Ptolemy takes Egypt ('the Kings of the South', Daniel 11) the first of 14 kings of that name, all Macedonian Greeks, ruling Egypt till 30BC. Seleucus takes from Syria eastwards ('the Kings of the North'). The Seleucid dynasty named their kings Seleucus or Antiochus. At first the Ptolemies hold the Holy Land, but the Seleucids capture it.

175-164 Antiochus IV Epiphanes (a Seleucid King)

167 The Abomination of Desolation – ie Antiochus tries to impose Greek culture and religion on Jerusalem; even raises an altar to the Greek god, Zeus, in the Jewish Temple; provokes huge revolt!

165-164 Victories of Judas Maccabeus and the cleansing of the Temple.

### **Rome**

64BC – 395AD



## Questions by the Jewish people

Faced with exile from the promised land, God's people must have asked many questions. Some are expressed below. Acutely aware of these, Daniel seeks to address the dilemma that they present, for example:

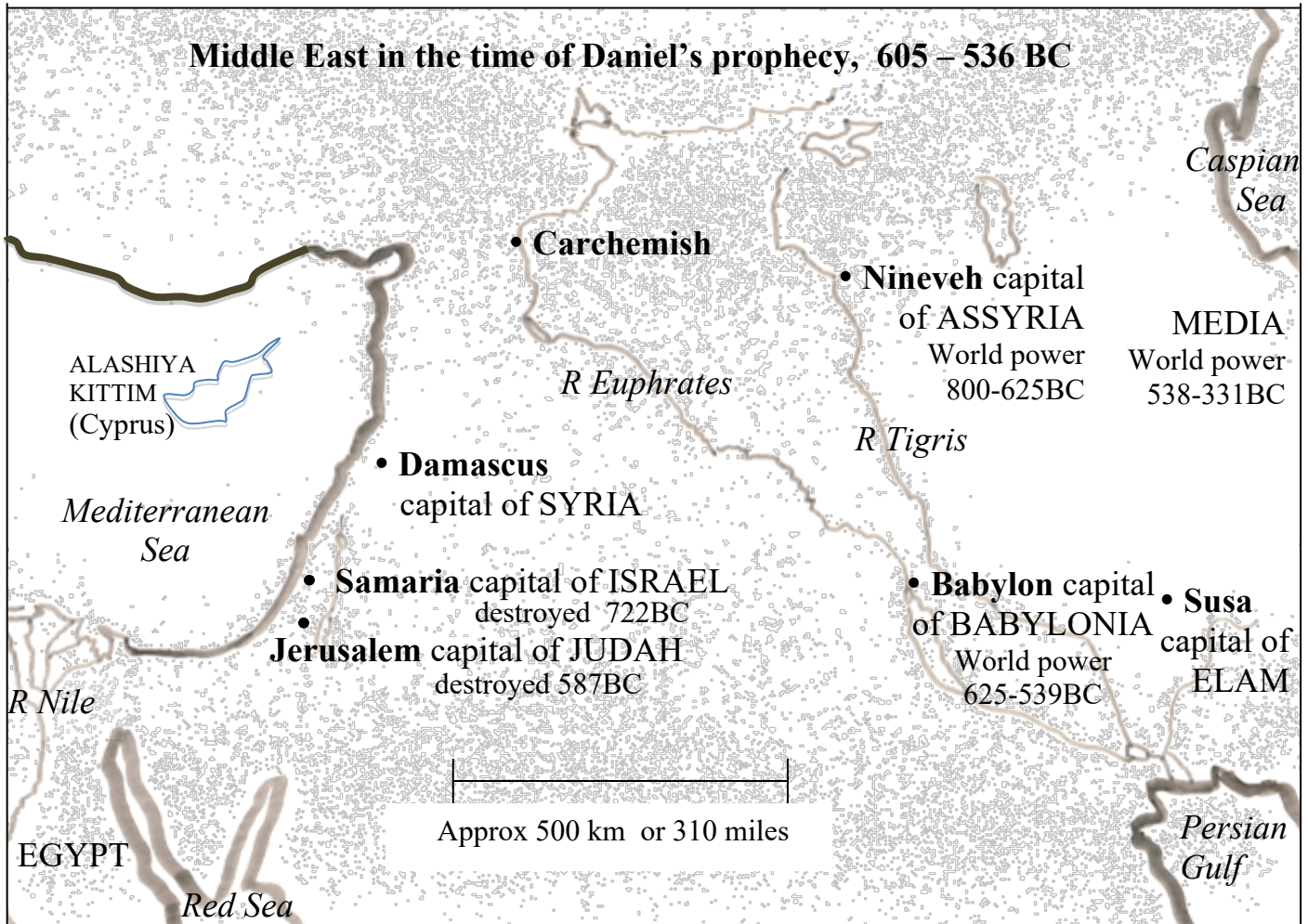
<b>The supremacy of God</b>	Where is the Lord who brought judgment on the gods of Egypt? ( <i>see</i> Exodus 12:12)
<b>The covenant of God.</b>	What has happened to the promise to Moses and David that God's love would never be taken away from them? ( <i>see</i> 2 Samuel 7:5)
<b>The land of Israel</b>	What has happened to the promise to give this land to His people? ( <i>see</i> Deuteronomy 1:8)
<b>The centre of God's promise</b>	What has become of Jerusalem, 'Mt Zion, the city of the great King'? ( <i>see</i> Psalm 48:2)
<b>The fate of Jerusalem</b>	Why is she like a widow who once was great among the nations? ( <i>see</i> Lamentations 1:1)
<b>The fate of the people</b>	How can we sing the songs of the Lord in a foreign land? ( <i>see</i> Psalm 137:4)

.  
  
*See **Study 5** for more historical detail that may link with **Daniel 11:1 – 12:3***

# The purpose of the book of Daniel

To teach that when God deals with human kingdoms, He is *sovereign*

## Map



## Daniel's Dream of Four Beasts

### Background information

Chapter 7 opens the second part of the book, with clear links to what has gone before. It is still in Aramaic; so its language continues the narrative of 2:2 – 6:28, though jumping back in time to before chapter 5.

In subject matter as well, it has much in common with an earlier chapter (2:36-45), which also refers to four kingdoms; *see* page 4 of this guide.

Daniel 7 gives us a kind of overview of history.

Daniel would have known of Ezekiel's visions, e.g. Ezekiel 1, 10, 17, 37, etc

### Word List

- 2 *had a dream*. . . the Aramaic says 'saw a dream, even visions of his head'  
ie this was no ordinary dream
- the great sea* old name for Mediterranean Sea. (Joshua 1:4)
- 5 *bear* Syrian brown bear may weigh up to 250 kilos and has a voracious appetite.
- 7 *horns* represent an animal's strength in self-defence or attack
- 9 *Ancient of Days* or 'elderly'
- 12 *period of time* or a season and a time, i.e. implying a limited future
- 13 *one like a son of man* idiomatic for 'a man', i.e. laying stress on this person's humanity

### Bible connections

- 2 *churning deep* source of evil Job 41:31; Ps 74:12-14; Rev 13:1
- 4 *lion and eagle* Nebuchadnezzar in Jeremiah 49:19-22
- 7 *horns* *see also* Zechariah 1:18-21
- 9-10 *Ancient of Days on throne* *see also* Ezekiel 1:4-29
- fire* *see also* Exodus 3:3; Malachi 4:1; Psalm 50:3; 97:3
- God's books* *see also* Exodus 32:32; Psalm 56:8; Malachi 3:16
- 9-13 *judgment* Paul refers to this judgment in Acts 17:31
- 11 *the beast* destroyed Revelation 19:20
- 13 *clouds of heaven* *see also* Exodus 16:10, 19:9
- son of man* used by Jesus of his sufferings/death or coming kingdom *see* Mark 13:26; 14:62; Matthew 19:28  
*see also* Revelation 1:13; 14:14
- 14 *given dominion...* *c.f.* Genesis 1:26

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

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## **LIVE**

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

b) His grace?

c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Daniel's vision of a ram and a goat

### Background information

The scope of chapter 8 is narrower than ch 7, with only two animals in the vision. It is set in Susa, the ancient capital of Elam, (*see* Map, p6) about to become one of the great cities of the Persian empire (Nehemiah 1:1)

The writer this time identifies the symbols: the ram is the kingdom of the Medes and Persians and the he-goat is the Greek empire. Alexander the Great died in 323BC, only 10 years after the collapse of the Persian empire, and the power struggle which followed resulted in his kingdom being divided between four of his generals Ptolemy, Philip, Antiochus and Seleucia. In Seleucid empire, centred in Syria, Antiochus IV began to reign in 175BC. In 169BC he first entered the Temple in Jerusalem and desecrated it (*more detail on pp 4 and 32*).

### Word List

- |    |                                    |                                                                                                                          |
|----|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | <i>Susa</i>                        | a strongly fortified city, 220 miles east of Babylon, 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf (in today's SW Iran).          |
|    | <i>Elam</i>                        | Susa was in the province of Elam, and was occupied almost continuously from pre-history till abandoned by the Seleucids. |
|    | <i>canal</i>                       | water way near the city                                                                                                  |
| 9  | <i>Beautiful Land</i>              | Palestine                                                                                                                |
| 10 | <i>host of the heavens</i>         | the stars                                                                                                                |
| 11 | <i>Prince of the host</i>          | their Creator, God                                                                                                       |
|    | <i>daily sacrifice</i>             | prescribed by God in Exodus 29:38-42                                                                                     |
| 14 | <i>2,300 evenings and mornings</i> | a relatively short period of time, fixed by God.                                                                         |
| 16 | <i>Gabriel</i>                     | means 'man of God' or 'strength of God', one of only two angels in the Bible identified by names.                        |

### Bible connections

- |     |                                                                   |                                                                           |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3-4 | <i>Ram representing aggressive rulers</i>                         | <i>see also</i> Ezekiel 34:17; 39:18<br>cf Jeremiah 51:40; Zechariah 10:3 |
| 9   | <i>Beautiful Land</i>                                             | <i>see also</i> 11:41; Jeremiah 3:19; Ezekiel 20:6,15                     |
| 10  | <i>Stars, sometimes worshipped by Jews, against God's command</i> | <i>see</i> Deuteronomy 17:3; Jeremiah 8:2; Zephaniah 1:5                  |
| 14  | <i>2,300 evenings and mornings</i>                                | mean God's timing is perfect <i>cf</i> Rev 9:13-15                        |
| 16  | <i>Gabriel</i>                                                    | <i>see also</i> Dan 9:21; Luke 1:11-20, 26-38; Revelation 8:2             |
| 25  | <i>Prince of princes</i>                                          | <i>c.f.</i> Daniel 10:20; 12:1                                            |
| 27  | <i>Daniel after 2<sup>nd</sup> vision</i>                         | <i>c.f.</i> 7:28 after 1 <sup>st</sup> vision.                            |

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## Daniel's Prayer

### Background information

In 539 BC Daniel is aware that the seventy years of exile prophesied by Jeremiah is almost over. By fasting, he prepares for a period of specific prayer on behalf of all Israel, scattered as they were in many different lands. They had deserved God's judgment on them and he confesses their sins. Yet they are the Lord's covenant people; relying on that, Daniel asks for mercy in accordance with the known character of God. His prayer contains many quotations from Deuteronomy and Jeremiah.

God's messenger Gabriel assures him his prayer has been heard but then gives him a message hard for him – and us – to understand: the 'seventy sevens'.

### Word List

- |    |                                      |                                                                                                               |
|----|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | <i>Darius</i>                        | King who ousts Belshazzar – see 5:31; 6:1                                                                     |
|    | <i>Xerxes</i>                        | <i>Ahasuerus</i> in Hebrew. May be a royal title                                                              |
| 2  | <i>Scriptures</i>                    | first mention in Bible of 'Scriptures' ie canonical writings                                                  |
|    | <i>LORD</i>                          | ie Yahweh the covenant name for God                                                                           |
|    | <i>Jeremiah</i>                      | Prophet in Jerusalem who, over a 40 year period prophesied its downfall, which happened in 587BC              |
|    | <i>Jerusalem</i>                     | capital of Judah, site of the Temple                                                                          |
| 3  | <i>sackcloth</i>                     | coarse cloth, usually made of goat's hair; to wear 'sackcloth and ashes' was a sign of mourning or repentance |
| 11 | <i>Law of Moses</i>                  | the Law God gave to Moses on Mt Sinai                                                                         |
| 21 | <i>time of the evening sacrifice</i> | ie mid-afternoon: Daniel still observed the regular times of Jewish worship                                   |
| 24 | <i>seal</i>                          | (legal) authenticate with one's seal and signature                                                            |
| 25 | <i>Anointed One, ruler</i>           | Hebrew <i>Messiah</i> , means leader                                                                          |

### Bible connections

- |    |                                                                                                 |   |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 2  | <i>seventy years</i> , as fixed term of divine indignation see Zechariah 1:12; Chronicles 36:21 | 2 |
| 6  | <i>your servants the prophets</i> - see also Jeremiah 26:5; 25:4; Ezra 9:11; Zech1:6            |   |
| 24 | <i>seventy sevens</i> (or weeks) see Leviticus 25:8; 26:18,34                                   |   |
- (Other Bible prayers of repentance and a plea for mercy see Psalm 51; Jonah 2; Ezra 9:5-15; Habakkuk 3)

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b) His grace?

c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Study 4

## Daniel 10:1-11:2a

### Daniel's Vision of a Man

#### Background information

Chapters 10-12 are all *one* vision, with ch 10 as a long introduction. It came to Daniel about 536BC. Daniel may have been disturbed by the reports of the unrelenting opposition to the exiles who had returned to Judah in 537BC (*see* 2 Chron 36:22-33; Ezra 1:1-5; 3:12; 4:1-5,24); this is what drove him to prayer and fasting. He is by now in his mid-eighties; no wonder the appearance of this messenger flattened him, physically and psychologically!

#### Word List

1	<i>Belteshazzar</i>	Name given to Daniel by Nebuchadnezzar
3	<i>lotions</i>	i.e. anointing himself (a sign of rejoicing <i>see</i> Psalm 45:7)
4	<i>24th day of 1st month</i>	Passover = 1 <sup>st</sup> month. Days 10-17
	<i>River Tigris</i>	Rises in Armenian Mountains and runs 1,400km SE before joining R Euphrates. Wide in Babylonia
5	<i>man</i>	an unnamed angelic figure <i>see also</i> Ezekiel 1:22-28; Revelation 1:9-19
	<i>linen</i>	bleached white, worn by priests (Lev16:4)
6	<i>chrysolite</i>	translucent precious stone
11	<i>highly esteemed</i>	greatly beloved/one in whom God takes delight
13, 20	<i>Prince of Persia, Greece</i>	evil angelic powers
14	<i>in the future</i>	refers to future historical events, not the end of time
21	<i>Michael</i>	Israel's angelic counterpart/warrior-advocate

#### Bible connections

1	<i>2 years after Cyrus' decree to return</i>	2 Chron.36:22-33; Ezra 1:1-
5	<i>Problems in rebuilding Temple</i>	Ezra 3:12; 4:4-5, 24
12	<i>'Do not be afraid'</i>	<i>see also</i> John 14:1; Colossians 3:15; Philippians 4:4-7
13,20	<i>imagery of warfare</i>	<i>see also</i> Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 12:7
21	<i>Book of Truth, God's control and knowledge of past, present and future</i>	<i>see also</i> Psalm 139:16; Malachi 3:16

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## **The Kings of the South and the North**

### **Background information**

**11:2-20** (536 – 175 BC) describes the human power struggle around Israel. The Persian empire is succeeded by the Kingdom of Greece(2). A mighty king (Alexander the Great) rules briefly for about ten years 334 -323 BC (3) His empire is then divided amongst his four generals.

Israel becomes the buffer zone between the two dynasties - the Kings of the South (5) / Egypt (the Ptolemies) and the kings of the North (6) / Syria , (the Seleucids).

The correlation of kings and events (5-20) are generally agreed by all commentators though God does not receive a mention!

**11:21-32** (175 -163) describes the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes which culminated in the ‘abomination that causes desolation’ (31) of the Temple (167 -163 BC). In it, the greek god Zeus was worshipped and a pig sacrificed. (The Temple was re-consecrated after the revolt led by Judas Maccabeus(163BC)

**11:33-35** The fate of those who resist Antiochus is described

**11:36-45** A brief comment on Antiochus (?) gives way (40) to a prophetic passage of the ruler (the prince of this world? (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), the scourge of God’s people.

**12:1-4** The vision ends with a heavenly view of the final judgement at the end of time

This passage is central to the meaning of the Book of Daniel. It indicates that it is written with anticipation of the events surrounding Antiochus Epiphanes’ ‘abomination that causes desolation’ but, as with all Scripture, it has a wider meaning and application. The tri focal application of all prophetic scripture applies giving it a relevance to the contemporary time, the time of the first coming of Jesus and the time of the second coming and final judgement.

(See footnotes for more dates and details of vvs 11:2 -12:4 on p

## Word List

16,41	<i>Beautiful Land</i>	Israel/Palestine
28,30	<i>holy covenant</i>	people of Israel/Palestine ie the Jews
22	<i>a prince of the covenant</i>	the High Priest Onias <sup>111</sup>
30	<i>coastlands</i>	Hebrew <i>Kittim</i> , the ancient name of Cyprus used generally for islands and coastlands west of Palestine
31	<i>daily sacrifice</i>	requirement laid down in Numbers 28:2-8
	<i>abomination that causes desolation</i>	Hebrew circumlocution to avoid writing the despicable name of false God, Baal.
12:4	<i>the book</i>	i.e. the living <i>c.f.</i> Psalm 69:28

## Bible connections

30	<i>Kittim, referring to Baalam's prophecy see</i>	Numbers 24:24
31	<i>abomination that causes desolation see also</i>	Jeremiah 19:4; Daniel 8:11-13; 9:27; Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14
35	<i>God's 'refining' of His people see</i>	Psalm 23:4-5; 78:38; Isaiah 48:10
36	<i>cf the morning star who wanted to make himself like the Most High (Is14:12-15)</i>	
12:2	<i>Multitudes who sleep...will awake. i.e. general resurrection before judgement c.f.</i>	Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

# LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

## **LISTEN**

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

## **LIVE**

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

b) His grace?

c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Enduring to the end

### Background information

We might expect the question ‘When will all this happen?’ (as in Matt 24:3) but the heavenly messenger puts it: ‘How long shall it be to the end?’ (cf 8:13) Daniel wants to know what the outcome will be, but the full significance is hidden, even from him (12:4)

The ‘abomination that causes desolation’ the first time, lasted from 168 BC to the re-consecration of the Temple in 165 BC (approx 3.5 years?)

The symbolic numbers would seem to indicate the need to persevere a bit longer – see also Jesus’ teaching on endurance to the end in Mark 13:13; Matthew 24:45-51 and Hebrews 10:36.

Daniel too must go on, even though he is already an old man. He will eventually die but will then experience resurrection life *cf* Matthew 28:20

### Word List

6	<i>man clothed in linen</i>	see 10:5
7	<i>time, times and half a time</i>	or ‘a year, two years and half a year’
11,12	<i>1,290 / 1,335 days</i>	enigmatic symbolism!

### Bible connections

7	<i>oath taking, generally raising one hand</i>	see Genesis 14:22; Exodus 6:8; Ezekiel 20:15
	<i>‘him who lives for ever’</i>	<i>cf</i> 4:34, reminiscent of Deuteronomy 32:40
	<i>‘shattering of power of the holy people’</i>	<i>cf</i> 12:1
11	<i>1,290 days</i>	<i>cf</i> 9:24-27
12	<i>1,335 days</i>	<i>ditto</i>
	<i>Jesus’ teaching on the signs of the end of the age</i>	see Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21:5-36;

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Now underline the application of the Main Point.



**Footnote:** More historical detail that may link to **Daniel 11:1 – 12:3**

**11:1-4**

- v2 Persia, Fourth King = Xerxes 485-465BC
- v3-4 Greece, Alexander the great 334-323BC

**11:5-20 kings of the North and South 323-175BC**

- v5 King of South (= Egypt): Ptolemy Soter (→ Ptolemaic dynasty)
- King of North (=Syria) : Seleucus I (→ Seluecid dynasty)
- 5-12 The Ptolemies of Egypt predominate
- 6a Ptolemy II (Philadelphus) c250BC gives his daughter, Berenice, to Antiochus II (Syria) in marriage on condition their son is heir to Seleucid kingdom; he dies c248BC. But Antiochus divorces Berenice, reinstates his earlier wife, Laodice, who then poisons Antiochus and has Berenice and her son liquidated so that Laodice's son Seleucus II (Callinicus) reigns over the north.
- 7-8 Ptolemy III (Berenice's brother) attacks the North, kills Laodice
- Seleucus II has unsuccessful foray south against Egypt c242BC
- 10 Seleucus II's sons keep assaulting Kings of South
- 11b Ptolemy IV (Philopater, 221-204BC) king of the South defeats the Seluecid king, Antiochus III, at Raphia 217BC
- 13-17 the North makes a comeback through Antiochus III, c214BC
- 13 He attacks Egyptians in Phoenicia and Palestine, driving them into Sidon where. . .
- ?15 . . . they surrender, in 198BC.
- 16 Palestine passes into Seleucid control
- 17 Antiochus III gives his daughter Cleopatra as wife to Ptolemy IV, hoping for influence; but she becomes decidedly pro-Egyptian
- 18 Antiochus III invades Greece; Romans defeat him at Thermopylae 191BC, then Magnesia 190BC, and exact tribute
- 19 Antiochus III loots temple in Elymas 187BC and a mob of Zeus zealots killed him
- 20a Seleucus IV sends Heliodorus to seize funds from Jerusalem Temple treasury
- 20b Heliodorus poisons Seleucus IV in 175BC

## 11:21-35     **Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) 175-163BC**

- 21a The 'contemptible person' could refer to this man. Once released from Rome in a hostage exchange he seizes the Seleucid throne
- 22-24 synopsis of Antiochus IV's reign
- 25-31 object of Antiochus IV's hostility
- 25-27 the king of the South
- 28-31 the covenant people
  - 29 unsuccessful foray against Egypt c168BC
  - 30 so he takes it out on Israel c167BC
- 32-35 cost of Antiochus IV's savagery,  
the great price Israel pays as they resist his programme

## 11:36-45     **'The King who does as he pleases'**

- 36a who is the 'king who does as he pleases'? A Seleucid yet he fights against the kings of the North (40)
- 36-37 his religious pretensions
- 40-44 his military dominance
- 45 his final end – at Jerusalem

*NB this does not fit with what secular history tells us about Antiochus IV (eg he died in Persia not Israel)*

The pattern in 11:21 – 35 is repeated in 11:36 – 12:3

- |    |                             |            |     |            |
|----|-----------------------------|------------|-----|------------|
| A. | rise and success            | 11:21 – 24 | and | 11:36 – 39 |
| B. | conflict and oppression     | 11:25 – 31 | and | 11:40 – 45 |
| C. | suffering and steadfastness | 11:32 – 35 | and | 12: 1 – 3  |

i.e. The final scourge will be like Antiochus IV - only worse!

See The Message of Daniel 'The Bible speaks today' by Dale Ralph Davis

# *Sharing the Word*

## **Use**

'Hearing the Word' can be used alone, with one other person, or in a group

## **Preparing for a group**

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE.

Write down your own questions and answers \*

## **A format**

If you have 45 mins together, you might like to try dividing it up like this.

(If longer or in a large group, you can extend the times)

- 1) Drink, bite to eat, chat (10 mins)
- 2) A Bible reading ( 2 mins)
- 3) A Bible study
  - a. Any questions? (Whether answer is known or not!) ( 2 mins)  
(Don't answer any, till all questions noted!)
  - b. Any relevant cross references? ( 2 mins)
  - c. Discussion of answers (13 mins)
  - d. Conclusion (10 mins)
    - i. A Key verse and Main Point?
    - ii. What does it show about God / Jesus?
    - iii. What should I do?
- 4) Sharing (Trials and joys – family, work, self) ( 5 mins)
- 5) Prayer ( 1 min)

## **Remember!**

As we gather round God's Word

- a) Listen to the views of others
- b) Make room for the novice. They can join in too when you start by listing 'Any questions'
- c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others' especially, 'seekers' in your sharing together.

\* The **process** is explained and practised in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called '**An Introduction to 'Hearing the Word'**'.

## ***“I can read the Bible for myself!”***

To show that the Bible is accessible to all,  
the Rev Nigel Barge, minister of Torrance Parish Church,  
has devised a tool called ‘Hearing the Word’.  
The Manual explains the basic principles of Bible reading,  
teaches them by means of an interactive course,  
and practices them on a single passage, Mark 10:35-45,  
Participants follow in a Workbook: *Hearing the Word - Introduction*,  
which includes the next six passages in Mark,  
so they may follow on for themselves.

As the principles apply equally to all, the course will both  
instruct the novice and refresh the ‘hardened’ Bible student!

