

Daniel

3398a AM, 4107 JP, 607 BC

777. Nebuchadnezzar ordered Ashpenaz, the overseer of the eunuchs, to carry off the best of the children of Israel, both from those of royal blood and from among the princes. {#Da 1:3} This had been predicted to Hezekiah by Isaiah, the prophet. {#Isa 39:7} They would be under Ashpenaz's care and were to be educated for three years in the language and sciences of the Chaldeans. The best of them were to be selected to stand before the king and serve in his palace. Among those taken from the tribe of Judah were Daniel, who was Belshazzar, Hananiah, who was Shadrach, Mishael, who was Meshach and Azariah, who was Abednego. Each had his name changed at the discretion of the prince of the eunuchs. {#Da 1:3-7}

3401a AM, 4110 JP, 604 BC

785. When Jehoiakim had lived in subjection to the king of Babylon for three years, he rebelled against him. {#2Ki 24:1}

786. Daniel and his three followers refused the diet provided for them from the king's allowance. They dined only on vegetables and water. However, they were found to look

better and to be of fairer complexion than the rest, who ate of the king's food. After three years, they were brought into court to attend the king. They greatly excelled in all matters of knowledge, wisdom and science, which the king chose to ask them. Their knowledge surpassed that of all the Magi and astronomers who were in his kingdom. {#Da 1:5-20}

787. In the second year of his kingdom, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of the great image made of various metals. When he forgot his dream, he asked his Magi and astronomers what his dream had been and what it meant. Because they could not satisfy him in so unreasonable a demand, he commanded them all to be put to death. When Daniel saw the execution being prepared and understood the reason for it, he asked the king to delay for a while. Daniel and his companions prayed to God, and God revealed both the dream and its interpretation to Daniel. He declared to the king what his dream had been, and also the four monarchies which were to come, because this was the meaning of the image which he had seen in his dream. [E85] As a result, the king enriched him with great gifts and made him governor of all the province of Babylon, and chief over all its wise men. Moreover, at Daniel's request, he made his three companions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, principal officers in all that province. {#Da 2:1-49}

33411a AM, 4120 JP, 594 BC

828. God, by signs and verbally, predicted Zedekiah's flight by night, the putting out of his eyes, his going into captivity and his dying in Babylon. He also foretold the captivity of the Jews and the calamities which they were to endure before this captivity. {#Eze 12:1-28} In this same year, the next seven chapters of Ezekiel were written. From his writings we understand that Daniel's name was at that time very famous for his continual prayers on behalf of the people of the captivity. {#Eze 14:14,20} Zedekiah had no regard for the covenant he had made and the oath which he had sworn, and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. {#Eze 17:15,17}

3416c AM, 4126 JP, 588 BC

844. Tyre rejoiced to see the wretched treatment Jerusalem experienced at Nebuchadnezzar's hand. However, in the eleventh year of Jeconiah's captivity, on the first day of the first month, Ezekiel prophesied that Tyre would also perish in like manner at the same hand, and that all who had known of her former wealth and bravery would be amazed. [L131] Tremellius and Pradus placed this prophecy in the fifth month. This would put it in the twelfth year of Jeconiah's captivity in Babylon. Ezekiel also foretold the same misery for the Sidonians, Tyre's neighbours. {#Eze 26:1-28:26} At

that time the fame of Daniel's wisdom was so great, even in foreign nations, that they spoke proverbially of people being as wise as Daniel. God upbraided Ithobolus, king of Tyre, for his pride and arrogance in his mind: [E91]

"behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; no secret can be hid from thee." {#Eze 28:3}

3434 AM, 4144 JP, 570 BC

882. When Nebuchadnezzar finished his conquests, he returned to Babylon. While at ease in his own palace, he had that remarkable dream of the large tree whose destiny it was to be cut down. This tree represented him. The meaning of the dream was explained by Daniel, when he could not learn it from any of his wise men of Chaldea. {#Da 4:1-37}

3444d AM, 4154 JP, 560 BC

902. In the kingdom of Media, when Astyages or Assuerus died, {#/ Apc Tob 14:15} he was succeeded by his son Cyaxares, Cyrus' mother's brother. {*Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 1. c. 5. s. 2. 5:77} This was in the beginning of the first year of the 55th Olympiad, thirty-one years before the death of Cyrus. Daniel called Cyaxares Darius the Mede, the son of Assuerus.

913. After Laborosoarchodus, who was Nebuchadnezzar's grandson by his daughter, was disposed of by his subjects for his acts of villainy, Nebuchadnezzar's grandson by Evilmerodach succeeded Laborosoarchodus. Berosus called him Nabonidus, but Herodotus called him Labynetus, while Abydenus referred to him as Nabannidochus and Daniel as Belshazzar or Baltazar. (Some historians think Belshazzar was the son of Evilmerodach based on Daniel {#Da 5:7}, where Belshazzar stated he would make anyone who interpreted the handwriting on the wall the third ruler in the kingdom. This implied that he was only the second ruler under his father. However, since this king had so many names, we will never know for sure. Also, the queen was second in authority after the king, hence Daniel would be third. {See note on 3466b AM. <<938>>}) He reigned seventeen years, according to the third book of the Chaldean History by Berosus. {*Josephus, Apion, l. 1. c. 20. (150) 1:223} {Ptolemy, Canon of Kings} [L140]

914. In the first year of this king's reign, Daniel had a vision of four beasts, which signified the four empires of the world. He also saw God overcoming all earthly powers, and the sovereignty of the Son of Man in all things. {#Da 7:1-28}

916. In the third year of Belshazzar, Daniel had a vision of a ram and a he-goat, which foreshadowed the destruction of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great and the great misery which Antiochus would bring upon the people of God. Daniel was living at Susa in the province of Elam, on the bank of the Ulai River. {#Da 8:1,2} This river surrounded the citadel of Susa and separated the provinces of Susa from Elimais, that is, the Susachaeans from the Elamites, as the inhabitants of those two provinces are identified by Ezra and according to Pliny. {#Ezr 4:9} {*Pliny, l. 6. c. 31. (135) 2:441} From this we know that the province of Susa was not in the hands of the Medes or Persians at this time. It was controlled by the Babylonians, under whom Daniel then lived. {See note on 3405c AM. <<809>>}

938. When Belshazzar and all his nobles were feasting, he ordered his servants to bring all the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar his father, or grandfather, (for he was his son's son or his son. We do not know which. {#Jer 27:7}) had brought away from Jerusalem. When they glorified the king's idols and reproached the true God, God sent a hand to write on the wall of the room where Belshazzar sat drinking. It wrote the number of years which the Babylonian empire was to last and that it had now been

weighed in the balance and was found wanting, for which reason it was to be transferred to the Medes. This hand of God also declared what was to happen to Belshazzar. When his wise men of Chaldea could not read the writing, his queen advised him to send for Daniel, who came and read the writing and interpreted it for him. For his efforts, he was publicly proclaimed the third ruler in the kingdom, after the king and the queen. {#Da 5:1-31} Since the king's wives are said to have been present at the banquet, {#Da 5:2,3} and the queen to have come in afterward, {#Da 5:10} this must be understood to be speaking of the queen mother, Nicotris. She was the mother of this last king of Babylon, as we have already shown from Herodotus.

939. In the very same night of this banquet, Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was killed by the soldiers of Gobryas and Gadneas, {#Da 5:30} {*Xenophon, Cyropaedia, l. 7. c. 5. s. 30. 6:273} and so the Babylonian kingdom came to an end, just as it had been predicted, {#Isa 13:1-14:32 21:1-17 43:1-28 46:1-13 Hab 2:1-20 Jer 25:1-38 50:1-51:64} and the empire was transferred to the Medes and Persians. {#Da 5:21 6:8,12,15}

The Persian Empire

943. Daniel, who at this time, it seems, went with Cyrus from Babylon to Media. Cyrus had given control of the kingdom to Cyaxares who then appointed governors to manage the new kingdom. Daniel said of this Cyaxares:

"It seemed good to Darius, to set over the kingdoms, one hundred and twenty governors, that they should be over all the kingdoms." {#Da 6:1}

944. Over all these governors he set three overseers, the principal one being Daniel. As a result, the rest were envious of him and had the king make a decree that:

"for thirty days, no petition should be made to any god or man, but to himself only" {#Da 6:7}

945. Daniel, having broken this decree by praying to God, was cast into the lion's den, from which he was eventually delivered unharmed. Then Darius cast those who had plotted against Daniel into the same lion's den, publishing through all his dominions that famous decree, that every man should reverence and fear Daniel's God. {#Da 6:1-28}

946. From the year of the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, which began when Jehoiakim was defeated in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, until the end of the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, was almost seventy years. According to Jeremiah the captivity was almost over:

**"Thus saith the Lord, when the seventy years shall begin to be finished with Babylon, then will I visit you and perform my good word unto you and will bring you again to this place ... and when you shall call upon me to depart from thence and when you shall pray unto me, then will I hear you."
{#Jer 29:10,12}**

947. Knowing the time of the captivity was almost up, Daniel prayed fervently for the remission of his own sins as well as those of his people, and for their release from captivity. The angel Gabriel brought him an answer which applied not only to this immediate matter, but also intimated the spiritual deliverance of the church, to be finally effected by the death of the Messiah. [E102] As a part of this, he gave that famous prophecy of the seventy weeks. {#Da 9:12-27}

3470c AM, 4180 JP, 534 BC

957. The Samaritans, by bribing certain courtiers of Cyrus, disrupted the Jews in their work of building the temple. {#Ezr 4:5} This was the reason for the three weeks of mourning by the prophet Daniel. He continued his fast, which he had begun about the third day of the first month in the third year of Cyrus, throughout the whole time of the Feast of the Passover. {#Da 10:1-4} After this, on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while he stood on the bank of Hiddekel or the Tigris River, he had the vision of the kings of Persia, of Alexander the Great and his successors and their kingdoms. This is recorded in Daniel and was the last vision that he had, shortly before his death. {#Da 10:1-12:13}