

## Why study the book of Daniel?

Are you interested in apocalyptic literature? Are you worried about the end of time? Would you like to understand Bible prophecy concerning the end of the world (including the prophecies in the book of Revelation)? Would you like to study Bible prophecy that predicted exactly when the Jewish Messiah (Christ) would appear the first time? Would you like to be inspired by a man of faith? Would you like to know that God is in control, even though you are going through suffering or persecution for your faith? **These are all reasons to study the book of Daniel in the Bible! Furthermore, the book of Daniel should be studied before you even consider studying the book of Revelation.**

The book of Daniel is written by and about a man of faith. The writer of Hebrews in the New Testament of the Bible alludes to two stories from the book of Daniel:

*And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, **shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.** Hebrews 11:32-34 (NASB) (emphasis mine)*

The book of Daniel is also one of the apocalyptic books in the Bible, giving detailed prophecy of the end of time. Jesus, in His teaching on the end times, refers to Daniel the prophet, and mentions one of his prophecies (see Matthew 24:15). In addition to this, the book of Daniel gives detailed prophecy concerning **when the Messiah or Christ was to appear the first time**. Daniel gives this prophecy more than 500 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. Finally, the book of Daniel emphasizes the sovereignty of God.

My method of teaching is to provide some guidance while having the student dig into the Bible for himself or herself. I believe in doing what is called an “**inductive Bible study.**” To do an inductive Bible study, the student learns all he or she can from the Bible itself on the subject being studied before looking at what other people say about it. This is particularly important for the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation in the Bible. So much popular literature has been written about end-time prophecy in the Bible, that people trust what someone says or writes about, instead of studying what the Bible says. **There are also a lot of false teachers and cults that use the end-time prophecies in the Bible to make a lot of money, to draw people into their false teachings, and to draw people away from a true view of Christ!** It is important to know what the Bible says instead of what others say about the Bible.

People also like to speculate about end-time subjects. I can't remember how many times I have heard someone speculate about the identity of the Anti-Christ in the 54 years that I have been alive. I also remember people speculating about certain prophecies and their possible relationship with nuclear or biological warfare. Speculating can be fun, but it can also be destructive. I look at what I know about apocalyptic literature in the Bible, and at times I like to speculate too. But I always need to come back to the fact that the Bible does not tell us every last detail about the end of time and the events leading up to it. Speculating about the

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end-times has very wide error bars. **Bible prophecy was not written for us to predict the future; it was written so that we would recognize events when or as they happen. It was also written to both warn us of things that will happen, and to comfort us by showing us that God is in control no matter what happens.** Knowing your Bible prevents you from being led astray!

The book of Daniel contains a lot more than just end-time prophecy. It shows us the life of a man of faith, who even though he was in a terrible set of circumstances, was completely sold out for God. It teaches us a lot about who God is and about many of His attributes. It shows us that God is in control! It provides one of the most detailed prophecies in the Bible predicting the Jewish Messiah and when He was to come! This is a major evidence that Jesus Christ is the Messiah that the Jews were waiting for! I hope you enjoy this study and use it to grow into a deeper relationship with God and His Son Jesus Christ.