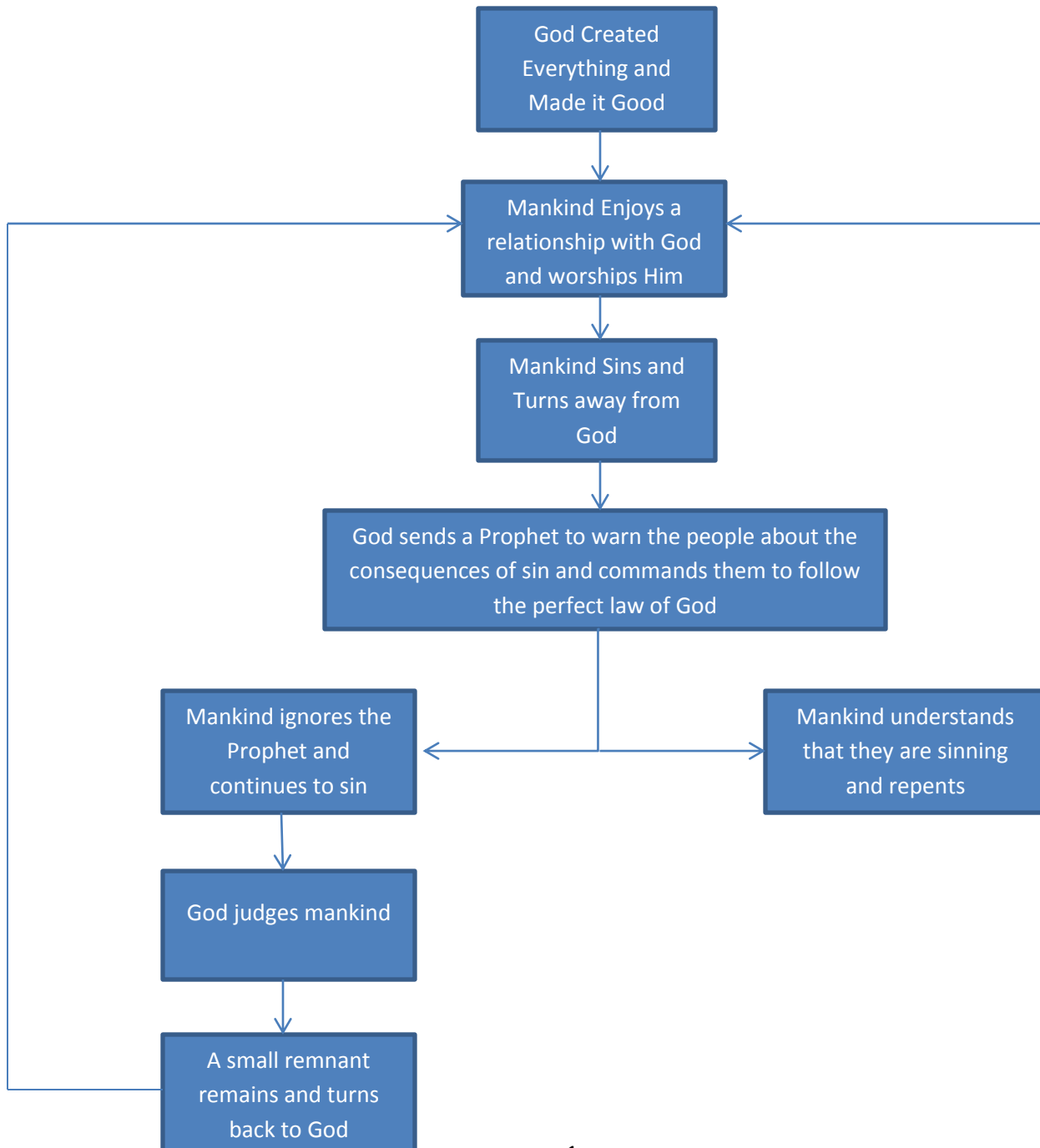


Bible Study – Daniel

Week 1 – Background and Context

I. What is the Pattern of Redemption in the Bible?



II. Why did God allow the Jews (the two Kingdoms) to be conquered?

- a. Israel was taken over by the Assyrians (740 BC captives were taken, 722 BC kingdom was surrendered)

Israel Carried Captive to Assyria
(2 Kings 17:5–14)

⁵ Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria; for three years he besieged it. ⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria; he carried the Israelites away to Assyria. He placed them in Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

⁷ This occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They had worshiped other gods ⁸ and walked in the customs of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had introduced. ⁹ The people of Israel secretly did things that were not right against the LORD their God. They built for themselves high places at all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city; ¹⁰ they set up for themselves pillars and sacred poles on every high hill and under every green tree; ¹¹ there they made offerings on all the high places, as the nations did whom the LORD carried away before them. They did wicked things, provoking the LORD to anger; ¹² they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, “You shall not do this.” ¹³ Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the law that I commanded your ancestors and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets.” ¹⁴ They would not listen but were stubborn, as their ancestors had been, who did not believe in the LORD their God.

- b. Judah was taken over by the Babylonians (605 BC)

The Fall of Jerusalem
(2 Kings 25:1–21; Jer 52:3b–30)

¹⁵ The LORD, the God of their ancestors, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; ¹⁶ but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD against his people became so great that there was no remedy.

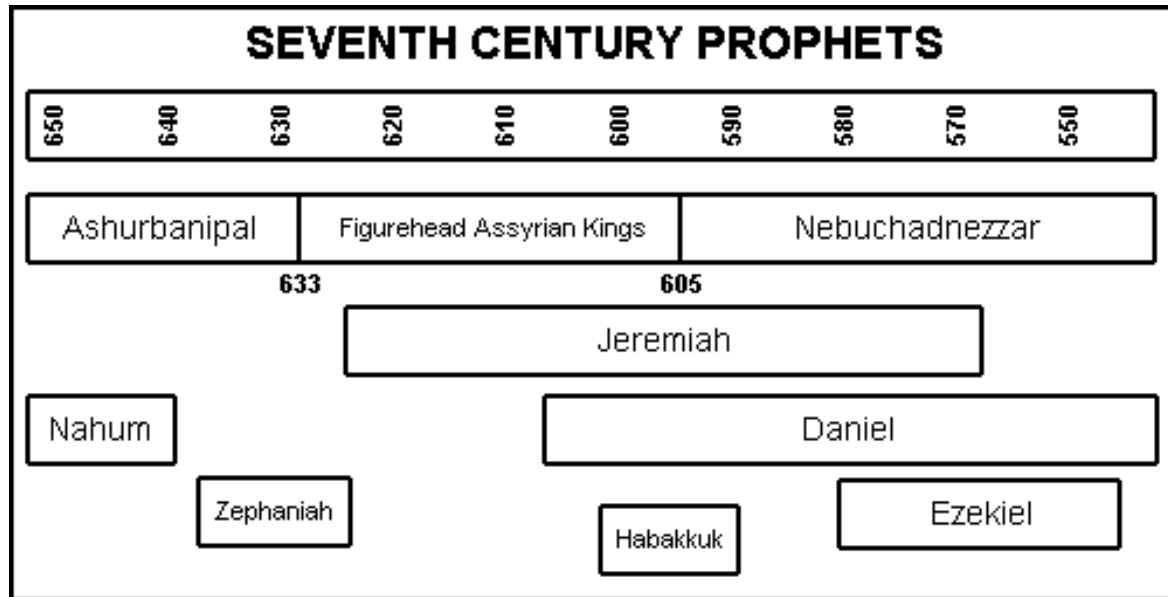
¹⁷ Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their youths with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or young woman, the aged or the feeble; he gave them all into his hand. ¹⁸ All the vessels of the house of God, large and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officials, all these he brought to Babylon. ¹⁹ They burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious vessels. ²⁰ He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹ to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had made up for its sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

- c. Despite multiple warning from the prophets, the Jews ignored God every time prophecy was given to them. By not heeding the word of God, the Jews continued in their sin until there was no return. When Judah retreated to Egypt, God allowed the Babylonians to conquer Egypt as well in order to destroy the disobedient Jews.

III. Who were some of the Prophets of God that tried to warn the Jews of their sin?

- a. Nahum - the seventh of the so-called minor prophets, an Elkoshite. All we know of him is recorded in the book of his prophecies. He was probably a native of Galilee, and after the deportation of the ten tribes took up his residence in Jerusalem. Others think that Elkosh was the name of a place on the east bank of the Tigris, and that Nahum dwelt there.
- b. Zephaniah - The son of Cushi, and great-grandson of Hezekiah, and the ninth in the order of the minor prophets. He prophesied in the days of Josiah, king of Judah (B.C. 641-610), and was contemporary with Jeremiah, with whom he had much in common.
- c. Jeremiah - One of the “greater prophets” of the Old Testament, son of Hilkiah, a priest of Anathoth. He was called to the prophetic office when still young. He remained in Jerusalem, uttering from time to time his words of warning, but without effect. He was there when Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city (Jer. 37:4, 5), B.C. 589. The rumour of the approach of the Egyptians to aid the Jews in this crisis induced the Chaldeans to withdraw and return to their own land. This, however, was only for a time. The prophet, in answer to his prayer, received a message from God announcing that the Chaldeans would come again and take the city, and burn it with fire (37:7, 8).
- d. Habakkuk - The eighth of the twelve minor prophets. Of his personal history we have no reliable information. He was probably a member of the Levitical choir. He was contemporary with Jeremiah and Zephaniah. When the prophet in spirit saw the formidable power of the Chaldeans approaching and menacing his land, and saw the great evils they would cause in Judea, he bore his complaints and doubts before Jehovah, the just and the pure (1:2–17). And on this occasion the future punishment of the Chaldeans was revealed to him.
- e. Ezekiel – One of the great prophets, the son of Buzi the priest (Ezek. 1:3). He was one of the Jewish exiles who settled at Tel-Abib, on the banks of the Chebar, “in the land of the Chaldeans.” He was probably carried away captive with Jehoiachin (1:2; 2 Kings 24:14–16) about B.C. 597. His prophetic call came to him “in the fifth year of Jehoiachin’s captivity” (B.C. 594). He had a house in the place of his exile, where he lost his wife, in the ninth year of his exile, by some sudden and

unforeseen stroke (Ezek. 8:1; 24:18). He held a prominent place among the exiles, and was frequently consulted by the elders.



IV. What are the books of the Major and Minor Prophets and what is the difference?

- a. Major Prophets:
 - i. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel
- b. Minor Prophets
 - i. Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- c. The reason for the designations of “Major” and “Minor” has nothing to do with the importance of the Books or their message, but rather the length of the texts. If all of the 12 “Minor” Books were combined, their total length would fall in the middle of the length of the “Major” Books. Judaism actually groups the “Minor” books into a collection called “The Book of the Twelve” or “The Twelve”.

V. It was all Prophesied!

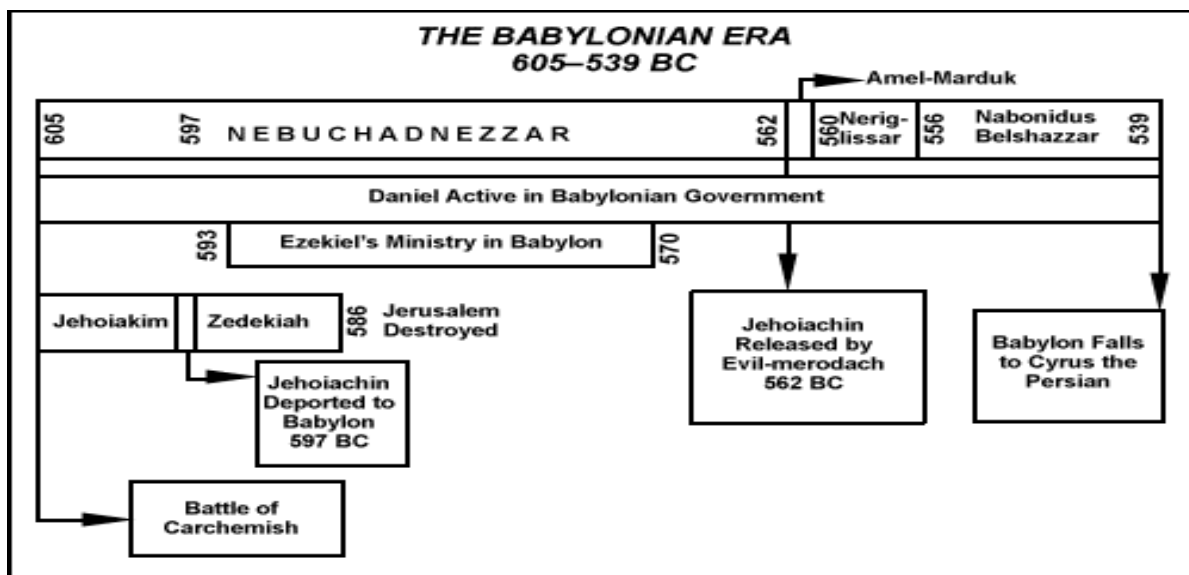
- a. Isaiah 39: ⁵ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: ⁶ Days are coming when all that is in your house, and that which your ancestors have stored up until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,

says the LORD. ⁷ Some of your own sons who are born to you shall be taken away; they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

- b. Isaiah prophesied from 739 BC to 686 BC. He spoke specifically about Judah falling under Babylonian control 100 years before it happened. He even indicated that some of their sons would be “eunuchs in the palace of the king”, and Daniel was.

VI. Why was Judah prophesied to be in captivity for 70 years?

- a. *Leviticus 25: 1-7* - The LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying: ² Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a sabbath for the LORD. ³ Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; ⁴ but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the LORD: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. ⁵ You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. ⁶ You may eat what the land yields during its sabbath—you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound laborers who live with you; ⁷ for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food.
- b. Jeremiah prophesied 70 years in order to fulfill the requirement for a Sabbath for the land on every 7th year. Because this command of God had not been followed for 490 years ($490 / 7 = 70$), when God judged Judah, He extracted the Sabbath rest at that time. The captivity lasted from 605 BC – 536 BC.



VII. What did the Captivity Accomplish?

- a. The Jews were never idolatrous ever again, even up to today. During Jesus' day, when Pilate came into town with pictures of Caesars, the Jews threatened to kill him.
- b. The synagogues were born because there was no temple to worship in (model for the Church)
- c. The Old Testament Scriptures were collected and canonized by people like Ezra.
- d. Because they were dispersed, they preached God to many different lands. Ex – The Wise Men were from Babylon, probably understood Jesus was Messiah and King from the teachings of Daniel.

VIII. Who Was Daniel?

- a. Daniel means "God is my Judge". His Babylonian name was Belteshazzar or "Prince of Bel".
- b. He was probably around 15 years old when he was deported by the Babylonians in 605 BC.
- c. He was part of a noble family in Judah and was selected because the Chaldeans thought him and other educated captives could learn the Chaldean's language, science, and religion, thus helping others to assimilate.
- d. He was righteous and wise. He obeyed the law of the Babylonians, but only when it did not conflict with the Law of God.
- e. Despite criticism from liberal scholars, the Bible confirms through the word of Jesus in Matthew 24:15 that Daniel actually wrote the book of Daniel. The writing probably occurred in 530 BC.

IX. Why was Daniel successful in his ventures?

- a. Jeremiah repeatedly preached that God had given Judah over to the Babylonians and that the Jews should accept this and submit themselves to the Chaldeans. If they did, they would prosper because they were following the will of God.
- b. Daniel followed the statutes of God, even when doing so might have meant his death.

X. What is the Purpose of the Book of Daniel

- a. Daniel shows that God is in control of all things and uses all things for his purposes.

- b. It demonstrates sovereign power through the display of miracles. One of 6 Biblical eras that's major focus is miracles:
 - i. Creation/Flood
 - ii. Patriarchs and Moses
 - iii. Elija and Elisha
 - iv. Jesus and the Apostles
 - v. Revelation
- c. It reveals prophecy concerning events contemporary in Daniel's time as well as eschatological events (Revelation).

