Daniel Finds Favor in Babylon

1:1 In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon advanced against Jerusalem and laid it under siege. 1:2 Now the Lord delivered King Jehoiakim of Judah into his power, along with some of the temple of God. He brought them to the land of Babylon to the temple of his god and put the vessels in the treasury of his god.

1 sn The third year of the reign of Jehoiakim would be ca. 605 B.C. At this time Daniel would have been a teenager. The reference to Jehoiakim’s third year poses a serious crisis interpretum, since elsewhere these events are linked to his fourth year (Jer 25:1; cf. 2 Kgs 24:1; 2 Chr 36:5-8). Apparently Daniel is following an accession year chronology, whereby the first partial year of a king’s reign was reckoned as the accession year rather than as the first year of his reign. Jeremiah, on the other hand, is following a nonaccession year chronology, whereby the accession year is reckoned as the first year of the king’s reign. In that case, the conflict is only superficial. Most modern scholars, however, have concluded that Daniel is historically inaccurate here.

2 sn King Nebuchadnezzar ruled Babylon from ca. 605-562 B.C.

3 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

4 sn This attack culminated in the first of three major deportations of Jews to Babylon. The second one occurred in 597 B.C. and included among many other Jewish captives the prophet Ezekiel. The third deportation occurred in 586 B.C., at which time the temple and the city of Jerusalem were thoroughly destroyed.

5 tn The Hebrew term translated “Lord” here is אֱלֹהִים (‘adonay).

6 tn Heb “gave.”

7 tn Heb “hand,” which is often used idiomatically for one’s power and authority. See BDB 390 s.v. יָד 2.

8 tn Or “utensils” or “articles.”

9 tn Heb “house of God.”

10 sn The land of Babylonia (Heb “the land of Shinar”) is another name for Sumer and Akkad, where Babylon was located (cf. Gen 10:10; 11:2; 14:1; 9; Josh 7:21; Isa 11:11; Zech 5:11).

11 tn Or “gods” (NCV, NRSV, TEV; also later in this verse). The Hebrew term can be used as a numerical plural for many gods or as a plural of majesty for one particular god. Since Nebuchadnezzar was a polytheist, it is not clear if the reference here is to many gods or one particular deity. The plural of majesty, while normally used for Israel’s God, is occasionally used of foreign gods (cf. BDB 43 s.v. אֱלֹהִים 1, 2). See Judg 11:24 (of the Moabite god Chemosh); 1 Sam 5:7 (of the Philistine god Dagon); 1 Kgs 11:33 (of the Canaanite goddess Ashtoreth, the Ammonite god Chemosh, and the Ammonite god Milcom); 2 Kgs 19:37 (of the Assyrian god Nisroch). Since gods normally had their own individual temples, Dan 1:2 probably refers to a particular deity, perhaps Marduk, the supreme god of Babylon, or Marduk’s son Nabu, after whom Nebuchadnezzar was named. The name Nebuchadnezzar means “Nabu has protected the son who will inherit” (HALOT 769-70 s.v. נבוכדנצר). In ancient Near Eastern religion see H. Ringgren, Religions of the Ancient Near East, 77-81.

12 tn Heb “brought.” Though the Hebrew verb “brought” is repeated in this verse, the translation uses “brought…put” for stylistic variation.

13 tn Or “gave orders to.” Heb “said to.”

14 sn It is possible that the word Ashpenaz is not a proper name at all, but a general term for “inkeeper.” See J. Collins, Daniel (Hermeneia), 127, n. 9. However, the ancient versions understand the term to be a name, and the present translation (along with most English versions) understands the word in this way.

15 sn The word court official (Hebrew סָרֹיס) need not mean “eunuch” in a technical sense (see Gen 37:36, where the term refers to Potiphar, who had a wife), although in the case of the book of Daniel there was in Jewish literature a common tradition to that effect. On the OT usage of this word see HALOT 769-70 s.v. סָרֹיס.

16 tn Heb “bring.”

17 tn Heb “and from the seed of royalty and from the nobles.”

18 tn Heb “good of appearance.”

19 tn Heb “knowers of knowledge.”

20 tn Heb “understanders of knowledge.”

21 tn Heb “who had strength.”

22 tn Heb “to stand in the palace of the king.” Cf. vv. 5, 19.

23 sn The language of the Chaldeans referred to here is Akkadian, an East Semitic cuneiform language.

24 tn Heb “Chaldeans” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV). This is an ancient name for the Babyloniars.

25 tn Heb “a thing of a day in its day.”

26 tn Heb “from the delicacies of the king.”

27 tn Or “educated.” See HALOT 179 s.v. חָסֹכִים.

28 tn Heb “stand before the king.”

29 tn Heb “and it happened that.”

30 tn Heb “among them”; the referent (the young men taken captive from Judah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

31 tn Heb “the sons of Judah.”

32 sn The names reflect a Jewish heritage. In Hebrew Daniel means “God is my judge”; Hananiah means “the Lord is gracious”; Mishael means “who is what God is?”; Azariah means “the Lord has helped.”

33 tc The LXX and Vulgate lack the verb here.
Mishael, Daniel, and Azariah. 1:8 But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the royal delicacies or the royal wine. He therefore asked the overseer of the court officials for permission not to defile himself. 1:9 Then God made the overseer of the court officials sympathetic to Daniel. 1:10 But he responded to Daniel, “I fear my master the king. He is the one who has decided your food and drink. What would happen if he saw that you looked malnourished in comparison to the other young men your age? If that happened, you would endanger my life with the king!” 1:11 Daniel then spoke to the warden, whom the overseer of the court officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 1:12 “Please test your servants for ten days by providing us with some vegetables to eat and water to drink. 1:13 Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who are eating the royal delicacies. 1:14 So the warden agreed to their proposal and tested them for ten days by providing us with some vegetables and water to drink. What would happen if he saw that you looked malnourished in comparison to the other young men your age? If that happened, you would endanger my life with the king!” 1:15 At the end of the ten days their appearance was better and their bodies were healthier than all the young men who had been eating the royal delicacies. 1:16 So the warden removed the delicacies and the wine from their diet and gave them a diet of vegetables instead. 1:17 Now as for these four young men, God endowed them with knowledge and skill in all sorts of literature and wisdom - and Daniel had insight into all kinds of visions and dreams. 1:18 When the time appointed by the king arrived, the overseer of the court officials brought them into Nebuchadnezzar’s presence. 1:19 When the king spoke with them, he did not find among the entire group anyone like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, or Azariah. So they entered the king’s service. 1:20 In every matter of wisdom and insight the king asked them about, he found them to be ten times better than any of the magicians and astrologers that were in his entire empire. 1:21 Now Daniel lived on until the first year of Cyrus the king.

Nebuchadnezzar Has a Disturbing Dream

2:1 In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar had many dreams. His mind was

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1 sn The meanings of the Babylonian names are more conjectural than is the case with the Hebrew names. The probable etymologies are as follows: Belteshazzar means “protect his life,” although the MT vocalization may suggest “Belti, protector.” Shadrach perhaps means “command of Aku”; Meshach is of uncertain meaning; Abednego means “servant of Nego.” Assigning Babylonian names to the Hebrew youths may have been an attempt to erase from their memory their Israelite heritage.

2 sn Or “would not make himself ceremonially unclean”; TEV “become ritually unclean.”

3 sn Various reasons have been suggested as to why such food would defile Daniel. Perhaps it had to do with violations of Mosaic law with regard to unclean foods, or perhaps it had to do with such food having been offered to idols. Daniel’s practice in this regard is strikingly different from that of Esther, who was able successfully to conceal her Jewish identity.

4 tn Heb “with the delicacies of the king and with the wine of his drinking.”

5 tn Heb “Then God granted Daniel loyal love and compassion before the overseer of the court officials.” The expression “loyal love and compassion” is a hendiadys; the two words combine to express one idea.

6 tn Heb “The overseer of the court officials.” The subject has been specified in the translation for the sake of clarity.

7 tn Heb “assigned.” See v. 5.

8 tn Heb “Why should he see your faces thin from the young men who are according to your age?” The term translated “thin” occurs only here and in Gen 40:6, where it appears to refer to a dejected facial expression. The word is related to an Arabic root meaning “be weak.” See HALOT 277 s.v. ll pr.

9 tn The words “if that happened” are not in the Hebrew text but have been added in the translation for clarity.

10 tn Heb “my head.” Presumably this is an implicit reference to capital punishment (cf. NCV, TEV, CEV, NLT), although this is not entirely clear.

11 sn Having failed to convince the overseer, Daniel sought the favor of the warden whom the overseer had appointed to care for the young men.

12 tn Heb “let our appearance be seen before you.”

13 tn Heb “the appearance of.”

14 sn The number ten is sometimes used in the OT as an ideal number of completeness. Cf. v. 20; Zech 8:23; Rev 2:10.

15 tn Heb “fat of flesh”; KJV, ASV “fatter in flesh”; NASB, NRSV “fatter” (although this is no longer a sign of health in Western culture).

16 tn Heb “the wine of their drinking.”

17 sn Hebrew “listen to them with regard to this matter.”

18 sn The number ten is sometimes used in the OT as an ideal number of completeness. Cf. v. 20; Zech 8:23; Rev 2:10.

19 tn Heb “fat of flesh”; KW, ASV “fatter in flesh”; NASB, NRSV “fatter” (although this is no longer a sign of health in Western culture).

20 tn Heb “the wine of their drinking.”

21 tn The words “from their diet” are not in the Hebrew text but have been added in the translation for clarity.

22 tn Heb “at the end of the days which the king said to bring them.”

23 tn Heb “from all of them.”

24 tn Heb “stood before the king.”

25 tc The MT lacks the conjunction, reading the first word in the phrase as a construct (“wisdom of insight”). While this reading is not impossible, it seems better to follow Theodotion, the Syriac, the Vulgate, and the Sahidic Coptic, all of which have the conjunction.

26 sn Heb “hands.”

27 sn The Persian king Cyrus’ first year in control of Babylon was 539 B.C. Daniel actually lived beyond the first year of Cyrus, as is clear from 10:1. The purpose of the statement in 1:21 is merely to say that Daniel’s life spanned the entire period of the neo-Babylonian empire. His life span also included the early years of the Persian control of Babylon. However, by that time his age was quite advanced; he probably died sometime in the 530’s B.C.

28 tn Heb “Nebuchadnezzar’s.” The possessive pronoun is substituted in the translation for stylistic reasons.

29 tn Heb “dreamed dreams.” The plural is used here and in v. 2, but the singular in v. 3. The plural “dreams” has been variously explained. Some interpreters take the plural as denoting an indefinite singular (so GKC 400 §124.c). But it may be that it is describing a stream of related dreams, or a dream state. In the latter case, one might translate: “Nebuchadnezzar was in a trance.” See further, J. A. Montgomery, Daniel (ICC), 142.

30 tn Heb “his spirit.”
disturbed and he suffered from insomnia. The king issued an order to summon the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and wise men in order to explain his dreams to him. So they came and awaited the king’s instructions.

2:3 The king told them, “I have had a dream, and I am anxious to understand the dream.” 2:4 The wise men replied to the king: [What follows is in Aramaic] “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will disclose its interpretation.” 2:5 The king replied to the wise men, “My decision is firm. If you do not inform me of both the dream and its interpretation, you will be dismembered and your homes reduced to rubble! But if you can disclose the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts, a reward, and considerable honor. So disclose to me the dream and its interpretation!” 2:7 They again replied, “Let the king inform us of the dream; then we will disclose its interpretation.” 2:8 The king replied, “I know for sure that you are attempting to gain time, because you see that my decision is firm. 2:9 If you don’t inform me of the dream, there is only one thing that is going to happen to you. For you have agreed among yourselves to report to me something false and deceitful until such time as things might change. So tell me the dream, and I will have confidence that you can disclose its interpretation.”

2:10 The wise men replied to the king, “There is no man on earth who is able to disclose the king’s secret, for no king, regardless of his position and power, has ever requested such a thing from any magician, astrologer, or wise man. 2:11 What the king is asking is too difficult, and no one exists who can disclose it to the king, except for the gods – but they don’t live among mortals!”

2:12 Because of this the king got furiously angry and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. 2:13 So a decree went out, and the wise men were about to be executed. They also sought Daniel and his friends so that they could be executed.

2:14 Then Daniel spoke with prudent counsel to Arioch, who was in charge of the king’s executioners and who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon. 2:15 He inquired of Arioch the king’s deputy, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?”

Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter. 2:16 So Daniel went in and requested the king to grant him time, that he might disclose the interpretation of the dream. 2:17 Then Daniel went to his home and informed his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the matter. 2:18 He asked them to

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1 tn Heb “his sleep left (?) him.” The use of the verb הָיָה (hayyāh, “to be”) here is unusual. The context suggests a meaning such as “to be finished” or “gone.” Cf. Dan 8:27.
2 tn Some scholars emend the verb to read נָדְדָה (nad-dom, “red.”) cf. Dan 6:19. See further, DCH 2:540 s.v. הָיָה I ni; HALOT 244 s.v. הָיָה nif; BDB 227-28 s.v. הָיָה Niph.2.
3 tn Heb “Chaldeans.” The term Chaldeans (Hebrew כַּשְׂדִּים, kasdim) is used in the book of Daniel both in an ethnic sense and, as here, to refer to a caste of Babylonian wise men and astrologers.
4 tn Heb “to explain to the king his dreams.”
5 tn Heb “stood before the king.”
6 tn Heb “I have dreamed a dream” (so KJV, ASV).
7 tn Heb “my spirit.”
8 tn Contrary to common belief, the point here is not that Daniel actually speaks in Aramaic during this period; its origins and usage were not restricted to the Babylonians. Rather, this phrase is better understood as an editorial note (cf. NAB) marking the fact that from 2:4b through 7:28 the language of the book shifts from Hebrew to Aramaic. In 8:1, and for the remainder of the book, the language returns to Hebrew. Various views have been advanced to account for this change of language, most of which are unconvincing. Most likely the change in language is a reflection of stages in the transmission history of the book of Daniel.
9 tn Or “the.”
10 tn Aram “answered and said,” a common idiom to indicate a reply, but redundant in contemporary English.
11 tn It seems clear from what follows that Nebuchadnezzar clearly understood the content of the dream, although obviously he does not know what to make of it. By not divulging the dream itself to the would-be interprters, he intends to find out whether they are simply leading him on. If they can tell him the dream’s content, which he is able to verify, he then can have confidence in their interpretation, which is what eludes him. The translation “the matter is gone from me” (cf. KJV, ASV), suggesting that the king had simply forgotten the dream, is incorrect. The Aramaic word used here (מַכּוֹל, makol) is probably of Persian origin; it occurs in the OT only here and in v. 8. There are two main possibilities for the meaning of the word: “the matter is promulgated by me” (see KBL 1048 s.v.) and therefore “publicly known” (cf. NRSV, F. Rosenthal, Grammar, 62-63, §189), or “the matter is irrevocable” (cf. NAB, NIV, TEV, NLT, HCSB 1508 s.v. מַכּוֹל; cf. also BDB 1079 s.v.). The present translation reflects this latter option. See further E. Vogt, Lexicon linguae aramaicae, 3.
12 tn Aram “made limbs.” Cf. 3:29.
pray for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery so that he and his friends would not be destroyed along with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. 2:19 Then in a night vision the mystery was revealed to Daniel. So Daniel praised the God of heaven, 2:20 saying, 3

“Let the name of God be praised forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to him. 2:21 He changes times and seasons, deposing some kings and establishing others. 6 He gives wisdom to the wise; he imparts knowledge to those with understanding; 2:22 he reveals deep and hidden things. He knows what is in the darkness, and light resides with him. 2:23 O God of my fathers, I acknowledge and glorify you, for you have bestowed wisdom and power on me. Now you have enabled me to understand what I requested from you. For you have enabled me to understand the king’s dilemma.” 9

2:24 Then Daniel went in to see Arioch (whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon). He came and said to him, “Don’t destroy the wise men of Babylon! Escort me to the king, and I will disclose the interpretation to him!” 12:25 So Arioch quickly ushered Daniel into the king’s presence, saying to him, “I have found a man from the captives of Judah who can make known the interpretation to the king.” 2:26 The king then asked Daniel (whose name was also Belteshazzar), “Are you able to make known to me the dream that I saw, as well as its interpretation?” 2:27 Daniel replied to the king, “The mystery that the king is asking about is such that no wise men, astrologers, magicians, or diviners can possibly disclose it to the king. 2:28 However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, 19 and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the times to come. The dream and the visions you had while lying on your bed are as follows. 2:29 “As for you, O king, while you were in your bed your thoughts turned to future things. The revealer of mysteries has made known to you what will take place. 2:30 As for me, this mystery was revealed to me not because I possess more wisdom than any other living person, but so that the king may understand the interpretation and comprehend the thoughts of your mind.” 14

2:31 “You, O king, were watching as a great statue—one of impressive size and extraordinary brightness—was standing before you. Its appearance caused alarm. 2:32 As for that statue, its head was of fine gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs were of bronze. 2:33 Its legs were of iron; its feet were partly of iron and partly of clay. 2:34 You were watching as a stone was cut out but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its iron and clay feet, breaking them in pieces. 2:35 Then the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were broken in pieces without distinction and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors that the wind carries away. Not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a large mountain that filled the entire earth. 2:36 This was the dream. Now we will set forth before the king its interpretation.

Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

2:37 “You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has granted you sovereignty,
power, strength, and honor. 2:38 Wherever human beings,2 wild animals,3 and birds of the sky live—he has given them into your power.4 He has given you authority over them all. You are the head of gold. 2:39 Now after you another kingdom5 will arise, one inferior to yours. Then a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule in all the earth. 2:40 Then there will be a fourth kingdom, one strong like iron. Just like iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything, and as iron breaks in pieces all of these metals,6 so it will break in pieces and crush the others. 2:41 In that you were seeing feet and toes7 partly of wet clay8 and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom. Some of the strength of iron will be in it, for you saw iron mixed with wet clay.9 2:42 In that the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, the latter stages of this kingdom will be partly strong and partly fragile. 2:43 And10 in that you saw iron mixed with wet clay, so people will be mixed12 with one another13 without adhering to one another, just as14 iron does not mix with clay. 2:44 In the days of those kings the God of heaven will raise up an everlasting kingdom that will not be destroyed and a kingdom that will not be left to another people. It will break in pieces and bring about the demise of all these kingdoms. But it will stand forever. 2:45 You saw that a stone was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands; it smashed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold into pieces. The great God has made known to the king what will occur in the future.15 The dream is certain, and its interpretation is reliable.16

2:46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar bowed down with his face to the ground16 and paid homage to Daniel. He gave orders to offer sacrifice and incense to him. 2:47 The king replied to Daniel, “Certainly your God is a God of gods and Lord of kings and revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery!” 2:48 Then the king elevated Daniel to high position and bestowed on him many marvelous gifts. He granted him authority over the entire province of Babylon and made him the main prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. 2:49 And at Daniel’s request, the king17 appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the administration of the province of Babylon. Daniel himself served in the king’s court.18

Daniel’s Friends Are Tested

3:19 King Nebuchadnezzar had a golden20 statue made.21 It was 90 feet22 tall and nine feet23 wide. He erected it on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. 3:2 Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent out a summons to assemble the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates,24 and all the other authorities of the province to attend the dedication of the statue that he25 had erected. 3:3 So the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the other provincial authorities assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar

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1 tn Aram “the sons of man.”
2 tn Aram “the beasts of the field.”
3 tn Aram “hand.”
4 sn The identity of the first kingdom is clearly Babylon. The identification of the following three kingdoms is disputed. The common view is that they represent Media, Persia, and Greece. Most conservative scholars identify them as Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome.
5 tc Theodotion and the Vulgate lack the phrase “and as iron breaks in pieces.”
6 tn The Aramaic text does not have this word, but it has been added in the translation for clarity.
7 tn The words “the others” are supplied from the context.
8 tc The LXX lacks “and toes.”
9 tn Aram “potter’s clay.”
10 tn Aram “clay of clay” (also in v. 43).
11 tc The present translation reads the conjunction, with most medieval Hebrew MSS, LXX, Vulgate, and the Qere. The Kethîb lacks the conjunction.
12 sn The reference to people being mixed is usually understood to refer to intermarriage.
13 tn Aram “with the seed of men.”
14 tc The present translation reads הֵיךְ דִּי (hekh diy) rather than the MT הֶיךְ דָי (hu’-hekh di). It is a case of wrong word division.
15 tn Aram “after this.”
16 tn Aram “fell on his face.”
17 tn Aram “and Daniel sought from the king and he appointed.”
18 tn Aram “was at the gate of the king.”
19 sn The LXX introduces this chapter with the following chronological note: “in the eighteenth year of.” Such a date would place these events at about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (cf. 2 Kgs 25:8). However, there seems to be no real basis for associating the events of Daniel 3 with this date.
20 sn There is no need to think of Nebuchadnezzar’s image as being solid gold. No doubt the sense is that it was overlaid with gold (cf. Isa 40:19; Jer 10:3-4), with the result that it presented a dazzling self-compliment to the greatness of Nebuchadnezzar’s achievements.
21 sn According to a number of patristic authors, the image represented a deification of Nebuchadnezzar himself. This is not clear from the biblical text, however.
22 tn Aram “sixty cubits.” Assuming a length of 18 inches for the standard cubit, the image would be 90 feet (27.4 m) high.
23 tn Aram “six cubits.” Assuming a length of 18 inches for the standard cubit, the image would be 9 feet (2.74 m) wide.
24 sn The dimensions of the image (ninety feet high and nine feet wide) imply that it did not possess normal human proportions, unless a base for the image is included in the height dimension. The ancient world knew of other tall statues. For example, the Colossus of Rhodes – the huge statue of Heliopolis which stood (ca. 280-224 B.C.) at the entrance to the harbor at Rhodes and was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world – was said to be seventy cubits (105 ft or 32 m) in height, which would make it even taller than Nebuchadnezzar’s image.
25 sn The specific duties of the seven types of officials listed here (cf. vv. 3, 27) are unclear. The Aramaic words that are used are transliterations of Akkadian or Persian technical terms whose exact meanings are uncertain. The translations given here follow suggestions set forth in BDAG.
had erected. They were standing in front of the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had erected.¹

3:4 Then the herald² made a loud³ proclamation: “To you, O peoples, nations, and language groups, the following command is given:⁴

3:5 When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither,⁵ trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, you must⁶ bow down and pay homage to the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has erected.

3:6 Whoever does not bow down and pay homage will immediately⁷ be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire!” ³:7 Therefore when they all⁸ heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes,⁹ and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations, and language groups began bowing down and paying homage to the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had erected.

3:8 Nowⁱ⁰ at that time certain¹¹ Chaldeans came forward and brought malicious accusations against¹² the Jews. ³:9 They said¹³ to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever!”¹⁴ ³:10 You have issued an edict, O king, that everyone must bow down and pay homage to the golden statue when they hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes,¹⁵ and all kinds of music.

3:11 And whoever does not bow down and pay homage must be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire. ³:12 But there are Jewish men whom you appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – and these men¹⁶ have not shown proper respect to you, O king. They don’t serve your gods and they don’t pay homage to the golden statue that you have erected.”

3:13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in a fit of rage¹⁶ demanded that they bring¹⁷ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego before him. So they brought them¹⁸ before the king. ³:14 Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you don’t serve my gods and that you don’t pay homage to the golden statue that I erected?

3:15 Now if you are ready, when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, you must bow down and pay homage to the statue that I had made. If you don’t pay homage to it, you will immediately be thrown into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire. Now, who is that god who can rescue you from my power?”¹⁹ ³:16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied to King Nebuchadnezzar.²⁰ “We do not need to give you a reply,²¹ concerning this. ³:17 If²² our God whom we are serving exists,²³ he is able to rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire, and he will rescue us, O king, from your power as well. ³:18 But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we don’t serve your gods, and we will not...

¹⁰ tc The LXX and Theodotion lack the words “that Nebuchadnezzar had erected.”
²⁰ tc According to DBB 1097 s.v. נהג the Aramaic word used here is a Greek loanword, but other scholars have argued instead for a Persian derivation (HALOT 1902 s.v. נהג).
⁴ tc Aram “in strength.”
⁵ sn The word אשר (Aramaic אשר, “zither”), and the words for harp (Aramaic שירה [p’santerr]) and pipes (Aramaic שיר ג’ [sunpon’yah]), are of Greek derivation. Though much has been made of this in terms of suggesting a date in the Hellenistic period for the writing of the book, it is not surprising that a few Greek cultural terms, all of them the names of musical instruments, should appear in this book. As a number of scholars have pointed out, the bigger surprise (if, in fact, the book is to be dated to the Hellenistic period) may be that there are so few Greek loanwords in Daniel.
⁶ tn The imperfect Aramaic verbs have here an injunctive nuance.
⁷ tn Aram “in that hour.”
⁸ tn Aram “all the peoples.”
⁹ tc Though not in the Aramaic text of BHS, this word appears in many medieval Hebrew MSS, some LXX MSS, and Vulgate. Cf. vv. 5, 10, 15.
¹⁰ tc This expression is absent in Theodotion.
¹¹ tn Aram “men.”
¹² tn Aram “the pieces of.” This is a rather vivid idiom for slander.
¹³ tn Aram “answered and said,” a common Aramaic idiom that occurs repeatedly in this chapter.
¹⁴ sn ‘O king, live forever!’ is a comment of typical court courtesy that is not necessarily indicative of the real sentiments of the speaker. Ancient oriental court protocol could sometimes require a certain amount of hypocrisy.
pay homage to the golden statue that you have erected.”

3:19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage, and his disposition changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He gave orders to heat the furnace seven times hotter than it was normally heated. 3:20 He ordered strong soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire. 3:21 So those men were tied up while still wearing their cloaks, trousers, turbans, and other clothes, and were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. 3:22 But since the king’s command was so urgent, and the furnace was so excessively hot, the men who escorted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were killed by the leaping flames. 3:23 But those three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell into the furnace of blazing fire while still securely bound.

God Delivers His Servants

3:24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was startled and quickly got up. He said to his ministers, “Wasn’t it three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?” They replied to the king, “For sure, O king.” 3:25 He answered, “But I see four men, united and walking around in the midst of the fire! No harm has come to them! And the appearance of the fourth is like that of a god!” 3:26 Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire. He called out, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the most high God, come out! Come here!”

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego emerged from the fire. 3:27 Once the satraps, prefects, governors, and ministers of the king had gathered around, they saw that those men were physically unharmed by the fire. The hair of their heads was not singed, nor were their trousers damaged. Not even the smell of fire was to be found on them!

3:28 Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, “Praised be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent forth his angel and has rescued his servants who trusted in him, ignoring the edict of the king and giving up their bodies rather than serve or pay homage to any god other than their God! 3:29 I hereby decree that any people, nation, or language group that blasphemeth the god of Shadrach, Meshach, or Abednego will be dismembered and his home reduced to rubble! For there exists no other god who can deliver in this way.” 3:30 Then Nebuchadnezzar promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

4:1 (3:31) “King Nebuchadnezzar, to all peoples, nations, and language groups that live in all the land: Peace and prosperity! I am delighted to tell you about the signs and wonders that the most high God has done for me. 4:3 “How great are his signs! How mighty are his wonders! His kingdom will last forever, and his authority continues from one generation to the next.”

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1 tn Aram “the appearance of his face was altered”; cf. NLT “his face became distorted with rage”; NAB “[his] face became livid with utter rage.”
2 tn Aram “he answered and said.”
3 tn This is sometimes taken as a comparative: “[some of the] strongest.”
4 sn There is a great deal of uncertainty with regard to the specific nature of these items of clothing.
5 tn Aram “into the midst of the furnace.” For stylistic reasons the words “the midst of” have been left untranslated.
6 tn Aram “caused to go up.”
7 tn The Aramaic verb is active.
8 tn Aram “the flame of the fire” (so KJV, ASV, NASB); NRSV “the raging flames.”
9 tn Aram “into the midst of the furnace.” For stylistic reasons the words “the midst of” have been left untranslated.
10 sn The deuterocanonical writings known as The Prayer of Azariah and The Song of the Three present at this point a confession and petition for God’s forgiveness and a celebration of God’s grace for the three Jewish youths in the fiery furnace.
11 tn Aram “we threw...bound.”
12 tn Aram “into the midst of.”
13 sn The phrase like that of a god is in Aramaic “like that of a son of the gods.” Many patristic writers understood this phrase in a christological sense (i.e., “the Son of God”). But it should be remembered that these are words spoken by a pagan who is seeking to explain things from his own polytheistic frame of reference; for him the phrase “like a son of the gods” is equivalent to “like a divine being.”
14 tn Aram “answered and said.”
15 sn Aram “from the midst of the fire.” For stylistic reasons the words “the midst of” have been left untranslated.
16 tn Aram “in their bodies.”
17 tn Aram “the fire did not have power.”
18 tn Aram “answered and said.”
19 sn The king identifies the “son of the gods” (v. 25) as an angel. Comparable Hebrew expressions are used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible for the members of God’s angelic assembly (see Gen 6:2; 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Pss 29:1; 89:6). An angel later comes to rescue Daniel from the lions (Dan 6:22).
20 tn Aram “they changed” or “violated.”
21 tn Aram “so that they might not.”
22 tn Aram “from me is placed an edict.”
23 tn Aram “speaks negligence.”
24 tn Aram “and the king.” The proper name has been supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.
25 sn Beginning with 4:1, the verse numbers through 4:37 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Aramaic text (BHS), with 4:1 ET = 3:31 AT; 4:2 ET = 3:32 AT; 4:3 ET = 3:33 AT; 4:4 ET = 4:1 AT, etc., through 4:37 ET = 4:34 AT. Thus Dan 3:31-33 of the Aramaic text appears as Dan 4:1-3 in the English Bible, and the corresponding verses of ch. 4 differ accordingly. In spite of the division of the Aramaic text, a good case can be made that 3:31-33 AT (= 4:1-3 ET) is actually the introduction to ch. 4.
26 tn Aram “May your peace increase!”
27 tn Aram “his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.”
Nebuchadnezzar Dreams of a Tree Chopped Down

4:4 (4:1)¹ I, Nebuchadnezzar, was relaxing in my house,² living luxuriously³ in my palace. 4:5 I saw a dream that⁴ frightened me badly. The things I imagined while lying on my bed – these visions of my mind – were terrifying me. 4:6 So I issued an order⁵ for all the wise men of Babylon to be brought⁶ before me so that they could make known to me the interpretation of the dream. 4:7 When the magicians, astrologers, wise men, and diviners entered, I recounted the dream for them. But they were unable to make known its interpretation to me. 4:8 Later Daniel entered (whose name is Belteshazzar after the name of my god,⁷ and in whom there is a spirit of the holy gods). I recounted the dream for him as well, ⁴:9 saying, “Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, in whom I know there to be a spirit of the holy gods and whom no mystery baffles, consider⁸ my dream that I saw and set forth its interpretation! ⁴:10 Here are the visions of my mind⁹ while I was on my bed.

While I was watching, there was a tree in the middle of the land.¹⁰ It was enormously tall.¹¹ ⁴:11 The tree grew large and strong. Its top reached far into the sky;

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¹ sn This verse marks the beginning of chap. 4 in the Aramaic text of Daniel (see the note on 4:11). The Greek OT (LXX) has the following addition: “In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign he said.” This date would suggest a link to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. In general, the LXX of chapters 4-6 is very different from the MT, so much so that the following notes will call attention only to selected readings. In Daniel 4 the LXX lacks sizable portions of material in the MT (e.g., vv. 3-6, 31-32), includes sizable portions of material not in the MT (e.g., v. 14a, parts of vv. 16, 28), has a different order of some material (e.g., v. 8 after v. 9), and in some instances is vastly different from the MT (e.g., vv. 30, 34). Whether these differences are due to an excessively paraphrastic translation technique adopted for these chapters in the LXX, or are due to differences in the underlying Vorlage of the LXX, is a disputed matter. The latter seems more likely. There is a growing trend in modern scholarship to take the LXX of chapters 4-6 much more seriously than was the case in most earlier text-critical studies that considered this issue.

² tn Aram “my house.”

³ tn Aram “happy.”

⁴ tn Aram “and it.”

⁵ tn Aram “from me there was placed a decree.”

⁶ tn The Aramaic infinitive here is active.

⁷ sn This explanation of the meaning of the name Belteshazzar may be more of a paronomasia than a strict etymology.

⁸ tc The present translation assumes the reading מִּכְזֵי (khazi, “consider”) rather than the MT מִכְזִי (khazey, “visions”). The MT implies that the king required Daniel to disclose both the dream and its interpretation, as in chapter 2. But in the following verses Nebuchadnezzar recounts his dream, while Daniel presents only its interpretation.

⁹ tc The LXX lacks the first two words (Aram “the visions of my head”) of the Aramaic text.

¹⁰ tn Instead of “in the middle of the land,” some English versions render this phrase “a tree at the center of the earth” (NRSV); NAB, CEV “of the world”; NLT “in the middle of the earth.” The Hebrew phrase can have either meaning.

¹¹ tn Aram “its height was great.”

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¹² tn Aram “its sight.” So also v. 17.

¹³ tn Or “to the end of all the earth” (so KJV, ASV); NCV, CEV “from anywhere on earth.”

¹⁴ tn Aram “the beasts of the field.”

¹⁵ tn Aram “all flesh.”

¹⁶ tn Aram “the visions of my head.”

¹⁷ tn Aram “a watcher and a holy one.” The expression is a hendiadys; also in v. 23. This “watcher” is apparently an angel. The Greek OT (LXX) in fact has ἄγγελος ἅγιος (angelos, “angel”) here. Theodotion simply transliterates the Aramaic word (ir). The term is sometimes rendered “sentinel” (NAB) or “messenger” (NIV, NLT).

¹⁸ tn Aram “in strength.”

¹⁹ tn Aram “and thus he was saying.”

²⁰ tn Aram “the stock of its root.” So also v. 23. The implication here is that although the tree is chopped down, it is not killed. Its life-giving root is spared. The application to Nebuchadnezzar is obvious.

²¹ sn The function of the band of iron and bronze is not entirely clear, but it may have had to do with preventing the splitting or further deterioration of the portion of the tree that was left after being chopped down. By application it would then refer to the preservation of Nebuchadnezzar’s life during the time of his insanity.

²² tn Aram “its lot be.”

²³ tn Aram “its heart.” The metaphor of the tree begins to fade here and the reality behind the symbol (the king) begins to emerge.

²⁴ sn The seven periods of time probably refer to seven years.

²⁵ tn Aram “over” (also in vv. 23, 25, 32).
4:17 This announcement is by the decree of the sentinels; this decision is by the pronouncement of the holy ones, so that those who are alive may understand that the Most High has authority over human kingdoms; and he bestows them on whomever he wishes. He establishes over them even the lowest of human beings.

4:18 “This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, for none of the wise men in my kingdom are able to make known to me the interpretation. But you can do so, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

4:19 Then Daniel (whose name is also Belteshazzar) was upset for a brief time; his thoughts were alarmed. The king said, “Belteshazzar, don’t let the dream and its interpretation alarm you.” But Belteshazzar replied, “Sir, if only the dream were for your enemies and its interpretation applied to your adversaries! 4:20 The tree that you saw that grew large and strong, whose top reached to the sky, and which could be seen in all the land, 4:21 whose foliage was attractive and its fruit plentiful, and from which there was food for all, under whose branches wild animals used to live, and in whose branches birds of the sky used to nest – 4:22 it is you, O king! For you have become great and strong. Your greatness is such that it reaches to heaven, and your authority to the ends of the earth. 4:23 As for the king seeing a holy sentinel coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its taproot in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze around it, surrounded by the grass of the field. Let it become damp with the dew of the sky. Seven periods of time will pass by for you, before you understand that the Most High is ruler over human kingdoms and gives them to whomever he wishes. 4:26 They said to leave the taproot of the tree, for your kingdom will be restored to you! 4:27 Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you. Break away from your sins by doing what is right, and from your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps your prosperity will be prolonged.”

4:28 Now all of this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. 4:29 After twelve months, he happened to be walking around on the battlements of the royal palace of Babylon. 4:30 The king uttered these words: “Is this not the great Babylon that I have built for a royal residence by my own mighty strength and for my majestic honor?”

4:31 While these words were still on the king’s lips, a voice came down from heaven: “It is hereby announced to you, King Nebuchadnezzar, that your kingdom has been removed from you! You will be driven from human society, and you will live with the wild animals. You will be fed grass like oxen, and seven periods of time will pass by for you before you understand that the Most High is ruler over human kingdoms and gives them to whomever he wishes.”

4:33 Now in that very moment this announcement about Nebuchadnezzar came
true. He was driven from human society, he ate grass like oxen, and his body became damp with the dew of the sky, until his hair became long like an eagle’s feathers, and his nails like a bird’s claws.

4:34 But at the end of the appointed time I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up toward heaven, and my sanity returned to me.

I extolled the Most High, and I praised and glorified the one who lives forever.

For his authority is an everlasting authority, and his kingdom extends from one generation to the next.

4:35 All the inhabitants of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he wishes with the army of heaven and with those who inhabit the earth.

No one slaps his hand and says to him, ‘What have you done?’

4:36 At that time my sanity returned to me. I was restored to the honor of my kingdom, and my splendor returned to me. My ministers and my nobles were seeking me out, and I was reinstated over my kingdom. I became even greater than before.

4:37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, for all his deeds are true.

For his authority is an everlasting authority, and I praised and glorified the one who lives forever.

I extolled the Most High, and I praised and glorified the one who lives forever.

He does as he wishes with the army of heaven and with those who inhabit the earth.

Belshazzar Sees Mysterious Handwriting on a Wall

5:1 King Belshazzar prepared a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in front of them all. While under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar issued an order to bring in the gold and silver vessels — the ones that Nebuchadnezzar his father had confiscated from the temple in Jerusalem — so that the king and his nobles, together with his wives and his concubines, could drink from them.

5:3 So they brought the gold and silver vessels that had been confiscated from the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, together with his wives and concubines, drank from them. As they drank wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

5:5 At that very moment the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the royal palace wall, opposite the lampstand.

The king was watching the back of the hand that was writing. Then all the color drained from the king’s face and he became alarmed.

The joints of his hips gave way, and his knees began knocking together. The king called out loudly to summon the astrologers, wise men, and diviners. The king proclaimed to the wise men of Babylon that anyone who could read this inscription and disclose its interpretation would be clothed in purple and have a golden collar.

The translation above seems preferable, however, given the clear evidence of inebriation in the context (cf. also CEV “he got drunk and ordered”).

The mention of the lampstand in this context is of interest because it suggests that the writing was in clear view.

While Aramaic can mean the palm of the hand, here it seems to be the back of the hand that is intended.

The phrase seems rather awkward. The Vulgate lacks “of the house of God,” while Theodotion and the Syriac lack “the house.” The form was probably accidentally dropped from the Aramaic text by homoioteleuton.

The translation reads מַשָּׂא (v-‘hashpa, “and the silver”) with Theodotion and the Vulgate. Cf. v. 2. The form was probably accidentally dropped from the Aramaic text by homoioteleuton.

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Daniel 5:8

placed on his neck and be third ruler in the kingdom.

5:8 So all the king’s wise men came in, but they were unable to read the writing or to make known its interpretation to the king. 5:9 Then King Belshazzar was very terrified, and he was visibly shaken.2 His nobles were completely dumbfounded.

5:10 Due to the noise caused by the king and his nobles, the queen mother3 then entered the banquet room. She said, “O king, live forever! Don’t be alarmed! Don’t be shaken! 5:11 There is a man in your kingdom who has within him a spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, he proved to have insight, discernment, and wisdom like that of the gods.4 King Nebuchadnezzar your father appointed him chief of the magicians, astrologers, wise men, and diviners.5 5:12 Thus there was found in this man Daniel, whom the king renamed Belteshazzar, an extraordinary spirit, knowledge, and skill to interpret dreams, solve riddles, and decipher knotty problems.6 Now summon Daniel, and he will disclose the interpretation.”

5:13 So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives of Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? 5:14 I have heard about you, how there is a spirit of the gods in you, and how you have25 insight, discernment, and extraordinary wisdom. 5:15 Now the wise men and astrologers were brought before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation. But they were unable to disclose the interpretation of the message. 5:16 However, I have heard26 that you are able to provide interpretations and to decipher knotty problems. Now if you are able to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, you will wear purple and have a golden collar around your neck and be third ruler in the kingdom.”

Daniel Interprets the Handwriting on the Wall

5:17 But Daniel replied to the king, “Keep your gifts, and give your rewards to someone else! However, I will read the writing for the king and make known its interpretation. 5:18 As for you, O king, the most high God bestowed on your father Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom, greatness, honor, and majesty. 5:19 Due to the greatness that he bestowed on him, all peoples, nations, and language groups were trembling with fear7 before him. He killed whom he wished, he spared whom he wished, he exalted whom he wished, and he brought low whom he wished. 5:20 And when his mind8 became arrogant and his spirit filled with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and his honor was removed from him. 5:21 He was driven from human society, his mind9 was changed to that of an animal, he lived10 with the wild donkeys, he was fed grass like oxen, and his body became damp with the dew of the sky, until he came to understand that the most high God rules over human kingdoms, and he appoints over them whomever he wishes.

5:22 “But you, his son Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself,11 although you knew all this. 5:23 Instead, you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven. You brought before you the vessels from his temple, and you and your nobles, together with your wives and concubines, drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone —
god's² that cannot see or hear or comprehend! But you have not glorified the God who has in his control³ your very breath and all your ways! 5:24 Therefore the palm of a hand was sent from him, and this writing was inscribed.

5:25 “This is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE,⁴ TEQEL, and PHARSIN.⁵

5:26 This is the interpretation of the words:⁵ As for mene⁶ – God has numbered your kingdom’s days and brought it to an end. 5:27 As for teqel – you are weighed on the balances and found to be lacking. 5:28 As for peres⁷ – your kingdom is divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

5:29 Then, on Belshazzar’s orders,⁸ Daniel was clothed in purple, a golden collar was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed third ruler in the kingdom. 5:30 And in that very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king,⁹ was killed. 5:31 (6:1)²⁵ So Darius the Mede took control of the kingdom when he was about sixty-two years old.

Daniel is Thrown into a Lions’ Den

6:1 It seemed like a good idea to Darius⁴² to appoint over the kingdom 120 satraps,¹³ who would be in charge of the entire kingdom. 6:2 Over them would be three supervisors, one of whom was Daniel. These satraps were accountable⁴⁴ to them, so that the king’s interests might not incur damage. 6:3 Now Daniel was distinguishing himself above the other supervisors and the satraps, for he had an extraordinary spirit. In fact, the king intended to appoint him over the entire kingdom. 6:4 Consequently the supervisors and satraps were trying to find⁵⁵ some pretext against Daniel in connection with administrative matters.¹⁶ But they were unable to find any such damaging evidence,²⁷ because he was trustworthy and guilty of no negligence or corruption.²⁸ So these men concluded,²⁹ “We won’t find any pretext against this man Daniel unless it is²⁰ in connection with the law of his God.”

6:6 So these supervisors and satraps came by collusion¹¹ to the king and said²² to him, “O King Darius, live forever! 6:7 To all the supervisors of the kingdom, the prefects, satraps, counselors, and governors it seemed like a good idea for a royal edict to be issued and an interdict to be enforced. For the next thirty days anyone who prays³⁰ to any god or human other than you, O king, should be thrown into a den of lions. 6:8 Now let the king issue a written interdict²⁴ so that it cannot be altered, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed.²⁵ 6:9 So King Darius issued the written interdict.

6:10 When Daniel realized²⁶ that a written decree had been issued, he entered his home, where the windows²⁷ in his upper room opened toward Jerusalem.²⁸ Three²⁹ times daily he was³⁰ kneeling and offering prayers and thanks to his…

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¹ tn Aram “which.”
² tn Aram “in whose hand [are].”
³ to The Greek version of Theodotion lacks the repetition of מְנֵא (m’nah, cf. NAB).
⁴ tn Aramaic word is plural. Theodotion has the singular form of סָפֶר (sophar), cf. NAB “PERES”.
⁵ tn Or “word” or “event.” See HALOT 1915 s.v. תְּקֵל.
⁶ tn Aramaic term מְנֵא (m’nah) is a noun referring to a measure of weight. The linkage here to the verb “to number” (Aram. ﻟُوُھَ, m’nahal) is a case of paronomasia rather than strict etymology. So also with ﻟُوُھَ (r’qel) and ﻟُوُھَ (farsin). In the latter case there is an obvious wordplay with the name “Persian.”
⁷ sn Peres (סֶפֶר) is the singular form of סָפֶר (pharsin) in v. 25.
⁸ tn Aram “Belshazzar spoke.”
⁹ tn Aram “king of the Chaldeans.”
¹⁰ tn The year was 539 B.C. C. At this time Daniel would have been approximately eighty-one years old. The relevant extra-biblical records describing the fall of Babylon include portions of Herodotus, Xenophon, Berossus (cited in Josephus), the Cyrus Cylinder, and the Babylonian Chronicle.
¹¹ sn Beginning with 5:31, the verse numbers through 6:28 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Aramaic text (BHS), with 5:31 ET = 6:1 AT, 6:1 ET = 6:2 AT, 6:2 ET = 6:3 AT, 6:3 ET = 6:4 AT, etc., through 6:28 ET = 6:29 AT. Beginning with 7:1, the verse numbers in the English Bible and the Aramaic text are again the same.
¹² tn Aram “It was pleasing before Darius.”
¹³ tn This is a technical term for an official placed in charge of a region of the empire (cf. KJV, NLT “prince[s]”; NCV, TEV “governors”). These satraps were answerable to a supervisor, who in turn answered to Darius.
¹⁴ tn Aram “giving an account.”
¹⁵ tn Aram “looking to find.”
¹⁶ tn Aram “from the side of the kingdom.”
¹⁷ tn Aram “pretext and corruption.”
¹⁸ tn Aram “no negligence or corruption was found in him.” The Greek version of Theodotion lacks the phrase “and no negligence or corruption was found in him.”
¹⁹ tn Aram “were saying.”
²⁰ tn Aram “unless we find [it] against him.”
²¹ tn Aramaic verb יַעֲשֵׁה (ya’sha) occurs three times in this chapter (vv. 7, 12, 16). Its meaning is widely disputed by commentators, and the versions vary considerably in how they render the word. The suggestion that it means “to come thronging” (BDB 1112 s.v.; cf. NAB) seems inappropriate, since it is unlikely that subordinates would enter a royal court in such a reckless fashion. The ancient versions struggled with the word and are not in agreement in their understanding of its meaning. In this chapter the word apparently means to act in agreement with other parties in the pursuit of a duplicious goal, namely the entrapment of Daniel. Cf. NIV, NCV “went as a group”; NRSV “conspired and came to the king.”
²² tn Aram “thus they were saying.”
²³ tn Aram “prays a prayer.”
²⁴ tn Aram “establish a written interdict and inscribe a written decree.”
²⁵ tn Or “removed.”
²⁶ tn Aram “knew.”
²⁷ sn In later rabbinic thought this verse was sometimes cited as a proof text for the notion that one should pray only in a house with windows. See b. Berakhot 34b.
²⁸ map For the location of Jerusalem see Map5-B1: Map6-F3; Map7-F2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JPL-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
²⁹ sn This is apparently the only specific mention in the OT of prayer being regularly offered three times a day. The practice was probably not unique to Daniel, however.
³⁰ tn Read with several medieval Hebrew MSS and printed editions of the Targum (Tehila) rather than the MT מַמְלָכָה (mallakah).
³¹ tn Aram “kneeling on his knees” (so NASB).
³² sn No specific posture for offering prayers is prescribed in the OT. Kneeling, as here, and standing were both practiced.
God just as he had been accustomed to do previously. 6:11 Then those officials who had gone to the king came by collusion and found Daniel praying and asking for help before his God. 6:12 So they approached the king and said to him, "Did you not issue an edict to the effect that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human other than to you, O king, would be thrown into a den of lions?" The king replied, "That is correct, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed." 6:13 Then they said to the king, "Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the edict that you issued. Three times daily he offers his prayer." 6:14 When the king heard this, he was very upset and began thinking about how he might rescue Daniel. Until late afternoon he was struggling to find a way to rescue him. 6:15 Then those men came by collusion to the king and said to him, "Recall, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no edict or decree that the king issues can be changed." 6:16 So the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into a den of lions. The king consoled Daniel by saying, "Your God whom you continually serve will rescue you."

6:17 Then a stone was brought and placed over the opening of the den, and Daniel was hauled up out of the den. He had no injury whatever to his body, for he had trusted in his God, who had also sent his angel and closed the lions’ mouths so that they had not harmed him, because I was found to be innocent before him. Nor have I done any harm to you, O king."

6:18 Then the king was delighted and gave an order to haul Daniel up from the den. So Daniel was hauled out of the den. He had no injury of any kind, because he had trusted in his God.

6:19 In the morning, the earliest sign of daylight, the king got up and rushed to the lions’ den. 6:20 As he approached the den, he called out to Daniel in a worried voice. "Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God whom you continually serve able to rescue you from the lions?"

6:21 Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever! 6:22 My God sent his angel and closed the lions’ mouths so that they have not harmed me, because I was found to be innocent before him. Nor have I done any harm to you, O king."

6:23 Then the king was delighted and gave an order to haul Daniel up from the den. So Daniel was hauled out of the den. He had no injury of any kind, because he had trusted in his God.

6:24 The king gave another order, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the lions’ den – they, their children, and their wives. They did not even reach the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

6:25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and language groups who were living in all the land: "Peace and prosperity! I have issued an edict that throughout all the dominion of my kingdom people are to revere and fear the God of Daniel.

"For he is the living God; he endures forever. His kingdom will not be destroyed; his authority is forever."

6:26 He rescues and delivers and performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth.

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1 tn Aram “those men”; the referent (the administrative officials who had earlier approached the king about the edict) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
2 tc The MT also has “about the edict of the king,” but this phrase is absent in the LXX and the Syriac. The present translation deletes the expression.
3 tn Aram “the word is true.”
4 tn Aram “from the sons of the captivity [of],”
5 tn Aram “prays his prayer.”
6 tn Aram “the word.”
7 tn Aram “placed his mind on.”
8 tn Aram “the entrances of the sun.”
9 tc Theodotion lacks the words “came by collusion to the king and...”
10 tn Aram “before the king.”
11 tn Aram “know”; NAB “Keep in mind”; NASB “Recognize”; NIV, NCV “Remember.”
12 sn Aram “said.” So also in v. 24, 25.
13 sn The den was perhaps a pit below ground level which could be safely observed from above.
14 tn Aram “answered and said [to Daniel].”
15 tn Aram “mouth.”
16 sn The purpose of the den being sealed was to prevent unauthorized tampering with the opening of the den. Any disturbance of the seal would immediately alert the officials to improper activity of this sort.
17 tn Aram “the signet rings.”
18 tn The meaning of Aramaic דחקווה (dakhavah) is a crux interpretum. Suggestions include “music,” “dancing girls,” “concubines,” “table,” “food” – all of which are uncertain. The translation employed here, suggested by earlier scholars, is deliberately vague. A number of recent English versions follow a similar approach with “entertainment” (e.g., NASB, NIV, NCV, TEV, CERV, NLT). On this word see further, HALOT 1849-50 s.v.; E. Vogt, Lexicon linguae aramaicae, 37.
19 tn Aram “his sleep fled from him.”
20 tn Aram “The king answered and said to Daniel.” This phrase has not been included in the translation for stylistic reasons: it is redundant in English.
21 tn Aram “with.”
22 tn Aram “said.”
23 tn Aram “had eaten the pieces of.” The Aramaic expression is ironic, in that the accusers who had figuratively “eaten the pieces of Daniel” are themselves literally devoured by the lions.
24 tn The Aramaic active impersonal verb is often used as a substitute for the passive.
25 tc The LXX specifies only the two overseers, together with their families, as those who were cast into the lions’ den.
26 tn Aram “May your peace be increased!”
27 sn Aram “until the end.”
He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions!"

6:28 So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Daniel has a Vision of Four Animals Coming up from the Sea

7:1 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream filled with visions while he was lying on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream in summary fashion. 7:2 Daniel explained. "I was watching in my vision during the night as the four winds of the sky were stirring up the great sea. Then three large beasts came up from the sea; they were different from one another.

7:4 "The first one was like a lion with eagles' wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off and it was lifted up from the ground. It was made to stand on two feet like a human being, and a human mind was given to it. It was told, 'Get up and devour much flesh!'

7:5 "Then a second beast appeared, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and there were three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'And you will be raised up to eat flesh after its kind.'"

7:6 "After these things, as I was watching, another beast like a leopard appeared, with four bird-like wings on its back. This beast had four heads, and ruling authority was given to it.

7:7 "After these things, as I was watching in the night visions, a fourth beast appeared – one dreadful, terrible, and very strong. It had two large rows of iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and anything that was left it trampled with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that came before it, and it had ten horns.

7:8 "As I was contemplating the horns, another horn – a small one – came up between them, and three of the former horns were torn out by the roots to make room for it. This horn had eyes resembling human eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things.

7:9 "While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His attire was white like snow; the hair of his head was like lamb's wool.

His throne was ablaze with fire, and its wheels were all aflame. A river of fire was streaming forth and proceeding from his presence. Many thousands were ministering to him; Many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him.

The court convened and the books were opened.

7:11 "Then I kept on watching because of the arrogant words of the horn that was speaking. I
was watching\(^1\) until the beast was killed and its body destroyed and thrown into\(^2\) the flaming fire. 7:12 As for the rest of the beasts, their ruling authority had already been removed, though they were permitted to go on living\(^3\) for a time and a season. 7:13 I was watching in the night visions, “And with\(^4\) the clouds of the sky\(^5\) one like a son of man\(^6\) was approaching. He went up to the Ancient of Days and was escorted\(^7\) before him. 7:14 To him was given ruling authority, honor, and sovereignty. All peoples, nations, and language groups were serving\(^8\) him. His authority is eternal and will not pass away.\(^9\) His kingdom will not be destroyed.\(^10\)

An Angel Interprets Daniel’s Vision

7:15 “As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed,\(^11\) and the visions of my mind\(^12\) were alarming me. 7:16 I approached one of those standing nearby and asked him about the meaning\(^13\) of all this. So he spoke with me and revealed\(^14\) to me the interpretation of the vision:\(^15\) 7:17 These large beasts, which are four in number, represent four kings who will arise from the earth. 7:18 The holy ones\(^16\) of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will take possession of the kingdom forever and ever.’

7:19 “Then I wanted to know the meaning\(^17\) of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others. It was very dreadful, with two rows of iron teeth and bronze claws, and it devoured, crushed, and trampled anything that was left with its feet. 7:20 I also wanted to know\(^18\) the meaning of the ten horns on its head, and of that other horn which came up and before which three others fell. This was the horn that had eyes\(^19\) and a mouth speaking arrogant things, whose appearance was more formidable than the others. 7:21 While I was watching, that horn began to wage war against the holy ones and was defeating\(^21\) them, 7:22 until the Ancient of Days arrived and judgment was rendered\(^22\) in favor of the holy ones of the Most High. Then the time came for the holy ones to take possession of the kingdom.

7:23 “This is what he told me:\(^23\) ‘The fourth beast means that there will be a fourth kingdom on earth that will differ from all the other kingdoms. It will devour all the earth and will trample and crush it. 7:24 The ten horns mean that ten kings will arise from that kingdom. Another king will arise after them, but he will be different from the earlier ones. He will humiliate\(^24\) three kings. 7:25 He will speak words against the Most High. He will harass\(^25\) the holy ones of the Most High continually. His intention\(^26\) will be to change times established by law.\(^27\)

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\(^1\) tc The LXX and Theodotion lack the words “I was watching” here. It is possible that these words in the MT are a distortion from the first part of the verse.

\(^2\) tn Aram “and given over to” (so NRSV).

\(^3\) tn Aram “a prolonging of life was granted to them.”

\(^4\) tc The LXX has ἐπὶ (epi, “upon”) here (cf. Matt 24:30; 26:64). Theodotion has μετὰ (meta, “with”) here (cf. Mark 14:62; Rev 1:7).

\(^5\) tn Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term בָּשָׂמִים (bashayim) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

\(^6\) sn This text is probably the main OT background for Jesus’ use of the term “son of man.” In both Jewish and Christian circles the reference in the book of Daniel has traditionally been understood to refer to an individual, usually in a messianic sense. Many modern scholars, however, understand the reference to have a corporate identity. In this view, the “son of man” is to be equated with the “holy ones” (vv. 18, 21, 22, 25) or the “people of the holy ones” (v. 27) and understood as a reference to the Jewish people. Others understand Daniel’s reference to be to the angel Michael.

\(^7\) tn Aram “they brought him near.”

\(^8\) tn Some take “serving” here in the sense of “worshiping.”

\(^9\) tn Aram “is an eternal authority which will not pass away.”

\(^10\) tn Aram “is one which will not be destroyed.”

\(^11\) tn The Aramaic text includes the phrase “in its sheath,” apparently viewing the body as a container or receptacle for the spirit somewhat like a sheath or scabbard is for a knife or a sword (cf. NAB “within its sheath of flesh”). For this phrase the LXX and Vulgate have “in these things.”

\(^12\) tn Aram “head.”

\(^13\) tn Aram “what is certain.”

\(^14\) tn Aram “and made known.”

\(^15\) tn Aram “matter,” but the matter at hand is of course the vision.

\(^16\) sn The expression holy ones is either a reference to angels or to human beings devoted to God.

\(^17\) tn Aram “to make certain.”

\(^18\) tn The words “I also wanted to know” are added in the translation for stylistic reasons.

\(^19\) tc The conjunction in the MT before “eyes” is odd. The ancient versions do not seem to presuppose it.

\(^20\) tn Aram “greater than its companions.”

\(^21\) tn Aram “prevailing against” (KJV and ASV both similar); NASB “overpowering them”; TEV “conquered them.”

\(^22\) tc In the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate the verb is active, understanding “judgment” to be the object rather than the subject of the verb (i.e., “the Ancient of Days rendered judgment”). This presupposes a different vocalization of the verb (יָבַשֶּׁהוּ [y’hush] rather than the MT יָבָשֶׂהוּ [y’hush]).

\(^23\) tn Aram “thus he said.”

\(^24\) tn Or “subjugate”; KJV, NASB, NIV “subdue”; ASV, NRSV “put down.”

\(^25\) tn Aram “wear out” (so KJV, ASV, NRSV); NASB, NLT “wear down.” The word is a hapax legomenon in biblical Aramaic, but in biblical Hebrew it especially refers to wearing out such things as garments. Here it is translated “harass...continually.”

\(^26\) tn Aram “he will think.”

\(^27\) tn Aram “times and law.” The present translation is based on the understanding that the expression is a hedgeiady.
They will be delivered into his hand For a time, times,¹ and half a time.
7:26 But the court will convene,² and his ruling authority will be removed – destroyed and abolished forever!
7:27 Then the kingdom, authority, and greatness of the kingdoms under all of heaven will be delivered to the people of the holy ones³ of the Most High. His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; all authorities will serve him and obey him.⁴
7:28 “This is the conclusion of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts troubled me greatly, and the color drained from my face.⁵ But I kept the matter to myself.”⁶

Daniel Has a Vision of a Goat and a Ram

8:1⁷ In the third year⁸ of King Belshazzar’s reign, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me previously.⁹ 8:2 In this⁩ vision I saw myself in Susa¹⁰ the citadel,¹¹ which is located in the province of Elam. In the vision I saw myself at the Ulai Canal.¹²

¹ sn Although the word times is vocalized in the MT as a plural, it probably should be regarded as a dual. The Masoretes may have been influenced here by the fact that in late Aramaic (and Syriac) the dual forms fall out of use. The meaning would thus be three and a half “times.”
² tn Aram “judgment will sit” (KJV similar).
³ tn If the “holy ones” are angels, then this probably refers to the angels as protectors of God’s people. If the “holy ones” are God’s people, then this is an appositional construction, “the people who are the holy ones.” See 8:24 for the corresponding Hebrew phrase and the note there.
⁴ tn Aram “my brightness was changing on me.”
⁵ tn Aram “in my heart.”
⁶ sn Dan 8:1 marks the switch from Aramaic (= 2:4b-7:28) back to Hebrew as the language in which the book is written in its present form. The remainder of the book from this point on (8:1-12:13) is in Hebrew. The biblical nature of the book has been variously explained, but it most likely has to do with the book’s transmission history.
⁷ sn The third year of King Belshazzar’s reign would have been ca. 551 B.C. Daniel would have been approximately 69 years old at the time of this vision.
⁸ tn Heb “in the beginning.” This refers to the vision described in chapter seven.
⁹ tn Heb “the.”
¹⁰ tn Susa (Heb. סוז, shushan), located some 230 miles (380 km) east of Babylon, was a winter residence for Persian kings during the Achaemenid period. The language of v. 2 seems to suggest that Daniel may not have been physically present at Susa, but only saw himself there in the vision. However, the Hebrew is difficult, and some have concluded that the first four words of v. 2 in the MT are a later addition (cf. Theodotion).
¹¹ tn The Hebrew word בַּרְחוֹת (birah, “castle, palace”) usually refers to a fortified structure within a city, but here it is in opposition to the city name Susa and therefore has a broader reference to the entire city (against this view, however, see BDB 108 s.v. 2). Cf. NAB “the fortress of Susa”; TEV “the walled city of Susa.”
¹² tn The term אֲדָם (˚adam = “stream, river”) is a relatively rare word in biblical Hebrew, found only here and in vv. 3 and 6. The Ulai was apparently a sizable artificial canal in Susa (cf. NASB, NIV, NCV), and not a river in the ordinary sense of that word.

8:3 I looked up¹³ and saw a¹⁴ ram with two horns standing at the canal. Its two horns were both long,¹⁵ but one was longer than the other. The longer one was coming up after the shorter one. 8:4 I saw that the ram was butting westward, northward, and southward. No animal¹⁶ was able to stand before it, and there was none who could deliver from its power.¹⁷ It did as it pleased and acted arrogantly.¹⁸
8:5 While I was contemplating all this, a male goat¹⁹ was coming from the west over the surface of all the land²⁰ without touching the ground. This goat had a conspicuous horn²¹ between its eyes. 8:6 It came to the two-horned ram that I had seen standing beside the canal and rushed against it with raging strength.²² 8:7 I saw it approaching the ram. It went into a fit of rage against the ram²³ and struck it²⁶ and broke off its two horns. The ram had no ability to resist it.²⁷ The goat hurled the ram²⁸ to the ground and trampled it. No one could deliver the ram from its power.²⁹ 8:8 The male goat acted even more arrogantly. But no sooner had the large horn become strong than it was broken, and there

¹³ tn Heb “lifted my eyes.”
¹⁴ tn Heb “and behold.”
¹⁵ tn Heb “one.” The Hebrew numeral adjective occasionally functions like an English indefinite article. See GKC 401 §125.b.
¹⁶ tn Heb “high” (also “higher” later in this verse).
¹⁷ tn Or “beast” (NAB).
¹⁸ tn Heb “hand.” So also in v. 7.
¹⁹ tn In the Hiphil the Hebrew verb נָצַר (nazar, “to make great; to magnify”) can have either a positive or a negative sense. For the former, used especially of God, see Ps 126:2; Joel 2:21. In this chapter (8:4, 8, 11, 25) the word has a pejorative sense, describing the self-glorification of this king. The sense seems to be that of vainly assuming one’s own superiority through deliberate hubris.
²⁰ tn The words “all this” are added in the translation for stylistic reasons and for clarification.
²¹ tn Heb “and behold, a he-goat of the goats.”
²² tn Or “of the whole earth” (NAB, ASV, NASB, NRSV).
²³ tn Heb “a horn of vision” [or “conspicuousness”], i.e., “a conspicuous horn,” one easily seen.
²⁴ tn Heb “the wrath of its strength.”
²⁵ tn Heb “him.”
²⁶ tn Heb “the ram.”
²⁷ tn Heb “stand before him.”
²⁸ tn Heb “he hurled him.” The referents of both pronouns (the male goat and the ram) have been specified in the translation for clarity.
²⁹ tn The goat of Daniel’s vision represents Greece; the large horn represents Alexander the Great. The ram stands for Media-Persia. Alexander’s rapid conquest of the Persians involved three battles of major significance which he won against overwhelming odds: Granicus (334 B.C.), Issus (333 B.C.), and Gaugamela (331 B.C.).
arose four conspicuous horns in its place, extending toward the four winds of the sky.

8:9 From one of them came a small horn. But it grew to be very big, toward the south and the east and toward the beautiful land. 8:10 It grew so big that it reached the army of heaven, and it brought about the fall of some of the army and some of the stars to the ground, where it trampled them. 8:11 It also acted arrogantly against the Prince of the army, from whom the daily sacrifice was removed and whose sanctuary was thrown down. 8:12 The army was given over, along with the daily sacrifice, in the course of his sinful rebellion. It hurled truth to the ground and enjoyed success.

8:13 Then I heard a holy one speaking. Another holy one said to the one who was speaking, “To what period of time does the vision pertain—this vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the destructive act of rebellion and the giving over of both the sanctuary and army to be trampled?” 8:14 He said to me, “To 2,300 evenings and mornings, then the sanctuary will be put right again.”

An Angel Interprets Daniel’s Vision

8:15 While I, Daniel, was watching the vision, I sought to understand it. Now one who appeared to be a man was standing before me. 8:16 Then I heard a human voice coming from between the banks of the Ulai. It called out, “Gabriel, enable this person to understand the vision.” 8:17 So he approached the place where I was standing. As he came, I felt terrified and fell flat on the ground. 8:18 As he spoke with me, I fell into a trance with my face to the ground. But he touched me and stood me upright.

8:19 Then he said, “I am going to inform you about what will happen in the latter time of wrath, for the vision pertains to the appointed time of the end. 8:20 The ram that you saw with the two horns stands for the kings of Media and Persia. 8:21 The male goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. 8:22 The horn that was broken and in whose place there arose four others stands for four kingdoms that will arise from his nation, though they will not have his strength. 8:23 Toward the end of their rule, when rebellious acts..."
are complete, a rash\(^2\) and deceitful\(^2\) king will arise.\(^3\) **8:24** His power will be great, but it will not be by his strength alone. He will cause terrible destruction.\(^4\) He will be successful in what he undertakes.\(^5\) He will destroy powerful people and the people of the holy ones.\(^6\) **8:25** By his treachery\(^7\) he will succeed through deceit.\(^8\) He will have an arrogant attitude,\(^9\) and he will destroy many who are unaware of his schemes.\(^10\) He will rise up against the Prince of princes, yet he will be broken apart—but not by human agency.\(^11\) **8:26** The vision of the evenings and mornings that was told to you is correct.\(^12\) But you should seal up the vision, for it refers to a time many days from now.”

**8:27** I, Daniel, was exhausted\(^13\) and sick for days. Then I got up and again carried out the king’s business. But I was astonished at the vision, and there was no one to explain it.

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**Daniel Prays for His People**

**9:1** In the first year of Darius\(^14\) son of Ahasuerus,\(^15\) who was of Median descent and who had been\(^16\) appointed king over the Babylonian\(^17\) empire – **9:2** in the first year of his reign\(^18\) I, Daniel, came to understand from the sacred books\(^19\) that, according to the word of the Lord\(^20\) disclosed to the prophet Jeremiah, the years for the fulfilling of the desolation of Jerusalem\(^21\) were seventy in number. **9:3** So I turned my attention\(^22\) to the Lord God\(^23\) to implore him by prayer and requests, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.\(^24\) **9:4** I prayed to the Lord my God, confessing in this way:

“O Lord,\(^25\) great and awesome God who is faithful to his covenant\(^26\) with those who love him and keep his commandments,\(^9:5\) we have sinned! We have done what is wrong and wicked; we have rebelled by turning away from your commandments and standards. **9:6** We have not paid attention to your servants the prophets, who spoke by your authority\(^27\) to our kings, our

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\(^1\) **tn** Heb “strong of face.”

\(^2\) **tn** Heb “understanding riddles.” Possible meanings include “double-dealing” (DBB 995 s.v.しなん; cf. TEV, CEV) and “with a good knowledge of intrigue” (HALOT 309 s.v. נייר; cf. NAB, NASB, NVI, NRSV, NLT).

\(^3\) **tn** Heb “he will cause deceit to succeed by his hand.”

\(^4\) **tn** Heb “in his heart he will act arrogantly.”

\(^5\) **tn** Heb “he will cause deceit to succeed by his hand.”

\(^6\) **tn** Heb “he will cause deceit to succeed by his hand.”

\(^7\) **tn** The Hebrew term has a primary meaning of “skill, insight,” but here it has the connotation “cunning, treachery.” See DBB 968 s.v. עַלְעָה, עַלְעָה.

\(^8\) **tn** Heb “in his heart he will act arrogantly.”

\(^9\) **tn** Heb “in his heart he will act arrogantly.”

\(^10\) **tn** Heb “in peace.” The Hebrew word used here is difficult. It may refer to the security felt by those who did not realize the danger of imminent attack, or it may refer to the condition of being unaware of the impending danger. The latter idea is reflected in the present translation. See further, DBB 1017 s.v. עַלְעָה.

\(^11\) **tn** Heb “with nothingness of hand.”

\(^12\) **tn** Heb “truth.”

\(^13\) **tn** The Hebrew word here is נַחַל (nīḥayyēt). Its meaning is not entirely clear. Hebrew נַחַל (hayah) normally has meanings such as “to be” or “become.” Here, however, it describes Daniel’s emotional and physical response to the enigmatic vision that he has seen. It is parallel to the following verb, which refers to illness, and seems to refer to a state of utter exhaustion due to the amazing things that Daniel has just seen. The LXX lacks the word. On the meaning of the word see further, DBB 227-28 s.v. הָיָה, DCH 2:540 s.v. הָיָה I Ni.3.

\(^14\) **sn** The identity of this Darius is a major problem in correlating the biblical material with the extra-biblical records of this period. Most modern scholars treat the reference as a mistaken allusion to Darius Hystaspes (ca. 522-486 B.C.). Others have maintained instead that this name is a reference to the Persian governor Gubaru. Still others understand the reference to be to the Persian king Cyrus (cf. 6:28, where the הָיָה (l) may be understood as הָיָה explicitum, meaning “even”). Under either of these latter two interpretations, the first year of Darius would have been ca. 538 B.C. Daniel would have been approximately eighty-two years old at this time.

\(^15\) **tc** The LXX reads “Xerxes.” This is the reading used by some English versions (e.g., NIV, NCV, TEV, CEV). Most other English versions retain the Hebrew name “Ahaseurus.”

\(^16\) **tc** The present translation follows the MT in reading a Hophal (i.e., passive). Theodotion, the Syriac, and the Vulgate all presuppose the Hiphil (i.e., active). Even though this is the only occurrence of the Hophal of this verb in the Bible, there is no need to emend the vocalization to the Hiphil.

\(^17\) **tn** Heb “was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans.”

\(^18\) **tc** This phrase, repeated from v. 1, is absent in Theodotion.

\(^19\) **tn** The Hebrew text has “books”; the word “sacred” has been added in the translation to clarify that it is Scriptures that are referred to.

\(^20\) **sn** The tetragrammaton (the four Hebrew letters which constitute the divine Name, YHWH) appears eight times in this chapter, and nowhere else in the book of Daniel.

\(^21\) **map** For location see Maps-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

\(^22\) **tn** Heb “face.”

\(^23\) **tn** The Hebrew phrase translated “Lord God” here is אדוניו (adonay ha’elōhím).

\(^24\) **sn** When lamenting, ancient Israelites would fast, wear sackcloth, and put ashes on their heads to show their sorrow and contrition.

\(^25\) **sn** The more idiomatic phrase is לֵאמֶר אֲדֹנָי (‘adonay hē’lemār).

\(^26\) **sn** When lamenting, ancient Israelites would fast, wear sackcloth, and put ashes on their heads to show their sorrow and contrition.

\(^27\) **tn** The Hebrew term translated “Lord God” here and in vv. 7, 9, 15, 16, and 19 is אדונ֫י (adonay).
leaders, and our ancestors, and to all the inhabitants of the land as well.

9:7 “You are righteous, O Lord, but we are humiliated this day—the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far away in all the countries in which you have scattered them, because they have behaved unfaithfully toward you. 9:8 O Lord, we have been humiliated—our kings, our leaders, and our ancestors—because we have sinned against you. 9:9 Yet the Lord our God is compassionate and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him. 9:10 We have not obeyed the Lord our God by living according to his laws that he set before us through his servants the prophets.

9:11 “All Israel has broken your law and turned away by not obeying you. Therefore you have poured out on us the judgment solemnly threatened in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against you. 9:12 He has carried out his threats against us and our rulers who were over us by bringing great calamity on us—what has happened to Jerusalem has never been equaled under all heaven! 9:13 Just as it is written in the law of Moses, so all this calamity has come on us. Still we have not tried to pacify the Lord our God by turning back from our sin and by seeking wisdom from your reliable moral standards.

9:14 The Lord was mindful of the calamity, and he brought it on us. For the Lord our God is just in all he has done, and we have not obeyed him.

9:15 “Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with great power and made a name for yourself that is remembered to this day—we have sinned and behaved wickedly. 9:16 O Lord, according to all your justice, please turn your raging anger away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain. For due to our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your people are mocked by all our neighbors.

9:17 “So now, our God, accept the prayer and requests of your servant, and show favor to your devastated sanctuary for your own sake.

9:18 Listen attentively, O my God, and hear! Open your eyes and look on our desolate ruins and the city called by your name. For it is not because of our own righteous deeds that we are praying to you, but because your compassion is abundant.

9:19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, pay attention, and act! Don’t delay, for your own sake, O my God! For your city and your people are called by your name.”

Gabriel Gives to Daniel a Prophecy of Seventy Weeks

9:20 While I was still speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my request before the Lord my God concerning his holy mountain—while I was still praying, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen previously in a vision, was approaching me in my state of extreme weariness, around the time of the evening offering.

1 tn Heb “our fathers” (also in v. 8, 16). The Hebrew term translated “father” can refer to more distant relationships such as grandparents or ancestors.
2 tn Heb “people.”
3 tn Heb “to you (belongs) righteousness.”
4 tn Heb “and to us (belongs) shame of face like this day.”
5 tn Heb “men.”
6 tn Heb “to us (belongs) shame of face.”
7 tn Heb “to the Lord our God (belongs) compassion and forgiveness.”
8 tn Heb “paid attention to the voice of,” which is an idiomatic expression for obedience (cf. NASB “nor have we obeyed the voice of”).
9 tn Heb “to walk in.”
10 tn The LXX and Vulgate have the singular.
11 tn Or “transgressed.” The Hebrew verb has the primary sense of crossing a boundary, in this case, God’s law.
12 tn Heb “by not paying attention to your voice.”
13 tn Heb “the curse and the oath which is written.” The term “curse” refers here to the judgments threatened in the Mosaic law (see Deut 28) for rebellion. The expression “the curse and the oath” is probably a hendiadys (cf. Num 5:21; Neh 10:29) referring to the fact that the covenant with its threatened judgments was ratified by solemn oath and made legally binding upon the covenant community.
14 tn Heb “him.”
15 tn Heb “he has fulfilled his word(s) which he spoke.”
16 tn Heb “our judges.”
17 tn Heb “who judged.”
18 tn Heb “we have not pacified the face of.”
19 tn Or “by gaining insight.”
20 tn Heb “by your truth.” The Hebrew term does not refer here to abstract truth, however, but to the reliable moral guidance found in the covenant law. See vv 10-11.

21 tn Or “righteous.”
22 tn Heb “in all his deeds which he has done.”
23 tn Heb “we have not listened to his voice.”
24 tn Heb “with a powerful hand.”
25 tn Or “righteousness.”
26 tn Heb “your anger and your rage.” The synonyms are joined here to emphasize the degree of God’s anger. This is best expressed in English by making one of the terms adjectival (cf. NLT “your furious anger”; CEV “terribly angry”).
27 tn Heb “hear.” Here the verb refers to hearing favorably, accepting the prayer and responding positively.
28 tn Heb “let your face shine.” This idiom pictures God smiling in favor. See Pss 31:16; 67:1; 80:3, 7, 19.
29 tn Heb “for the sake of my Lord.” Theodotion has “for your sake.”
30 tn Heb “turn your ear.”
31 tn Heb “desolations.” The term refers here to the ruined condition of Judah’s towns.
32 tn Heb “over which your name is called.” Cf. v. 19. This expression implies that God is the owner of his city, Jerusalem. Note the use of the idiom in 2 Sam 12:28; Isa 4:1; Amos 9:12.
33 tn Heb “praying our supplications before you.”
34 tn Heb “for your name is called over your city and your people.” See the note on this expression in v 18.
35 tn Heb “the holy mountain of my God.”
36 tn Heb “speaking in prayer.”
37 tn Heb “in the beginning.”
38 tn The Hebrew expression נַחֲלָת (ma‘af ha‘af) is very difficult. The issue is whether the verb derives from נָחַל (Nahal, “to fly”) or from פָּרַשׁ (Parash, “to be weary”). Many ancient versions and modern commentators take the first of these possibilities and understand the reference to be to the swift flight
9:22 He spoke with me, instructing me as follows: 1 “Daniel, I have now come to impart understanding to you. 9:23 At the beginning of your requests a message went out, and I have come to convey it to you, for you are of great value in God’s sight. 2 Therefore consider the message and understand the vision. 3

9:24 “Seventy weeks” 4 have been determined concerning your people and your holy city 5 to put an end to 6 rebellion, to bring sin to completion, 7 to atone for iniquity, 8 to bring in perpetual righteousness, 9 to seal up 10 the prophetic vision, 11 and to anoint a most holy place. 12

9:25 So know and understand: From the issuing of the command 13 to restore and rebuild Jerusalem 14 until an anointed one, a prince arrives, 15 there will be a period of seven weeks, 16 and sixty-two weeks.

of the angel Gabriel in his coming to Daniel. The words more likely refer to the extreme weariness, not of the angel, but of Daniel. Cf. 7:28; 8:27; 10:8-9, 16-17; also NASB.

2 sn Or “a precious treasure”; KJV “greatly beloved”; NASB, NIV “highly esteemed.”

3 tn This sentence is perhaps a compound hendiadys (“give serious consideration to the revelatory vision”).

4 tn Heb “sevens.” Elsewhere the term is used of a literal week (a period of seven days), cf. Gen 29:27-28; Exod 34:22; Lev 12:5; Num 28:26; Deut 16:9-10; 2 Chr 8:13; Jer 5:24; Dan 10:2-3. Gabriel unfolds the future as if it were a calendar of successive weeks. Most understand the reference here as periods of seventy “sevens” of years, or a total of 490 years.

5 tc Or “to finish.” The present translation reads the Qere (from the root הבּש, bâsh), with many witnesses. The Kethib has “to seal up” (from the root בּשָׁה, bashâ), a confusion with a reference later in the verse to sealing up the vision.

6 tc The present translation reads the Qere (singular), rather than the Kethib (plural).

7 tn The Hebrew phrase פָּקָד (P’kâd) is apparently an alternative (metaplastic) spelling of the root פִּקָד (pîkâd, “to complete, finish”), rather than a form of פָּקָד (pâkâd, “to shut up, restrain”), as has sometimes been supposed.

8 sn Or “everlasting.”

9 sn The act of sealing in the OT is a sign of authentication. Cf. 1 Kgs 21:8; Jer 32:10, 11, 44.

10 tn Heb “vision and prophecy.” The expression is a hendiadys.

11 tn Or “the most holy place” (NASB, NLT); or “a most holy one”; or “the most holy one,” though the expression is used of places or objects elsewhere, not people.

12 tn Or “decrease” (NASB, NIV); or “word” (NAB, NRSV).

13 sn For location see Map 5:11; Map 6:F3; Map 7:E2; Map 8:F2; Map 10:B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

14 tn The word “arrives” is added in the translation for clarification.

15 tn Heb “sevens” (also later in this line and in v. 26).

sn The accents in the MT indicate disjunction at this point, which would make it difficult, if not impossible, to identify the “anointed one/prince” of this verse as messianic. The reference in v. 26 to the sixty-two weeks as a unit favors the MT accentuation, not the traditional translation. If one follows the MT accentuation, one may translate “From the going forth of the message to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until an anointed one, a prince arrives, there will be a period of seven weeks. During a period of sixty-two weeks it will again be built, with plaza and moat, but in distressful times.” The present translation follows a traditional reading of the passage that deviates from the MT accentuation. 16 sn Heb “it will return and be built.” The expression is a verbal hendiadys.

17 sn The expression have nothing is difficult. Presumably it refers to an absence of support or assistance for the anointed one at the time of his “cutting off.” The KJV rendering “but for himself,” apparently suggesting a vicarious death, cannot be defended.

18 tc Some witnesses (e.g., the Syriac) understand a passive verb and the preposition ל (lim, “with”) rather than the noun ל (lam, “people”), thus reading “the city and the sanctuary will be destroyed with the coming prince.”

19 tn The words “will come speedily” are not in the Hebrew text but have been added in the translation for clarity.

20 sn Flood here is a metaphor for sudden destruction.

21 sn Heb “one seven” (also later in this line).

22 tn The referent of the Hebrew word עַנְפָּה (’ânâf, “wing”) is unclear here. The LXX and Theodotion have “the temple.” Some English versions (e.g., NAB, NIV) take this to mean “a wing of the temple,” but this is not clear.

23 sn The Hebrew text does not have this verb, but it has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

24 sn This chapter begins the final unit in the book of Daniel, consisting of chapters 10-12. The traditional chapter divisions to some extent obscure the relationship of these chapters.

25 tc The LXX has “first.”

26 sn Cyrus’ third year would have been ca. 536 B.C. Daniel would have been approximately eighty-four years old at this time.

27 sn The meaning of the Hebrew word יָשָׁר (yashar) is uncertain in this context. The word most often refers to an army or warfare. It may also mean “hard service,” and many commentators take that to be the sense here (i.e., “the service was great”). The present translation assumes the reference
10:2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three whole weeks.\(^1\) 10:3 I ate no choice food; no meat or wine came to my lips;\(^2\) nor did I anoint myself with oil\(^3\) until the end of those three weeks.

10:4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month\(^4\) I was beside the great river, the Tigris.\(^5\) 10:5 I looked up\(^6\) and saw a\(^7\) man\(^8\) clothed in linen,\(^9\) around his waist was a belt made of gold from Ufaz.\(^10\) 10:6 His body resembled yellow jasper.\(^11\) and his face had an appearance like lightning. His eyes were like blazing torches;\(^12\) his arms and feet had the gleam of polished bronze. His voice\(^13\) thundered forth like the sound of a large crowd.

10:7 Only I, Daniel, saw the vision; the men who were with me did not see it.\(^4\) On the contrary, they were overcome with fright and ran away to hide. 10:8 I alone was left to see this great vision. My strength drained from me, and my vigor disappeared.\(^37\) I was without energy.\(^18\) to be to the spiritual conflicts described, for example, in 10:16–11:1.

1 tn Heb “three weeks of days.” The inclusion of “days” here and in v. 3 is perhaps intended to call attention to the fact that these weeks are very different in nature from those of chap. 9, which are “weeks of years.”

2 tn Heb “mouth.”

3 sn Anointing oneself with oil (usually olive oil) was a common OT practice due to the severity of the Middle Eastern sun (cf. Ps 121:6). It was also associated with rejoicing (e.g., Prov 27:9) and was therefore usually not practiced during a period of mourning.

4 sn The first month would be the month of Nisan, during which Passover was observed.

5 tn The Hebrew text has הִדְדִי (hiddāqel). “Tigris” appears here in the LXX, since it is the Greek name for this river. Elsewhere in the OT “the great river” refers to the Euphrates (e.g., Gen 15:18; Josh 1:4), leading some interpreters to think that a mistake is involved in using the expression to refer to the Tigris. But it is doubtful that the expression had such a fixed and limited usage. The Syriac, however, does render the word here by “Euphrates” (Syr, penut) in keeping with biblical usage elsewhere.

6 sn The Hebrew word הָעַד (haddēl) is a plural of extension.

7 tn Heb “lifted up my eyes.”

8 tn Heb “one.” The Hebrew numerical adjective is used here like an English indefinite article.

9 sn The identity of the messenger is not specifically disclosed. Presumably he is an unnamed angel. Some interpreters identify him as Gabriel, but there is no adequate reason for doing so.

10 sn The Hebrew word צִבָּה (tsabbāh) is a plural of extension. See GKC 396–97 §124.a, b, c and Jones 2:500 §136.c.

11 tn The location of this place and even the exact form of the Hebrew name יָפָצ (yafaz) are uncertain. Apparently it was a source for pure gold. (See Jer 10:9.) The Hebrew word גֶּז (gez; “refined gold” or “pure gold”) is more common in the OT than יָפָצ, and some scholars emend the text of Dan 10:5 to read this word. Cf. also “Ophir” (1 Kgs 9:28; Isa 13:12; Job 22:24; 28:16).

12 tn The Hebrew word translated “yellow jasper” is יָפָצ (yafaz) (nāsh̄ish); it appears to be a semiprecious stone, but its exact identity is somewhat uncertain. It may be the yellow jasper, although this is conjectural. Cf. NAB, NIV “chrysolite”; NASB, NRSV “beryl.”

13 sn A verbal hendiadys.

14 tn Heb “torches of fire.”

15 tn Heb “The sound of his words” (cf. v. 9).

16 tn Heb “the vision.”

17 tn Heb “great trembling fell on them.”

18 tn Heb “did not remain in.”

19 tn Heb “was changed upon me for ruin.”

20 tn Heb “strength.”

21 10:9 I listened to his voice,\(^19\) and as I did so\(^20\) I fell into a trance-like sleep with my face to the ground. 10:10 Then\(^21\) a hand touched me and set me on my hands and knees.\(^22\) 10:11 He said to me, “Daniel, you are of great value.\(^23\) Understand the words that I am about to\(^24\) speak to you. So stand up,\(^25\) for I have now been sent to you.” When he said this\(^26\) to me, I stood up shaking. 10:12 Then he said to me, “Don’t be afraid, Daniel, for from the very first day you applied your mind\(^27\) to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. I have come in response to your words. 10:13 However, the prince of the kingdom of Persia was opposing me for twenty-one days. But\(^28\) Michael, one of the leading princes, came to help me, because I was left there\(^29\) with the kings of Persia. 10:14 Now I have come to help you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to future days.”

19 tc Heb “I heard the sound of his words.” These words are absent in the LXX and the Syriac.

20 tn Heb “as I listened to the sound of his words.”

21 tn Heb “Behold.”

22 tc Theodotion lacks “and the palms of my hands.”

23 tn Heb “on my knees and the palms of my hands.”

24 tc Or “a treasured person”; KJV “a man greatly beloved”; NASB “man of high esteem.”

24 tn The Hebrew participle is often used, as here, to refer to the imminent future.

25 tn Heb “stand upon your standing.”

26 tn Heb “spoke this word.”

27 tn Heb “gave your heart.”

28 tn Heb “and beheld.”

29 tc The Greek version of Theodotion reads “I left him [i.e., Michael] there,” and this is followed by a number of English translations (cf. NAB, NRSV, NLT).

30 tn Heb “speaking to me according to these words.”

31 tn Heb “placed my face toward.”

32 tn Heb “Behold.”

33 tc So most Hebrew MSS; one Hebrew MS along with the Dead Sea Scrolls and LXX read “something that looked like a man’s hand.”

34 tn Heb “my lord,” here a title of polite address. Cf. v. 19.

35 tn Heb “How is the servant of this my lord able to speak with this my lord?”

36 tn Heb “does not stand.”

37 tn Heb “He added and touched me.” The construction is a verbal hendiadys.

38 tn Heb “treasured man.”
now, 1 for you have given me strength.” 10:20 He said, “Do you know why I have come to you? 10:21 Now I am about to return to engage in battle with the prince of Persia. When I go, the prince of Greece is coming.

10:21 However, I will first tell you what is written in a dependable book. 3 (There is no one who strengthens me against these princes, 4 except Michael your 5 prince. 11:1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, 6 stood to strengthen him and to provide protection for him.) 11:2 Now I will tell you the truth.

The Angel Gives a Message to Daniel

“Three 6 more kings will arise for Persia. Then a fourth 6 king will be unusually rich, 9 more so than all who preceded him. When he has amassed power through his riches, he will stir up everyone against 10 the kingdom of Greece. 11:3 Then a powerful king 11 will arise, exercising great authority and doing as he pleases. 11:4 Shortly after his rise to power, 12 his kingdom will be broken up and distributed toward the four winds of the sky 13—but not to his posterity or with the authority he exercised, for his kingdom will be uprooted and distributed to others besides these.

14 sn The king of the south is Ptolemy I Soter (ca. 323-285 B.C.). The following reference to one of his subordinates apparently has in view Seleucus I Nicator (ca. 311-280 B.C.). Throughout the remainder of chap. 11 the expressions “king of the south” and “king of the north” repeatedly occur. It is clear, however, that these terms are being used generically to describe the Ptolemaic king (i.e., “of the south”) or the Seleucid king (i.e., “of the north”) who happens to be in power at any particular time. The specific identity of these kings can be established more or less successfully by a comparison of this chapter with the available extra-biblical records that discuss the history of the intertestamental period. In the following notes the generally accepted identifications are briefly mentioned.

15 sn Heb “princes.”

16 sn Heb “and he”; the referent (the subordinate prince mentioned in the previous clause) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

17 sn Heb “be strong against.”

18 sn Heb “greater than his kingdom.”

19 sn Here they refer to Ptolemy II Philadelphus (ca. 285-246 B.C.) and Antiochus II Theos (ca. 262-246 B.C.).

20 sn The daughter refers to Berenice, who was given in marriage to Antiochus II Theos.

21 sn Heb “the strength of the arm.”

22 sn Heb “stand.” So also in vv. 7, 8, 11, 13.

23 sn Heb “and his arm.” Some understand this to refer to the descendants of the king of the north.

24 sn The present translation reads יָלְדָּה (yaldah, “her child”) rather than the MT יַלְדָּה (yaldah, “the one who begot her”). Cf. Theodotion, the Syriac, and the Vulgate.

25 sn Antiochus II eventually divorced Berenice and remarried his former wife Laodice, who then poisoned her husband, had Berenice put to death, and installed her own son, Seleucus II Callinicus (ca. 246-227 B.C.), as the Seleucid king.

26 sn The reference is to the king of Egypt.

27 sn Heb “the stock of her roots.”

28 sn The reference to one from her family line is probably to Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes (ca. 246-221 B.C.).

29 sn Heb “will deal with them and prevail.”

30 sn The Hebrew preposition צָרָה (zarah) is used here with the verb יָצָר (yatsar, “to stand”). It probably has a sense of separation (“stand away from”), although it may also be understood in an adversative sense (“stand against”).

31 sn Heb “he”; the referent (the king of the north) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
11:10 His sons⁴ will wage war, mustering a large army which will advance like an overflowing river and carrying the battle all the way to the enemy’s fortress.⁵

11:11 “Then the king of the south will be enraged and will march out to fight against the king of the north, who will also muster a large army, but that army will be delivered into his hand. 11:12 When the army is taken away, the king of the south will become arrogant.⁶ He will be responsible for the death⁷ of thousands and thousands of people,⁸ but he will not continue to prevail. 11:13 For the king of the north will again muster an army, one larger than before. At the end of some years he will advance with a huge army and enormous supplies.

11:14 “In those times many will oppose⁹ the king of the south.⁩ Those who are violent⁹ among your own people will rise up in confirmation of the vision, but they will falter. 11:15 Then the king of the north will advance and will build siege mounds and capture a well-fortified city.² Twelve forces of the south will not prevail, not even his finest contingents.³ They will have no strength to prevail. 11:16 The one advancing against him will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to stand before him. He will prevail in the beautiful land, and its annihilation will be within his power.¹⁴ 11:17 His intention¹⁵ will be to come with the strength of his entire kingdom, and he will form alliances.¹⁶ He will give the king of the south a daughter¹⁷ in marriage in order to destroy the kingdom, but it will not turn out to his advantage. 11:18 Then he will turn his attention¹⁸ to the coastal regions and will capture many of them. But a commander²⁰ will bring his shameful conduct to a halt; in addition,²¹ he will make him pay for his shameful conduct.²² 11:19 He will then turn his attention to the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall, not to be found again. 11:20 There will arise after him one²⁴ who will send out an exactor²⁵ of tribute to enhance the splendor of the kingdom, but after a few days he will be destroyed,²⁶ though not in anger or battle.

11:21 “Then there will arise in his place a despicable person²⁷ to whom the royal honor has not been rightfully conferred. He will come on the scene in a time of prosperity and will seize the kingdom through deceit. 11:22 Armies²⁸ will be suddenly swept away in defeat²⁹ before him; both they and a covenant leader³¹ will be destroyed.³² 11:23 After entering into an alliance with him, he will behave treacherously; he will ascend to power with only a small force.³³ 11:24 In a time of prosperity for the most productive areas of the province he will come and accomplish what neither his fathers nor their fathers accomplished. He will distribute loot, spoils, and property to his followers, and he will devise plans against fortified cities, but not for long.³⁵ 11:25 He will rouse his strength and enthusiasm³⁶ against the king of the south³⁷ with a large army.

¹ sn The sons of Seleucus II Callinicus were Seleucus III Ceraunus (ca. 227-223 B.C.) and Antiochus III the Great (ca. 223-187 B.C.).

² tn Heb “his”; the referent (the enemy of the king of the north) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³ tn Heb “and he will certainly come and overflow and cross over and return and be aroused unto a fortress.” The translation has attempted to simplify the syntax of this difficult sequence.

⁴ sn This king of the south refers to Ptolemy IV Philopator (ca. 221-204 B.C.).

⁵ tn Heb “his heart will be lifted up.” The referent (the king of the south) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁶ tn Heb “cause to fall.”

⁷ tn Heb “of myriads.”

⁸ tn Heb “stand against.”

⁹ sn This was Ptolemy V Epiphanes (ca. 203-181 B.C.).

¹⁰ tn Heb “sons of violence.” “Son(s) is sometimes used idiomatically in Hebrew to indicate that someone is characterized by a certain quality. So the expression “sons of violence” means that these individuals will be characterized by violent deeds.

¹¹ tn Heb “to cause to stand.”

¹² sn This well-fortified city is apparently Sidon. Its capture from the Ptolemies by Antichus the Great was a strategic victory for the Seleucid kingdom.

¹³ Or “choice troops” (DBB 104 s.v. min, or “elite troops” (HALOT 542 s.v. min).

¹⁴ tn Heb “hand.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “and he will set his face.” Cf. vv. 18, 19.

¹⁶ to The present translation reads מִבְּחָר (masharim, “alliances”) for the MT מֵבִית (mibiyit, “uprightness”).

¹⁷ tn Heb “him”; the referent (the king of the south) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁸ tn Heb “the daughter of the women.”

¹⁹ sn The daughter refers to Cleopatra, the daughter of Antiochus, who was given in marriage to Ptolemy V.

²⁰ tn Heb “his face.” See v. 19 as well.

²¹ sn The commander is probably the Roman commander, Lucius Cornelius Scipio.

²² tn The Hebrew here is difficult in that the negative פַּרְעַה (parah, “not”) is used in an unusual way. The sense is not entirely clear.

²³ tn Heb “his shameful conduct he will return to him.”

²⁴ tn Heb “on his place.”

²⁵ sn The one who will send out an exactor of tribute was Heliodorus (cf. 2 Maccabees 3).

²⁶ tn Heb “broken” or “shattered.”

²⁷ sn This despicable person to whom the royal honor has not been rightfully conferred is Antiochus IV Epiphanes (ca. 175-164 B.C.).

²⁸ sn Perhaps this exactor of tribute was Heliodorus (cf. 2 Maccabees 3).

²⁹ tn Heb “arms.”

³⁰ tc The present translation reads מִבְּחָר (mishatarot), Niphal infinitive absolute of מִבְּחָר (mishar, “to overflow”), for the MT מִבְּשָׁר (mishar, “flood”).

³¹ tn The words “in defeat” are added in the translation for clarification.

³² tn Heb “a prince of the covenant.”

³³ tn Heb “broken” or “shattered.”

³⁴ tn The preposition צֶּרֶשֶׁת (miyn) is probably temporal here (so DBB 583 s.v. 7.c.; cf. KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV), although it could also be understood here as indicating means (so J. Goldingay, Daniel [WBC], 279, n. 23a; cf. TEV, NLT).

³⁵ tn Heb “nation.”

³⁶ tn Heb “and unto a time.”

³⁷ sn This king of the south was Ptolemy Philometor (ca. 181-145 B.C.).
The king of the south will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to prevail because of the plans devised against him. 11:26 Those who share the king’s fine food will attempt to destroy him, and his army will be swept away; many will be killed in battle. 11:27 These two kings, their minds filled with evil intentions, will trade lies with one another at the same table. But it will not succeed, for there is still an end at the appointed time. 11:28 Then the king of the north will return to his own land with much property. His mind will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action, and then return to his own land. 11:29 At an appointed time he will again invade the south, but this latter visit will not turn out the way the former one did. 11:30 The ships of Kittim will come against him, leaving him disheartened. He will turn back and direct his indignation against the holy covenant. He will return and honor those who forsake the holy covenant. 11:31 His forces will rise up and profane the fortified sanctuary, stopping the daily sacrifice. In its place they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. 11:32 Then with smooth words he will defile those who have rejected the covenant. But the people who are loyal to their God will act valiantly. 11:33 These who are wise among the people will teach the masses. However, they will fall by the sword and by the flame, and they will be imprisoned and plundered for some time. 11:34 When they stumble, they will be granted some help. But many will unite with them deceitfully. 11:35 Even some of the wise will stumble, resulting in their refinement, purification, and cleansing until the time of the end, for it is still for the appointed time.

11:36 “Then the king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every deity and he will utter presumptuous things against the God of gods. He will succeed until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been decreed must occur. 11:37 He will not respect the gods of his fathers – not even the god loved by women. He will not respect any god; he will elevate himself above them all. 11:38 What he will honor is a god of fortresses – a god his fathers did not acknowledge he will honor with gold, silver, valuable stones, and treasured commodities. 11:39 He will attack mighty fortresses, aided by a foreign deity. To those who recognize him he will grant considerable honor. He will place them in authority over many people, and he will parcel out land for a price.

11:40 “At the time of the end the king of the south will attack him with chariots, horsemen, and a large armada of ships. He will invade lands, passing through them like an overflowing river. Then he will enter the
12:5 I, Daniel, watched as two others stood there, one on each side of the river.  
12:6 One said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river, “When will the end of these wondrous events occur?”  
12:7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen who was over the waters of the river as he raised both his right and left hands to the sky and made an oath by the one who lives forever: “It is for a time, times, and half a time. Then, when the power of the one who shatters the holy people has been exhausted, all these things will be finished.”  
12:8 I heard, but I did not understand. So I said, “Sir, what will happen after these things?”  
12:9 He said, “Go, Daniel. For these matters are closed and sealed until the time of the end.  
12:10 Many will be purified, made clean, and refined, but the wicked will submit to him. Until that time, your own people, the holy people, will be given daily bread, and many willdash about and fall, but these will escape;  
12:11 from the time that the daily sacrifice is removed and the abomination that causes desolation is set in place, there will be 1,290 days.  
12:12 Blessed is the one who waits and attains to the 1,335 days.  
12:13 But you should go your way until the end. You will rest and then at the end of the days you will arise to receive what you have been allotted.”

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1 sn The beautiful land is a cryptic reference to the land of Israel.  
2 tn This can be understood as “many people” (cf. NRSV) or “many countries” (cf. NASB, NIV, NLT).  
3 tn Heb “be delivered from his hand.”  
4 tn Heb “hand.”  
5 sn Or “Nubians” (NIV, NCV); Heb “Cushites.”  
6 tn Heb “Libyans and Cushites will be at his footsteps.”  
7 sn Presumably seas refers to the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea.  
8 tn Heb “stands over the sons of your people.”  
9 tn Heb “will stand up.”  
10 tn Or “from the beginning of a nation.”  
11 sn The Words “whose names are” are added in the translation for stylistic reasons and for clarification.  
12 sn This verse is the only undisputed reference to a literal resurrection found in the Hebrew Bible.  
13 tn Or “will run back and forth”; KJV “shall run to and fro”; NIV “will go here and there”; CEV “will go everywhere.”  
14 tn Heb “one to this edge of the river and one to that edge of the river.”  
15 tc The present translation reads יַד־נֹפֵץ (yad-nofets, “hand of one who shatters”) rather than the MT רַפְקָה (nappets-yad, “to shatter the hand”).  
16 tn Heb “my lord,” a title of polite address.  
17 tn Heb “to give.”  
18 tn The words “your way” are not in the Hebrew text, but are implied.  
19 tn The LXX lacks “until the end.”  
20 tn The word “receive” is added in the translation for clarification.  
21 sn The deuterocanonical writings known as the Story of Susanna and Bel and the Dragon appear respectively as chapters 13 and 14 of the book of Daniel in the Greek version of this book. Although these writings are not part of the Hebrew/Aramaic text of Daniel, they were popular among certain early communities who valued traditions about the life of Daniel.