

Joy to the World, the LORD Has Come!

A Review of Daniel's Scroll

This past summer we began our study of the book of Daniel. We've gone verse by verse and chapter by chapter through this extraordinary book of the Bible. Today, we'll review all we've learned from our study.

Daniel, Chapter 1 tells what it takes to follow the LORD in a day when the rest of culture does not.

Daniel is a prince (nephew of Judah's King) when he is taken captive by Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel (b. 625 BC – d. 535 BC) lives his entire adult life as a slave in Babylon, serving in the king's court.

THEME: Look in the mirror and determine your course before others look at you and demand your conformity.

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused the king's meat and wine, obeying God (the Torah).

The anthem we sing: ***A Mighty Fortress Is Our God***

Daniel, Chapter 2 describes King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a gold, silver, bronze, and iron statue.

This statue represents the world's four kingdoms that would come from Daniel's time to the Messiah.

Babylon (gold), Persia (silver), Greece (bronze), and Rome (iron) with the Rock striking down the statue.

THEME: Christ's kingdom conquers every earthly kingdom, and His Kingdom is One of peace, not war.

Never put your trust in a political party, or a president, or a king, or any government. Trust Christ alone.

The anthem we sing: ***Crown Him with Many Crowns***

Daniel, Chapter 3 recounts the three Hebrew boys being thrown into the fiery furnace for their faith.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are serving in the king's court and refuse to bow down to the statue.

Nebuchadnezzar overheats the furnace and kills his "valiant soldiers" but the three boys are unharmed.

THEME: Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us...but even if He does not, we will still serve Him.

In difficulties and trauma in life, the LORD is with you, and still trust Him regardless of your deliverance.

The anthem we sing: ***Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus***

Daniel, Chapter 4 details Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a tall tree that comes crashing down and dies.

Daniel is called upon to interpret the dream and grudgingly says that the king's pride will bring him low.

Nebuchadnezzar winds up eating grass in the field like a cow, and his kingdom is removed from him.

THEME: God brings low the tall tree but exalts the low tree (trees in the Bible represent people).

Be very careful that you do not think more highly of yourself than you ought. Think highly of the LORD.

The anthem we sing: ***Praise to the LORD the Almighty***

Daniel, Chapter 5 is the story of God's "handwriting on the wall" and the fall of Babylon to the Persians.

King Belshazzar of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar's grandson) throws a three-month long party in his palace.

A hand writes Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin, - *You've been weighed on God's scales and found wanting.*

THEME: There's coming a "payday, someday" when evil doers will answer to God for their actions.

Just because the wicked seem to prosper in this life, never forget that the Creator has a scale of justice.

The anthem we sing: ***Be Thou My Vision***

Daniel, Chapter 6 tells of Daniel being thrown in the lion's den for refusing to obey the king's decree.

The new king of Babylon (Darius the Mede, Prince of Persia) had ordered that nobody could pray to God.

Daniel, refusing the king's decree, opened his window toward Jerusalem and prayed to YHWH every day.

THEME: Obeying God may lead to persecution in the world, but the LORD'S Kingdom will be victorious.

Daniel's civil disobedience was respectful and only occurred after repeated appeals to authority.

The anthem we sing: ***It Is Well With My Soul***

Daniel can be neatly divided into two parts:

1. Daniel Chapters 1-6 are biographical and inspirational.
2. Daniel Chapters 7-12 are prophetic and chronological.

Daniel, Chapter 7 gives Daniel's vision of the four beasts (kingdoms) and the coming of the Son of Man. Daniel receives a vision during King Belshazzar's reign of the first coming of the Messiah (at Bethlehem). The lion with wings, bear, leopard with four heads, and beast are Babylon, Persia, Greece, then Rome. **THEME: Daniel and the prophets saw the coming of the King of kings to establish His eternal kingdom.** Christ came to commence His Kingdom, which continues in our day and will be consummated one day.

The anthem we sing: ***Come Thou Long Expected Jesus***

Daniel, Chapter 8 is about Daniel's vision of the ram (Persia) and the Goat (Greece) and Christ's reign. Alexander the Great of Greece (b. 356 BC – d. 323 BC) marches his army to Persia to fight the Persians. After Alexander dies, his kingdom is divided among four generals according to the compass (N.S.E.W.). **THEME: History is His Story for all events are under the rule of the King of kings, Jesus the Messiah.** The reason the Bible is often ridiculed is because people are ignorant of history and Western Civilization.

The anthem we sing: ***Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel!***

Daniel, Chapter 9 gives the incredibly precise prophecy of when the Messiah would come (9:24-27). For centuries, Christians taught that this prophecy refers to the Person and work of our Messiah. This prophecy is ***Daniel's 70 Weeks*** (490 years) and begins with Artaxerxes decree in Ezra 7 (458 BC). Counting 490 years from 458 BC (*the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple*), you come to AD 26. **THEME: The 70th Week begins with Jesus' baptism (AD 26) and ends with Stephen's stoning (AD 33).** The precise timing of the coming of the Messiah led the Magi to come "from the east" to search for Him.

The anthem we sing: ***KING of Kings!***

Daniel, Chapter 10 contains one of the most beautiful prayers in all the Bible, Daniel's prayer for Israel. Daniel mourns the rebellion of his people, and he cries out to the LORD, requesting heaven's mercy. Gabriel announces: "The LORD is ending His agreement with your people but will do something better!" The end of the Old Covenant (with Israel) occurs at the beginning of the New Covenant (with the world). **THEME: This NEW AGREEMENT promises the believer blessings for trusting Jesus the True Israel.** Make sure to understand that the basis for blessings in life is the Messiah's fulfillment of the Law for us.

The anthem we sing: ***Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery***

Daniel, Chapter 11 is a chapter that traces the history of the world to the coming of the Prince of Peace. It is a repetition of Daniel 2, 7, 8, and 9 since Daniel is summarizing all his visions to the new king Darius. Critics of the Bible have said, "Nobody can foretell the future, so Daniel 11 was written by an imposter." The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1947, proved Daniel's scroll to have been written before the events. **THEME: The world is constantly at war, and it is only the Prince of Peace and His reign that ends war.**

The anthem we sing: ***O Holy Night***

Daniel, Chapter 12 opens with the bold words, "*At that time...Michael shall arise,*" a Messianic promise. The Jews and orthodox Christians all believed Micha-el (Who Is Like God?) to be a title for the Messiah. The LORD sends the Messiah to reveal mankind's misery and the Messiah's mercy. God saves sinners. **THEME: Joy comes from comprehending the power of God to completely deliver you from your sins.** Daniel is not about Christ's Kingdom which has not yet come, but it is about His Kingdom that has come.

The anthem we sing: ***Joy to the World, the LORD Has Come!***