THE BOOK OF DANIEL
Chapters 1-6 Daniel and his friends remain faithful and the foreign kings under whom they serve approve of them and their God. 4th/3rd centuries B.C. How to live under a foreign empire.

Chapters 7-12 Visions and dreams describe severe persecution of Jews (by Antiochus IV) and their eventual deliverance by God. 167-164 B.C. How to remain faithful at a time of persecution.
Daniel and other Jews taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar
Nebuchadnezzar selects Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah to be trained as Babylonian bureaucrats
They are renamed Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
Daniel refuses food and wine offered by the king
Daniel: See how I do on a diet of veggies and water
After a ten day trial Daniel and his friends appeared better and fatter than the bureaucrats who were on royal rations.

God gave them wisdom and insight; Daniel could interpret visions and dreams.

Nebuchadnezzar tested them and found them ten times wiser than their competitors.

Therefore they served in the king’s court.
Nebuchadnezzar has a bad dream
The king to his dream interpreters: “Tell me what I dreamt and what my dream means!”
The king sentences all his unsuccessful dream interpreters to death.
Daniel, among those threatened, asks for time to think this over.
Daniel has a night vision.
Daniel: Stop the execution! I will interpret the king’s dream.
Illustration from Luther’s translation of Daniel in 1530
Illustration from Luther’s translation of all the prophets in 1541
Illustration from Luther’s complete Bible of 1534
Same picture from 1534 colored
Head of gold
Middle and thighs of bronze
Chest and arms of silver
Sequence of metals = gradual decline.
Legs of iron
Feet partly iron and partly clay
THE HUGE AND FRIGHTENING STATUE

- Head of gold
- Chest and arms of silver
- Middle part of body and thighs of bronze
- Legs were iron
- Feet, partly iron, partly baked clay
- A stone, not made with human hands, struck the statue in its feet, destroyed the statue, and the stone became a great mountain.
You, king Nebuchadnezzar, are the head of gold.
A succeeding kingdom will arise after you.
Then a third kingdom
A fourth kingdom will crush all the previous kingdoms.
Its toes of iron and baked clay—strong and brittle
They will mix together (in marriage)
THE MARRIAGES

- Antiochus II of Syria with Berenice of Egypt in 252 B.C.
- Antiochus III gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V Epiphanes 193 B.C.
- See Dan 11:6, 17.
INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM

- You, king, are the head of gold. **Babylonians**
- A succeeding and inferior kingdom will arise after you. **Medes**
- A third kingdom **Persians**
- A fourth kingdom will crush all the previous kingdoms. **Greeks**
- Its toes of iron and baked clay—strong and brittle
- Ptolemies in Egypt and Seleucids in Syria
- They will mix together in marriage
Head of gold = Babylonians

Middle and thighs of bronze = Persians

Chest and arms of silver = Medes

Legs of iron = Greeks

Feet partly iron and partly clay = Ptolemies from Egypt and Seleucids from Syria
The Stone that Becomes a Mountain

- The kingdom of God
- It will stand forever
- The dream is certain and its interpretation is trustworthy
NEBUCHADNEZZAR CONVERTS

- Nebuchadnezzar confesses the God of Daniel as God of gods and Lord of kings
- Made Daniel ruler over whole province of Babylon
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego also given a promotion at Daniel’s request.
The king made a 90 foot high, golden statue that was only 9 feet wide.
At the sound of the music, everyone is to fall down and worship the statue (vv. 5, 7, 10, 15)

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not obey the king, serve his gods, or worship the golden statue

The three men: Our God may (or may not) deliver us, but in any case we will not serve your gods or this golden statue
INTO THE FURNACE YOU GO

- Furnace 7 times hotter than usual
- The three men were bound in their street clothes
- Those who threw them into the furnace died of the heat
- The king: There’s a fourth person in the furnace who looks like a god (v. 28 an angel)—they are all unbound
- Nebuchadnezzar orders them to come out
Catacombs of Priscilla, 3-4 centuries A.D.
Three Men and angel in Fiery Furnace

Rolf Goerler
Toros Roslin
Bible Illuminator
13th century
THE RESULTS

- Hair of men not singed
- No smell of fire on them
- Nebuchadnezzar blesses the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
- Anyone who blasphemes the God of Israel will be torn limb from limb and their house ruined.
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego promoted.
Herbert Falken 1932-

Song of Three Men in Fiery Furnace

All creation praises God

Three.jpg
Prayer of Azariah

20 Deliver us in accordance with your marvelous works, and bring glory to your name, O Lord.
21 Let all who do harm to your servants be put to shame; let them be disgraced and deprived of all power, and let their strength be broken.
22 Let them know that you alone are the Lord God, glorious over the whole world."
23 Now the king's servants who threw them in kept stoking the furnace with naphtha, pitch, tow, and brushwood.
24 And the flames poured out above the furnace forty-nine cubits, and spread out and burned those Chaldeans who were caught near the furnace.
25 But the angel of the Lord came down into the furnace to be with Azariah and his companions, and drove the fiery flame out of the furnace,
26 and made the inside of the furnace as though a moist wind were whistling through it. The fire did not touch them at all and caused them no pain or distress.
28 Then the three with one voice praised and glorified and blessed God in the furnace:
40 Bless the Lord, sun and moon; sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.
41 Bless the Lord, stars of heaven; sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.
42 "Bless the Lord, all rain and dew; sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.
43 Bless the Lord, all you winds; sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.
44 Bless the Lord, fire and heat; sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.
45 Bless the Lord, winter cold and summer heat; sing praise to him and highly exalt him forever.
Alexander the Great
332-323
Heracles
Zeus holding eagle and scepter
The stone not made with human hands destroys statue