

# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## DANIEL

### Introduction and Background

#### Lesson 1

Welcome to the Joyful Life Bible Study. Today we begin our study of Daniel. Pastor Chuck wrote: *The Book of Daniel is one of the most exciting books in the Bible and one of my personal favorites. You can't over estimate its importance.* Daniel's experiences and prophecies continually reveal the Lord as a God at work in human history.

Through our study of Daniel we will discover that it is rich in application for believers today. We will find the testimony of Daniel, a righteous Jewish man, living under the captivity of the Babylonian empire, very relevant to us in this 21st Century. In the midst of a secular world Daniel lived a life of spiritual integrity. Daniel presents to every believer an example of how to survive and thrive spiritually in a heathen culture.

This extraordinary book contains powerful incentives for believers to live every day with an eternal perspective. Through this study we will find inspiration and motivation to live for the Lord and be ready for His soon return.

*...the people that do know their God  
shall be strong, and do exploits.*

Daniel 11:32b

# BACKGROUND TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## AUTHOR:

- Daniel, a Jewish prophet of God, a captive in Babylon

## DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING:

- Approximately 536 B. C.
- Babylon

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

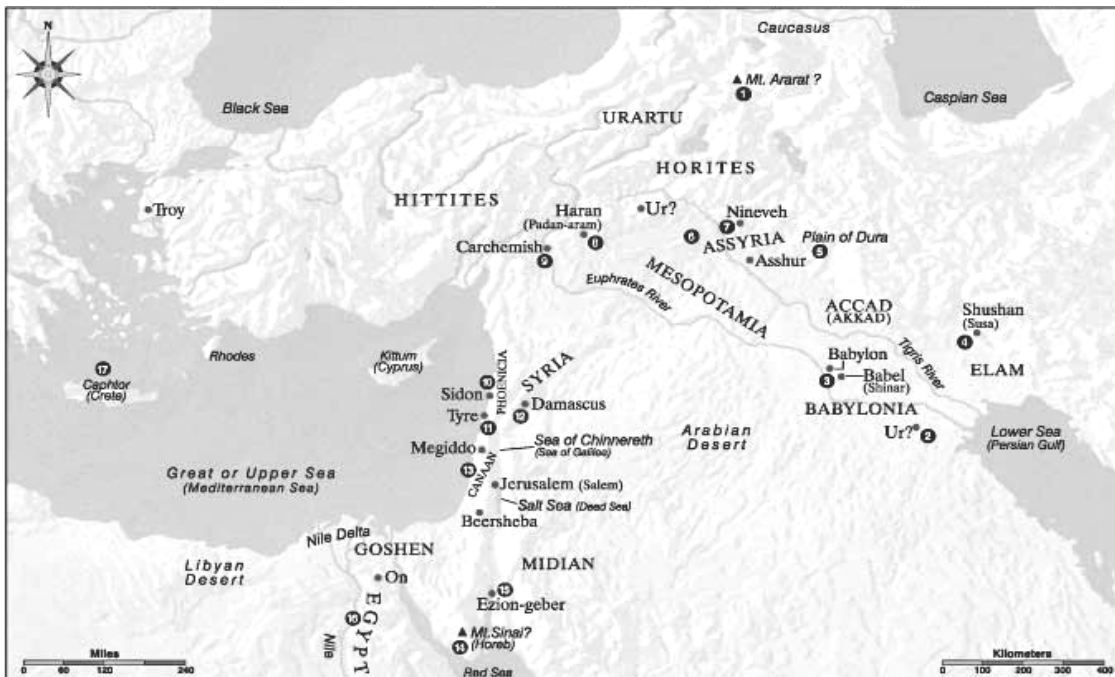
Daniel was born in Jerusalem during a time of great upheaval in the Southern kingdom of Judah. Jerusalem was besieged and then raided by King Nebuchadnezzar before eventually being leveled in 586 B. C. During the first invasion of Jerusalem in 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar took captive a number of the choicest people of Judah. In that company was Daniel, who was about sixteen years of age. Daniel's companions, whom the king of Babylon named Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were also taken captive. Having been carried away to Babylon, these young men were then trained in the culture, literature and language of Babylon for three years. During that time every effort was made to break down their faith and devotion to God.

Remarkably Daniel served seventy years as a statesman in the Babylonian and Persian empires. Throughout his life his heart was steadfast toward God. Daniel received wisdom, revelations, visions, dreams and even angelic visitations from the Lord. Faith, prayer, courage, consistency and commitment characterized Daniel's life. The name *Daniel* means *God is judge*.

## PURPOSE FOR WRITING:

The primary focus of Daniel's message was to the Gentile nations and the Jews in exile. Daniel reveals the hidden things of the future, the power of God and His sovereignty over the all the nations of the world.

This book divides neatly into two sections. Chapters 1-6 are largely narrative, yet filled with application for godly living. Chapters 7-12 contain some of the most thrilling and compelling prophecies to be found within the pages of God's Word. A study of these chapters will not only expand your understanding of God's plan for the future of the world, it will also fortify your faith to trust Him for your own future.



**FIRST DAY:** The Introduction

1. Review the Introduction on page one of this lesson. In what way has it affected your desire to study the Book of Daniel?
  
2. What phrase, sentence or thought especially captured your attention?
  - a. Why?
  
3. Express your greatest desire in relationship to your study of Daniel by writing a prayer here.

*Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,  
for wisdom and might are His.  
He gives wisdom . . . and knowledge . . .*  
Daniel 2:20b,21b NKJV

**SECOND DAY:** Author, Date, and Place of Writing

1. Choose and record one or two facts or statements about Daniel from the Background information on page two.
  - a. What characteristic is used in Ezekiel 14:14,20 to describe Daniel?

Optional: Why do you think the Bible emphasizes Daniel's *righteousness*?

2. In Matthew 24,25 Jesus quoted exclusively from Daniel. How does Matthew 24:15 confirm that Daniel was a prophet and the writer of the Book of Daniel?
  
3. From the Background information write the Date and Place of Writing.

### THIRD DAY: Historical Background

1. What stands out the most to you from the Historical Background information?
  - a. Why?
  
2. On the map located on page two trace the journey of Daniel and his three friends when they were taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar by drawing a line from Jerusalem to Babylon.
  - a. Think about what this journey might have been like. Write your thoughts.

Advanced Students: Research the ancient city of Babylon and write a brief summary of your findings.

### FOURTH DAY: Purpose for Writing

1. Review the paragraphs under the Purpose for Writing on page two. Record a thought, phrase or statement that particularly stands out to you.
  - a. Why?
  
2. Considering Daniel's purpose in writing, why do you think it is important for us to study this book?
  
3. How does the following scripture speak to you about the study of Daniel?

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God,  
and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof,  
for correction, for instruction in righteousness:  
That the man of God may be perfect,  
thoroughly furnished unto all good works.  
II Timothy 3:16,17*

## **FIFTH DAY:** The Book of Daniel

1. This exciting book will help prepare us for what lies ahead in God's prophetic calendar. Pastor Chuck says: *The Book of Revelation would be almost impossible to understand without the prophecies of Daniel. The book (Daniel) not only predicted the various kingdoms as they would unfold in history, but it predicted the coming of the Messiah to the very day, as we will see, and the eschatological events that still lie in the future.* Today many people are concerned about future events and some are even asking questions. With this in mind what impact could the study of Daniel have on your Christian witness?
  - a. Print the exhortation written to all believers in I Peter 3:15.

(1.) What is your response to this exhortation?

2. You will recall from the Introduction on page one that the writings contained in Daniel should motivate believers to live with eternity in view. Why do you think this is vital for us today?

## **SIXTH DAY:** Review the Introduction and Background to the Book of Daniel

1. In what way has the Introduction on page one spoken to you?
2. Note one interesting fact or discovery you made from this week's study concerning:
  - a. Daniel
  - b. The Background to the Book of Daniel
3. How do you expect to benefit from your study of Daniel?