

Old Testament Survey

Daniel: Faithfulness in a Foreign Land

Date: February 13, 2022; Teacher: Rev. David Senters
New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Richmond Hill, GA

Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 27. *Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?* Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition,^a made under the law,^b undergoing the miseries of this life,^c the wrath of God,^d and the cursed death of the cross;^e in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.^f

Theological Significance:

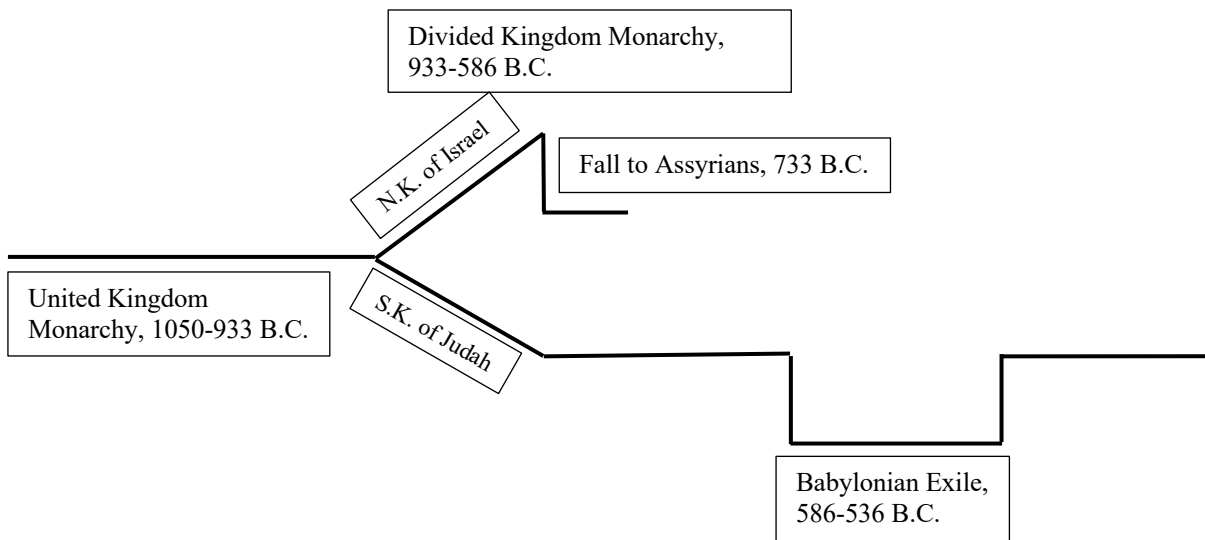
1. Christ becoming man came at a great price to himself.
2. Christ is our prophet, priest, and king both in his exaltation and humiliation.
3. His humiliation was not only the cross, but in his entire life.

Daniel

Introduction and DQ: Let's read Daniel 1:1-7. Walk a mile in Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishaël's shoes—what might they have been thinking and feeling about God?

Context, Authorship, Date

1. Historical Context



^aLuke 2:7; 2 Cor 8:9; Gal 4:4.

^bGal 4:4.

^cIsa 53:3; Luke 9:58; John 4:6; John 11:35; Heb 2:18.

^dPs 22:1; Matt 27:46; Isa 53:10; 1 John 2:2.

^eGal 3:13; Phil 2:8.

^fMatt 12:49; 1 Cor 15:3-4.

2. Daniel: The author has long been believed to be Daniel during his exile in Babylon from 605 B.C. to 536 B.C. This would extend from the first deportation of exiles to Babylon to the book's last recorded historical event.
 - a. Dan 1:1, "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it."
 - b. Dan 10:1a, "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar."
 - c. Estimates of age place Daniel leaving Israel around age 15 and concluding his career at age 85.
 - d. Daniel lived through the reigns of the Judean kings Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. He probably heard the preaching of Jeremiah, was in Babylon when Jerusalem was destroyed, and lived to see the fall of the Babylonian Empire to the Persians. He was also a contemporary of Ezekiel, who mentioned him three times (Ezek 14:14, 20; 28:3).
3. Composition and Date
 - a. Dan 7:1, "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter."
 - b. Dan 12:4a, "But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end."
 - c. Composed in Hebrew (Dan 1:1-2:4a; 8:1-12:13) and Aramaic (2:4b-7:28).
 - d. Probably composed at the end of the Exile, ca. 530 B.C.
4. The Maccabean Thesis
 - a. The book was written by an anonymous Jew during the 2nd century B.C., to encourage Jews in their struggle against Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-162 B.C.) during the Maccabean Period.
 - b. The book contains inspiring, but non-historical accounts of non-historical people (i.e., Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael), and pseudo-prophecies.
 - c. Problems
 - i. Dating from The Dead Sea Scrolls
 - ii. Content within Daniel
 - iii. Removes the possibility of divine revelation and foretelling the future

Purpose: To show God is faithful to his covenant people and sovereign over all the nations, including those he uses as his instruments of discipline; that he will return his covenant people from Exile at the appointed time, including orchestrating all the historical events; and the full restoration of his covenant people will be fulfilled by the Messiah.

Main Characters

1. The Exiles: Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael.
2. Gentile Kings: Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, Symbols for Kings (Giant Idol, Tree, Beasts), and unnamed kings
3. The unnamed (un)wise men: magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, satraps, etc.
4. Angels: God's Angel and Gabriel
5. God: God, Ancient of Days, and God's Angel (?)

Outline

1. Introduction of the Faithful Exiles (Dan 1)
2. The Faithful God's Plan for Faithless Gentiles (Dan 2-6)
 - a. Visions of Nebuchadnezzar (2-4)
 - b. Vision of Belshazzar (5)
 - c. Darius throws Daniel in the Lion's Den (6)
3. The Faithful God Rules Faithless Nations (7)
4. The Faithful God's Plan for Faithless Judah (8-12)
 - a. Daniel's vision of the Ram and Goat (8)
 - b. Daniel's vision of the 70 weeks (9)
 - c. Daniel's vision of Israel's future (10-12)

Summary

1. God Tests: Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael (1).
2. God blesses the Exiles with Wisdom in a Foreign Land (Dan 2-7)
 - a. God Reveals: Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Great Image (2).
 - i. Four Kingdoms: Babylonians, Medo-Persians, Greeks, Romans.
 - ii. An everlasting kingdom will come (vv. 44-45).
 - b. God Rescues: Nebuchadnezzar's Great Image (3:1-4:3).
 - i. Refusal to worship Nebuchadnezzar's giant idol.
 - ii. The "son of the gods (v. 25)" and "angel (v. 28)" delivers them from fire.
 - c. God humbles: Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar (4:4-5).
 - i. Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Giant Tree (4:4-37).
Nebuchadnezzar will be cut down like a tree, driven insane, until he is humbled to know that God is the true king.
 - ii. Daniel Interprets the Handwriting on the Wall for Belshazzar (5).
Belshazzar is removed and killed, because he refused to humble himself, even though he knew God had humbled Nebuchadnezzar (5:22-23).
 - d. God Rescues: Daniel is Thrown into the Lion's Den for Praying (6).
 - i. Daniel's adversaries attempt to remove him from power in Darius' kingdom (6:4-5, 10).
 - ii. Daniel is thrown into the Lion's Den but rescued by God's angel (6:22).
 - e. God Reveals: Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts (7)
 - i. The rise and fall of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.
 - ii. These kingdoms will fall to an everlasting kingdom (7:17-18, 21-22).

DQ: With which section would you place Daniel 7? It's the end of the Aramaic, but the beginning of Daniel's dreams.

3. God blesses the Exile Daniel with Visions while in a Foreign Land (Dan 8-12)
 - a. God Exalts and Humbles: The Vision of the Ram and Goat (8).
 - i. The Medo-Persians (the Ram) and the Greeks (the Goat).
 - ii. The terrible little horn is Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
 - b. God Remembers and Forgives: The Vision of the 70 Weeks (9).
 - i. Exile was a period of 70 years (9:1-2).
 - ii. Daniel confesses the sins of God's people and repents (9:2-19).

- iii. Rebuilding was a period of 70 7s: the 7 7s is the immediate rebuilding of Jerusalem, 62 7s is a troubled time, and the 1 7 is the time of the Messiah.
 - c. God Prepares: The Vision of the King of Kings, and the Kings of the South and North (10-12).
 - i. The true King of Kings is reigning on his throne (10).
 - ii. Kings of the South, the Ptolemies in Egypt, and the Kings of the North, Seleucids in Syria/Babylon, will have conflict (11).
 - iii. Final encouragement for God's people (12).

Theological Themes

1. The absolute sovereignty of God over kings and their kingdoms.
2. The eternal decrees of God to raise up some kingdoms and humble others according to the counsel of his own will. God is the only true wise King: not the Gentile kings, not their wisemen, and not even Daniel.
3. Prophecy: Not only is it forth-telling but can also be foretelling.
4. The judgment of God on wicked nations with whom he uses to discipline his people.
5. Piety among paganism.

DQ: Read Daniel 10:1 and 12:8. What makes some of the prophecies in Daniel difficult to understand?

The Book of Daniel in the New Testament

1. The Olivet Discourse – The Abomination of Desolation
 - a. Matt 24:15-16, “So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”
 - b. Dan 9:27b, “...and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”
 - c. Dan 11:31, “Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.”
 - d. Dan 12:11, “And from the time that the regular burn offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days.”
 - e. For Daniel, the “abomination of desolation” was fulfilled by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who sacrificed a pig on an altar to Zeus in the Temple in 167 B.C. For Jesus, the “abomination of desolation” was fulfilled by the Roman army destroying Jerusalem in A.D. 70, including entering and destroying the Holy Place.

2. Revelation

DQ: How did the Apostle John use Daniel symbolically?

- a. Depending on how you count them, G.K. Beale references Daniel more than 250 times in his commentary on Revelation (NIGTC).
- b. John's Vision of God in Rev 1 come from Dan 7 and 10.
- c. The period of the two witnesses prophetic ministry in Rev 11:2-3 from Dan 9.
- d. The first beast of Rev 13, 17 from Dan 7.