

***The Long War Against God:  
Introduction to Daniel -- Hope Upon Hope for the Jews!!***

**Our Theme Verses:**

***Dan. 9:1-2***

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

**2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.**

***Is. 44:28-45:4***

**28 That saith of Cyrus, [He is] my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.**

**45:1 Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;**

2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

**3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call [thee] by thy name, [am] the God of Israel.**

**4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.**

***Matt. 24:15-16*** When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) When ye therefore shall see **the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place**, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

**Review:**

- ***We have spent many of our fellowships here recently in the book of Esther and have by necessity looked carefully at the seven so-called “festivals” or “feasts” in the Hebrew calendar. We have seen how that calendar given by God to his people, provides details that figure directly in the story of Esther***

*and in addition, have prophetic significance.*

- *We also saw how the Lord in the time of Esther instituted an additional Feast, the Festival of Lots or Purim (meaning “lots”) making eight in total. Mordecai & Esther were co-regents in the Persian kingdom of Ahasuarus, and when the children of Israel were miraculously delivered from Haman the Agagite’s death warrant, Mordecai and Esther proclaimed a festival to be celebrated on a specific date in the calendar, AFTER the last festival, the Festival of Tabernacles. We read of that in Esther chapters 9:20-22.*
- *We learned also how the Agagites were Amalekites and were therefore descendants of Esau. Then the significance of this seemed to come into a clear focus and the meaning of that festival, as well began to be clear.*
  - *Remember the sacred calendar leading up to Purim end in the seventh month, the month Tisri, with the Feast of Trumpets (the Jewish New Year or Rosh Ha-Shanah) occurring on the 1st of that month, the Day of Atonement following on the 10th of the month and the Feast of Tabernacles beginning on the 15th of the same month.*
  - *Since Tabernacles signified Israel’s full reception of their prophesied kingdom blessings, clearly that feast was intended to be fulfilled only when the children of Israel finally received their promised kingdom.*
  - *But then Purim was then added as the Eighth Festival with its place in the sacred calendar AFTER Tabernacles . . . , on the 14th and 15th days of the last month ADAR! We conclude at the minimum that any prophetic meaning of this feast must relate also to the Millennial reign of Christ and most likely to the end of that 1000 year reign, since Purim is scheduled AFTER the Feast of Tabernacles which has its prophetic focus during the Kingdom itself.*
- *Note that in Esther Purim has everything to do with Israel’s and the Lord’s victory over Haman who is a type of Anti-Christ who energizes the False Prophet, and the Beast. They are Satan’s tools during the Great Tribulation period leading up to the second coming of Christ and the establishing of the Kingdom. They all are defeated, however, by Christ at his Second coming, at which point according to Revelation 20:1-3 & 7-10.*

- ***So, at the end of the 1000 year reign of Christ Satan's released from his prison and deceives the nations to surround and attack the holy City and the people of Israel yet again. Could Purim's fulfillment have then to do with Satan's final destruction as Rev. 20 and verse 10 indicates? I believe that it does.***
- ***We then saw how a key to our understanding is the Agagite connection between Haman and the Amalekites. So Haman was an Amalekite because we know from 1 Sam. 15:8 that Agag was the king of the Amalekites!! So the picture starts to become clear, and indeed, there may be another very important dimension to the Esther story therefore. In fact, it may be that the true meaning of the story prophetically revolves around Haman and his ancestry and that he is set forth as a "type" of Satan and his minion, The anti-christ, as revealed in the book of Revelation. Therefore, the Amalekites, Israel's enemies always in the Old Testament would have a counterpart at the end of the Millennial Kingdom and we saw in Revelation 20 how these counterparts might very well fulfill the Old Testament types of Haman and the Amalekites in their total destruction at the very end of the age.***
- ***And so, we concluded that since the destruction of Haman and Israel's enemies during the time of Mordecai and Esther was accomplished by the miraculous working of Almighty God, looking forward, Satan himself will be destroyed finally and completely at the end of the Kingdom when Satan leads many of the nations of this earth against God's people and he is defeated once and for all and thrown into the Lake of Fire according to Rev. 20:10.***
- ***Finally, we saw how Daniel's request for understanding regarding "the times and the seasons", he received instead a warning:***

***Dan. 12:4, 8-9***

***4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, [even] to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.***

***--***

***8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what [shall be] the end of these [things]?***

**9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words [are] closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**

- **So we must conclude that in the time of the end a special understanding shall be given to some so that they may understand these prophecies, just as Dan. 12:4 and 9 make so abundantly clear.**

**Today:**

- **God encouraged his people so thoroughly with the events that led to the Purim Festival; so also he will now encourage them even more through Daniel, with their return to the land of promise. The hope of Purim in Esther is complemented so well by the hope of Daniel pointing forward to Israel's Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- **Let's not forget that throughout all of these centuries of time, the Lord God is carrying out his plan regarding the Seed of the Woman, and that throughout it all, Satan is the arch-enemy of Almighty God working in every way possible to thwart the plan of God establishing himself as God! But God is always victorious, as we have seen.**
- **The sacred history in both Esther and in Daniel reveal so clearly that God is the creator and the redeemer of his people and that all things are under his control -- even when the days are long and dark and there seems to be no hope at all left for God's people. BUT EVEN THEN, GOD IS AT WORK AND HE WILL ACCOMPLISH HIS ETERNAL PLAN OF THE AGES, AND WE, HIS PEOPLE, ARE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT. AMEN.**

**I. The Links between Esther and Daniel are Many**

- **There are many links and parallels between Esther and Daniel, not the least of these being that Esther is prophetic in its types, Daniel in its prophecies. That is a most profound subject indeed, as we have already here in our fellowship been privileged to see unfolding our study.**
- **They both have many prophetic overtones in reference to the second coming of Christ, the millennial reign of Christ in the 1000 year kingdom, and in the events at the end of the Kingdom with the final destruction of Satan.**

- ***The time periods covered in the two books are overlapping. They come close to being the same, in fact. The geographical and national focus, however, in Esther is Persia, and that in Daniel is Babylon. Babylon is taken captive by Persia in due time and then the two become one. Daniel mentions the Persian rulers Ahasuerus, Darius and Cyrus in that regard.***
- ***In fact, Daniel mentions in his book five or more kings by name. Having lived through the entire seventy year Babylonian and Persian Captivities, he knew them all. Daniel was carried off by Nebuchadnezzar and lived, it seems, until the return to the land. That is a period of seven kings, four in Babylon and three in Persia.***
- ***The key timing statements in Daniel establishing this are these:***
  - ***Dan 1:21 And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.***
  - ***Dan 6:28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.***
  - ***Dan. 9:1-2***  
***1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;***  
***2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.***
  - ***Dan. 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.***
  - ***So we know from this that Daniel lived during the reigns of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar and his short lived followers, and then also during the reigns of the Persian kings Ahasuerus, Darius, and Cyrus, giving a total life of in excess of***

**85 years. We think of him as a child since he was carried off from the kingdom of Josiah in Judah in apparently his teen years. But he lived to be a wise elder statesman in Babylon and lived as an aged man under the Persian king Cyrus. So his lifespan covered the pre-exilic period, the exilic period, and the earliest part of the post-exilic period of Israel's history. There are no other known examples of this.**

## **II. The Prophecies of Daniel - an Introduction - Chapter 1**

### **[READ ] Dan. 1:1-4**

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring [certain] of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

4 Children in whom [was] no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as [had] ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

### **[READ ] Dan. 1:5-8**

5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel [the name] of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who

hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which [are] of your sort? then shall ye make [me] endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

***[READ ] Dan. 1:17-21***

**17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.**

**18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.**

**19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.**

**20 And in all matters of wisdom [and] understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians [and] astrologers that [were] in all his realm.**

**21 And Daniel continued [even] unto the first year of king Cyrus.**

### ***III. The King's Purpose Revealed***

- ***The human element - who was taken - verses 3 & 4***
- ***The changing of the names (indicating clearly what the king's purpose was in all of this) - verses 6 & 7***
  - ***The name Daniel (meaning God is my judge ) was changed to Belteshazzar (meaning Bel's prince ).***
  - ***The name Hannaniah (meaning Beloved by the Lord) was***

- changed to Shadrach (meaning Illumined by Sun-god ).*
- *The name Mishael (meaning Who is as God ) was changed to Meshach (meaning Who is like Venus ).*
  - *The name Azariah (meaning The Lord is my help ) was changed to Abed-Nego (meaning Servant of Nego ).*
- *The defining issue (just like with Mordecai in Esther!) - verse 8*
  - *Their care and feeding provided - verses 12 - 16*
  - *God's special provision for Daniel and his friends - verses 17-20*
  - *The time frame of Daniel's prophecies outlined - verse 21*
  - *Take note here that God was very much at work in this Gentile kingdom. Verses 9, 17 & 20 make this so clear:*
    - *1:9* Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.
    - *1:17* As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.
    - *1:20* And in all matters of wisdom [and] understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians [and] astrologers that [were] in all his realm.

#### **IV. The Theme of Daniel is Revealed**

***Dan. 4:17*** This matter [is] by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

- *This theme is critical to understanding Daniel. Daniel opens the time of the Gentiles in Biblical history. Now during this time God will raise up Gentile nations to bring Israel into bondage as he had promised, but (and this is very important) as he does so he will also continue to reveal himself through these same Gentile rulers and nations. Never has God abandoned his throne through all of this, even though it might very well appear to God's own chosen people that Bel has replaced Jehovah on the throne.*
- *Daniel's prophecies (and as supplemented by Isaiah and Jeremiah) will establish once and for all that in every circumstance God*

*remains in control, and more so, that God rules even over the hearts of sinful kings and rulers in Babylon and Persia.*

**V. An Overview of Daniel's Prophecies (Looking forward to next time)**

- *Their miraculous nature is clear in Daniel with the seventy years prophecy already fulfilled and the 70 weeks (of years) (for us) already partially fulfilled with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the very appointed day.*
- *Their links to other prophecy and revelation are astounding really:*
  - *The book of Revelation, chapter 12, makes references to Daniel's prophecies, chapters 7 & 12 (the "time, times, and an half" language meaning 3 ½ years)*
  - *The Lord Jesus refers to Daniel's prophecies in Mt. 24 six times!*
- *The context of Daniel is revealed in the Pre-exilic prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah*
  - *The amazing reference in Isaiah giving the name of Israel's Gentile deliverer should cause all readers to take note:*

**Is. 44:28-45:4**

**28** That saith of Cyrus, [He is] my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

**45:1** Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

**3** And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call [thee] by thy name, [am] the God of Israel.

**4** For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though

thou hast not known me.

- ***The Seventy Years Prophecy of Jeremiah 25***

***[READ ] Jer. 25:9-14***

9 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

**11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, [and] an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.**

12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, [that] I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, [even] all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

14 For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

***[READ ] Jer. 29:10*** For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

- ***Daniel learned of this prophecy in Jeremiah and it changed his entire outlook and provided a transforming hope to the people in exile. The day was approaching for their deliverance! The Israelites abandoned their idolatry once and for all due to these (and other revelations). It was so clear that there was one God and that it was Jehovah. Before the Babylonian Captivity Israel was idolatrous and for that they were eventually expelled from their land and their temple was destroyed.***

***But afterwards they continued for many centuries and continue even today as monotheistic even though they are in unbelief!! Daniel's discovery of the Jeremiah prophecy is recorded in his chapter 9:***

- ***[READ ] Dan. 9:1-2***
  - 1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;
  - 2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.
- ***An even more important scripture than all of these is the so-called "Seventy Weeks" Prophecy of Daniel 9:***

***Dan. 9:24-27***

**24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.**

**25 Know therefore and understand, [that] from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince [shall be] seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks:** the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

**26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off,** but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof [shall be] with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

**27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:** and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make [it] desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

### **Conclusions:**

- ***Hope upon hope is the theme of these books of scripture.***
  - ***The Festival of Purim established a hope for God's people Israel as it***

***was shown so clearly in history that God can even work through the apparent randomness of the dice as he turns the heathen religious system of lots (Purim means 'lots') into circumstances for the deliverance of his people in Persia. That Festival of Purim will continue throughout the coming Great Tribulation and also throughout the Millennial Kingdom giving hope to his people as they remember yearly his care for them.***

- ***Now in Daniel's days as we have seen, God revealed to and through Daniel his servant and prophet how he would soon deliver his people according to promises made 200 years before (in the Isaiah case) and just before the beginning of the captivity (in the Jeremiah case). So hope upon hope for his people Israel is so clearly revealed here in these pages of sacred scripture. Amen and amen.***
- ***What does it mean of us today, Gentiles living under the abundance of grace? Well, it means very much. May God be praised that he has given us his word of truth.***