The Heart of the Matter

It is doubtful that any Old Testament prophet played a more significant role in the history of Israel than Daniel. Taken from his homeland while still a teenager (no more than 15 years old) and pushed through a highly competitive crash course in a foreign culture, Daniel emerged as the premier prophet during the reigns of several monarchs of the captivity era. In this person, we find a model of integrity, flawless to the core. And in his prophecies, we discover a panorama of truth regarding God’s plan for the Gentile nations outlined nowhere else in such clear detail. With the book of Daniel’s New Testament counterpart, Revelation, we can fit together a fairly complete account of future events set forth in the pages of Scripture.

Discovering the Way

1. Daniel’s Circumstances and Character

Daniel exhibited integrity throughout his long life—as a teenager, a counselor, a high-ranking official, and an intercessor.

2. Daniel’s Tests and Results

Daniel’s integrity held firm when confronted with peer pressure, professional promotion, public praise, physical danger, and issues of everyday private life.

3. Daniel’s Visions and Prophecies

Daniel’s personal life was marked by integrity. His prophetic life was marked by visions of Gentile nations, the Persian kingdom, and the period of the end-times tribulation.

Starting Your Journey

Daniel’s message for us today is twofold: a person of integrity is a powerful instrument in the hand of God, and a promise with authority is a calm assurance in the heart of humanity.
DANIEL

Biographical Section
Daniel Interprets Others' Dreams

MAIN EMPHASIS:
DANIEL THE PROPHET
Introduction and setting (1)
Nebuchadnezzar’s apocalyptic dream (2)
Historical narratives (political and personal) (3–6)

CHAPTERS
1–6

Prophetical Section
Angel Interprets Daniel's Dreams

MAIN EMPHASIS:
THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL
Daniel’s foundational vision (7)
Prophetic visions (near and far) (8–12)

CHAPTERS
7–12

POLITICAL POWERS

Babylonian Rule
Nebuchadnezzar
Belshazzar

Medo-Persian Rule
Darius
Cyrus

Grecian Rule
Alexander the Great
Four generals

Roman Rule
Last of the
Gentile powers

Theme
God’s sovereignty over kingdoms and His unfolding plan for the future

Key Verses
2:20–22, 44; 4:34–37

Christ in Daniel
The stone that will crush earth’s kingdoms (2:34–35, 44); Son of Man (7:13–14);
the coming Messiah who will be crucified (9:25–26)

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