

# DANIEL IN THE CRITICS' DEN

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“Probably no date of a biblical book has been so positively asserted or so stridently denied as that of Daniel.”<sup>1</sup> Until the twentieth century the dominant opinion of both Jewish and Christian scholars was that the book was written by Daniel during the dates the book of Daniel attributes to him.<sup>2</sup> According to the Talmud, Jewish tradition says the men of the Great Synagogue edited the book of Daniel sometime between Ezra (c. 450) and Simeon the Just (270).<sup>3</sup>

## MAJOR VIEWS OF AUTHORSHIP

What are the major views of authorship and date of the book? We mention three primary views.

**The Sixth-Century B.C.** Some believe that the book was written by a prophet who was carried into exile by Nebuchadnezzar c. 605 B.C. and who served the Babylonian and Persian governments until c. 535 B.C. at least. There are several occasions where the prophet speaks in first person (7:2,4,6,28; 8:1,15; 9:2; 10:2). As stated earlier, this was the accepted position of both Jewish and Christian scholars till the last century or so. Daniel 1 and 2 claim to belong to the earliest periods of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 1:1; 2:1). Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylon in 605. The last date mentioned in the book is “the third year of Cyrus the Persian” (10:1). This would have been about 537. “The impression given, therefore, is that the whole book comes from the sixth century, and increasingly scholars are tending to concede that the stories of chapters 1-6 belong earlier than the rest, and stem from the period of the exile.”<sup>4</sup>

**Book Written around 165 B.C.** These would argue that the book was written c. 165 B.C. Some of them believe they can even identify the specific point at which the book was written. These writers state that the original author lived between the events of Daniel 11:39 and 40. The reason that this is given as the breaking point is that everything that is written up to 11:39 is accurate historically. However, beginning at 11:40 the writer speaks of things that do not coincide with actual historical events. Therefore, we can detect, according to this argument, the point at which the writer quit writing history and started at tempting prophecy, a prophecy these writers believed failed.

**Middle of the road position.** Some writers believe that chapters 1-6 are earlier than the rest of the book, maybe as early as the sixth-century B.C. However, they also claim that chapters 7-12 and their outline of future events cannot or would not have been written by the Daniel whose dates are given above.<sup>5</sup> An obvious problem with this view is that the visions of chapters 7-12 are the first person sections

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<sup>1</sup> William Sanford LaSor, David Allen Hubbard, and Frederic William Bush, *Old Testament Survey*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, 574.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond B. Dillard, and Tremper Longman III, *Introduction To The Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 330.

<sup>3</sup> LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush, *Old Testament Survey*, 575.

<sup>4</sup> Joyce G. Baldwin, “Is there pseudonymity in the Old Testament?” *Themelios* 4(1978), 10. Baldwin’s point here that many who take a late date for the final composition of the book argue for an earlier origin of chapters 1-6 is significant. An example of this is the following: “As a series of tales these would not, in and of themselves, be at home in Palestine in the crises of the period of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and it is difficult to understand how they could have been created at that period when the line between things Jewish and things pagan was being so sharply drawn. From these tales the possibilities of life in contact and interaction with things foreign is affirmed; there has been polarization of the situation.” W. Lee Humphries, “A Life-style for Diaspora: a Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 92 (1973), 221.

<sup>5</sup> Baldwin, “Is there pseudonymity in the Old Testament?” 10. John Goldingay writes, “It is not so much that God could not but that he would not give such detailed information in advance.” John Goldingay, “The Book of Daniel: Three Issues,” *Themelios* (Jan. 1977), 49.

of the book.<sup>6</sup> When Jesus quoted Daniel the prophet, He made reference to the last part of the book. The “abomination of desolation” that Jesus speaks of is described in Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11. Jesus endorses Daniel’s authorship of the section of the book that modern critics are most likely to deny him.

A good thing is that modern scholarship is placing more emphasis on the form of the text as we currently have it.<sup>7</sup> This does not mean that modern scholarship has abandoned their critical beliefs, but they do not spend all their time trying to figure out how the text came to be in its final form.

### THIS IS AN OLD PROBLEM

Arguments about the date of the book of Daniel are nothing new. Porphyry was a Neo-Platonic philosopher who lived almost three centuries after Christ. He wrote a fifteen volume work entitled “Against the Christians.” Constantine opposed his work and Theodosius II commanded that it be destroyed in 448. The work of Porphyry does not survive today, but we know of it because Jerome refuted it in his commentary on Daniel.<sup>8</sup> Porphyry believed that the detailed prophecies of the book show that the book was written in the Maccabean period. In his commentary on Daniel, Jerome says, “Porphyry wrote his twelfth book against the prophet Daniel denying that it was composed by him whose name it bears but rather by someone who was in Judea during the times of Antiochus, who is called Epiphanes.”<sup>9</sup> “The underlying assumption for Porphyry was the absolute impossibility of predictive prophecy. He rejected the idea that a personal God by special revelation could have foretold to a sixth-century Daniel what was going to happen through the centuries to come.”<sup>10</sup> The irony is that if Porphyry were alive today he could teach in many “Christian” seminaries.<sup>11</sup>

### FULFILLED PROPHECY: THE ULTIMATE EVIDENCE FOR INSPIRATION

Why is this a big deal? Last year we had a good discussion of the date of the book of Revelation. While many of us disagreed about that subject, what are the practical consequences of that disagreement? I do not believe the consequences are that great in the study we had last year. I think it is a different matter when we come to the book of Daniel. If Daniel wrote this book before 500 B.C., then there is no other conclusion that we can come to except that the book is from God. However, if the book was written c.165 B.C. then it can be attributed to a purely human process. (Not all who take the view that the book was written in 165 deny inspiration.)

How do we know the Bible is the word of God? In his sermon on inspiration, J.W. McGarvey gives several things about the Bible that he believes prove that the Bible is inspired. McGarvey defends inspiration on the basis of the impartiality of the Biblical writers. He also appeals to the calmness of the authors, the unexplained brevity of the New Testament records, the air of infallibility of the Biblical writers, and the power of scriptures to move men to holy living.<sup>12</sup> These are intriguing qualities of the Bible, but do any of them in and of themselves establish the fact that the Bible is from God? Could a book

<sup>6</sup> Dillard and Longman, *An Introduction To The Old Testament*, 331.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 347.

<sup>8</sup> Roland K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969, 1110.

<sup>9</sup> Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, Translated by Gleason L. Archer, Jr., (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958).

<sup>10</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr. “Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136 (1979), 129

<sup>11</sup> Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949). On pages 317-320 Young has an appendix on Porphyry and His Criticisms of Daniel. At the conclusion of this section Young writes, “This date (the Maccabean date for the writing of the book) has been accepted by many in recent times. But let us never forget that the ‘modern’ date for the composition of Daniel was first advanced by one whose heart and soul was hostile to supernatural Christianity.” 320. Yamauchi says, “It is ironic that not only Jewish scholars, ... but also so-called ‘Christian’ scholars now prefer the views of the anti-Christian Porphyry to that of his Christian opponent Jerome.” Edwin M. Yamauchi, “Hermeneutical Issues in the Book of Daniel,” *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 23 (1980), 16-17.

written by men be impartial, calm, and brief? We know writings of men that have an air of infallibility about them; just read the editorials of any liberal newspaper. Some uninspired books have even had a positive moral impact on man ( Bunyon's *Pilgrims Progress* for example). In order for something to establish that the Bible is from God it must be something that **cannot** be true of a book written by men.

I would also suggest that we cannot prove inspiration on the basis that there are no errors in the Bible. It is possible for men to write a book without contradictions. I do not believe that the Bible contains any errors, but this belief about infallibility is based on my belief about inspiration, not vice versa.

How then can I defend the fact that the Bible is the word of God? Men cannot know the future; therefore, if we can establish the fact that the Bible accurately foretells the future, we demonstrate that the Bible is from God.<sup>13</sup>

If the book of Daniel is written when I believe it was, it is a clear demonstration of the sovereignty of God. If God foretold events before they took place, then truly He is sovereign over them. The prophet Daniel speaks of dark and difficult times that God's people face in the future. When these events begin to take place they could receive comfort that the things they encountered were foretold by God, and therefore, He is still in control. He also promises that the Lord will bring victory out of this chaos. There is no more important theme in Daniel than the sovereignty of God. God's sovereignty is not threatened by men like Antiochus Epiphanes, but it is actually illustrated by the fact that God foretold what he would do and that God would bring him down.

### DANIEL'S PROPHECIES ARE UNIQUE

We need to acknowledge that Daniel's prophecies are unique in the Biblical record in many ways.<sup>14</sup> One striking difference between Daniel and other prophets is the specific nature of Daniel's prophecies. Daniel 8 and 11 are particularly interesting in this regard. In Daniel 8:20-21 we are told that the two-horned ram described in verses 1-4 represents the kings of Media and Persia and the shaggy goat of verses 5-8 is the king of Greece. The passage even goes on to identify the large horn between the goat's eyes as the first king of Greece (Alexander the Great). Daniel 8:22 speaks of the four horns that arise in the place of the first one as four kingdoms that will arise from this nation. Daniel 11 goes into even much greater detail than chapter 8 does. There are some examples of such specific [prophecy] in the Biblical text. In I Kings 13:2 the unnamed man of God from Judah prophesies of Josiah and how he would sacrifice the bones of wicked priests on Jeroboam's altars. Jeroboam's dates were from about 930-909 B.C. This prophet speaks of Josiah's actions (640-609) very specifically almost three hundred years before Josiah was ever born. The same point can be made about Isaiah's prophecies of Cyrus in Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1. (Though this is not the main point of this section these passages also provide biblical precedent for predictive prophecy.) These prophecies are not long and extended like those in the book of Daniel, but they do provide other Biblical examples of very specific prophecies.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> J.W. McGarvey, *Sermons*, (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, no date), 1-15. These ideas have been repeated by many brethren over the years in tracts and I know for myself that I presented the same type of arguments as proofs of inspiration in sermons.

<sup>13</sup> Bruce K. Waltke, The Date of the Book of Daniel, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 133 (1976), 320.

<sup>14</sup> LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush, *Old Testament Survey*, 576.

<sup>15</sup> Of course, those who have problems with predictive prophecy in Daniel also have the same kind of troubles with the passages just mentioned. I Kings 13:2 is viewed as a gloss added by a later writer. Many believe that the Isaiah who wrote chapters 1-39 was different than the Isaiah who wrote chapters 40-55. Interestingly, in John 12:38-41 Jesus quotes from Isaiah 6 and 53 and he attributes both of these sections to the same writer. The New Testament writers quote twelve different chapters from this book and attributes these quotes to Isaiah, seven of these chapters quoted are from 1-39 and five of those quoted are from 40-66. (Oswald T. Allis, *The Unity of Isaiah*, Presbyterian and Reformed 1950, pages 42-43.) these sections also demonstrate common theological themes and vocabulary. See Dillard and Longman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 271-72.

However, such explicit prophecies serve as the exception rather than the rule. Most biblical prophets who speak of the future speak in very general terms. In reading and teaching passages like Ezekiel 37:15-28, Ezekiel 40-48, Joel 3:9-20, and Obadiah 17-21, we are forced to face questions like what are these texts specifically prophesying of and when were they fulfilled. These passages speak in dramatic and poetic terms of a bright future for the people of God and of judgment on Israel's enemies.

I do not think we are always to look for a literal fulfillment of such prophecies. I also think it is a mistake to try to pinpoint the time when passages like these were fulfilled. I think in many of these passages there are layers of fulfillment. In Ezekiel 40-48 Ezekiel speaks of an ideal temple to be built in Jerusalem. Some look for this to be a literal temple yet to be built in Jerusalem. While such a view is filled with problems,<sup>16</sup> it does relieve us of the responsibility to say when the prophecies were fulfilled. I think in some sense these prophecies of the temple were fulfilled in the completion of the post-exilic temple in 516 B.C.<sup>17</sup> I think these prophecies find a deeper fulfillment as Christ tabernacles with man (John 1:14) and as the indwelling of the Spirit leads us to be described as a temple of the living God (I Cor. 6:18-20; II Cor. 6:16). In a still greater way, these prophecies will be fulfilled in the future as God dwells with us throughout eternity (Rev. 21:3, 22-27). In summary, I believe Ezekiel 40-48 "is now telling the beaten Jew that the day was coming when they would enjoy prosperity and glory under the Lord and that he described it in terms with which they were altogether familiar."<sup>18</sup>

I think passages like Ezekiel 40-48 show how prophecy is usually to be interpreted. Some of the passages at the end of Daniel are much more specific than prophecy usually is. When some of those we argue with about the date of Daniel contend that this is not typical of most Biblical prophecy, I believe they are correct.

#### THE PROBLEM OF ALLEGEDLY FAILED PROPHECY OF 11:40FF.

Many of those who take a late date for the book of Daniel believe they can specifically identify the time that the book was written. They believe the author was writing between Daniel 11:39 and 11:40 (or some might say between 11:35 and 11:36.) Typical of this view is the following statement: "The fictional prophecy begun in 11:2 continues in 11:39. The present section (beginning with 11:40, T.P.) contains no historical information at all but purports rather to be a genuine prediction of events to happen after this apocalypse was composed and presumably circulated among the faithful. The trouble is that nothing in these verses matches the actual course of history as it is known from other sources.<sup>19</sup> Another example of this view is this: "The predicted end of Antiochus in 11:40-45 differs from the stories of his death in I and II Maccabees and hence it presumably represents real prediction on the part of the author of Daniel which was never fulfilled."<sup>20</sup>

Among the alleged inaccuracies in Daniel 11:40-12:13 are: (1) that the passage predicts that Antiochus will be killed in a campaign against the Holy Land (11:40-45). (2) The passage predicts that God will intervene and bring about the end of time and the resurrection of the dead (12:2-3). The difficulty of correlating Daniel 11: 40-12:13 with what we know of the history of Antiochus Epiphanes is not only felt

<sup>16</sup> An excellent discussion of the problems with this view is found in the book *The Bible And The Future*, Anthony A. Hoekema, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), pages 203-205.

<sup>17</sup> See Taylor, *Ezekiel*, 252 and Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 214 for the problems of taking this as the only fulfillment of these chapters.

<sup>18</sup> Jim McGuiggan, *The Book of Ezekiel*, (Lubbock: Montex, 1979), 340.

<sup>19</sup> Hartman and DiLella, *The Book of Daniel*, 303. Other examples of some commentaries that have the same ideas are: Gerald Kennedy, "The Book of Daniel," *The Interpreter's Bible* vol. 6 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), 537; S.R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1900), 193; John J. Collins, *Daniel*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 389. In reviewing the paper I see that I failed to quote from these and other representative liberal commentaries often enough.

<sup>20</sup> Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls*, 35-36.

by liberal critics. **Dispensational scholars** believe these verses portray an end time conflict centered in the Holy Land and Jerusalem in which God finally rescues His people and defeats their enemies. One argument made by these writers to defend their position on these verses is that it removes us from having to find a fulfillment in what we know of history.<sup>21</sup> Even some **non-premillennial writers** like Edward J. Young cannot see how these words apply to Antiochus Epiphanes. On pages 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, and 255 Young states that these words cannot apply to Antiochus. The only page left out in the section above was 254 and that page has no writing on it.<sup>22</sup> Even brethren have taken this same view: "The events and career outlined in verses 36-45 preclude the possibility of it being Antiochus IV."<sup>23</sup>

Is Daniel 11:40ff failed prophecy? Particularly troubling to some is the way the death of Antiochus is described in 11:45. The verse states he will pitch his tent between the seas and the holy mountains and will come to the end. "The prediction of the location of his death eliminates the figure of Antiochus Epiphanes, who met his end in Persia, after an unsuccessful raid on a temple in Elymais."<sup>24</sup> However, the text does not specifically state where the king under discussion will die. The text states where the king will pitch his tent and that he will die, but does not state the king will die when he is in the holy land. This may be an example of "telescoping the future" in "which the more distant event appears to merge with the nearer so as to become indistinguishable from it."<sup>25</sup> An example of telescoping in prophecy may be in John the Baptist's statement about Jesus baptizing in the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11). Another explanation of Daniel 11:40-45 is that the passage describes an "apocalyptic ideal" of the overthrow of Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>26</sup>

Some allege that Daniel 11:40-45 demands a military invasion of Antiochus' forces into Egypt after 168 B.C., which is viewed as extremely unlikely.<sup>27</sup> However, Jerome attributes to Porphyry, the enemy of Christianity, a mention of such a campaign.<sup>28</sup> Even Driver urges caution, "It is true, our accounts of Antiochus' reign are incomplete, there being large gaps, especially in the parts of Polybius and Livy which would naturally have contained particulars of his closing years."<sup>29</sup> Though Driver himself does not believe the invasion probable, he says, "We are not in a position to deny categorically a fourth Egyptian campaign."<sup>30</sup> Some suggest that these words may not be intended to introduce a new campaign against Egypt but to summarize all that has been said before. The explanation of 11:40-45 may be that these verses contain a general summarization of the whole war-like career of Antiochus Epiphanes especially

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<sup>21</sup> Roland S. Wallace, *The Message of Daniel*, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979), 190. Archer writes, "As for the final paragraph of this chapter, the effort to tie its details to the known career of Antiochus Epiphanes becomes utterly hopeless." Gleason L. Archer, Jr. "Daniel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 146.

<sup>22</sup> Young, *Commentary on Daniel*, 247-255. Young takes what may be described as the "Anti-Christ" position. He is not premillennial but he believes Daniel 11:40ff. refers to a still future conflict between good and evil. This view goes back as far as Jerome. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, Translated by Gleason L. Archer, Jr. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958), 136. This "Anti-Christ" view is also taken by H.C. Leupold.

<sup>23</sup> Jim McGuiggan, *The Book of Daniel*, (Lubbock: Montex Publishing, 1978), 170.

<sup>24</sup> Archer, "Daniel," 148. In his commentary on the book of Daniel on pages 196-97, Driver gives a good summary of what can be known of the last days of Antiochus. S.R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1900).

<sup>25</sup> Baldwin, *Daniel*, 202.

<sup>26</sup> Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 210.

<sup>27</sup> Hartman and DiLella, *The Book of Daniel*, 304.

<sup>28</sup> Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 139.

<sup>29</sup> Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 197.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

against Egypt and Israel.<sup>31</sup> This type of summary would not be unusual in apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic literature "is fond of repetition and delights to revert to previous statements and enlarge on them, even though the result is to destroy all sense of consecutive arrangement. Failure to appreciate this has led many western commentators to find doublets, contradictions and inconsistencies, and so to assume multiple authorship where this is quite unnecessary."<sup>32</sup>

One scholar who argues the Maccabean date for Daniel says, "The revised date for the 'end' also came and went, but the failure did not diminish the authority of the book."<sup>33</sup> How could a failed prophecy not diminish the authority of the book? One of the tests of a true prophet, according to Deuteronomy 18:22, is that the words which he speaks must come to pass. If the book of Daniel contains what is so obviously a false prophecy, why did the Jews so quickly accept it as authoritative scripture?<sup>34</sup>

### THE LANGUAGE OF DANIEL

Some argue that the use of foreign words in the Aramaic portion of Daniel demonstrates that the book originated much later than the sixth century B.C. There are some fifteen words of Persian origin used throughout the book. There are at least three Greek words used in Daniel 3 that indicate to some that the work must have been composed during the Greek period. The argument is as follows: "The Persian words presuppose a period after the Persian Empire had been well established; the Greek words demand, the Hebrew supports, and the Aramaic permits, a date after the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great."<sup>35</sup>

The presence of the Persian words in this book should come as no surprise to us. After all, Daniel lived into this period and it is possible he did most of his writing in this period. Kitchen notes that the Persian terms used are Old Persian words that occurred within the history of the language till about 300 B.C.<sup>36</sup> By the time the LXX translation was made, probably about 100 B.C., the meaning of four of these Persian words was purely guesswork. "Now if Daniel were wholly the product of 165 B.C., then just a century or so in a continuous tradition is surely embarrassingly inadequate as a sufficient interval for that loss (or change) of meaning to occur by Near Eastern standards."<sup>37</sup>

These Greek words all appear in one verse, Daniel 3:5. They are used in a list of musical instruments.<sup>38</sup> "It is known that foreign names of imported musical instruments often find currency in the language purchasers as soon as they are purchased, and that Greek traders had been selling their wares on the Near Eastern markets from the Mycenaean age and onward. The Greek poet Alcaeus of Lesbos (living around 600 B.C.) mentions (in one of his surviving fragments) that his brother Antimenidas had served in the Babylonian army."<sup>39</sup> Franz Rosenthal has shown the Aramaic in Daniel was the Aramaic used in the courts from the seventh century B.C. on and eventually became widespread in the near East.<sup>40</sup> Greek

<sup>31</sup> Paul T. Butler, *Daniel*, (Joplin, Missouri; College Press, 1970), 438.

<sup>32</sup> John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel*, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1969), 236.

<sup>33</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 401.

<sup>34</sup> Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 400.

<sup>35</sup> S.R. Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 5th ed., (New York: Meridian library, 1960), 508.

<sup>36</sup> Kenneth A. Kitchen, et al., "The Aramaic of Daniel," *Notes of Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, (London: Tyndale Press, 1965), 43-44.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>38</sup> Archer, "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel," 142.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Waltke, "The Date of the Book of Daniel," 322-23. I quote Waltke's comment on the work of Rosenthal because Rosenthal wrote in German.

words are attested in the Elephantine papyri of the fifth century B.C.<sup>41</sup>

The language of the book though used as an argument in defense of the late-date may actually be one of the strongest arguments for the early date. "Insurmountable difficulties are encountered in attempting to explain how it is possible in the 160 years between Alexander's conquest of the Near East and the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes that not a single Greek term pertaining to administration or government had been adopted into the Aramaic of the early second century. Since there are at least fifteen Persian ??? (largely pertaining to government functions and administrative titles) to be found in Daniel's Aramaic, the lingua franca of the Babylonian capital, readily adopted foreign terms of the sort. But the fact that no such Greek terms are to be found in Daniel demonstrates beyond all reasonable doubt that this work was composed in the Persian period rather than after Greek had become the language of government in the Near East."<sup>42</sup>

Other scholars also appeal to language as an argument for the early date of Daniel. "The linguistic evidence, both Hebrew and Aramaic, suggests a date in the fourth or even fifth century."<sup>43</sup> LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush argue that the Hebrew of Daniel more closely resembles the Chronicler and is earlier than the Mishnah and Qumran.<sup>44</sup> The Aramaic of Daniel (2:4-7:28) is closer to Ezra (Ezra 4:8-6:18) is in Aramaic) and the fifth-century Elephantine papyri than to Qumran.<sup>45</sup>

There is no trace of Greek influence on the book of Daniel.<sup>46</sup> "It is interesting to observe that the Hebrew text of Ecclesiasticus, dating from about 200-180 B.C., shortly before the Maccabean period, furnishes us with a fair sample of the type of Hebrew which would have been current at the time Daniel was written according to late date theorists. ...Nevertheless it is quite striking that Ecclesiasticus exhibits later linguistic characteristics than Daniel, being somewhat rabbinical in tendency. Israel Levi in his *Introduction to the Hebrew Text of Ecclesiasticus* (1904) lists the following: a) new verbal forms borrowed mainly from Aramaic, b) excessive use of the hiphil and hithpael conjugations, and c) peculiarities of sorts heralding the approach of Mishnaic Hebrew."<sup>47</sup> James Montgomery recognized the weakness of the arguments about the Greek language to establish the late date: "The rebuttal of this evidence for a low date lies in stressing the potentialities of Greek influence in the Orient from the sixth century onward."<sup>48</sup>

What about the Aramaic sections of Daniel? Some of the documents discovered in the caves of Qumran, such as the Genesis Apocryphon, give an example of Palestinian Aramaic from the Maccabean time period. The Aramaic of Daniel is considered to be Eastern Aramaic in contrast with the Western Aramaic of the Genesis Apocryphon. The Western Aramaic generally places the verb at the beginning of the clause, while the Eastern style delays the verb till later in the clause.

### ALLEGED HISTORICAL DIFFICULTIES OF DANIEL

One reason given for rejecting the sixth-century B.C. date for Daniel is the historical difficulties in the book. We plan to look at a few of these troublesome passages and problems.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 324. Edwin M. Yamauchi, "Daniel and Contacts Between the Aegean and the Near East Before Alexander," *Evangelical Quarterly* 53 (1981):37-47. Yamauchi argues in this article that the Greek words in Daniel cannot be used to support a Hellenistic date.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 142-43.

<sup>43</sup> LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush, *Old Testament Survey*, 574.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Kenneth A. Kitchen, et al., "The Aramaic of Daniel," *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, (London: Tyndale Press, 1965), 31-79.

<sup>46</sup> Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 391.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1927), 22.

Daniel 1:1 states that in the third year of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and besieged it. Some argue that this contradicts Jeremiah 25:1 which says the first year of Nebuchadnezzar was the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Some claim that the author of Daniel, writing several centuries after these events, was confused with the facts and made a mistake.<sup>49</sup> The simple answer to this problem is that Daniel and Jeremiah were following different methods of dating. It seems that in the Babylonian method of speaking of a king's reign was to speak of the first year as the accession year. The second year was then technically considered the first year. "If this were the case, when Daniel spoke of the third year of Jehoiakim he would be referring to the same year as that which Jeremiah designated as the fourth year."<sup>50</sup> It is also interesting that Daniel had been studying the book of Jeremiah to see what he said about the number of the years of the exile (Daniel 9:2). Two times Jeremiah mentions the exile as lasting seventy years (Jer. 25:10-11; 29:10). It would be strange if Daniel contradicted one of the very passages in Jeremiah that Daniel specifically tells us that he was examining.<sup>51</sup> The following chart demonstrates the difference between the accession and non-accession method.

Accession year	Dan. 1:1	Accession year	1 <sup>st</sup> yr	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr
Non-accession year	Jer. 25:1, 9; 46:2	1 <sup>st</sup> yr	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr	4 <sup>th</sup> yr <sup>52</sup>

Waltke actually turns the above dispute into a case for a sixth century date of the book of Daniel. "Had the author Daniel been an unknown Jew of the second century B.C., it is unlikely that he would have followed the obsolete Babylonian chronological system of computation in preference to his own Palestinian method, which had the sanction of so important a personage as the prophet Jeremiah."<sup>53</sup>

A problem that does not have as easy a solution is the question about the identity of Darius the Mede. Darius is mentioned in Daniel in 5:31; 6:1, 6, 9, 25, 28; 9:1; and 11:1. Darius receives the kingdom when Belshazzar is slain. He is the king that Daniel deals with in the episode about the lions den. And in 9:1 he is said to be the son of Ahasuerus. Who is he? He is unknown by this name outside of the book of Daniel.<sup>54</sup> Those biased against the reliability of Daniel have argued that the writer clearly made a historical blunder. Cyrus was the king of Persia from 539-530 and Darius was the king of Persia from 521-486. Some believed Daniel somehow mistakenly merged these two characters and included them both within his book. (Cyrus is mentioned in the book in 1:21; 6:28; and 10:1.) These writers believe the writer then compounded his error even further by speaking of Darius as the "son of Ahasuerus" (9:1). Ahasuerus or Xerxes was actually the son of Darius and he reigned from 486-464. Therefore, some writers claim that Darius the Mede is the "conflation of confused traditions."<sup>55</sup>

There are three main explanations I have encountered to explain the identity of Darius the Mede.

<sup>49</sup> Louis F. Hartman, and Alexander A. DiLella, *The Book of Daniel*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978, 48.

<sup>50</sup> R.K. Harrison, "Daniel," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, volume 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 862.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Dillard and Longman III, *An Introduction To The Old Testament*, 334. This proposal is also suggested in the excellent work by Edward R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 163-165.

<sup>53</sup> Waltke, "The Date of the Book of Daniel," 326.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> H.H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel*, (Cardiff: The University of Wales Press Board, 1935), 54.



William Shea's explanation is that Darius the Mede is Gubaru mentioned in the Nabonidus Chronicles.<sup>56</sup> Gubaru, also known as Ugbaru, was a general in the Persian army that defeated Babylon. Gubaru died a year and a few days after the conquest of Babylon and during that time served over the Persians.<sup>57</sup>

John Whitcomb's explanation was similar, but he introduced a new wrinkle to the argument. He also believed that Darius the Mede was Gubaru, but his contribution was the idea that Gubaru and Ugbaru were different men. Ugbaru was the general who took the city of Babylon, but Gubaru was the one who occupied the throne in Babylon. His argument was that Ugbaru died a few days after the victory over Babylon.<sup>58</sup> Both of these writers identify Darius the Mede as a character we know from history by another name who served under Cyrus.

The explanation that I like the most is that Darius the Mede is actually another name for Cyrus. This solution is proposed by D.J. Wiseman. He suggests that Cyrus was the king's Persian name and Darius was the king's Median name. He argues Daniel 6:28 should be translated that Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius that is the reign of Cyrus the Persian. There is precedent for translating "waw" as meaning "that is." In I Chronicles 5:26 the "waw" seems to be used this way as the text there identifies Pul, king of Assyria, with Tiglath-Pilneser.<sup>59</sup>

Those who are quick to criticize the historical value of the book of Daniel need to learn to be careful about making premature criticisms of the historical value of the book. Once upon a time Belshazzar was appealed to as an example of a historical error in the book.

Is there any positive evidence we can present to argue that Daniel was indeed a careful historian? The author knew enough about the events of the sixth-century B.C. to picture Nebuchadnezzar as able to change Babylonian law at will (Dan. 2:12ff, 46). However, the writer also shows Darius the Mede as being unable to change the laws of the Medes and the Persians (Dan. 6:8; Esther 1:19; 8:8). It is interesting that in Esther 1:18 and 19 the text speaks of the "laws of Persia and Media" where Daniel uses a different order. Daniel 8:3 speaks of the horn that grew later becoming longer than the other. This may indicate that Daniel was written in an earlier period when the Medes still exercised a dominant influence in the kingdom and this situation was reversed by the time Esther was written.<sup>60</sup> It is also interesting that the writer speaks of the Babylonians using fire for capital punishment (Dan. 3:11), but the Persians used the lions' den as the means of capital punishment (Dan. 6:7). Fire was sacred to the Persians. A Pahlavi text says, "Go three times a day to the fire temple and do homage to the Fire, for he who makes a habit of going to the Fire temple and of doing homage to the Fire, will be blessed with a greater share of both worldly wealth and of holiness."<sup>61</sup> Therefore, the Persians would not have used fire as means of capital punishment.<sup>62</sup>

King Belshazzar in Daniel 5 was at one time appealed to as an example of the untrustworthy nature of the history recorded by Daniel. The Greek historians who preserved the names of Nebuchadnezzar's successors mention Nabonidus as the last ruler over Babylon. There was no mention of Belshazzar in these histories.<sup>63</sup> Ferdinand Hitzig, an important German scholar, wrote in 1850 that Belshazzar was a

<sup>56</sup> William H. Shea, "Darius the Mede: An Update," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20 (1982):229-247.

<sup>57</sup> Dillard and Longman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 336-37.

<sup>58</sup> John C. Whitcomb, *Darius the Mede: A Study in Historical Identification*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 21-22.

<sup>59</sup> D.J. Wiseman, *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*, (London: Tyndale, 1965), 12-16.

<sup>60</sup> Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1120.

<sup>61</sup> Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990, 447.

<sup>62</sup> Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1121.

<sup>63</sup> Alan Millard, "Daniel and Belshazzar in History," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 11:3 (May-June 1985), 74.

figment of the imagination of the author of Daniel.<sup>64</sup> However, in 1854, a British archaeology team digging in Southern Iraq discovered a mud-brick wall that was part of a temple of a moon god. They also discovered several clay cylinders with cuneiform writing. One of the discoveries was a prayer for the health of Nabonidus and his oldest son Belshazzar.<sup>65</sup> When this picture was seen it was easier to understand the references to the "third highest ruler in the kingdom" in verses 7, 16, and 29. Why did Belshazzar not offer the interpreter of the writing on the wall the position of second in the kingdom? Joseph was given this position by Pharaoh in Genesis 41:40. The fact that Belshazzar offered the position of third ruler points to the accuracy of the Biblical record. "The fact that by the time of Heroditus (ca. 450 B.C.) the very name of Belshazzar had been forgotten, at least so far as the informants of the Greek historian were concerned, indicates a far closer acquaintance with the events of the late sixth century on the part of the author of Daniel than would have been the case by the second century B.C."<sup>66</sup>

One liberal writer acknowledged the fact that Daniel was an accurate historian on at least a couple of accounts. "We shall presumably never know how our author learned that the new Babylon was the creation of Nebuchadnezzar (4:30), as the excavations have proved and that Belshazzar, mentioned only in Daniel, and in Baruch 1:11, which is based on Daniel, was functioning as king when Cyrus took Babylon in 538 (chapter 5)."<sup>67</sup>

The points at which the book of Daniel has proved reliable need to be remembered when we encounter difficulties now in which the solution is not easy. When William F. Albright stated his view of Darius the Mede (which was much like Whitcomb's) he said, "After the cuneiform elucidation of the Belshazzar mystery, showing that the latter was long co-regent with his father, the vindication of Darius the Mede for history was to be expected.... We may safely expect the Babylonian Jewish author to be acquainted with the main facts of the Neo-Babylonian history."<sup>68</sup>

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KINGDOMS OF DANIEL 2 AND 7

Liberal scholars interpret the four kingdoms of Daniel 2 and 7 as the Babylonian, Median, Persian, and Grecian kingdoms.<sup>69</sup> The reason for this interpretation is that it eliminates a serious problem for them as they endeavor to eliminate the supernatural from the book. Most of us have probably taught that the four kingdoms of Daniel 2 and 7 are the Babylonian (605-539), the Medo-Persian (539-331), the Grecian (331-167), and the Roman (63 B.C.- the end of New Testament times and beyond). This interpretation of these chapters is nothing new. Martin Luther believed this and said of the view, "In this interpretation and opinion all the world are agreed, and history and fact abundantly establish it."<sup>70</sup> The trouble with such a view for liberal interpreters is immediately evident. Even if we granted their presuppositions about

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 74-75.

<sup>66</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 383.

<sup>67</sup> R.H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 758-59.

<sup>68</sup> William F. Albright, "The Date and Personality of the Chronicler," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 40 (1921), 11, footnote 2.

<sup>69</sup> Hartman and DiLella, *The Book of Daniel*, 147 serves as an example of this. Their commentary says, "The second, third, and fourth kingdoms of chapter 2 are those of the Medes, the Persian, and the Greeks (or Macedonians), respectively." Robert J.M. Gurney, "The Four Kingdoms of Daniel 2 and 7," *Themelios* 2 (1977): 39-45. Gurney argues identifies these four kingdoms the same way. John H. Walton, "The Four Kingdoms of Daniel," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 29 (1986):25-36 suggests the possibility that the four kingdoms may be Assyria which he believes lived on in Babylon, Median, Medo-Persian, Greece. This was a little surprising to me since Walton is generally conservative. He argues though that he does not necessarily believe this but that it is worthy of more attention than it has been given.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in C.F. Kiel and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* vol. 9, "Ezekiel and Daniel," C.F. Kiel, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, reprinted 1982), 245.

the date of the book, (that the book was written about 165 B.C.), if we interpret the fourth kingdom as Rome, there is still the element of predictive prophecy in the book. "And if he received divine revelation enabling him to predict such earth-shaking events a hundred years in advance, it necessarily follows that he could have predicted all the earlier events which are recorded in Daniel as prophecies of the future."<sup>71</sup>

Is there evidence within the book of Daniel for making the Median and Persian kingdoms two separate kingdoms? In 550 B.C. Cyrus defeated Astyages (Astyages was Cyrus' grandfather on his mother's side) and he merges the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians.<sup>72</sup> Throughout the book the kingdom of the Medes and Persians is viewed as one kingdom and not two. In Daniel 5:28 Daniel interprets the Aramaic word "peres" as indicating that Belshazzar's kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians. There is a word play in the text of this verse. The consonants of the verb divide and Persia are the same. (The transliteration equivalents are p, r, s.) "The word-play is not with the 'Medes' (as it would have to have been had there been an earlier, independent Median empire) but expressly with the 'Persians'...Daniel regards the second empire as the Medo-Persian, with the Persians predominating over the Medes, rather than as the Median alone."<sup>73</sup> Daniel 6 makes three references to the "law of the Medes and the Persians." (verses 8, 12, 15). If the writer believed the Median kingdom had a separate existence from the Persian kingdom, why would he speak of Darius being bound by the law of the Persians.<sup>74</sup> Daniel 8:20 tells us that the two-horned ram represents "the kings of Media and Persia." It is described as the "kingdom of the Medes and Persians" when they conquered the Babylonians (5:28-31) and when they fell to the Greeks (8:20-21). There is no reference in Daniel to a Median kingdom separate from the Persian kingdom.<sup>75</sup>

The image of the third beast in chapter 7 corresponds more closely with the Greek kingdom than any alleged Persian kingdom. This third beast had four wings and four heads. "This corresponds with nothing in the Persian Empire (to which it would have to correspond according to the late date theory) but fits in perfectly with the Alexandrian Empire, which broke up into four independent kingdoms not too long after Alexander's death in 323."<sup>76</sup>

The strongest argument for interpreting the fourth kingdom with the Grecian Empire instead of the Roman is the mention of the "little horn" in chapters 7 and 8. In Daniel 8 the little horn arises from the he-goat who plainly represents the kings of Media and Persia. (Notice particularly Daniel 8:9-14 and 22-26.) The little horn in Daniel 7:8ff arises from the fourth kingdom. The argument is that since the kingdom from which the little horn arises in Daniel 8 is clearly the Grecian kingdom then we should see the Grecian kingdom as the fourth kingdom of Daniel 7. The difficulty with this view is that the third beast in Daniel 7 corresponds more closely with the male goat of Daniel 8. In Daniel 7:6 it is the third beast that has four wings and four heads. In Daniel 8:8 the male goat has four horns grow up in place of the one prominent horn that is broken off. Therefore, the goat of chapter 8 (Greece, 21) actually seems to parallel the third kingdom of chapter 7 and not the fourth. The little horn of chapter 8 is not the same little horn of chapter 7.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Archer, "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel", 138.

<sup>72</sup> D.J.A. Clines, "Cyrus," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 844.

<sup>73</sup> Archer, "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel," 141.

<sup>74</sup> Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 398.

<sup>75</sup> Ernest C. Lucas, "The Origin of Daniel's Four Empire Scheme Reexamined," *Tyndale Bulletin* 40 (1989), 192-93. Lucas writes, "If what is intended is the sequence: Babylonian, Median, Persian, Macedonian, the inclusion of the Median Empire is odd since the Medes never gained control of Babylonia or Judaea."

<sup>76</sup> Archer, "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel," 140.

<sup>77</sup> Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 398.

The fact that these two little horns arise from two different kingdoms should not surprise us. These two chapters present one of the main theological themes of the book. Throughout history ruler after ruler arises who becomes arrogant and seeks to exalt himself. He becomes outraged at God's people because of their exclusive devotion to the true God and turns against them in hostility and violence. Nebuchadnezzar did this in the first four chapters. Belshazzar exalts himself against God in chapter 5, though he is not specifically said to persecute God's people. Darius does this in chapter 6 by demanding that requests only be offered to him for thirty days and throwing all into the lion's den who do not comply. The little horns of chapter 7 and chapter 8 wage war against the saints. The ruler introduced in Daniel 11:36 does the same thing. The book of Daniel introduces a recurring phenomena throughout history. Evil men come to positions of power and become intoxicated with their own importance and use their authority to attempt to destroy God's people. However, God intervenes and humbles the tyrants and delivers His people since it is He who rules the world. Since Daniel portrays this as an event that happens over and over again, it should not surprise us that the little horn of Daniel 7 is a different character from a different kingdom than the one in Daniel 8.

If the fourth beast of Daniel is Rome, then liberals are unsuccessful in their attempts to remove predictive prophecy from this book. "Again, one is faced with conclusive internal evidence from the text that the author of Daniel predicted the overthrow of the Greek Empire by the Roman at least one hundred years (even on the assumption of the Maccabean date) before it took place. Thus it turns out that the entire effort to explain the predictive elements in Daniel as prophecy after the event ends up in failure."<sup>78</sup>

#### EVIDENCE FROM QUMRAN

Among the discoveries at Qumran known as the Dead Sea Scrolls were several manuscripts of Daniel. In 1956 there were seventeen fragments of Daniel that were known and it was stated that "there were certainly several others."<sup>79</sup> On the basis of paleography one of these scrolls can not be dated later than 120 B.C.<sup>80</sup> It would seem that these manuscripts do great damage to the late date theory because it leaves "too little time between a mid-second century autograph and the acceptance of the book as canonical."<sup>81</sup>

Discoveries of portions of other Biblical books at Qumran have led scholars to reject Maccabean dates for these books. For example, Jacob Myers, author of the Anchor Bible Commentary on Chronicles, wrote, "The discovery of a fragment of Chronicles at Qumran renders a Maccabean date virtually impossible for any part of Chronicles."<sup>82</sup> In opposition to the idea that some of the Psalms originated in the Maccabean period, W.H. Brownlee said, "It would seem that we should abandon the idea of any of the canonical Psalms being of Maccabean date, for each song had to win its way in the esteem of the people before it could be included in the sacred compilation of the Psalter. Immediate entree for any of them is highly improbable."<sup>83</sup> Millar Burrows was arguing against the idea that Ecclesiastes originated in the

<sup>78</sup> Archer, "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel," 141. Other articles that are worthy of attention are: G.R. Beasley-Murray, "The Interpretation of Daniel 7," *Catholic Bible Quarterly* 45 (1983): 44-58; John H. Walton, "The Four Kingdoms of Daniel," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 29 (1986): 35-46.

<sup>79</sup> H.H. Rowley, *The Zadokite Fragments and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956), 7.

<sup>80</sup> William H. Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 36.

<sup>81</sup> Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 46. Even J.A. Scoggin, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 409, agrees with Baldwin's basic premise as stated in the quotation in the text of the paper. Scoggin writes, "Many fragments of it (Daniel) have been found among the writings of the Qumran sect, which is an evident sign that the book had acquired considerable importance at the earliest in the third century and certainly in the second." However, on the next page, Scoggins still dates the book between 168 and 164 B.C.

<sup>82</sup> Jacob M. Myers, *I Chronicles*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1965), 165.

<sup>83</sup> Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible*, 30.

Maccabean period. He commented that scrolls of Ecclesiastes were found in cave 4 that have been dated around 150 B.C. He states, "This is not much later than the time at which many scholars have thought the book was originally written. ... but the probability of its composition in the third century, if not earlier, is somewhat enhanced by finding the manuscript probably not written much after 150 B.C."<sup>84</sup>

While scholars adjust the dates for other Biblical books on the basis of evidence from Qumran, this has not happened with the book of Daniel. One writes, "None of the Dead Sea Scroll copies of Daniel are so early as to dispute the usual critical view of the book's authorship."<sup>85</sup> However, some acknowledge that this is a weighty problem for any who accept a late date. "The evidence of the LXX and Qumran indicates that Daniel was in existence in its full form, and had been distributed over a relatively wide area, prior to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. This raises questions for theories of a second-century authorship."<sup>86</sup>

Maccabees shows the people believed prophecy had ceased in their time. I Maccabees 4:46 refers to an event in 164 BC and I Maccabees 14:41 speaks of an event in 140 BC. Both of the passages tell us something was done (In the first instance the stones from the alter were dismantled and set aside and in the second case Simon was made commander of the army and high priest) until a trustworthy prophet would arise. This is the time liberals say that Daniel lived and yet they viewed prophecy as ceased.

#### THE DANIEL OF EZEKIEL 14

Some have stated that if Daniel were indeed an actual historical figure of the sixth- century B.C. we would expect some reference to him by his contemporaries.

In response to this some state this is exactly what we have in the book of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 14 God threatens His people with four dreadful judgments: sword, famine, wild beast, and plagues. The people are so wicked that even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were among the people, these three men would only be able to save themselves (Ezekiel 14:12-23, Noah, Daniel, and Job are mentioned in verses 14 and 20.) Was the Daniel mentioned here the Biblical Daniel? Many conservatives are quite certain that he is not. Taylor writes, "He can hardly be Ezekiel's contemporary in exile."<sup>87</sup> Craigie says, "Daniel is not the biblical hero of that name, but rather a heroic figure referred to in the literature of Phoenicia and Syria."<sup>88</sup> In the ruins of Ugarit from around 1200 B.C. the story was found of the legendary King Dan'el who was described as, "upright, sitting before the gate, beneath a mighty tree on the threshing floor, judging the cause of the widow, adjudicating the case of the fatherless."<sup>89</sup> The identification of the Daniel of Ezekiel 14 (and 28:3) with this Daniel of Ras Shamra is usually based on the spelling of his name,<sup>90</sup> and the fact that the other two characters are non-Israelites.<sup>91</sup> Though much is made of the spelling of the name, this

<sup>84</sup> Millar Burrows, *More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (New York: 1958), 171.

<sup>85</sup> Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible*.

<sup>86</sup> LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush, *Old Testament Survey*, 574. In their footnote on page on page 830 that evidence from Qumran indicates that the Aramaic section of the book begins and ends where it does today. Another article that contains information similar to what is given above is Robert I. Vasholz, "Qumran and the Dating of Daniel," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21 (1978), 315-21. Vasholz adds the note that the prayer of Nabonidus from Qumran cave 4 has been dated around 150 B.C. and if this non-canonical literary source is dependent on the book of Daniel this is "uncomfortably close to the alleged date for the canonical Daniel."

<sup>87</sup> John Taylor, *Ezekiel*, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1969), 129.

<sup>88</sup> Peter C. Craigie, *Ezekiel*, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), 101.

<sup>89</sup> J.B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd. edition, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 151.

<sup>90</sup> Taylor, *Ezekiel*, 129.

<sup>91</sup> Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, (Dallas: Word Books, 1994), 217-218. Allen writes, "The foreign and ancient factors of the context indicate that Daniel is not the Judean contemporary with Ezekiel who features in the narratives

does not seem to be an extremely important factor. Dny'l and Dn'l are simply variant spellings of the same name.<sup>92</sup> The major factor against identifying the Ugaritic Daniel with the Daniel of Ezekiel is that this Daniel was not a worshiper of Yahweh. "While the hero of the Aqhat story may have gained a reputation as a just ruler, he is pagan, worshiping a foreign god, much more at home with the Canaanites and more like Ezekiel's audience than the people of Yahweh as the prophet envisions them."<sup>93</sup> "Thus, it is especially inappropriate to suggest a Baal-devotee, the Ugaritic Dnil, as an exemplarily 'righteous' man."<sup>94</sup>

One writer says, "A close scrutiny of the Ugaritic Aqht Text has shown that the Ugaritic Dnil is not reported to be particularly wise, nor righteous, nor able to save his son or daughter."<sup>95</sup>

While I believe the Biblical Daniel is the Daniel of Ezekiel, I do not believe everything hinges on this identification. It is very rare that the prophets make reference to the life or the preaching of their fellow-prophets. (An exception to this is the reference to Micah in Jeremiah 26:17-19.) If I am correct, this shows us that the Biblical Daniel was a well-known historical figure even before the destruction of the temple in 587 B.C.

### DOES APOCALYPTIC LANGUAGE DEMAND A LATE ORIGIN?

Some writers argue that the apocalyptic language in the book indicates a Persian influence and demands a later date for writing it. It is true that the closest parallels to Biblical Daniel are from the Seleucid period. However, apocalyptic language in and of itself does not demand a late date for the book. There are texts that are apocalyptic or close to it from the Ancient Near East as old as 1200 B.C.<sup>96</sup> "Though fully developed apocalyptic is not extant until the Persian period, there are striking predictions of the future preserved in Akkadian literature, dated as early as 1000 B.C."<sup>97</sup>

### IS DANIEL PSEUDONYMOUS?

A pseudonymous work is one written under a false name meant to conceal the identity of the author. There has been an increasing tendency, even among evangelicals, to regard books, or at least parts of them, as pseudonymous.<sup>98</sup> There are certainly examples of this type of literature among the Jews. I, II, and III Enoch, The Apocryphon of Ezekiel, The Apocalypse of Zephaniah are just a few of the examples of pseudonymous literature.<sup>99</sup> Is Daniel to be placed in this category? The proponents of this view find themselves in a difficult position. On the one hand, they claim that pseudonymity was an accepted literary

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of Daniel 1-6 but the figure in Ugaritic texts, to whom Ezek. 28:3 will refer as a model of wisdom in the Phoenician context."

<sup>92</sup> Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 1-24*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 448.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Harold H.P. Dressler, "The Identification of the Ugaritic DNIL with the Daniel of Ezekiel," *Vetus Testamentum* 29 (1979), 161.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 160. He also states that "Extra-Biblical traditions, too, has revealed no variant traditions for the Ugaritic Dnil." 161. Dressler's article was opposed by John Day, "The Daniel of Ugaritic and Ezekiel and the Hero of the Book of Daniel," *Vetus Testamentum* 30 (1980): 174-184.

<sup>96</sup> Dillard and Longman, *An Introduction To The Old Testament*, 345.

<sup>97</sup> D. Brent Sandy and Martin G. Abegg, Jr., "Apocalyptic," eds. D. Brent Sandy and Robert L. Giese, Jr. *Cracking Old Testament Codes*, (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995).182.

<sup>98</sup> John E. Goldingay, "The Book of Daniel: Three Issues." *Themelios* 2 (1977), 49.

<sup>99</sup> Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 2nd edition, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 446. Ferguson also writes, "As to literary form, an apocalyptic writing was normally pseudonymous...Part of what is presented as prediction is often a symbolic survey of history up to the real author's own time. This plus the 'scientific' material about the structure of the cosmos apparently functioned to give credence to the message concerning the end." 447.

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practice that deceived no one. On the other hand they also argue that the use of a great person's name from the past added weight and authority to the book. Why would it add importance to the book if everyone instantly recognized it as a pseudonym? "Those who contend that Daniel was written under a pseudonym cannot have it both ways."<sup>100</sup>

If the book was pseudonymous then the writer seems to have truly been successful in deceiving many who we would expect to be in a position to know. Jesus and the early church fathers seem to have accepted the book as the work of Daniel. It does seem that Jesus' quotation of Daniel in Matthew 24:15 would eliminate this option for those who believe that He is God come in the flesh.<sup>101</sup> (Jesus quotes the passages about the abomination of desolation. It is interesting that these passages may also be alluded to in I Maccabees 1:54, which is believed to be written no later than 140 B.C.)

#### DANIEL'S PLACE IN THE CANON<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Baldwin, "Is there pseudonymity in the Old Testament?" 11.

<sup>101</sup> Waltke, "The Date of the Book of Daniel," 320. Waltke says, "If He (Jesus, T.P.) is wrong in His interpretation of the book, then He must be less than the omniscient, inerrant God incarnate."

<sup>102</sup> I was not able to pursue this subject the way that I wanted. Some sources that will be helpful are: Archer, "Modern Rationalism and the Book of Daniel," 131-133. Douglas E. Fox, "Ben Sira on OT Canon Again: The Date Of Daniel," *Westminster Theological Journal* 49 (1987), 335-350. Fox argues that Ecclesiasticus of The Wisdom of Ben Sira (believed to have been written by 190-180 B.C.) actually quotes Daniel. If this is correct, the 165 B.C. date for Daniel is impossible. Another article that looks interesting, but I have not yet had the opportunity to read is: Geza Vermes, "Josephus' Treatment of the Book of Daniel," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 42 (1991), 149-166.