

DANIEL

A PRINCE AND A PROPHET

Authorship:

Some contemporary scholars, theologians, and commentators have given way to the arguments of the critics and have begun to reject Daniel authorship, assuming that his prophecy is too accurate to have been written beforehand. Thus, they ascribe a date of writing between the testaments as a compromise. We believe Daniel to be the author.

The date of writing appears to be later in Daniel's life, to include his captivity in 605 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar, to some of his final service to Cyrus the Mede in 536 B.C.

The man:

His work – According to the book, we most know Daniel because of his high position in the court as an advisor and consultant to kings of Babylon, and then the Medes and Persians. Daniel specifically highlights the intent to glorify God in this position. Six occasions emphasize this reality: 1) the purification period for young men to serve the king, 2) interpretation of the king's dream (the great image), 3) the stand of Daniel's friends, and their deliverance from the fiery furnace, 4) second interpretation of the king's dream (the great tree), 5) reading of the writing on the wall, and 6) preserved in the lions den.

His character – As one would expect, this man is as godly, and spiritually mature as any character of the O.T. God reveals through him four new visions, a great honor. He is bold in his deliverance of the truth to the kings he served, though that would have doubtless been very intimidating. Consistently you find Daniel as a model of faith and obedience. He is the epitome of dedication.

Along with his godliness, Daniel is socially polished, culturally educated, and politically dependable. (Some even single out Daniel as a part time prophet and full time courtier, emphasizing his secular job rather than his spiritual.)

His messages:

The book is a basic two-part structure. Chapters 1-6 reflect a large record of historical elements, whereas chapters 7-12 teach on things to come. Also, the dichotomy of the book can be seen in its use of two languages: Aramaic and Hebrew. It appears that the Aramaic is used to draw attention to God's message to the Gentile nations, whereas the Hebrew is used to address the Jews. (We believe that the language of inspiration is not by accident. God used those languages purposefully.)

A prominent theme of the book is God's sovereign control over kings and kingdoms. Daniel witnessed the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar, the destruction of Belshazzar, and he explained on two occasions the role of the gentile nations as God would use them in the course of human history. (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome)