

# FROM READING TO UNDERSTANDING



Before studying every chapter in the book of Daniel, we should learn about some principles that will help us to better understand its message.



**The center: Jesus**



**The literary structure**



**The difference with other prophecies**



**The timescale**



**The practical relevance**

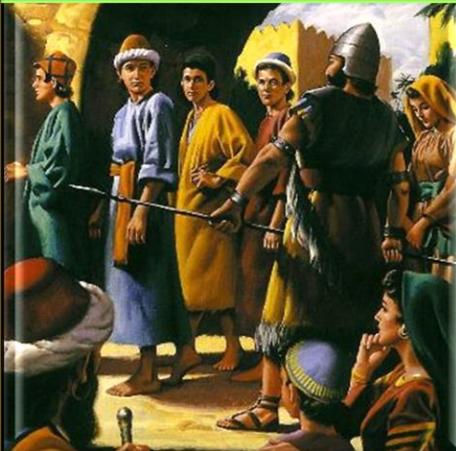


# THE CENTER: JESUS

"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." (John 5:39)

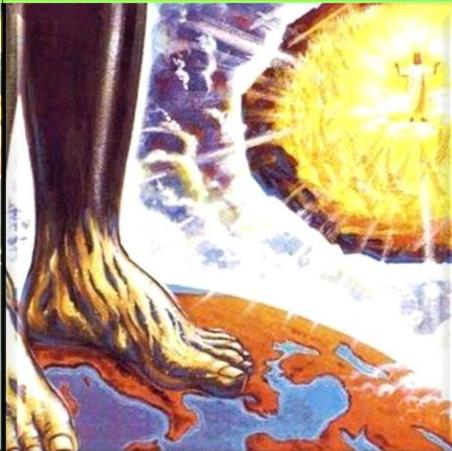
Jesus is somehow referenced in every section of the book of Daniel:

## Chapter 1



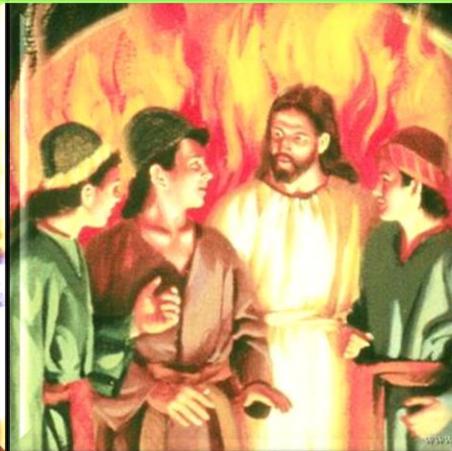
Similarly to Daniel's story, Jesus left Heaven to live on Earth, and received wisdom from above (Lk. 2:52)

## Chapter 2



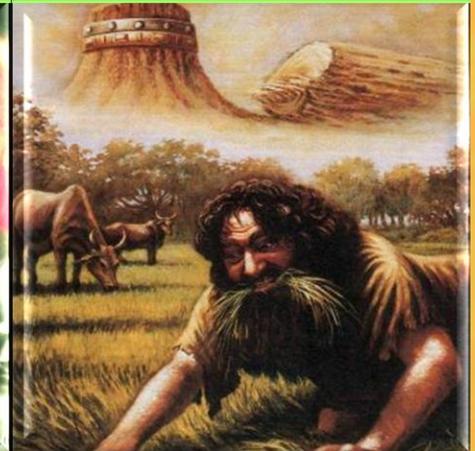
Jesus' kingdom will replace all other kingdoms

## Chapter 3



Jesus walked with his friends in the fiery furnace

## Chapter 4



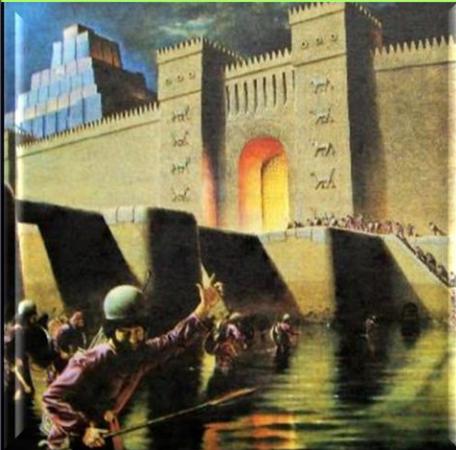
Jesus took Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom from him for some time, so he would understand the He reigns over all kingdoms

# THE CENTER: JESUS

*"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." (John 5:39)*

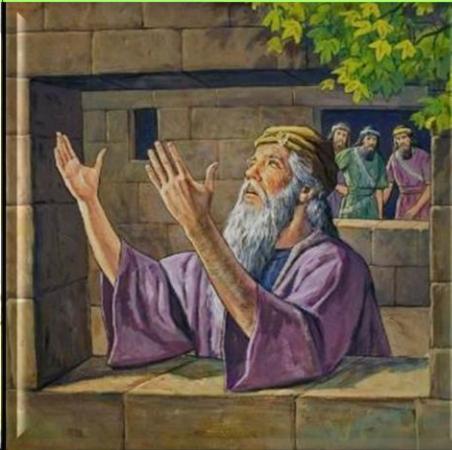
Jesus is somehow referenced in every section of the book of Daniel:

## Chapter 5



The trial and death of Belshazzar, and the fall of Babylon, reflect Jesus' victory at the End Time

## Chapter 6



The plot against Daniel is similar to the priests and Pharisees' plot against Jesus

## Chapter 7



It tells how Jesus (the Son of man) receives the Kingdom and reigns over His people

## Chapter 8



It introduces Jesus as the High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary

# THE CENTER: JESUS

*"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." (John 5:39)*

**Jesus is somehow referenced in every section of the book of Daniel:**

## Chapter 9

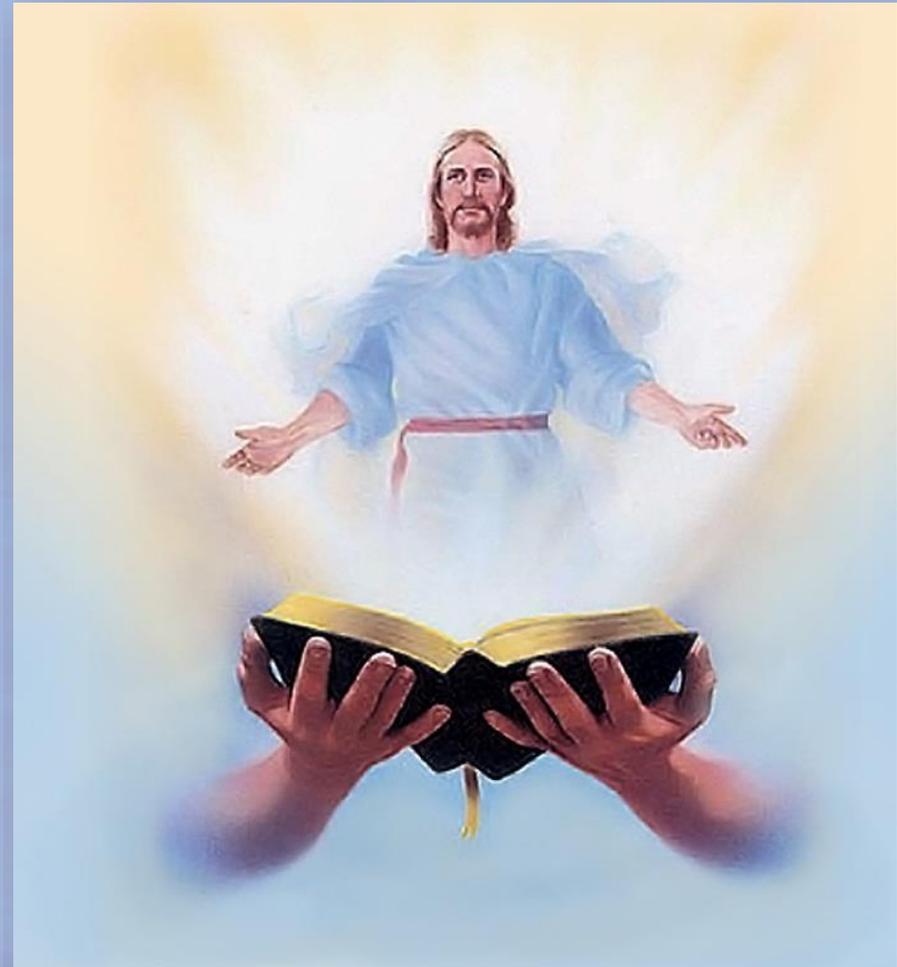


**Jesus is the sacrifices in the new covenant between God and His people**

## Chapters 10-12

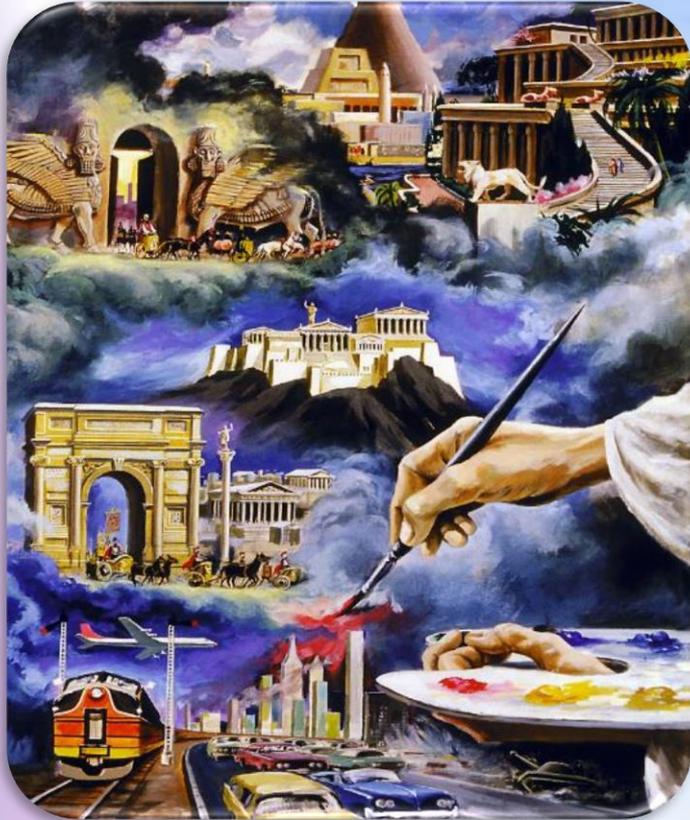


**Jesus is the Commander-in-chief who fights against the forces of evil and rescues His people**



# THE LITERARY STRUCTURE

“And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” (Daniel 2:44)



The book of Daniel was written in Hebrew and Aramaic. Chapters 2 to 7 were written in Aramaic, and they were written using a parallel structure.

- A Vision of the empires (c. 2)
- B { God delivers from the fiery furnace (c. 3)
- C { { Nebuchadnezzar is judged (c. 4)
- C' { { Belshazzar is judged (c. 5)
- B' { God delivers from the lions' den (c. 6)
- A' Vision of the empires (c. 7)

God's sovereignty over the nations is shown here and in the prophetic sections. He uses repetition to show the judgment over this world and the foundation of His eternal kingdom.



Chapter 2

Chapter 7

Chapter 8-9

Chapters 10-12



BABYLON

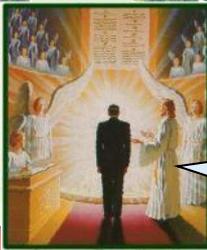
PERSIA

GREECE

ROME

EUROPE

ETERNAL KINGDOM



The beast dies



PERSIA

PERSIA

GREECE

GREECE

PAGAN AND PAPAL ROME

PAGAN AND PAPAL ROME

THE JUDGMENT

MICHAEL STANDS UP

2,300



# THE DIFFERENCE WITH OTHER PROPHECIES

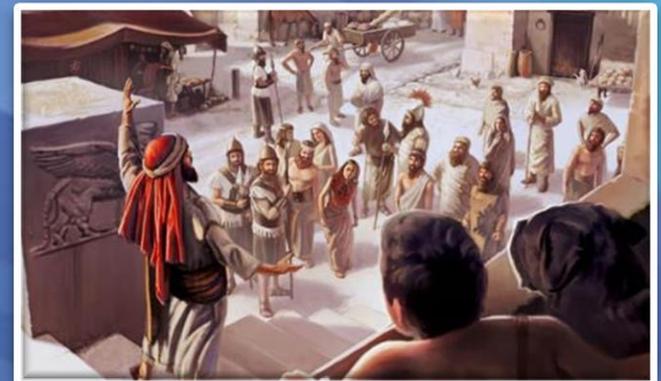
“After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.” (Daniel 7:6)

What? A leopard with four wings and four heads?

This kind of unreal visions difference “apocalyptic” prophecy from “classical” prophecy.

The prophecies of prophets like Isaiah or Jeremiah sometimes contained visions and symbols from actual things. However, their main goal was to communicate “the word of the Lord.” The fulfillment of their prophecies depended on how the people responded to them (e.g. see Jonah’s case).

The prophecies in Daniel are unconditional. They display God’s plan for the nations, no matter the response or attitude of the people involved in them.



# THE TIMESCALE

"And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year." (Ezekiel 4:6)

There are three ways of interpreting the prophecies in the book of Daniel:



## *Preterism*

All the events have occurred in the past (supposing Daniel wrote this book in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century B.C.)



## *Futurism*

All the events will occur in the End Time.



## *Historicism*

The events cover the history between Daniel and the End Time

The book of Daniel was written in the 6th Century B.C., so the preterist interpretation can be discarded.

The futurist interpretation depends on the imagination of the interpreter.

# THE TIMESCALE

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The historic interpretation of the symbols in the book of Daniel is sound:

- ➡ The empires described in Daniel 2, 7 and 8 are in line with history
- ➡ The time periods (e.g. the 1,260 days or 490 years) can be applied to history by using the day-year principle (Nm. 14:34; Gn. 5:4)
- ➡ Jesus applied Daniel 9:26-27 to the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:15-16; Luke 21:20-22)
- ➡ The fathers of the Church and the reformers used the historicist interpretation
- ➡ It shows how God is always in control of human history, and how He will finish the salvation plan



# THE PRACTICAL RELEVANCE

“Then he said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.’” (Daniel 10:12)



The book of Daniel contains important lessons for the 21st Century.

## □ *God is sovereign over our lives*

- ❖ He cares for each one of us. He is with us in our trials and temptations

## □ *God is in control of history*

- ❖ He quietly and patiently controls history and fulfills His plan on the nations' history

## □ *God provides an example to follow in the End Time*

- ❖ Don't compromise your faith. Remain faithful to your commitment to God. Be useful for the country and the society you live in



**“The prophet Daniel described the kingdoms that would rise and fall. Interpreting to the king of Babylon the dream of the great image, he declared to Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom would be superseded. His greatness and power in God’s world would have its day, and a second kingdom would arise that also would have its period of test and trial as to whether the people would exalt the one Ruler, the only true God. Not doing this, they and their glory would fade away, and a third kingdom would occupy their place. Proved by obedience or disobedience, this also would pass away, and a fourth, strong as iron, was to subdue the nations of the world. This Word, opened by the infinite God to finite human beings, recorded on the prophetic page, and traced on the pages of history, declares that God is the ruling power.”**

E.G.W. (Christ Triumphant, June 22)