**Old Testament Survey**

**Book of Daniel**

**Daniel 6** **Daniel’s Devotion**

1. Remember, Daniel is not a teenager in this chapter; he is a man in his eighties. How did the prime minister begin each day? He to the Lord. In 6:10 we are told that Daniel prayed three times a day in a special “prayer chamber” atop his house. “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray,” says Ps. 55:17.
2. God had honored Daniel for his . There were actually 124 persons involved in the leadership of the land: Darius the king, the three presidents (with Daniel as #1), and 120 princes.
3. The other leaders were not too happy about Daniel’s success. The wicked lied about God’s people; they told Darius that all the presidents agreed on the plan (v. 7), when Daniel had never been consulted. How foolish Darius was to sign the decree without first consulting with his best president.
4. Daniel was one of the first ones to hear of the new decree, and he had to decide what to do. Of course, his character and spiritual walk had already decided for him: he would serve the Lord and pray to Jehovah just as he had always done.
5. His enemies watched as Daniel went to his prayer chamber where the windows were always open and they could see him kneel and lift up his hands toward Jerusalem. Now they had him. But Daniel had peace in his heart. This was not a “crisis prayer meeting”; Daniel was used to praying and had been since he was a teenager. It is wise to start spiritual habits when you are young.
6. The king realized what a fool he had been, but even his power and wealth could not alter the law of the Medes and Persians. Daniel was not depending on the king (Ps. 146:1–6). He had learned long ago to the living God. God did not want to save Daniel from the lions’ den; He wanted to deliver him out of it.
7. What a contrast between Darius in his palace and Daniel in the lions’ den. Darius had no , yet Daniel was perfectly at with himself, the Lord, and the lions. It was Daniel’s faith in God that delivered him (6:23; Heb. 11:33).

**Daniel 7–8**

Until now, Daniel has been interpreting the dreams of others. Now God gives him extraordinary visions of his own. These two chapters take place before chapter 5, since Babylon has not yet fallen to the Medes and Persians.

**The Vision of the Four Beasts (7)**

1. The restless sea in the Bible is a picture of the Gentile nations (Rev. 17:15; Isa. 17:12). Here it is the Great Sea, or the Mediterranean Sea, and all of the empires mentioned in this vision bordered on this sea. Daniel saw four beasts, and the angel explained what they meant. Each beast represented a (v. 17).
2. **The lion with wings (v. 4).** Here we have Babylon, corresponding to the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great image (2:36–38). The winged lion was a favorite image in Babylon; you may see these figures in any museum that has a Babylonian display. The animal made to stand like a man certainly reminds us of Nebuchadnezzar’s experience in 4:27–37.
3. **The bear with the ribs (v. 5).** Here we meet the Medo-Persian empire, known not for its swiftness or skill, but for its force, just like a bear. The three ribs depict the three empires already defeated (Egypt, Babylon, Lydia); and the fact that the bear stood “raised up on one side” indicates that one half of the empire (the Persian half) was stronger and more honorable than the other half (the Medes). Medo-Persia conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., but their empire lasted only some two hundred years.
4. **The winged four-headed leopard (v. 6).** This is certainly , led by Alexander the Great, who swiftly conquered the world, defeating the Persians about 331 B.C. But the great general died in 323, and his vast kingdom was divided into four parts (and thus the four heads). Four of his leading generals each took a part of the kingdom and ruled.
5. **The terrible beast (vv. 7–8, 17–27).** This beast startled Daniel, because nothing like it had appeared in any of the previous revelations. It seems clear that we have here the Empire, corresponding to the iron in Nebuchadnezzar’s image. But the picture seems to go beyond history into “the latter days,” because we see ten horns on the beast, and these parallel the ten toes of the image in chapter 2, the revived Roman Empire of the last days. Verses 8 and 20 both tell us that a “little horn” (ruler) will appear and defeat three of the ten kingdoms represented by the ten horns and ten toes. This little horn will then become a world ruler, the .
6. **The judgment (vv. 9–14, 26–28).** It must have shocked Daniel to see a man in heaven. He saw , the glorious Son of man. Of course, God could not permit the beast to control the world. He will send His Son to judge the beast and destroy his kingdom, and then to set up His own glorious kingdom, with the saints of God reigning with Him.

**The Vision of the Ram and He Goat (8)**

1. This vision is explaining how Greece will conquer Medo-Persia. Chapter 8 takes place two years after chapter 7 and describes the kingdoms that will follow Babylon after it falls.
2. God carried Daniel in a vision to the capital of Persia, the palace in Shushan. The ram (vv. 3–4) represents Medo-Persia in its conquests (v. 20); the emblem of Persia was a ram. Just about the time the ram was through “pushing,” the he goat appeared from the west (v. 5) and leaped swiftly to where the ram was standing. This ram had two horns, one higher than the other, symbolizing the Medes and the Persians, with the Persians the stronger. The he goat had one great horn, Alexander the Great. Now, the he goat attacked the ram, broke the two horns, and became very great (vv. 7–8). This represents Greece’s victory over Medo-Persia. But then we see the great horn broken (Alexander’s death) and four horns taking its place (the four generals who divided his kingdom and ruled over it).
3. Another ruler will arise. Verse 25 tells us he will use craft and lies to accomplish his purposes. He will even stand up against Christ, the Prince of princes. But this will be a battle. He shall be broken “without hand” (see 2:34), defeated at the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19). No wonder Daniel was overwhelmed. And so ought we to be as we consider the amazing prophecies of the Word of God.

**Daniel 9:1–27 Seventy Years of Captivity**

1. Daniel was a student of the OT Scriptures, particularly those prophecies that related to the destiny of his people. He was now nearly ninety years old. He was reading Jer. 25:1–14, and the Lord caused him to see that his people would be in Babylon for seventy years. Note that God does not give people “visions and dreams” when He can teach them through His . Daniel realized that the seventy years of captivity were about to close.
2. Daniel’s prayer is one of the greatest examples of in the Bible. He confesses his own sins and the sins of his people. He reviews Bible history and confesses that the nation has been wicked and God has been righteous to judge them. After confessing his sins and the sins of the people, Daniel begins to pray for Jerusalem (vv. 16–19). Now we will see how God answers his prayers. (Note how Daniel’s prayer in Dan. 9 is similar to those in Ezra 9 and Neh. 9.)

**Daniel 10:1–12:13 God’s reign over all history**

1. The narrative of Daniel’s final vision extends from the beginning of 10 to the end of the book. It is precisely dated in the third year of Cyrus during the period of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread and is set on the banks of the Tigris. On the anniversary of the exodus from Egypt a exodus began in the first year of Cyrus (Ezr. 1).
2. The first part of Daniel’s vision faded from view leaving him overwhelmed in a deep sleep. Then, apparently, a second figure addressed him (11), explaining that an to his prayers for insight had been sent immediately when he began to pray (12). The messenger had been resisted, however, by the prince of the Persian kingdom (evidently a supernatural figure; 13) until Michael had come to his aid. The archangel Michael (Jude 9) is the leading defender of God’s people against the powers of darkness.
3. It is clear that behind the scenes of the conflicts of history lies a conflict ‘in the heavenly realms’ (Eph. 6:12), in which Daniel had become involved in his intercession. Spiritual powers tried to prevent his receiving of the future.
4. The angelic messenger promises Daniel that the people of God will be protected against the powers of darkness, as always, by Michael. But like the testing of himself and his companions this will not mean that they will be from the time of distress but delivered out of it. The wise who have been faithful to God’s word, despite shame and suffering, will be glorified (3). This is the message of hope and comfort which will strengthen future believers. For this reason, Daniel is to seal the words of the scroll.
5. The conclusion focuses again on Daniel himself. Daniel is here personally assured he will one day be present to in the glorious events that follow the resurrection of believers. May all who read these words have this assurance through having trusted Christ as their personal Saviour.

**Book of Hosea**

The name Hosea means “salvation.” He preached to the Northern Kingdom (Israel, also called “Ephraim”) during a period of national decline. The nation was rotting away inwardly and getting involved with foreign alliances instead of trusting God to lead and protect them. Hosea lived to see Israel taken captive by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.

**Hosea 1–3 Israel’s Unfaithfulness Pictured**

1. At the outset of Hosea’s ministry the instructed him to marry an adulterous woman. Hosea married Gomer and she bore Hosea three children, then left him to live with other men. Imagine how Hosea’s was broken over her sin. Then God commanded the prophet to go find his wayward wife, and he discovered her - being sold in the slave market! (3:1–2) He had to buy his own wife back, bring her home, and assure her of his forgiveness and love.
2. All of this pictured Israel’s unfaithfulness to the Lord. The nation was married to the Lord (Ex. 34:14–16; Deut. 32:16; Isa. 62:5; Jer. 3:14) and should have remained to Him. But Israel lusted after sin, especially the false gods of other nations, and she committed “spiritual adultery” by forsaking the true God and worshipping the idols of her enemies.

**Hosea 4–7 Israel’s Sins Proclaimed**

1. No doubt all the neighbors talked about Gomer’s sins and pointed an accusing finger at her. But now Hosea points a finger at them and their sins. Swearing, lying, drunkenness, murder, treachery, adultery, idolatry - these sins and many more were rampant in the nation. And to make matters worse, the nation tried to cover her sins with a shallow “religious revival” (6:1–6). Hosea is a master preacher; see how he pictures the spiritual condition of the people: (1) a morning cloud (6:4), here one minute, gone the next; (2) a half baked cake (7:8), for their religion had not gotten deep into their lives, but was a surface thing; (3) gray hairs (7:9), losing their strength but ignorant of the change; (4) a silly dove (7:11), unstable, (5) a deceitful bow (7:16) that you cannot depend on.

**Israel’s Judgment Pronounced (8–10)**

1. The backslider is always (Prov. 14:14), and that is what Israel was - a backslider (4:16; see also Jer. 3:6, 11). Hosea could see Assyria coming to punish the nation and deliver it into slavery. He pictures this judgment as the coming of a swift eagle (8:1), the wrath of a whirlwind (8:7), and the burning of a fire (8:14). The nation is going to be scattered (8:8; 9:17), and they will reap more than they have sown (10:12–15).

**Israel’s Restoration Promised (11–14)**

1. Hosea does not end on a gloomy note. He sees the future of the nation. Just as his wife was brought back from slavery and restored to his home and heart, so the nation would one day be restored to her land and to her Lord. These closing chapters magnify the faithful of God in contrast to the unfaithfulness of His people.
2. God loved Israel in Egypt (11:1), when she was a captive nation having no beauty or glory. It was His that redeemed her from slavery, that led her, that provided for her every need. But from the very beginning of this “marriage” between Jehovah and Israel, the people were “bent on backsliding” (11:7). God drew them with cords of love (11:4), but they tried to break those cords and go their own way. Sin is not only the breaking of God’s law; it is the breaking of God’s heart.
3. Chapter 14 is God’s loving appeal to His “wife” to return to His heart and blessing. He promises to their backslidings (14:4) and restore them to His favor. He pictures the nation as a fruitful tree or vine (vv. 4–7) once the nation has turned from her idols and returned to the Lord.