

1. The Book of Daniel is intriguing. It is filled with truths that are just as relevant to believers today as they were to those who first heard them.
2. This book is often neglected or deliberately avoided by believers because some of its passages seem strange and difficult.
3. Daniel was a Jewish captive carried off to Babylon after the first conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C.
4. The record of events extends to the third year of Cyrus (536 B.C.) and covers a span of about 70 years.
5. The date and authorship of the book was not an issue until the rise of higher criticism in the seventeenth century - more than 2,000 years after the book was written.
6. Confirmation concerning the history of Daniel himself is found in 3 passages of Ezekiel and also in Matthew. (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3; Matthew 24:15)
7. When examining Scripture - whether it is doctrinal or prophetic in nature - Jesus' view is of paramount importance.
8. Strong evidence for the traditional view of authorship and date comes from the testimony of Jesus Christ himself.
9. First, Christ demonstrated His belief that Daniel was a real, historical person who was an instrument of divine revelation ("spoken of through the prophet Daniel").
10. Second, Christ held that the prophecies contained in the Book of Daniel (from which he quoted) came from Daniel himself, not a later anonymous individual.
11. Third, Christ assured that this prophecy describes future events, for the context shows that "the abomination that causes desolation" to which Christ referred was yet future.
12. This means that arguments based on the premise that the prophets never foretold the distant future are invalid.
13. Fourth, apparently the only accepted view during the time of Christ for the setting of the prophet Daniel was the sixth century B.C.; therefore - if Christ treated Daniel as a historical individual, He also assumed the sixth-century date.
14. One's view concerning authorship and date is significant because it ultimately determines the interpretation of every aspect of this prophecy.
15. The Babylonian captivity and years leading up to the final destruction of Solomon's Temple was a period of intense prophetic activity.

16. Jeremiah was preaching in Jerusalem, and it seems almost certain that both Daniel and Ezekiel would have heard Jeremiah preach.
17. Jeremiah's influence is evident on Ezekiel's writings, and he may have had a profound effect upon Daniel's life as well. Habakkuk also preached during this general time period.
18. Daniel lived throughout the entire period of the Babylonian captivity.
19. The theology of the Book of Daniel centers around several key themes. Without doubt the principal theological focus of the book is the sovereignty of God.
20. God is the Lord of individuals, nations, and all of history.
  - A. Chapter 1: God sovereignly delivers Jehoiakim into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and protects his followers in Babylon.
  - B. Chapter 2: God is sovereign over history.
  - C. Chapter 3: God's sovereignty over the power and decrees of earthly kings is demonstrated by His deliverance of the three Hebrews from the fiery furnace.
  - D. Chapter 4: The humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar.
  - E. Chapter 5: God's judgment of the defiant Belshazzar.
  - F. Chapter 6: The rescue of Daniel from the lions.
  - G. Chapters 7-12: God's sovereignty over the nations and empires of the world. The Lord of history raises them up and brings them to an end.
21. Daniel also emphasizes the person and work of the Messiah. In the Son of Man (7:13-14), the seventy sevens or seventy weeks of chap. 9, and elsewhere in the book.
22. Both His first and second comings are referred to, with particular attention directed toward the latter.
23. Finally, eschatology (study of the last days) is a prominent theme in Daniel's prophecies, particularly the tribulation of the last days and the subsequent new world.
24. Someday the Messiah will appear and establish a kingdom that will bring earthly regimes to an end. In this new world believers will be rewarded and honored, and God will be glorified.