

Daniel: The eunuch who served and subverted four different empires

Outline

I. Narration (1–6): six legends pertinent to a certain "Daniel" in the 6th century BC Originally written in the Oriental Diaspora (400-200 BC) and intended for a general audience

- 1:1-2/5 Introduction
- 1:3/6-21 Daniel and his three exiled companions, vegetarians in the palace of Belshazzar
- 2:1-13 King Nebuchadnezzar's dream (a vision of a statue made of four different metals)
 - 14-49 Daniel interprets the dream: the metals represent four oppressive empires: the Neo-Babylonian Empires, the Medes, the Persians and the Greeks (the heirs of Alexander the Great)
- 3:1-18 The golden statue: three Jewish "faggots" liberated from the fiery furnace?
- 4:1-37 Nebuchadnezzar's dream, madness and healing
- 5:1-31 King Belshazzar's feast and the writing on the wall
- 6:1-28 Daniel liberated from the lions' den (under the reign of "Darius the Mede", 6:1)

II. The four apocalyptic visions of "Daniel" (7–12): liberation from the great persecution. Written in Judah ca. 165 BC for a more erudite audience.

- 7:1-8 Daniel's dream: the four beasts (= the four metals / empires mentioned in 2:31-35)
- 9-28 God's judgment against the oppressors, carried out by a "Son of Man", 13-14
- 8:1-27 Vision of the ram (the Medes and the Persians) and the goat (Alexander the Great)
- 9:1-19 Daniel prays for his people
 - 20-27 Prophecy of the seventy weeks: an imminent liberation
- 10:1–12:13 Daniel's great final vision: the time of wrath
 - 10:1–11:1 The third year (536?) of Cyrus, king of Persia, on the bank of the river Tigris
 - 11:2-20 First wars between the Seleucids and the Lagids
 - 11:21-39 Antiochus Epíphanes (175-163 BC)
 - 11:40–12:1 The persecutor's downfall (Antiochus Epiphane 163 BC)
 - 12:2-4 Resurrection and retribution
 - 12:5-13 The sealed prophecy

Daniel makes mention of four Empires¹:

1. Babylon: Nebuchadnezzar (604-562 BC), Daniel 1–4 (see Cyrus, 1:21; cf. 6:28); [Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon (556-539 BC), absent for eight years]; Belshazzar fulfilled the role of "king" during his father Nabonidus' absence, Dan. 5; 7–8.
2. "Darius the Mede" (Dan. 5:31–6:28; 9:1-27; 11:1). Historical?²
3. Persia: Cyrus II (558-530 BC [Edict 538]). Dan. 1:21; 6:28; 10:1–12:1 (cf. 11:1); [Darius I of Persia (522-486 BC), he is *not* "Darius the Mede" from Dan. 5:31–6:28].
4. Greece: Alexander the Great conquers Persia (333 BC):
 - Antiochus IV Epíphanes (175-163 BC, reign of the Seleucids: Syria and Palestine);
 - The great persecution and the Maccabean revolt to overthrow Antiochus (167-164 BC);
 - Daniel written (ca. 165 BC) using the pseudonym "Daniel" (598-537 BC).

Judea is free (attaining its autonomy through the Maccabean revolution), 166-142 BC [Rome: conquers Jerusalem in 63 BC (– 476 AD) and is not the "fourth Empire"]

Porphyry the heretic (ca. 232-303 AD) affirmed that the book of Daniel did not have its origins in a "Daniel" from the 6th century BC, that he had neither miraculously foretold the Maccabean battles against Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Seleucid governor (Syria) in the 2nd century (167-164 BC), nor the advent of Rome as a "fourth empire" (Daniel 11). This Neo-Platonic vegetarian philosopher, born in Tyre (Syria), concluded that, rather, the book of Daniel was pseudonymous: written precisely towards the end of the Maccabean war that it supposedly foresaw (ca. 165 BC). As to the succession of four Empires, the fourth was not Rome, but the Hellenistic empire of the 2nd century BC, the successors of Alexander the Great: the Ptolomies (in Egypt) and the Seleucids.

During almost two millennia, the Church was scandalized about Porphyry's conclusions and denounced them as a heresy (see also the fundamental error, which also lasted two millennia, in the interpretation of → Song of Solomon as pious allegories instead of erotic poetry). However, in the 1800's, scientific study of the Bible started supporting Porphyry's "heresy" as being the correct interpretation of the Book of Daniel, and in the 20th century this conclusion was universally accepted (with the exception of fundamentalists, both Jewish and Christian). Maurice Casey still attempts to show that some glosses in the Syrian version of the Hebrew Bible and certain Syrian-speaking authors in the Eastern church actually anticipated Porphyry's observations, but John Collins disagrees with Casey's conclusions³.

We can accept the possibility of miraculous prophecy in the Bible (normally referring to the immediate future) without having to exaggerate its possible extent (it certainly would be quite miraculous if Daniel, in the 6th century BC, was able to describe the Maccabean battles that were to take place in the 2nd century BC, the advent of the Roman Empire and of Christianity⁴). Such increasing exaggeration concerning the extent of miracles is a common phenomenon in the history of religions. In Daniel's case, only a Maccabean date of origin can explain that the book is so specific and correct in its "predictions", whereas in 11:39 and in 11:40-45 it suddenly stops being specific and reverts to more vague and general descriptions. This phenomenon of "predictions" written *after* the events that they supposedly prophesy (*vaticinium ex eventu*) was quite common in other pseudonymous Jewish writings of the age, which also claim to be "prophesying" events in the far future: 1 Enoch; 4 Esdras and the 2nd Apocalypse of Baruch⁵. Furthermore, the narrations in Daniel 1-6 concerning the life of a certain Daniel who lived in the 6th century could contain a historical core relating to such a person's actual life, yet the selection of those narrations and the way they are told, along with the apocalyptic visions in Daniel 7-12, represent precisely what must have been the perspective and the interests of an author who lived and wrote around ca. 165 BC. If the book of Daniel was truly written by Daniel from the 6th century, we would expect to find at least some narrations that were superfluous in relation to the situation in the 2nd century, as opposed to the selection in the Book of Daniel which particularly addresses the problems of the Maccabean period.

- 1:3/6-21 Daniel and three companions are in exile; they are vegetarians in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar.
They observe the dietary laws (see Esther LXX; Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8-10)
- 2:1-13 King Nebuchadnezzar's dream (the vision of a statue made of four metals).
14-49 Daniel interprets the dream: the metals represent four oppressive Empires (the Neo-Babylonian empire, the Medes, the Persians and the Greeks (heirs of Alexander the Great)).
The fourth kingdom (2:40-43) refers to the Hellenistic empire of the 2nd century BC
- 3:1-18 Nebuchadnezzar and the golden statue; Shadrach, Meschach and Abed'nego are liberated from the furnace
Prohibition of idolatry and images (1st and 2nd of the Ten Commandments)
- 4:1-37 King "Nebuchadnezzar" 's dream, madness and healing [see Nabonidus]
Prohibition of idolatry and images (1st and 2nd of the Ten Commandments)
- 5:1-31 The 'king' of Babylon's feast (Belshazzar / Balthasar) and the writing on the wall.
Sacrilige, desecration of sacred vessels, adoration of idols.
The name of Yahweh and all that pertains to it are sacred (Ten Commandments # 1-3)
- 6:1-28 Daniel liberated from the lions' den (under "Darius the Mede", 6:1).
Prohibition of idolatry and images (1st and 2nd of the Ten Commandments)

Parallels between Joseph (Genesis 37- 50) and Daniel 1- 6

The study of parallels between the stories of Daniel, Joseph and Esther has helped to ascertain that their literary genre is not "history", but, rather, "legends of the court" or "sapiential didactic narratives"⁶:

- Both Joseph and Daniel are taken into captivity, and they become members at the Court of foreign kings.
- Both are handsome and sexually attractive (Genesis 39:6; Daniel 1:4).
- Both achieve a prominent position thanks to their capacity to interpret dreams: they are entrusted with high functions in the service of a Gentile king.
- Both possess a divine spirit (Gen 41:38; Dan 5:11, 14) and both recognize the work of God in the interpretation (Gen 40:25, 28; Dan 2:28) and in the fulfillment (Gen 41:25, 28; Dan 2:28) of dreams .
- Both are rewarded for their services with a gold chain (Gen 41:42; Dan 5:29).

Thus it is probable that the author of the Book of Daniel knew the story of Joseph and other similar ones, such as the Gentile narrative of Ahikar⁷.

Parallels between Esther and Daniel 1- 6

The Book of → Esther and Daniel 1–6 have even more in common than Esther and the Joseph narrative in Genesis 37–50⁸:

- Daniel, just as Mordecai, is an exiled single man, and member of the Court of an Empire (Babylon or Persia); both men insist on living a life which is openly and publicly faithful to the laws of Israel.
- Daniel, just as Esther, is quite attractive sexually; both live in luxury and both books refer to the King's ring that is used to seal official documents written in several languages.
- Just as Mordecai, Daniel also resists the order to prostrate himself, and both are victims of slander on the part of a pagan who tries to kill them.
- In all of the Bible, only the books of Esther and Daniel mention Imperial edicts that are irrevocable (Esther 8:8; Dan 6:8, 12).
- In both cases, the king lies awake a whole night, and the pagan enemy is killed by the same means that had originally been prepared for killing the Jew. The Book of Daniel, however, emphasizes the role of God, and God's miraculous interventions.

In the light of these narrative elements, we can understand why the Hebrew Bible includes the Book of Daniel in the "Writings" (along with other didactic narratives such as Esther and Ruth, and the sapiential literature), and not among the Prophets. The LXX and subsequent versions of the Bible placed Daniel within the Prophets, thus contributing towards the exaggeration of the miraculous; notably, even Protestant Bibles (which claim to offer a faithful reflection of the Hebrew Bible) follow the LXX by placing Daniel after Ezekiel within the section of the Prophets.

Ezekiel refers two times to a certain "Dan'el", along with Noah and Job, as a paragon of *justice* (Ezek 14:14⁹) and *wisdom* (28:3). It was formerly supposed that Ezekiel was referring to Daniel¹⁰, although earlier commentators could not explain why Ezekiel placed Daniel, from the 6th century, between Noah (of the flood, before Abraham, Genesis 6–9) and → Job (also from patriarchal times) when this Daniel had been a contemporary of → Ezekiel and of the Exile. Both quotes were used in order to confirm the historicity of the "prophet Daniel" for the 6th century, but archaeological findings refuted this interpretation. Starting in 1929, thousands of clay tablets were discovered in Ugarit (today called Ras Shamra, on the coast of Syria) and include the "Aqhat Epic" (ca. 1400-1200 BC), with references to a just and pious king named "Dan-el" (*dn' il*, "my judge is God [El]"). This King "Dan-el" did not have children, so he prayed to the gods, whereafter Aqhat was born. As a king, Dan-el passed judgment in favor of widows and orphans (cf. Daniel in the apocryphal narrative of Susanna¹¹). The Ugaritic language is closely related to Hebrew, and the discovery of those numerous texts in Ras Shamra is of great importance for understanding Biblical Hebrew (→ Psalms; the names of the sacrifices in Leviticus). They also help us understand many references to mythological figures in poetry, such as Leviathan (Isaiah 27:1, Psalm 74:14; Job 26:13) = the Ugaritic Lotan, Baal's enemy.

One Ugaritic legend refers to a certain rite of cooking a goatling in its mother's milk in order to bring about rain, a custom which was expressly forbidden in Ex 23:19; 34:26; Deut 14:21. In the Baal epic, Baal has sex with a calf, which undoubtedly explains why the Bible explicitly prohibits bestiality (Lev 18:23, 24; [20:15-16])¹².

1. The poor and the oppressed. The study of parallels between Daniel, Esther and the story of Joseph in Genesis not only helps us to appreciate stereotypical characteristics and to specify the literary genre of these texts as sapiential, didactic legends; such an investigation also throws light on these narratives' function and on their perspective. They are told from the vantage point of an ethnic group subjugated under domination, trying to show that, in spite of its having been conquered, the ethnic group keeps on preserving a wisdom superior to that of its conquerors and oppressors¹³. These legends affirm the courage, even the superiority of a people that have lost all political power, i.e. they defend the dignity of the oppressed in the face of their oppressors and of the mechanisms of oppression¹⁴.

Stephen Breck Reid¹⁵ adds that the bilingual character of the book of Daniel, which is written in Hebrew (1:1–2:4a; 8:1–12:13) and in Aramaic (2:4b–7:23) also reflects the colonial system, in which the colonized people maintain their own indigenous language (Hebrew) alongside the Imperial language (Aramaic). In other words, although the technical vocabulary for oppression and poverty is not abundant in Daniel, the whole book represents the perspective of a people conquered and dominated by a series of four violent Empires. The narrative perspective is that of an elite, which has now been conquered, driven into exile and dominated—formerly arrogant, but now humiliated and repentant (Daniel 9; → Lamentations), cruelly persecuted (Daniel 3, 6, 8-12) and pleading to Yahweh for definitive, final liberation. The program presented in Daniel 7–12 is based, in part, on a renewal of the Deuteronomic pact (Dan. 9:4-19; Jeremiah 9:2) and invokes the God of the Exodus in order to reclaim liberation from oppression. To invoke the God of the Exodus is a political act (9:15), since the paradigm of the Exodus "funciona en la imaginación bíblica para deconstruir todos los 'faraones' que piensan que sus reinos son eternos"¹⁶.

The text which is most explicit and strong on the subject of the poor and the oppressed occurs when Daniel finishes interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream by calling the emperor to repentance:

Expiate your sins by practicing works of liberating justice (*tsidqah*, Aramaic)
and your iniquities by helping the poor-oppressed (*'anayim*, Aramaic).
(Dan. 4:24/27¹⁷)

The justice reclaimed by Daniel is not limited to "alms": this is evident from the parallelism with the "poor-oppressed" and from the context of persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes, which the book of Daniel attempts to resist¹⁸. Daniel 4:24/27 denounces the oppressive measures taken against the exiles, which were probably common under that Empire¹⁹. Although Daniel is referring to the Persian emperor (1:21; 10:1), it is notable that the book remains silent concerning Cyrus' decree (539 BC) that liberated the Jews from Babylonian captivity, especially since that decree was an outstanding example of liberating justice.

When he introduces the figure of Antiochus Epiphanes, Daniel emphasizes the violence and oppression which characterize that ruler—in other words, the "persecution" of the people of God, the Great "Tribulation", is an abuse of power, an injustice committed using violent acts of oppression²⁰.

23 The fourth beast is the fourth kingdom [the Greek empire of Alexander the Great]
which will arise in this world.
It will be different from the other kingdoms;
it shall devour (*te' kul*) the whole earth—
it will crush it (*tedushinah*) and stamp on it (*tadqinah*)!
24 The ten horns are ten kings
who shall arise out of this kingdom [the kings of the Seleucid dynasty].
Another king shall come after them
different from the former ones [Antiochus IV Epiphanes, 175-163 BC],
and he shall dethrone three kings.

25 He shall speak words against the Most High
 and shall oppress (*balle'*) the saints;
 he shall try to change the festivities
 and the laws as well,
 and the saints shall remain under his power
 during three and a half years (lit.: "a time, and times, and half a time").
 (Dan 7:23-25)

Since it was written in the midst of the persecutions carried out by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Book of Daniel ends the section of visions with descriptions of this ruler's oppressive acts, his violence, arrogance, sacrilege and blasphemy: "the little horn" (Dan. 7:8; 8:9-14), the "insolent king" (8:23-25), the "king who shall arise" (7:26-27) and, most of all, "the contemptible man" (11:21-45). Before the last description (11:21-45), Daniel gives a long overview of history from Cyrus (10:1, 539-522 BC), increasing in detail, up to Antiochus (175-163). However, this synopsis' conclusion (11:40-45) becomes quite vague, and the narration of the death of Antiochus does not correspond with the historical data. Thus, it is evident that the book was written at that particular moment in the midst of the persecutions when the Maccabean resistance against Antiochus had begun (described by Daniel as being "of little help", 11:34). In other words, that which the book presents as "prophecies" made by Daniel from the 6th century are actually prophecies *ex eventu* (written after the events which they claim to prophesy²¹). Other pseudonymous Apocalyptic books are similar: they contain long descriptions of history, become all the more specific as they draw near to the author's own time, and all of a sudden become imprecise and incorrect when they attempt to prophesy the future.

In Daniel 9 we encounter a dialectic between the Deuteronomic theology of prayer on the one hand (9:1-19), in which Israel is driven into exile as a punishment for its sins, and the Apocalyptic theology of angelic revelation on the other hand (9:20-27), where the sins which are being condemned (those of oppression, violence and sacrilege) have been committed by the oppressors, and where history is predetermined by God, who solely intervenes by carrying out the final, decisive act of liberation. The angel's pronouncement is a "Midrash" on the prophecy of Jeremiah (Dan 9:2; Jer 25:11-12; 29:10): it attempts to reinterpret the text from the Scriptures in order to make it more comprehensible, useful and relevant for a later generation²². It arrives at an interpretation which is suggested by the text's literal meaning (the "70 years" in Jeremiah), yet which is also clearly different. 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 interpreted Jeremiah's prophecy as having been fulfilled by Cyrus' decree (539 BC). Daniel 9:20-27 does not refer to Rome, nor to Jesus, but to Antiochus Epiphanes—to the assassination of High Priest Onias III (170 BC), to the sacrilege committed by Antiochus when he erected a small altar to Zeus in the Temple, and to the judgment against Antiochus, predetermined and carried out by God²³. The Apocalyptic revelation describes the whole age between the "going forth of the word" (9:25, to Daniel, under "Darius the Mede" without specifying the year within the 6th century as previously indicated in Dan. 9:1) up to the reign of Antiochus (175-163 BC) as times of "oppression" (*tsoq*, 7:25²⁴). The Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25) seems to have affected the rereading of Jeremiah's prophecy ("seventy years" now becomes seventy times seven, i.e. 490 years); it also affects the meaning of final liberation resulting in the destruction of Antiochus the tyrant (9:27) and ushering in a permanent state of liberating justice (*tsedeq*; 9:24).

The last reference to oppression in Daniel can be found at the end of the book, in the first text within the Hebrew Bible that clearly affirms resurrection and eternal life:

1 At that time shall arise Michael [the angel who protects the Jewish people],
 the great protecting prince.
 There shall be a time of oppression (*tsarah* 1²⁵)
 such as never has been seen since nations exist.
 Those belonging to your people shall be liberated/saved (*yimmalet*),
 those whose name shall be found written in the book,
 2 and shall arise from the dust of the earth
 many of those who sleep,
 some to everlasting life,
 but others to remain in shame
 and perpetual confusion.
 3 Those who are wise shall shine
 with the brightness of the heavenly vault;

those who instruct the multitudes in the path of justice (*matsdyqe*)
shall shine like the stars for all eternity (Dan. 12:1-3).

The phrase "time of oppression" (*eth tsarah*) occurs in six other texts within the Hebrew Bible (Judges 10:14; Psalm 37:39; Is 33:2; Jer 14:8; 15:11; 30:11²⁶). The meaning of oppression is made clear by the contexts (especially → Judges 10:6-14, but also Psalm 37:35-40; Is 33:1-2; Jer 15:11). In this situation of oppression, Michael, the angel who protects the Jewish people, manifests his "option in favor of the poor-oppressed" (Dan. 12:1²⁷), just as angels do throughout the whole Bible (→ Gen. 21:17-18; Lk. 16:22).

In other texts of the Hebrew Bible, to have one's name "written in the book" simply points to the fact that one is a member belonging to the community of the pact made on earth, but in this context, which continues referring to the resurrection, the phrase seems to be alluding to the book of eternal life²⁸. Although earlier books spoke metaphorically of the resurrection (Ezek 37; Hos 6:2; Is 26:19; Job 14:12; Jer 51:39, 57), Daniel 12:2 is the only clear reference to a resurrection which is literally undergone by individuals²⁹. Daniel does not indicate that the resurrected enjoy a terrestrial life thereafter, nor does he allude to a universal resurrection, nor does he mention Hell³⁰. Just as in → Revelation 20, the teaching in Daniel 12 concerning resurrection emerges from a historical context of persecution and oppression, and here we are dealing with a limited resurrection. The justice taught by the wise (Dan 12:3) is the justice bestowed upon martyrs and upon all those who risk their lives in solidarity with them. The described resurrection (12:2) seems to be referring particularly to them (in order to vindicate them) as well as to their persecutors (in order that the latter be punished³¹). Thus, Daniel's post-imperial vision is valid for those who have died as well as for those who are still alive³²).

Daniel 9:24-27: 70 weeks (7 + 62 + 1/2 + 1/2) = 490 years of oppression³³. In Daniel 9:2 and 24-27, the 70 years of Jeremiah 25:11-12 and 29:10 are now interpreted as 70 *weeks* of years (490 years³⁴). Jeremiah and Daniel interpret the Exile as a punishment for Israel's sins (Lev. 26:18, punished *seven times*; see 2 Chron 36:21 and the Sabbath years in Lev 26:34-35).

9:24 "To seal both vision and prophecy", in other words, they will be ratified or finished (no longer necessary); "to anoint the Holy of Holies" = the purification and new dedication of the Temple, 164 BC; the Temple (24) and the High Priests Joshua and Onias (25, 26) = anointed (not Christ); The angel Gabriel emphasizes that the Temple is the "focus of the battle for liberation" by indicating the time and duration of its purification (8:11-14; 9:24-27³⁵). It is an anointed *space*, thus the text is not referring to a person such as the Messiah).

9:25 The word (*dabar*) to restore and build Jerusalem = ???

- the divine oracle of Jeremiah 25:1 (605 BC)?³⁶
- the divine oracle of Jeremiah 29:10 (598 BC)? 586 BC, the destruction of Jerusalem? --
- A decree? The numbers are almost exact
- A decree issued by Cyrus (539/8 BC), Ezra 1:1-4³⁷; permission to return, not to reconstruct
- *Dan 7:23, the word of the angel Gabriel: the first year of "Darius the Mede", 539 BC³⁸
- A decree issued by Darius I (521-486 BC), Ezra 6:6-12: Temple reconstructed 520-515 BC
- A decree issued by Artaxerxes I (465-423 BC), Ezra 7:12-26; Nehemiah and the walls 444 BC
(Dispensationalists and other fundamentalists); "walls", not the whole city

7 weeks (49 years) → the anointed chief arrives = ???

- Zorobabel or High Priest Joshua 520-14 BC, Hag 1:1-14; Zech; 6:9-14; Ezra 2:2; 3:2
- or Cyrus II, the "anointed/messiah" (Is 45:1)

Streets and *walls* of Jerusalem reconstructed in 62 weeks (434 years)

= a bad calculation or a rounded-off number to indicate the duration of the age of oppression (Dan 2:41, 43; 11:4-20) (cf. Nehemiah and the reconstructed *walls*, 444 BC under Artaxerxes I)

9:26 they will take the anointed chief's life = High Priest Onias III, assassinated in 171. BC

- (2 Macc 4:30-38; 32-34) → 3 1/2 years until the arrival of Antiochus, 168 BC
- Both Jerusalem and its temple destroyed by people under the orders of a king who shall come = Antiochus 168 BC

- The end will arrive suddenly...war and destruction

9:27 *One more week (seven years)*: he will make a pact (with Hellenized Jews, 1 Macc 1:11-15)

half a week (3 ½ years) a horrible sacrilege = Antiochus profanes the Temple, 168 BC

Abomination of desolation: Dan 8:13-14; 1 MCA 1:54

167-164, the last 3 ½ years; Dan 7:25; 8:13-14

destruction is visited upon the author of these horrors = death of Antiochus, 164 BC

(Dan 7:26-27; 11:40-45; cf. 1 Macc 6:1-16; 2 Macc 1:13-17; 9:1-28)

2 Women. The absence of women in the Book of Daniel is noteworthy—the only female figure who appears in the story and talks is the Queen Mother, a wise, anonymous widow, who advises her son, King Belshazzar, to seek out Daniel's counsel (5:10-12; see also the wives and concubines of Belshazzar, who appear in the story without talking, 5:2; cf. the wise Queen Mother of King Lemuel, → Proverbs 31:1-9; and the wise counsel of Pilate's wife, the only married couple in → Matthew 27:19). Nonetheless, Carol Newsom concludes that Daniel is a very valuable book for women, since it offers a strong critique of the ideology of State power and Imperial power and of its arrogance, and this critique can also be applied to patriarchal hegemony³⁹.

The narratives of Daniel 1-6 were probably written during the 4th and 3rd centuries BC by Jews who lived in the Diaspora (in Syria or in Mesopotamia). They explore the relation between royal, State power and God's sovereignty. They recognize the dangers and vulnerability of life in exile, but they also show a certain optimism regarding the possibilities of achieving success, even in the royal courts of the Gentile world. On the other hand, the apocalyptic visions of Daniel 7-12, written in Palestine between 168 and 164 BC, describe State power as being totally corrupt and violent, and destined to be destroyed by divine wrath⁴⁰. A similar dialectic can be found in certain New Testament texts (→ Romans 13, a generous, well-meaning State; → Revelation 13, a diabolical State⁴¹).

Feminist theology, highly alert to the traditional exclusion of women's voices, insists on a reading of Daniel that emphasizes the evident diversity of voices contained all within one book: "Así una lectura feminista de Daniel concluye que la forma del libro, que preserva fielmente las perspectivas de dos comunidades judías distintas en su enfrentamiento con el problema del poder estatal, es más congenial que la ideología epistemológica explícita del libro que considera el conocimiento como un secreto revelado solamente a la élite de los sabios"⁴².

As Carol Newsom points out, Daniel 1 only plays with the distinction between apparent power (Nebuchadnezzar as conqueror and emperor) and authentic power (belonging to God, 1:2, 9; and that of Daniel and his three companions, 1:9, 15-20): "La dinámica del relato hace eco a las mujeres, las minorías étnicas y otras personas marginadas invitadas a participar en una institución de poder de la cual anteriormente fueron excluidas"⁴³. Newsom concludes that institutions such as corporations and churches quite often cannot imagine that certain people commonly considered as 'needy' could actually be harboring resources of power that the institution desperately needs.

In Daniel 2-4 we have a cycle of narratives concerned with Nebuchadnezzar's education in terms of recognizing authentic power, which comes from God. The first educational experience is his dream and its interpretation as revealed by God to Daniel (2:28, 30, 37-38, 46-47). The enormous golden statue erected by Nebuchadnezzar functions as an image of his own royal power (Dan 3). In Daniel 4, Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a large tree representing Imperial power, which needs to function in order to feed all creation (4:10-12; see Dame Wisdom as a "tree of life", Prov 3:18). Carol Newsom warns against simplistic applications to modern democracies, where power proceeds from the citizens' consent, not from a heavenly decree. Nevertheless, she concludes: "Hay mucho en esta imagen [of the tree] de interés para mujeres que luchan políticamente para hacer que el gobierno responda mejor a las necesidades de niños, de familias, y de los pobres como de los ricos. Esta imagen presenta el poder del estado con una expresión privilegiada, no en su capacidad militar, sino en el bienestar de toda la comunidad"⁴⁴.

Although Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue in Daniel 2 presented an image of the State which is basically positive and concerned with the welfare of its citizens, open to repentance, change and reform, Daniel 7 opens the second section of the book (Dan 7-12) with a vision of the same four Empires, but subsumed under the images of four beasts that emerge from the sea. Carol Newsom recognizes that when evil seems to have a monopoly on all the visible resources of power, apocalyptic literature can function as a powerful cry against oppression and violence, thus offering comfort and support to those who still dare to believe in the triumph of good. However, she warns

against the dangers of adopting a vision which is too simplistic and dualistic (fundamentalist), where everything is seen in black and white, without any shades of gray. The Apocalyptic world seems to be a patriarchal world as well: males fighting with military resources in order to gain political dominion. The world of women, with its daily routines at home and in the village, is quite different⁴⁵ → Prov 31). Notably, when we direct our attention either towards the figure of Daniel in the narratives (Dan 1-6), a eunuch belonging to an exiled people, depending on God to enlighten and liberate him, or towards the figure of Daniel who utters the Apocalyptic visions (Dan 7-12), a pacifist in the midst of the Maccabean revolution⁴⁶, we encounter in both cases a paradigm for sexual minorities that breaks with the usual schemes.

Concerning the importance and pertinence of the Book of Daniel for our world today, John Collins points out that many of the traditional emphases, still widely studied in fundamentalist and Dispensationalist circles (the final Great Tribulation, the Antichrist, the abduction of the Church, the Millennium), are not taken seriously any more in today's circles of academic Biblical erudition: "Las profecías de Daniel ya no sirven de pruebas cristológicas, ni puede el esquema cronológico del libro funcionar para estructurar la historia universal"...since "Daniel no es una fuente confiable de información factual, ni sobre el pasado, ni sobre el futuro"⁴⁷. Collins still criticizes the erudite attempt of Brevard Childs (Yale), who wrote: "El carácter del libro, como atado a un tiempo específico, no se puede evadir con vagas afirmaciones que es 'un testigo veraz sobre el final de este mundo', que no explican *como* tal testimonio sea veraz"⁴⁸. However, Collins recognizes that "El libro todavía puede ayudarnos a 'nombrar' las 'bestias' y los 'pequeños cuernos' de este mundo" pero no como historiografía o futurología: "el testimonio es más parecido a la poesía, pues el lenguaje es mayormente de leyenda y mito, que apela más a la imaginación que al intelecto racional"⁴⁹.

In the rereadings undertaken by Jesus and by the authors of the New Testament, Daniel helped them "name the beasts" (the Roman Empire, in connivance with the religious oligarchy of Jerusalem). In the 20th century, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and so many others denounced Hitler and his Nazi followers, suffering martyrdom—and in the new millennium, many are meeting a similar fate in the face of global terrorism. The media constantly and faithfully remind us of the extreme poverty suffered by the population of a country that is being bombarded by the most powerful Empire in history. Furthermore, the oppression of women under the Taliban was the object of much attention, since they were not permitted to study or work outside their homes. The churches are also constantly drawing attention to the plight of Christians in Afghanistan, sent to jail for proselytizing. Yet what have we heard about sexual minorities?

3 Sexual minorities. The only woman mentioned in the book of Daniel is the widowed mother of "Persian king" Belshazzar (Dan 5:10-12). This alerts us to the extent to which sexual minorities are prevalent in the whole book. The only mentioned "family", that of Belshazzar (countless wives and concubines, 5:2), is totally lacking in "family values" (5:3-4, 22-31), whereas Daniel and his three single companions lived together (2:17) and are paradigms of faith and virtue. During the history of the Christian church, the idolatry of "family" and of its supposed "values" has entailed that the exclusive prevalence of sexual minorities in the book of Daniel has passed without notice in innumerable Bible commentaries.

Daniel and his three single friends, young men brought up in noble Jewish homes, were taken to the palace as exiled prisoners, partly due to the fact that they were quite "handsome" (*tobe mare'h*, 1:4), and they were made slaves under the authority of Ashpenaz, the "chief of the *eunuchs*". The most common translations use euphemisms ("chief of *palace service*", DHH) in order to conceal the reality pointed out in more literal translations: RV95, "eunuch(s) (*saris[im]*)" 1:3, 7-11, 18 (seven times in Dan 1; see also Jer 29:1-2⁵⁰). According to Josephus⁵¹ and other ancient authorities, Daniel and his three companions were (castrated) eunuchs. John Collins⁵² gives a good summary of the evidence → Nehemiah 1:11; Is 56:3-8; Mt 19:12; Acts 8:27). The author of Daniel 1 wanted to present Daniel as a hero, and it is easy to understand his discretion in not explicitly referring to the castration of exiled Jews. But the emphasis (seven times) in referring to Ashpenaz as chief of the eunuchs and of the young prisoners does clarify their situation, which was quite common for prisoners of war at the time. And thus, we can understand why Daniel and his companions have neither wives nor children, how Daniel was able to continue as a man who maintained the trust of kings under three different empires, and many other characteristics in this book.

Similarly to → Esther, who underwent a year's beauty treatment under the eunuch Hegai, Daniel and his friends underwent three years of education under the authority of Ashpenaz, chief of the royal eunuchs, until they were

finally presented to king Nebuchadnezzar (1:9, 18). They were not given a beauty treatment, but they chose to eat dishes that were "for the weak", associated with women⁵³ (concerning the diet of vegetables and water, see → Romans 14). Daniel was able to maintain himself in a position of royal confidence for some 60 years (under Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, "Darius the Mede" and up to Cyrus, 1:21; 10:1) since eunuchs did not represent such a high risk for the security of the King and of his harem⁵⁴. When Daniel is able to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he is richly rewarded (Dan 2:48-49), but not with a wife (cf. Joseph in Genesis 37-50).

The narratives in Daniel 1-6 describe a young man who is not only handsome and intelligent, but also charming (→ David, 1-2 Samuel). As Esther, Daniel also manages to establish an intimate bond with the chief of the eunuchs, and the text affirms that Ashpenaz felt "love and [maternal] compassion" (1:9, *khesed* and *rakhmim*) for Daniel. After three years of study, Daniel and his companions caused a great impression on King Nebuchadnezzar (1:18-21). When Arioch, captain of the king's guard, arrives with the order to kill all the wise men, Daniel manages to convince him to let him talk with the king (2:13-14). When Nebuchadnezzar has the dream featuring a great tree, Daniel is the man of confidence for whom the king asks and from whom the king receives the interpretation (4:8). Under Belshazzar, the mother in the Imperial court seems to be the only person who knows Daniel (Dan 5:10-12). But then, once again, in the subsequent narration about the lions' den, Daniel is described as being the person in whom Darius the Mede places the greatest confidence (6:3). Although the king orders (against his own will) the death penalty for Daniel, the text particularly emphasizes the great affection that Darius felt for Daniel (6:14, 16, 18-23).

The queen (5:10-12), just as much as King Belshazzar (5:13-16), sees Daniel as a sort of shaman, a man specially gifted with divine Spirit; → Micah, also full of the Spirit, was a man of peace who taught the wise path of justice and peace (4:1-4). However, the diversity of Biblical texts on the subjects of war and peace suggests that it would be risky to try to establish an "absolute ethics" of pacifism (→ Mt. 5).

Whereas the Daniel figure in the narratives (Dan 1-6) is a eunuch, the Daniel who narrates the apocalyptic visions (Dan 7-12) was thoroughly impressed with the military figure of Alexander the Great (who was well-known to be gay, and, what is more, the lover of a handsome eunuch; see below). Nevertheless, the Daniel who narrates the visions seems to be neither frustrated nor indignant about having been excluded from the Maccabean revolutionary army, since he offers evidence of being a pacifist. At least, he describes the Maccabean revolution as being of "little help" (Dan 11:34), and this passage has led some commentators to describe the book of Daniel as a "Pacifist treatise"⁵⁵—since Daniel does not recommend the Maccabean path of armed violence, but, rather, the path of the wise who attempt to instruct the people in the path of justice and solidarity with the weak, and of being willing to die, not to kill, for one's faith (Dan 12:3; 3:16-18; 4:27; 6:10-24).

Although Zechariah seems not only to refer to Alexander the Great (→ Zech 9:1-8), but also to do so in quite positive terms, Daniel refers to Alexander in four different chapters, without naming him, but using metaphors and descriptions in such detail that they leave no room for doubt (see below: Dan 2:40-43; 7:7; 8:5-8, especially 8:21-22; 11:3-4⁵⁶). If the author of these texts were a eunuch (as the Daniel figure in the narratives), we could well understand his fascination with "the magnificent horn" (Dan 8:5, BJ) of the gay military hero who loved a handsome, well-known eunuch—and perhaps also why he insisted so much on the conqueror's "different" character (Dan 7:7, 19, 23; cf. the despised Antiochus Epiphanes, "the little horn", 7:8). Furthermore, we can comprehend why a young man who suffered castration as a prisoner of war would have so much pleasure in describing the destruction of the enemies' "horns" (8:7-9), the possibility of having a new horn grow in the place where an older one was destroyed, and how a little horn can also grow (8:7-10).

Most of all, although the last vision (10:1-12:13) does not reveal much about the future, the introduction to the vision is quite revealing about Daniel as a representative of sexual minorities. The modern reader, captive to Neo-Platonic ideologies, supposes that angels have neither a human body nor sexual capacities, yet several texts in the Bible refer to angels as human beings (Mark 16:5). Jacob wrestled all night with an angel, and that would be difficult if the angel had no human body; moreover, the narration of Sodom (Genesis 19) makes it clear that angels can arouse sexual attraction in others (→ Judas 7). Thus, although Daniel 10, in the beginning of Daniel's vision, refers to a "man (*ish*) clothed in linen" (10:5), the angelical character of that "man" is soon made manifest—his identity as Gabriel⁵⁷. The detailed description of the suntanned, "bronze" skin (not white, 10:6) on Gabriel's body does not only resemble other descriptions of celestial figures in apocalyptic literature (→ Rev 1), but also the descriptions of the beloved male in the → Song of Solomon 5:10-16.

Only Daniel has this vision, and his companions, inexplicably frightened, conveniently flee—leaving Daniel and Gabriel alone (10:7-8). For his part, Gabriel addresses Daniel twice, calling him "beloved man" (*khamudot*, fem. pl.; 10:11, 19; see 9:23; "beloved man"⁵⁸; cf. *khamadim*, masc. pl. "altogether lovely", Song of Solomon 5:16). The Spanish RV95 maintains the literal strength of the Hebrew "greatly beloved". But other translations attempt to conceal this, starting with the LXX "worthy of pity". Modern translations commonly opt for one of two escape routes: either they change the expressed love into an admiration of Daniel's character ("esteemed", NVI) or they make Daniel the object of divine, not angelical love ("God loves you very much", DHH). The same strong verb (*khamad*) is used in the Ten Commandments (Deut 5:21) to prohibit "coveting" (also in Prov 6:25, the prohibition of coveting a prostitute).

Daniel's first reaction to the handsome angel is not very manly, since he faints, similarly to → Esther in the arms of the king (according to the Deutero-Canonical version) and he falls into a deep sleep (10:8-9; cf. Jacob *wrestling* all night with an angel, Gen. 32:22-32 and Daniel's quite manly behavior in the lion's den, Dan 6). This phenomenon appears to be similar to current Pentecostal/Charismatic experiences ("to faint in the Spirit"). Just like Sleeping Beauty, Daniel only awakens, trembling, after Gabriel touches him (10:10—afterwards, Gabriel touches his lips, 10:16, 18). Although Biblical angels generally do not accept adoration, when Gabriel awakens his beloved Daniel, he places him in a kneeling position (10:6, 15)—the same gesture that Mordecai refused to make in obeisance to Haman → Esther. In the following revelation, Gabriel tells Daniel about his celestial military adventures with his angel companion Michael (10:13; see the famous Sacred Band of Thebes in Athens). Just as Michael had strengthened Gabriel, now Gabriel tenderly gives courage to Daniel. During the whole narrative, Daniel addresses Gabriel as his "Lord" (10:16-17, 19) and even voluntarily kneels in front of the angel, adopting the position of a slave (*'ebed*, 17). Not only does Gabriel imbue Daniel with strength, but he also gives him peace/shalom (10:18; → Song of Solomon 8:10). Especially for a man who has never given any evidence of interest towards women, the whole tender scene with the angel Gabriel is possibly more "revealing" than the supposed "prophecies" that follow (Dan 11-12).

In his polemic against Antiochus Epiphanes, Daniel says: "He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers, *nor to the love of women*, nor shall he give heed to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all" (11:37). The literal Hebrew phrase could be an accusation of homosexuality, and Luther interpreted it as an allusion to papal celibacy. Saint Jerome, at the other extreme, translated: "he shall be engrossed in lust for women" (Vulgate). However, modern translations that choose to interpret the ambiguous Hebrew phrase as a reference to the god "beloved by women" seem to be preferable: in other words, this is probably an allusion to Adonis-Tammuz⁵⁹ (see also Ezekiel 8:14).

Alexander III (the Great) of Macedonia (356-323 BC) and the Bible

Alexander, the son of Philip II (King of Macedonia) and Queen Olympias, had Aristotle as his tutor starting when he was six years old (342-340 BC), and the philosopher encouraged him in his love for Classical Greek culture and literature. When he was 14 years old, Alexander commanded the left flank of the Macedonian army, and, after his father's death in 336, ascended to the throne at the age of 20. After conquering the Persian Empire (333 BC), he managed, within ten years, to create the largest Empire in history. In the process of doing so, Alexander revolutionized the art of war: for example, he left the wounded behind so that they would marry with the local population, thus establishing Greek colonies and making Greek the first universal language in history. After having conquered Egypt (332), he founded the city of Alexandria, which became the main intellectual capital of the Ancient world. It is the city where the Hebrew Bible was translated into the Greek *koiné* (the Septuagint version, LXX), which was to be the Bible of the early Christian churches (see the New Testament, also in Greek). Once Alexander had extended his empire up to the borders of India (the Hindus river), his soldiers refused to follow any further. He returned to Babylon in 323 BC, where he died on June 13th at the age of 32, from fatigue, wounds and fever. Hellenism, the cultural synthesis between East and West, continues to be a fundamental influence in Western history, and with the Judeo-Christian tradition, it expressed itself in the syncretism of the Catholic Church (apart from numerous popular expressions of faith, see also the Neo-Platonic theology of Saint Augustine and the Aristotelian theology of Saint Thomas of Aquine).

Although Alexander bewedded the Sogdian princess Roxane, his marriage was more a political gesture than an expression of love. His strong passion for handsome young men was legendary. In 324, when Hephaestion died,

having been his closest friend since youth, Alexander went through a quite extravagant period of mourning. Afterwards, he enjoyed a relationship with the handsome eunuch Bagoas, who had previously been the young favorite of King Darius of Persia; Alexander took many eunuchs as sexual companions (Is 39:7; Joel 4:3; see → Nehemiah and → Ecclesiastes). In spite of his "gay" life, the Koran () regarded him as a prophet: "Alexander of the two horns" (*Ishkander du al-qarnain*).

Alexander the Great in the Bible⁶⁰:

→ Zech 9:1-8 debatable identity, but with positive characteristics (330 BC)
Daniel 2:33 legs of iron (statue), = fourth kingdom, 40; metaphoric, implicit, neutral
7:7, 19 the fourth beast = the fourth kingdom, 7:23 ("different", 3 times)
8:5-8, 21-22 the he-goat with a magnificent horn; cf. Antiochus ("small horn")
11:3-4 a brave king (with no descendants⁶¹)
1 Maccabees (130-100 BC) 1:1-9; 6:2 explicit, negative ("arrogant")

Bibliography on Alexander the Great [apart from Collins (1993) on Daniel 8]

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Hindley, Clifford (2001). *Who's Who in Gay and Lesbian History*, 15-16.
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Daniel 3 and the three Jewish "faggots" in the furnace (they preferred to be burned rather than to commit apostasy). In the tragic, thoroughly censured history of homophobia, many Western cultures feature the burning of sexual minorities as preferred method of punishment⁶². For example, Joan of Arc (1412-31) was burned by the Inquisition for her heresies, the main one of which consisted in that she refused to forsake the male clothing that she had worn as a military leader. Five centuries after having burned her, in 1920, the Roman Catholic Church canonized her as a "saint"⁶³. The feast day of Joan, the first canonized transvestite person, is now May 30th.

When all the men of Sodom attempted to rape the visiting angels, the entire city (including women and children) was destroyed by fire (Genesis 19). Later on, when the sin of Sodom was misinterpreted as "sodomy" (anal penetration of a male), the narrative of Genesis remained in human memory forever, suggesting that the appropriate punishment was to burn the transgressors.

Lev 20:13 imposes the penalty of death for two males guilty of anal sexual relations, probably by stoning, which was the most common method of capital punishment in the Hebrew Bible (see John 8:1-11: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone"). However, the next verse (Lev 20:14) requires that a man who marries both a woman and her mother be "burned alive", along with them (the same applies to the daughter of a priest who offers himself in prostitution, Lev 21:9; see the adultery of Tamar⁶⁴, Gen 38:24-26). Bernadette Brooten points out the great injustice of always putting both people to death, when often the passive person was the victim of rape, or a war prisoner, a slave, or an abused child or young person⁶⁵.

Fone writes about France in the 13th century as follows: "Comúnmente las sentencias condenaron al sodomita a ser 'quemado vivo, junto con los registros de su proceso judicial'—la censura de la evidencia"⁶⁶. In a chapter entitled "The Burning Question", Fone points out that the first penalty of death in the furnace for a sodomite was carried out in Ghent (Belgium, 1292⁶⁷). In the 16th century, the Council of Trent and the Counter-Reformation produced an unprecedented number of persecutions and death penalties for sodomy⁶⁸. In Germany in the Second World War, during the "Holocaust", besides killing some six million Jews, the Nazis also killed thousands of homosexuals. Many Jews now prefer to use the term "Shoah" (obstruction), in order to avoid any suggestion that this horror could in any way be seen as a sacrifice mandated by God (see the holocausts commanded by God according to Leviticus 1).

The first documented use of the word "faggot" in English in order to designate homosexuals (pansies, queers) occurred in the press in Portland, Oregon in 1914⁶⁹. In Europe, the punishment of burning sexual minorities to death was common over centuries (with the exception of England, where, following the decree of Henry VIII in 1553, sodomites were hanged). Possibly under the influence of those (European immigrants to the US?) who remembered the punishment of Sodom and the Medieval practice of burning sodomites, the term "faggots" as applied to effeminate homosexuals emerged from the imagined "faggots" of wood to kindle a fire, often abbreviated as "fag(s)". By shouting that insult to gays and lesbians today (and this is still quite common in schools, colleges, universities and the workplace), hardly anyone truly realizes the horrible practice and the homophobic tradition which this word represents.

Bibliography: faggots; Joan of Arc

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Daniel 4, Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus (the last king of Babylon, 556-539 BC).

For many years, various investigators had suspected that the narration in Daniel 4 mentioning Nebuchadnezzar and his ten-year absence from Babylon was actually referring to Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon: when Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon, the king was Nabonidus, not Nebuchadnezzar. Then the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, and in 1956 J. T. Malick published an important discovery: the prayer of Nabonidus, dated ca. 75-50 BC, which has an obvious connection with Daniel 4 and upholds the conclusions of earlier investigators (translation from the Aramaic by Frank Cross⁷⁰):

(1) Las palabras de la oración que Nabonid, rey de Babilonia, el gran rey, oró cuando se fue golpeado (2) con una mala enfermedad, decretada por Dios en Teman: "Yo, Nabonid, fui golpeado con una mala enfermedad (3) por siete años, y desde aquel entonces llegué a ser como una bestia y oré al Altísimo (4) y, en cuanto a mi pecado, lo perdonó. Un adivino—quien era un Judío de los Exiliados—me vino y dijo: (5) 'Cuenta y escribe estas cosas para dar honor al nombre del Dios Altísimo'. Y así escribí: 'Fui golpeado con una mala enfermedad en Teman por el decreto del Dios Altísimo, y en cuanto a mí, (7) por siete años yo oraba a los dioses de plata y oro, bronce y hierro, madera, piedra y lodo, porque estuve de la opinión que eran dioses.... [Another, later fragment refers to a "dream" which "disturbed" the king.]

This discovery is important, since (1) it demonstrates once more that—contrarily to so much fundamentalist propaganda—archaeology does not always uphold the "historicity" or the "inerrancy" of the Bible; (2) it helps clarify to which literary genre the five narratives in Daniel 1-6 belong: they are certainly more legend (with a certain historical nucleus) rather than "history" in the modern, scientific sense; (3) nevertheless, as in the case of the parables of Jesus, the teachings found in these narratives can be just as wise and profound as if they belonged to history. Divine inspiration can manifest itself in a great variety of literary genres (→ Hebrews 1:1-4).

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The book of Daniel and its rereadings in the New Testament⁷¹. More important for the NT (85x) is **”the Son of Man” (<Dan 7:13):**

Q (Luke // Matthew excluding Mark, 11 times):

Prophetic/apocalyptic sayings (seven): Lk 6:22 // (Mt 5:11); Lk 11:30 // Mt

12:40; Lk 12:8-9 // (Mt 10:32-33); Lk 12:40 // Mt 24:44; Lk 17:24 // Mt 24:27; Lk 17:26 // Mt 24:37; Lk 17:30 (cf. Mt 24:39).

”I myself” sayings (two): Lk 7:34 // Mt 11:19; (Lk 22:28-30) // Mt 19:28

Sapiential (one): Lk 9:58 // Mt 8:29; *Legal* (one): Lk 12:10 // Mt 12:32

***Mark** (14 times): *Authority on earth* (2:10, 28); *Killed, resurrected* (8:31; 9:9,12,31; 10:33 [-34], 45; 14:21^a and b, 41); *Coming again in glory* (8:38; 13:26; 14:62)

Matthew (30x:: 8x <Q; 13x <Mk; 9x Mt): 19:28Q; 13:24, 37; 16:27-28; 25:31

Luke (25x: 9x <Mk; 10x <Q; 6x Lk) 5:24; 6:5, 22Q; 7:34Q; 9:21-22, 26,44,58Q; 11:30 Acts 7:55; cf. 1:9-11

***John** (13x): 1:51; 3:13-14; 5:22, 27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23, 34; 13:31

Revelation (2 times): 1:13; 14:14 [cf 1:7^a]; **Hebrews** 2:6 (from Psalm 8:4-6)

- Daniel 2:27-29 **mystery** (sing.); cf Dan 2:47 → Mk 4:11 mysteries (pl.); 13:7; Mt 26:54; Rev 1:1, 19; 4:1; 22:6; Dan 2:34-35, 44-45, **the stone** → Lk 20:17-18; Dan 2:35 → Rev 12:8; 20:11
- Daniel 3:4-6, **adoration of the statue** → Rev 13:14-15
3:23-27, **fiery furnace** → Heb 11:34
- Daniel 4:12, Nebuchadnezzar=**tree** → Mk 4:32 // Mt 13:32 // Lk 13:19 RD = tree
Cf. Ps 103:12 LXX + Ezek 17:23; 31:6
- Daniel 6:19, 23 the **lions** → Heb 11:33 (cf. Samson and David)
- Daniel 7:2-8 **beasts from the sea** → Rev 13:1-10; Antichrist (1 Jn 2:18,22; 4:3; 2 Jn 7);
Cf. ”deceiver” (Mt 24:4-5, 24; Mk 13:5-6, 21-22; Lk 21:8; Rev 13:11-18; 16:13; 19:20; 20:10;
Dan 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 8:10-14, 25 **little horn** → Rev 13:5-6
Dan 7:10 **angels and the throne, books opened** for judgment → Rev 5:11; 20:12
- Dan 8:10-14, 25, **3½ years** (7:25; 9:27; 12:7,11-12) → Rev 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5
Dan 8:10 little horn and **war against the stars** → Rev 12:4; 13:6
Dan 8:3 **ram with two horns** → Rev 13:11
- Daniel 9:27 **”a horrible sacrilege”,** or **”the abominatio of desolation”** (11:31; 12:11; cf 8:13) → Mk 13:13-14 // Mt 24:13,15
- Dan 11:36 **man without law** → 2 Thess 2:3-4
- Daniel 12:1 **oppression without precedent** → Mk 13:13 // Mt 24:13, 21; Rev 7:14
The book of (eternal) life → Rev 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27
12:2 **resurrection, eternal life** → Mt 25:31-46; Rev 20:13
12:9-10 **book sealed**, fulfillment far in the future → Rev 22:10-11 not sealed
12:10 **the just/pure vs. the oppressors/dirty** → Rev 22:11
12:12 **Blessed....** → Mk 13:13 // Mt 24:13

The dialectic of Daniel 1-6 and 7-12: the people of God vs. the State⁷²:

In one book, Daniel summarizes the whole NT dialectic between the people of God and the State:

- Dan 1-6 a benign State (collaborate without conforming) → Romans 13; 12:1-2;
- Dan 7-12 a beastly/diabolical State → Revelation 13 (militant, non-military resistance, unto death).

We can see, especially in Daniel 1-6 (as the narratives about Joseph [Gen 37-50], Esther, Ezra and Nehemiah also demonstrate), that many Empires have a benevolous dimension under which the Jews, even those exiled, were able to participate, flourish and make a positive contribution to the society in which they lived:

”Work for the benefit of the city [Babylon] where I have sent you into exile, and pray to me on its behalf, for on its welfare depends your own welfare” (Jer 29:7).

On the other hand, in such crises and conflicts the arrogant abuse of political power is dangerously latent (Daniel 7-12); the Jewish community must be faithful to its traditions and resist the temptation of assimilation. Moreover, according to David Pleins, ”Intensamente, a lo largo de Daniel 7-12, emerge una visión *postimperial*”⁷³. Pleins explains: ”Daniel desarrolla una visión postimperial en la cual una persona de integridad pudiera apoyar los gobernantes extranjeros cuando actúan con justicia, pero no evitaría actos de resistencia cuando los valores fundamentales y las instituciones del pueblo sufren un ataque extranjero”⁷⁴.

In the 20th century, Dispensationalists and other fundamentalists interpreted Daniel through a Neo-Platonic lens in order to justify escapism and political quietism⁷⁵—until the movement was politicized by Jerry Falwell and his ”Moral Majority” after 1980. On the other hand, W. S. Towner points out to what extent a post-Imperial vision has influenced Western history⁷⁶. In the 1600’s, English and American Puritans (descendants of Calvin and of his theocracy in Geneva) found in the book of Daniel the basis for a radical political program: the refusal of any type of hierarchy, either religious or political, along with regicide (the death penalty for Charles I in 1649), the establishment of the first modern Republic under Oliver Cromwell and the egalitarian government of the ”Saints” (Dan 7:18). These Reformed circles combined the typological reading of Daniel 7-12 with a ”(post-)Millennial” interpretation of → Revelation 20:1-6, and they ended up planning a government of ”the Saints” (meaning themselves, the Puritans) on earth for one thousand years before the Final Judgment, unleashing ”una dinámica poderosa para la acción social y política”⁷⁷.

The LXX, 4 Esdras, the Qumran community and Josephus all made rereadings of Daniel as a ”prophet” who prophesied about Rome⁷⁸. Jesus and the authors of the New Testament followed that tradition (see Jesus in Mt 24:15-16; → 2 Thess; Revelation). Thus, in the New Testament we repeatedly encounter rereadings of Daniel that we cannot interpret as exegeses of the book’s original meaning and intent.

More important and notable is the tendency of Jesus to refer to himself as ”the Son of Man”, taken from Dan 7:13. Particularly in the Gospel of → Mark, where Jesus is a ”closeted” messiah, his wish to keep ”the messianic secret” hidden is high on his agenda, and the references to the ”Son of Man” serve to maintain a certain humility and ambiguity in the affirmations that Jesus makes about himself. We can ask ourselves why a single man like Jesus felt so fascinated with the figure of Daniel, a Jewish eunuch and the presumed author of the apocalyptic book. As a single man, Jesus also gave thought to the variety of ”eunuchs”, and posited three types of eunuchs as paradigms of discipleship (Matthew 19:12; see also the single man Paul, 1 Cor 7).

However, according to John Collins, although the ”Son of Man” in Dan 7:13 and 8:17 only means ”human being”, it is referring to the Archangel Michael (or possibly to Gabriel), and ”the Saints” is the designation of the other angels⁷⁹ (see Michael in Dan 8:15 and 10:21; cf. Gabriel in 9:21). Collins mentions the importance of angels in the Qumran documents, and he rejects a messianic interpretation, pointing out that Daniel shows no interest in the Davidic monarchy⁸⁰.

In his ”canonic” interpretation of the Scriptures, Brevard Childs concludes that in the Bible we continually encounter examples of ”rereading”: Daniel does a rereading of Jeremiah, and Jesus and the authors of the New Testament do rereadings that take Daniel’s references to Antiochus (who is not explicitly named) in order to designate Rome as the contemporary Beast of their own time⁸¹.

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Dan 1: Daniel y colegas/ amigos/compañeros de clase Dan 1yeadim, yeled joven, muchachos? Todos guapos e inteligentes --// British boarding school, solo varones. , bajo profesor soltero (ver Qohelet) y eunuco Solo Daniel decide mantener la dieta?1:8)? Daniel toma liderazgo, pero otros compañeros de clase le siguen (1:12 siervos/esclavos 11-14 todos

v. 17 educación pagana? Make them magicians and enchanters 1:20 Ver Pleins

2:13 sent for Daniel y sus amigos Aramaico: khabrohi: also 17 vivieron juntos, v. 17

Minorías sexuales bajo Talibán

Daniel eunuch size queen, Alex big horn, Antiochus little horn;?

Judíos exiliados, observantes dentro de los imperios

Manifestando una influencia

Mostrando un poder político e influencia religiosa mucho más allá de la imaginación de los Israelitas pre-exílicas 196

Violence 11:14 *parits*

Lejos de rendirse a la desesperanza, Daniel ofrece una perspectiva potente del ejercicio del poder político judío en términos de una teología profética de lealtad y resistencia 196

1-6 servicio leal a los imperios benévolos

vs 7-12 denuncia de las bestias (imperios) del mar (197)

Dan una "teología de resistencia" con un "manifiesto de acción" (198) , acción educadora, no militar

Cap 4 un "watcher" "ángel centinela" 13, 17, 23 ordena cortar el árbol ; ver Gen 6, Judas, Ezeq watchman?
Angeles como minoría sexual en Dan? Watchers Dan 4:13, 17, 20 ver Jude

Cap 1-6 "parecerían animar vivir una vida doble" (200), Daniel y cia nombres dobles , judíos y paganos 1:6-7
significan?

Épocas de opresión y persecución, los fieles deben "decir la verdad a los poderes" (201)

Guest & Birch on Bib Law no immutable vs. pagan notion of unchangeable laws in Daniel & Esther. P. 81 Guest
in T&S vs Wold

Violence 11:14 *parits de su propio pueblo Collins 379-380* obscure

Mujeres, 11:18 will give daughter in marriage (she property to be transferred)

Sum Daniel's intimate relations, nada de mujeres, pero ver eunuco Dn 1 Arioc, Dario Medo, mensajero de Dan 10,
3 amigos lived with

Antiochus, little horn, despreciable, no desire of women // Hitler? Cp Alex mag horn

Ezq 23 8:15 looked like a man (transvestite?)

Notes

- ¹ for historical background, see NISB, NOAB, HCSB, NJB, JSB.
- ² see NISB, notes 5:1, 31
- ³ John Collins 1993:114-117; cf. Towner 1999:244
- ⁴ John Goldengay 1989:xxxix-xl
- ⁵ Collins 1993:54-58; James Charlesworth, ed. 1983-85
- ⁶ Collins 1993:38-56
- ⁷ Collins 1993:39-41; James Charlesworth, ed. 1983-85
- ⁸ Collins 1993:40; Adele Berlin 2001:xl
- ⁹ DHHBE and JB, notes
- ¹⁰ RV95, "Daniel", but see the note in the Reina Valera Study Bible
- ¹¹ Collins 1993:1-2
- ¹² *Nuevo Diccionario Ilustrado de la Biblia* [NDIB], Miami: Caribe, 1998:1167
- ¹³ Lawrence Wills, cited in Collins 1993:44
- ¹⁴ Juan Snoek & Rommie Nauta 1993:50-52
- ¹⁵ Stephen Breck Reid 2000:315
- ¹⁶ Pleins 2001:203
- ¹⁷ see JB note 4:24; Is. 1:17
- ¹⁸ *pace* Collins 1993:230
- ¹⁹ see Rashi, quoted in Collins, 230
- ²⁰ Hanks 1983:48-50
- ²¹ Collins 1993:388
- ²² Addison G Wright, quoted in Collins 1993:359
- ²³ see JB and DHHBE, notes; Collins 351-360; but cf. the rereadings of the New Testament, below, along with Dispensationalist writings
- ²⁴ Hanks 1983:22-25
- ²⁵ Hanks 1982:42; 1983:20-22
- ²⁶ Collins 1993:390-391
- ²⁷ see DHHBE, note 10:13k
- ²⁸ Collins 1993:391
- ²⁹ Collins 1993:392 and *Excursus* 394-398
- ³⁰ Collins 1993:392-393; cf. John 5
- ³¹ John Goldengay 1989:308
- ³² Pleins 2001:203
- ³³ DHHBE and JB notes; Collins 1993:360
- ³⁴ see note k, 9:24 DHHBE
- ³⁵ Pleins 2001:202
- ³⁶ Driver, Montgomery, Koch
- ³⁷ Calvin; Keil
- ³⁸ Collins 1993:355
- ³⁹ Carol Newsom 1998:201
- ⁴⁰ Newsom 1998:201-202
- ⁴¹ John Goldengay 1989:329-334
- ⁴² Newsom 1998:206
- ⁴³ Newsom 1998:202
- ⁴⁴ Newsom 1998:204
- ⁴⁵ Newsom 1998:206
- ⁴⁶ John Goldengay 1989:329
- ⁴⁷ John Collins 1993:122-123
- ⁴⁸ Childs 1979:619, quoted in Collins 1993:123
- ⁴⁹ Collins 1993:123
- ⁵⁰ see RV95 and DHHBE, notes 1:3
- ⁵¹ Josephus, *Ant.* 10.186
- ⁵² John Collins 1993:39, 134-136
- ⁵³ see Carol Newsom 1998:202

- ⁵⁴ Herodotus, cited by Collins 1993:134
⁵⁵ cf. Collins 1993:386
⁵⁶ BJ notes 2:28, 7:7 and 11:4; DHHBE notes 2:38-40, 2:41; 8:1-27; 11:2-45
⁵⁷ DHHBE notes 10:5; 8:16; 9:21; cf. Michael, the angel who protects Israel, see the note to 10:13
⁵⁸ Collins 1993:361
⁵⁹ NVI; BL; BJ and DHHBE + notes; Collins 1993:387
⁶⁰ See Collins (1993) and Goldengay (1988)→Zacarías 9-14
⁶¹ see BJ notes on the texts of Dan
⁶² Byrne Fone 2000
⁶³ Marjorie Garber 1992:215-217
⁶⁴ Gagnon 2001:113-114, note 181
⁶⁵ Brooten 1996:292-94; cf Robert Gagnon 2001:122-28
⁶⁶ Fone 2000:174
⁶⁷ Fone 2000:144
⁶⁸ Fone 2000:189
⁶⁹ EH 383; GHC 301
⁷⁰ quoted by John Collins, ABD 4, 1992:976-977
⁷¹ Adela Yarbo Collins in John Collins 1993:90-112
⁷² Pleins 2001
⁷³ Pleins 2001:202
⁷⁴ Pleins 2001:204
⁷⁵ Hal Lindsey 19XX/89
⁷⁶ DBI 1999:I, 245
⁷⁷ Towner I, 245
⁷⁸ Collins 1993:84-85
⁷⁹ Collins 1993:309-310
⁸⁰ Collins 1993:309
⁸¹ Childs 1979:608-623