

The Book of Daniel



Unique Features of Daniel

- Only book written in 2 languages (Hebrew & Aramaic)
- 2 distinct genres – narrative “court” stories, visionary/apocalypses
- 2 voices – 3rd person narratives, 1st person visions embedded in 3rd person narrative
- Unique “challenges” – unclear dates, names, loan words from other languages, chronology of passages
- Place in the OT canon – “prophets” or “writings”
- Extra stories added – Judith, Tobit, Bel & the Dragon
- Arrangement into final form

Interpreting Challenges – Apocalyptic Visions

- Grew to be a common type of literary style – relationship to Daniel?
- Predictive prophecy?
- Preterist approach?
- Combination?
- Symbols – meaning from contemporary parallels or interpret literally?



Anchor Points

- Bible is inspired and God speaks to us through it
- Bible also has historical particularity – be humble
- Look at the situation, what and how the author says, and ask the Holy Spirit to discern how it applies to us today

Daniel 1

Living as a Minority in a Foreign Culture



The Ancient Near East
in 540 BC



Character Introduction –

Ch. 1:1 - 7

- Put yourself in their shoes – what are you thinking?
What are you feeling? Why?
- What stands out about them (v. 4)?
- What is their new job? What were they supposed to do?
- Why the name change?

The Test –

Ch. 1:8 - 17

- Why do you think Daniel thought the food would “defile” him?
- What does he eat and drink, what does he not eat and drink?
- How would you describe Daniel’s act? Defiant? Compromising?
- How does that inform your view of Daniel?

Outcome –

Ch. 1:18 - 21

- What are the differences between “acquired skill” and “wisdom”?
- Do we often mistake “knowledge” and “wisdom”?
- How do you tell the difference?

What does this mean to us?

- How has our world changed in the last 100 years?
- What effect has this had on the church's ability to spread the gospel?
- How does the church relate to the wider world?
- What should our response be? Do we engage? Disengage? Or some place in between?