

Chronological Bible Study

Week 38:

The Hope of a Future Deliverer

Zechariah 9-14

Daniel 7-12

John 1:1-18

Luke 1:1-2:38

Matthew 1:1-2:21

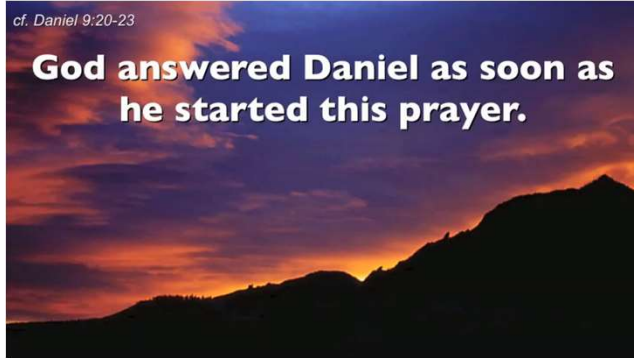
Daniel's Prayer

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ghVxVxA5jg>

cf. Daniel 9:20-23

**God answered Daniel as soon as
he started this prayer.**





Introductions

Introduce yourself

What is your favorite translation of the Bible?

We have some new people joining us tonight, so please introduce yourself and tell us which Bible translation you most enjoy reading.

Questions?

Comments?

Summary of This Week's Readings

- Zechariah's Visions and Prophecy
- Apocalyptic Visions of Daniel
- The Prehistory of Jesus
- The Birth of John the Baptist
- The Genealogy of Jesus
- The Birth of Jesus

Judgement on Israel's Enemies

- Zechariah is a difficult prophet to interpret
- Basic theme of the visions is the establishment of the reign of Yahweh over the whole earth
- They apply to a time when the Persian province of Judah was under bad leadership, faced economic oppression and distress, and had returned to idolatry.
- The visions talk about a defeat of Tyre which historically occurred under Alexander the Great
- Zechariah's visions point to Jesus as Zion's king
- God subdues enemy nations and their kings
- God's presence and power displayed, with swift and decisive action to defend and protect his people.
- God is shown as a warrior. He is a divine protector that supports his people against challenges and threats during their time of rebuilding.
- God will return to encamp at his temple.
- Zions king, the future messiah, will return riding on a donkey.



Several weeks ago we reviewed the visions of Haggai and Zechariah, that were filled with visions that were interpreted by an angelic guide. In this week's reading there is no guide for interpretation. The visions in Zechariah 9-14 are among the most difficult to put into an historical context. The visions may refer to the time of Darius (Persian rule) or may relate to the Greek empire of Alexander the Great.

The visions apply to a time when the Persian province of Judah was under bad leadership, faced economic oppression and distress, and had returned to idolatry. It may have occurred before or after Nehemiah's time. The visions talk about a defeat of Tyre which historically occurred under Alexander the Great. Many texts from chs. [9-14](#) are applied to Jesus in the NT.

The basic theme is the establishment of the reign of Yahweh over the whole earth (14:9), inclusive of the house of David and Jerusalem as God's dwelling place (12:7-9) to which the nations come (14:16-19).

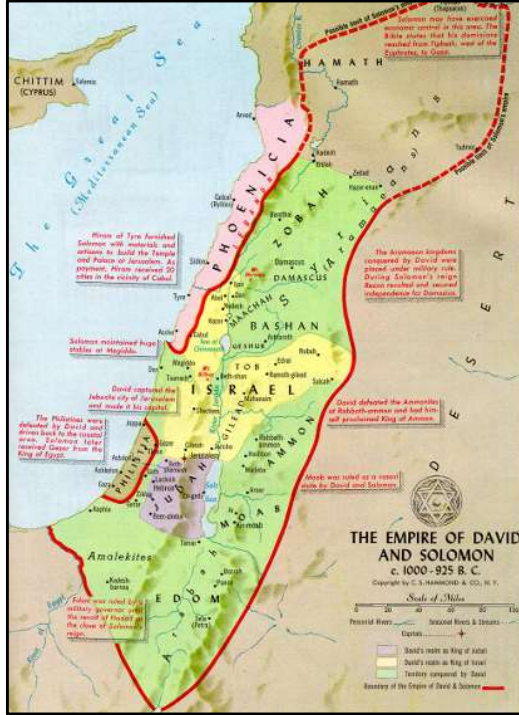
The first prophecy of Zechariah in this week's reading dramatically pictures God's return

and its outcome in terms drawn from Israel's past history. The first prophetic message (chs. [9–11](#)) presents God subduing enemy nations and their kings through his kings for his people. God comes to subdue the nations and return to his temple (v. [8](#)). The movement from north to south mirrors earlier enemy campaigns. The cities in this section mark out the ideal land of Israel. King David incorporated many of these cities into his empire, and some paid him tribute. They existed during Zechariah's time but did not threaten Judah. Hence, Zechariah draws on Israel's past to portray the future. In addition, Jeremiah prophesied the downfall of many of these cities before restoration would take place.

In Zechariah 9:14, the imagery of the Lord being seen over the people, and his arrow going forth as the lightning, conveys a powerful and awe-inspiring vision of God's presence and power. The image of the arrow going forth as the lightning suggests swiftness, precision, and unstoppable force. This symbolizes God's swift and decisive action in defending and protecting his people. The Lord blowing the trumpet is a symbol of announcing his presence and his readiness for battle, while the whirlwinds of the south symbolize the unstoppable and all-encompassing nature of God's power. One of the key themes in this verse is the idea of God's protection and intervention on behalf of his people. The imagery of the Lord as a warrior going forth with his arrow, blowing the trumpet, and moving with whirlwinds conveys the idea of God as a mighty and fearsome defender of his people. This theme of divine protection and intervention was especially relevant to the Israelites as they faced numerous challenges and threats during their time of rebuilding.

Along with Israel's enemies being subdued and God returning to his temple, Jerusalem's king will come. The Davidic king whom the earlier prophets expected will come. Unlike many kings of the past, this king will be "righteous."

During David's exile from Jerusalem, when he was nearly defeated by his enemies, he rode on a donkey ([2 Sam 16:2](#)). God saved David in battle and delivered him back to Jerusalem as king. Isaiah's suffering servant is "afflicted" not for his own sins (like David) but for the sins of others ([Isa 53](#)). Zechariah combines the images here to speak of the future Messiah who will return to Jerusalem on a donkey and "proclaim peace to the nations." (The forgiveness of sin associated with Isaiah's servant is the focus of [Zech 12:10–13:1](#); cf. [3:9](#).) The king's rule will extend over all the earth. All four Gospels record that Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem claiming to be this king ([Matt 21:1–11](#); [Mark 11:1–11](#); [Luke 19:28–38](#); [John 12:12–19](#)). His righteousness and his affliction as a servant to the point of death ([Phil 2:6–11](#)) meant that God "saved" him in his resurrection, and now through his gospel he proclaims "peace to the nations" (v. [10](#); cf. [Eph 2:14–18](#); [Col 1:20](#)).



Geography of Zechariah

- Land of Hadrak: likely relates to the Assyrian city of Hatarikka, which borders Damascus.
- Hamath: one of the oldest cities in Syria that was hostile to David, who subdued it (2 Samuel).
- Tyre and Sidon: wealthy trade ports
- Philistine cities: Frames the borders of Judah

Several placenames mentioned in this text:

Hadrak: Not mentioned elsewhere in the OT. Probably a “land” that relates to the city of Hatarikka (known from Assyrian sources); a region that borders Damascus, the capital of Syria (Aram). David subdued Damascus, and they paid him tribute ([2 Sam 8:6](#)).

Hamath: Hostile to Israel until David subdued it ([2 Sam 8:9–10](#))

Tyre and Sidon: Trade ports that possessed great wealth and security (v. [3](#)). The king of Tyre helped build palaces for David and Solomon ([2 Sam 5:11](#); [1 Kgs 9:11](#)). God will judge all these cities in the northern regions (cf. [6:1–8](#)). Only Alexander the Great ever defeated Tyre.

Philistine Cities: God mentions four cities associated with the Philistines: Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod. They defined the borders of the territory of Judah ([Josh 15:11](#), [45–46](#)), but Israel did not subdue them until David’s time ([2 Sam 5:17–25](#); [21:15–22](#)). God will subdue them once again and remove what is unclean (v. [7](#)). God will incorporate “those who are left” (v. [7](#)) into his people, just like the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem before David captured it were absorbed into Judah ([2 Sam 5:6–9](#); [24:18–24](#)). Hence, Zechariah envisages God judging and saving the nations (cf. [8:22–23](#)).

Shepherding

- Shepherd is a metaphor for a leader (king).
- God will raise up a godly leader for his people.
- Jesus, the Messiah, is a good shepherd who rescues and reunites the flock by laying down his life.



Shepherd imagery is prominent in Zechariah 9 through 13, which will be used again in the Gospel messages. The shepherd is a metaphor for a leader, particularly a king. Without a king, the people wander like sheep oppressed (Isaiah 53:6, Jeremiah 50:6-7, Ezekiel 34:5). It is important to have godly leaders. God will judge the present rulers of his people, who were foreign rulers since the people lacked a shepherd of their own. God will raise up alternative leadership for his people. With a new leadership, God will “strengthen Judah” and “save the tribes of Joseph” (the southern and northern houses of Israel). In his “compassion” he will “restore” their covenant relationship and answer his people’s prayers.

Zechariah reminds the people that they suffered exile in Babylon because of poor leadership. The people’s shepherds failed them. Rather than feeding and protecting the flock, the leaders used the flock for their own gain by buying and selling them and then mocking God, saying, “Praise the LORD, I am rich!” (v. 5). Cf. [Jer 23:1–2](#); [Ezek 34](#). God’s patience finally ran out; he would “no longer have pity” (v. 6) but would hand them over to their enemies. The judgment of v. 6 came with the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC.

The “foolish shepherd” in Zechariah 11 represents foreign kings who presently oppress and feed off God’s people (cf. v. 3). The “worthless shepherd” will be judged, connecting back to the destruction of foreign shepherds. In stark contrast, Jesus is the Good Shepherd who

rescues and reunites the flock by laying down his life



God's Kingdom Come

- God's kingdom will not come without great cost.
- On that day refers to the day when God will establish his kingdom on earth in glory
- God will save and strengthen his people.
- The people will mourn and grieve the one they pierced.

A second prophecy in Zechariah 12 reveals that God's kingdom will not come without great cost. There will be another exile-like experience for Jerusalem, but its outcome will be glorious. The phrase "on that day" runs through this section and refers to the day when God will establish his kingdom on earth in glory. In the NT, this "day" is expanded to encompass both the first and second comings of Jesus.

God will save and strengthen his people. God will repel the nations who attack Judah: He will "make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling" (v. [2](#)) as if drunk; Jerusalem will be "an immovable rock" (v. [3](#)) that injures all those "who try to move it" (v. [3](#)); and "the horses of the nations" (v. [4](#); used in warfare) will be put out of action, thwarting their attack. Yet God promises to "keep a watchful eye over Judah" (v. [4](#)), who was initially caught up with the nations in this attack. When the "clans of Judah" (v. [5](#)) see God protecting them and defending Jerusalem, they have a change of heart and turn against the surrounding peoples and "consume" them (v. [6](#)). The outcome is that "Jerusalem will remain intact in her place" (v. [6](#)); it will be saved.

In the aftermath of this battle, the people will mourn and grieve the one they have pierced. Piercing with a weapon normally meant death (cf. [Isa 13:15](#)). The close connection between God and his anointed (cf. [Ps 45:6](#); [Isa 9:6](#)) explains how the death of the Messiah also "pierced" God. This prophecy gains even greater clarity for Christians who see its

fulfillment in the piercing of Jesus on the cross by a Roman soldier's spear ([John 19:34–37](#)). After Jesus' death, God's Spirit was poured out on the God-fearing Jews in Jerusalem, who were "cut to the heart" and repented ([Acts 2:32–37](#)). At his return, all the nations will mourn the one who was pierced ([Rev 1:7](#)).

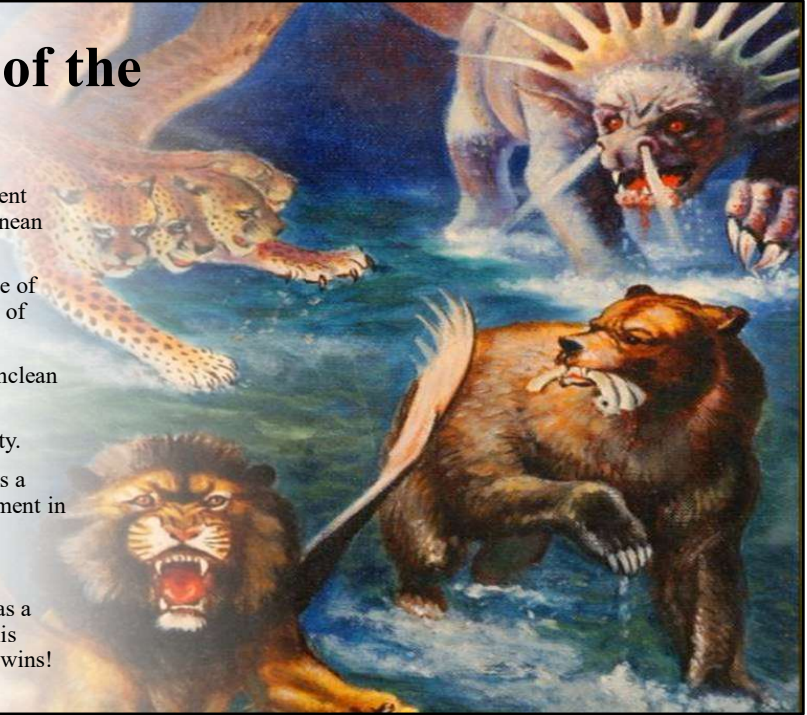


Discussion

How does the promise of God's ultimate reign influence your personal faith journey and your interactions with others?

Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts

- Four beasts in the first vision represent successive empires in the Mediterranean region.
- The use of sea and beasts in this type of literature often represents the forces of chaos and evil.
- Hybrid creatures were considered unclean and repulsive.
- Horns symbolize power and authority.
- The Ancient of Days pictures God as a powerful, aged king rendering judgment in court.
- The Son of Man represents Christ
- An angel interprets Daniel's vision as a conflict between the kingdoms of this world and the God's kingdom. God wins!



The last six chapters of Daniel present four apocalyptic visions (chs. [7](#); [8](#); [9](#); [10–12](#)). All four visions recognize that the people of God experience oppression now and into the future but that at the end of time God will intervene to rescue them.

Daniel's first vision begins with four beasts arising out of a chaotic sea and wreaking great damage (vv. [1–8](#)). The use of sea and beasts in this type of literature often represents the forces of chaos and evil. The beasts represent human kings/kingdoms. The beasts are hybrid creatures (part lion/part eagle; part leopard/part bird). Israelites considered hybrid animals unclean and repulsive. Horns symbolize power and authority and a lifted up horn describes pride and honor. This pride and honor may be godly or ungodly, stemming from the idea of a powerful animal lifting its head high.

The Ancient of Days pictures God as a powerful, aged king rendering judgment in court. Much of the imagery in this verse is not uncommonly associated with God's appearance and signals his wisdom (white hair), righteousness (white clothing), and power in judgment (fire).

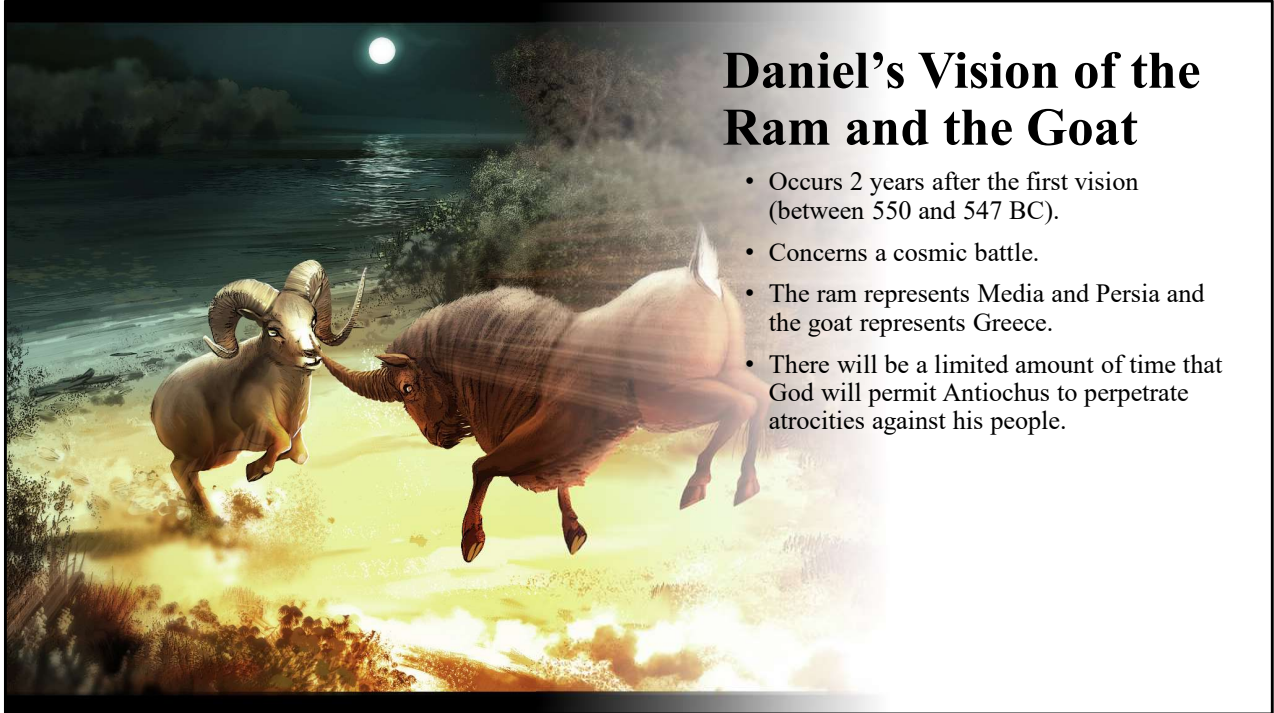
The Son of Man is a well-known phrase in the OT that means "human being" ([Ezek 2:1](#), [3](#), [6](#), [8](#) and throughout Ezekiel). However, this figure is not a human being but is "like" a

human being, and in the OT riding on clouds indicates divinity ([Pss 68:4](#); [104:3–4](#); [Isa 19:1](#); [Nah 1:3](#)). The description of this figure left no doubt in the minds of the NT authors that this refers to Jesus Christ. Indeed, many believe that this passage is the source of Jesus' self-designation as the Son of Man (e.g., [Matt 8:20](#)). The NT also cites these verses when envisioning Christ's future return at the end of history when he rides the clouds to defeat the forces of evil (e.g., [Matt 24:30](#); [Mark 13:26](#); [14:62](#); [Luke 21:27](#); [Rev 1:7](#)).

An angel interprets Daniel's vision. The vision concerns the conflict between the kingdoms of this world (represented by the beasts) and the heavenly kingdom. God will defeat evil human powers and establish his kingdom forever. Similar to Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the multi-meted statue in [2:31–45](#), the four great beasts represent four kings or kingdoms. Debate surrounds the exact identification of the kingdoms. One school of thought identifies the first beast as Babylon, followed by the Medes, the Persians, and the Greeks. Another view sees the first beast as Babylon, but then identifies the next three as the Medo-Persian Empire, followed by the Greeks and the Romans. It is more likely that these beasts and the horns do not represent actual kingdoms (with the exception of the first) but rather point to one evil human kingdom succeeding another until God intervenes at the end of time to defeat them and establish his eternal kingdom. The interpreting angel goes no further than to say that the fourth beast represents a kingdom and that the ten horns and the little horn represent kings. Some believe that the fourth kingdom is Greece and that the little horn is Antiochus IV Epiphanes (215–164 BC), who unleashed atrocities against the Jews in the middle of the second century BC; others believe that the fourth kingdom is Rome and that the little horn anticipates the antichrist at the end of the age. Even if we are not to identify the beasts with specific nations like Greece or Rome, the image of God defeating the little horn to usher in his eternal kingdom gives credence to the idea that it anticipates his victory over evil at the end of the age.

The ultimate message of Daniel's vision concerns God's ultimate victory over the forces of evil, which is good news for God's people presently experiencing the oppression of evil human kingdoms. As Jack summarizes the Book of Revelation, the same conclusion is here: God Wins!

The second scene is a judgment room where one like the son of man comes into the presence of the Ancient of Days (vv. [9–14](#)) and presents the divine realm using human figures.



Daniel's Vision of the Ram and the Goat

- Occurs 2 years after the first vision (between 550 and 547 BC).
- Concerns a cosmic battle.
- The ram represents Media and Persia and the goat represents Greece.
- There will be a limited amount of time that God will permit Antiochus to perpetrate atrocities against his people.

While much debate surrounds the interpretation of Daniel's other visions, the second vision garners little disagreement. Daniel receives a vision concerning a ram and a goat, and the angel's interpretation indicates that the vision concerns events that culminate in the reign of the evil king Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a Greek Hellenistic king who ruled the Seleucid Empire from 175 BC until 164 BC. He captured Jerusalem in 167 BC and desecrated the Temple by offering the sacrifice of a pig on an altar to Zeus and ordering the end to daily sacrifice at the temple.

Two years after the first vision; sometime between 550 and 547 BC. The fall of Babylon is still almost a decade away (539 BC). The vision concerns Susa, which will become an important city in the Persian Empire. Daniel refers to God's angelic army as the starry host; the host of heaven. The vision concerns a battle that is not only earthly but cosmic in scope.

Unlike the vision of ch. 7, Gabriel, who interprets the dream speaking for God, identifies the animals with specific nations. The ram's two horns symbolize Media and Persia, kingdoms from the Iranian highlands. One horn was larger than the other (v. 3), indicating Persia's eventual dominance over Media. The goat represents Greece, whose first king was Alexander the Great, who conquered the Persian Empire and extended its boundaries. He died young (thus the broken horn), and his kingdom was eventually divided among four of

his generals (the “four horns”).

A key message is that there will be a limited amount of time that God will permit Antiochus to perpetrate atrocities against his people. The end point is the rededication of the temple in Jerusalem after Antiochus IV profaned it. The rededication of the temple in 165 BC is the origin of the Jewish holiday Hanukkah, still celebrated by Jews today.

Daniel's Prayer

- The third vision occurs about 10 years after the second vision
- After reading Jeremiah's prophecy of exile Daniel prays for God's forgiveness and restoration.
- Daniel's prayer of penitence (vv. [4-19](#)) is on behalf of all the people of God who are scattered all over the known world.
- God's covenant of love includes the promise that God will restore his sinful people if they repent. Daniel appeals for God's mercy.
- The end of the 70-year exile will begin a process that will last for years. At the end of the 70 sevens, God will remove sin and establish righteousness.



The third vision occurs about 10 years after the second vision. The vision takes place while he is studying the book of Jeremiah, particularly where it announces a 70-year exile. Thinking he lives at the end of the 70 years, Daniel turns to God to ask forgiveness on behalf of his people's sin. In response, Gabriel, the interpreting angel, comes to him to explain the "vision" (v. [23](#)) to him.

After reading the prophecy of Jeremiah that the exile would last 70 years, Daniel turns to God in prayer with the hope of God's forgiveness and restoration and expresses deep grief and mourning over the sins of God's people. Daniel's prayer (vv. [4-19](#)) is a prayer of penitence that confesses sin, petitions for restoration, and praises God. The prayer is poetic and appeals to God on the basis of his "covenant of love" with his people. In the covenant, God promises to protect his faithful people ("those who love him and keep his commandments" [v. [4](#)]), though Daniel acknowledges that the people have broken covenant with God by disobeying his laws and neglecting to listen to his spokespersons, the prophets. Daniel prays on behalf of all the people of God who are scattered all over the known world, not just those in Babylon but also those who fled to Egypt and other small nations surrounding Israel. The "covenant of love" (v. [4](#)) includes the promise that God will restore his sinful people if they repent ([Deut 30:1-10](#)). God indeed is "merciful and forgiving." Daniel appeals for God's mercy.

Much debate surrounds the exact significance of “Seventy sevens,” but one thing is clear: Gabriel suggests that the end of the 70-year exile begins a process, one that will last for 70 “sevens,” or weeks of years—usually understood as 490 years. Though Jews will be allowed to return to the land, the exile will not come to a definitive end with anything approaching full restoration. At the end of the 70 “sevens,” God will remove sin and establish righteousness.



Discussion

The vision ends with the heavenly figure telling Daniel to get on with his life in the assurance that he will receive his reward when the end does come .

How does this concept of waiting comfort us and encourage us in our present day living? How might it apply to difficult times in our own lives?



Daniel's Vision of the Glorious Man

- Daniel overwhelmed when he sees a heavenly, priestly figure, likely an angel
- The angel's prophecy identifies events through the Persian and Greek period, and then looks to a far distant future end of time.
- End times, physical resurrection, and fates of the righteous and wicked described.
- Daniel told to get on with his life in the assurance that he will receive his reward when the end does come.

An introduction prefaces the final vision by describing Daniel's reaction to receiving a vision of a great war. Daniel's vision deeply disturbs him. He prays for divine help, but he suffers mental anguish for three weeks until he has a vision of a heavenly figure ([10:5–21](#)). There is a cosmic battle behind the earthly one, which explains the three-week delay of the angelic interpreter (perhaps Gabriel again). The prince of Persia resisted the heavenly figure until Michael came and rendered help in the fight. After encouraging Daniel to be strong, the angel prepares to explain the vision.

Daniel is overwhelmed when he sees a heavenly figure, described as a man "dressed in linen," the material worn by priests ([Lev 6:10](#)). The figure's features are statue-like: "his body was like topaz . . . like the gleam of burnished bronze." Other parts are hard to visualize: "his face [was] like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches." His voice is resonant and deep, "like the sound of a multitude." While the figure's dress is similar to that of an angel in [Ezek 9:2](#), the rest of the description connects to Ezekiel's experience of God's presence in [Ezek 1](#) as well as John's depiction of Christ in [Rev 1:14–15](#). On the basis of the Ezekiel parallels, one might think this figure is God himself, but if he is the same as the heavenly figure who speaks in [10:11–11:1](#), then he is more likely an angel. The figure ministers to Daniel.

The Book of Truth is mentioned. This is not mentioned anywhere else in Scripture, but in

this context is a book that contains the course of future events. God is sovereign over history.

The fourth vision is unlike the highly figurative visions that precede it. The heavenly figure gives a lengthy prophecy about unnamed kings and their actions. While these kings reign in the future from Daniel's sixth-century BC perspective, readers today recognize that the prophecy identifies events through the Persian period and into the Greek period. The prophecy ends with a look to the far distant future, the end of time, when God will reward those who follow him with everlasting life and consign those who resist him to everlasting contempt.

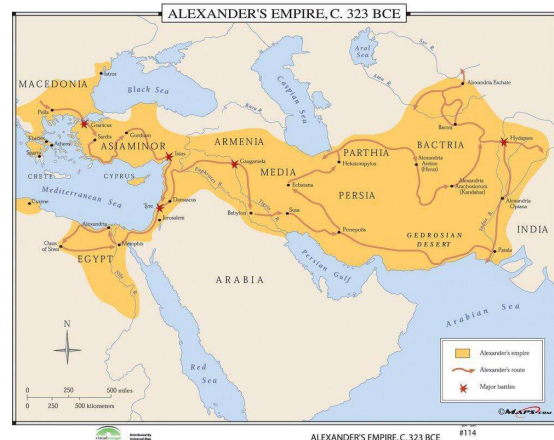
We cannot be dogmatic about which of the 13 known Persian kings this vision refers to. Some think it refers to the next three kings after the founder Cyrus: Cambyses (530–522 BC), Pseudo-Smerdis, also known as Gaumata (523–522 BC), and Darius I (522–486 BC). A fourth, either Xerxes I (486–465 BC), who attacked the Greeks, leading to the eventual defeat of Persia a century later, or Darius III (336–333 BC), whom the Greeks conquered is also mentioned. Alexander the Great is the mighty king. Alexander defeated the Persians and died at a young age in 323 BC, soon after Persia's defeat. His four leading generals (the four winds of heaven) then carved up his kingdom, leading to the Maccabean-Hasmonena Period that we will discuss next.

“the king of the North” (v. [6](#)) is the head of the Seleucid realm, headquartered in Antioch in Syria; “the king of the South” (v. [5](#)) is the head of the Ptolemaic kingdom, headquartered in Alexandria in Egypt. They fought over controlling Jerusalem, which lay between them, though in these early years the Ptolemaic kingdom held it. Verses 11 and 12 are typically analyzed as discussing the end times. There is clear Old Testament teaching on the physical resurrection and different fates of the righteous and the wicked. They impart the impression that God has determined an end to evil, but they do not allow us to predict when this end will actually come.

The vision ends with the heavenly figure telling Daniel to get on with his life in the assurance that he will receive his reward when the end does come

The Silent Years

- 400 BC – 0: The Silent Years
- Nothing of this timeframe in the 66 books of the Bible.
- Apocryphal books and writing of historians from the period help our understanding.
- Alexander the Great ruled from 336-323 BC
- 250 BC Greeks commissioned the Septuagint – a Greek translation of the Old Testament.
- Jews lived throughout the empire.



The 400 years from 400 BC to the year 0 are called by Protestants the 400 Silent years. This is because nothing is recorded about the events of these 400 years in any of the 66 books of the Bible that we recognize as Scripture. It is also called the Intertestamental Period or the deuterocanonical period (By Catholics and Orthodox). However, since several significant events occurred during this period that might increase our understanding of the New Testament it is helpful to understand the time. The information comes from apocryphal books or from the writings of historians from that period.

The Greeks under Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire and established the Greek Empire. The Holy Land was not dominated by the Greeks. The Greeks began to refer to the Holy Land as Palestine (their version of Phillistine), that part of the Holy Land that they were familiar with. The Greeks pushed Greek culture and language on all of the people of the Greek Empire. This was called Hellenization. The Jews began to speak koine Greek in addition to Aramaic and Hebrew.

The Jews who had not returned to the Holy Land were free to resettle in other regions of the Greek empire. By the time Jesus died, there were as many Jews living outside of the Holy Land as there were living in the Holy Land. Paul later visited many of their synagogues.

In about 250 BC the Greeks commissioned 70 Jewish scholars to translate the Hebrew scripture (the Old Testament) into Greek. This translation is known as the Septuagint. The Septuagint was used by the early Church. It originated in Alexandria, Egypt and was translated between 300-200 BC. It was widely used among Hellenistic Jews and was produced because many Jews spread throughout the empire and were beginning to lose their Hebrew language. The Septuagint is the Bible used by Jesus and the apostles. Most of the quotations found written in the NT are from the Greek Septuagint. It is also called the translation of the seventy because tradition states that the Septuagint was translated by seventy people. In academia, the Septuagint is often abbreviated LXX in honor of this tradition.



100 Years of Jewish Independence

- After Alexander the Great, King Antiochus IV Euphianes ruled the Holy Land and tried to eradicate Judaism.
- Judas Maccabeus leads a rebellion in 167 BC
- Greeks define and vandalize the temple
- IN 164 BC Maccabees regain control of and rededicate the temple
- Small amount of holy oil miraculously lasted 8 days. Jews celebrate Hannukah to commemorate the miracle.
- Jews achieve political freedom for 100 years (until 63 BC) during the Hasmonean Period.
- Book of Maccabees documents events

After the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek Empire was ruled as 5 separate territories. Eventually the Holy Land came under the rule of King Antiochus who tried to stamp out Judaism. When King Antiochus IV Euphianes asked a Jewish priest named Mattathias to sacrifice a pig to Zeus, he refused. Mattathias later killed both the Greek official and the priest who performed the sacrifice. Mattathias and his 5 sons then fled to the hills. Soon a guerilla army joined them and a revolt had begun. The year was 167 BC. Their leader was Judas Maccabeus, the 3rd son of Mattathias.

During the Maccabean Revolt, the Greeks defiled and vandalized the temple. Within 3 years the Maccabees had regained control of the temple against much larger Greek forces. In 164 BC, the Jews rededicated the Temple and relit the golden lampstand. God miraculously made a small amount of holy oil to last the full 8 days necessary to make more holy oil. The Jews commemorate this miracle with a Festival of Lights called Hannukah.

The Jews achieved political freedom (no taxation) and independent rule for 100 years (until 63 BC). This is referred to as the Hasmonean Period. There is documentation of these events in the book Maccabees, which is part of the Catholic canon.

THE APOCRYPHA

The word Apocrypha is from the Greek 'Apokruphos' meaning secret or hidden. It consists of 14 books which were included in the original 1611 King James Bible. It is not included in modern day KJV copies as it was removed in the 19th century.

BOOKS OF THE APOCRYPHA

- 1 ESDRAS**: Yoshiyahu revives the Passover and the exiles return to Jerusalem.
- 2 ESDRAS**: Yah's anger against Yasar'a'l, Ezra's dialogue, vision & renewal of Scripture.
- TOBIT**: Tobit's reverent acts. Tobias journey to Media with Rapha'Al and his marriage.
- JUDITH**: Siege is laid against Yasar'a'l. Judith prays and the enemy is delivered to her.
- ADDITIONS TO ESTHER**: Six additions that aren't included in the Hebrew text. Expresses spiritual element.
- WISDOM OF SOLOMON**: Regarded by early church most important of Apocrypha. Essence, nature of wisdom.
- ECCLESIASTICUS**: Wisdom of the son of Sirach, citizen of Jerusalem. Wisdom and instructions.
- BARUCH**: Early period of exile to Babylon. Book read to exiles listing punishment & mercy.
- LETTER OF JEREMIAH**: Foretelling to Israel in their land that they will be carried captive to Babylon.
- PRAYER OF AZARIYAH**: Prayer and hymn of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when cast into the furnace.
- SUSANNA**: Immediately follows after the book of Daniel. Concerning the elders & Susanna.
- BEL & THE DRAGON**: Denunciation of idol worship of Persians and Babylonians and Daniel's actions.
- PRAYER OF MANNASEH**: Prayer ascribing praise, confession of sin asking for pardon, trust in Yah's mercy.
- 1 & 2 MACCABEES**: An account of the Maccabean revolt while Yasar'a'l were captives in Greece.

Apocrypha (14 books)	DATE (B.C.)
Tobit	3rd Century
Judith	Late 2nd Century
1 Maccabees	Late 2nd Century
2 Maccabees	Late 2nd Century
Ecclesiasticus/Sirach (i.e. Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach)	180
Baruch	1st Century (A.D.)
Letter of Jeremiah (included as ch. 6 of Baruch)	
Additions to Daniel	
1. Song of the Three (includes Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Jews; added as 3:24-90)	100
2. Susanna (added as ch. 13)	1st Century
3. Bel and the Dragon (added as ch. 14)	100
Additions to Esther (ch. 3, 4, 8, 10)	100
1 Esdras	100
Prayer of Manasseh	1st Century
Wisdom of Solomon	65
2 Esdras	65 B.C. – 120 A.D.

The **biblical apocrypha** (from Ancient Greek meaning 'hidden') denotes the collection of apocryphal ancient books thought to have been written some time between 200 BC and 100 AD. The [Catholic](#), [Eastern Orthodox](#) and [Oriental Orthodox](#) churches include some or all of the same texts within the body of their version of the Old Testament, with Catholics terming them [deuterocanonical books](#).^[6] Traditional 80-book Protestant Bibles include [fourteen books](#) in an intertestamental section between the Old Testament and New Testament called the [Apocrypha](#), deeming these useful for instruction, but non-canonical.

The apocrypha are the collection of ancient books found in some editions of Christian Bibles in a separate section between the Old and New Testaments. Some Christian Churches include some or all of the same texts within the body of their version of the Old Testament. The term *apocryphal* had been in use since the 5th century, and generally denotes obscure or pseudepigraphic material of dubious historicity or orthodoxy. It was in Luther's Bible of 1534 that the Apocrypha was first published as a separate intertestamental section. The preface to the Apocrypha in the Geneva Bible claimed that while these books "were not received by a common consent to be read and expounded publicly in the

Church", and did not serve "to prove any point of Christian religion save in so much as they had the consent of the other scriptures called canonical to confirm the same", nonetheless, "as books proceeding from godly men they were received to be read for the advancement and furtherance of the knowledge of history and for the instruction of godly manners." Later, during the English Civil War, the Westminster Confession of 1647 excluded the Apocrypha from the canon and made no recommendation of the Apocrypha above "other human writings", and this attitude toward the Apocrypha is represented by the decision of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the early 19th century not to print it. Today, "English Bibles with the Apocrypha are becoming more popular again" and they are often printed as intertestamental books.

Most of the books of the Protestant Apocrypha are called deuterocanonical by Catholics per the Council of Trent and all of them are called *anagignoskomena* by the Eastern Orthodox per the Synod of Jerusalem. The Protestant Apocrypha contains three books (3 Esdras, 4 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh) that are accepted by many Eastern Orthodox Churches and Oriental Orthodox Churches as canonical but are regarded as non-canonical by the Catholic Church and are therefore not included in modern Catholic Bibles.

Many of these texts are considered canonical Old Testament books by the Catholic Church, affirmed by the Council of Rome (382) and later reaffirmed by the Council of Trent (1545–1563); and by the Eastern Orthodox Church which are referred to as *anagignoskomena* per the Synod of Jerusalem (1672). The Anglican Communion accepts "the Apocrypha for instruction in life and manners, but not for the establishment of doctrine (Article VI in the Thirty-Nine Articles)", and many "lectionary readings in The Book of Common Prayer are taken from the Apocrypha", with these lessons being "read in the same ways as those from the Old Testament". The first Methodist liturgical book, *The Sunday Service of the Methodists*, employs verses from the Apocrypha, such as in the Eucharistic liturgy. The Protestant Apocrypha contains three books (1 Esdras, 2 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh) that are accepted by many Eastern Orthodox Churches and Oriental Orthodox Churches as canonical but are regarded as non-canonical by the Catholic Church and are therefore not included in modern Catholic Bibles.

To this date, the Apocrypha are "included in the lectionaries of Anglican and Lutheran Churches". Anabaptists use the Luther Bible, which contains the Apocrypha as intertestamental books; Amish wedding ceremonies include "the retelling of the marriage of Tobias and Sarah in the Apocrypha". Moreover, the Revised Common Lectionary, in use by most mainline Protestants including Methodists and Moravians, lists readings from the Apocrypha in the liturgical calendar, although alternate Old Testament scripture lessons are provided.

What is the Apocrypha?

[Video Link](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHm9h_YElal



Are these really hidden books no one wants you to know about. Some of the Dan Brown mysteries? Not really – here is a discussion of why these books are not in the Protestant Bible.

Hellenistic Judaism

- Combines Jewish Religious tradition with Hellenistic culture.
- Began with conquest of Judea by Alexander the Great.
- Many Jews lived outside of the Holy Land.
- The Greeks viewed Jewish culture favorably, until Antiochus IV.
- Pro-Hellenistic Jews generally upper class or those living in Gentile communities.
- Hellenistic Jews may have been marginalized or absorbed into early Christianity



Hellenistic Judaism was a form of [Judaism](#) in [classical antiquity](#) that combined Jewish religious tradition with elements of [Hellenistic culture](#). Until the [early Muslim conquests](#) of the [eastern Mediterranean](#), the main centers of Hellenistic Judaism were [Alexandria](#) in [Egypt](#) and [Antioch](#) in [Turkey](#), the two main [Greek urban settlements](#) of the [Middle East and North Africa](#), both founded in the end of the fourth century BCE in the wake of the conquests of [Alexander the Great](#). Hellenistic Judaism also existed in [Jerusalem during the Second Temple Period](#), where there was a conflict between [Hellenizers](#) and traditionalists.

With the conquest of Judea by [Alexander the Great](#), the [spread of Hellenism](#) caused a blending of the local culture and the culture of the conquerors. Jewish life in both Judea and the diaspora was influenced by the culture and language of Hellenism. Local indigenous elites frequently played a significant role in embracing and promoting Hellenism, leading to its impact on all regional cultures, including the Jewish culture.

The Jews living in countries west of the Levant formed the Hellenistic diaspora. The Egyptian diaspora is the most well-known of these. There was firm economic integration of [Judea](#) with the [Ptolemaic Kingdom](#) that ruled from Alexandria, while there were friendly relations between the royal court and the leaders of the Jewish community. This was a diaspora of choice, not of imposition.

The Greeks viewed Jewish culture favorably, while Hellenism gained adherents among the Jews. Later historians would sometimes depict Hellenism and Judaism uniquely incompatible, likely due to the influence of the persecution of Antiochus IV. However, it does not appear that most Jews in the Hellenistic era considered Greek rulers any worse or different from Persian or Babylonian ones.

Over time, Jewish society was divided between conservative factions and pro-Hellenist factions. Pro-Hellenist Jews were generally upper-class or minorities living in Gentile-majority communities. They lived in towns that were far from Jerusalem and heavily connected with Greek trading networks.

The reasons for the decline of Hellenistic Judaism are obscure. It may be that it was marginalized by, absorbed into, or became [Early Christianity](#) (see the [Gospel of the Hebrews](#)). The [Pauline epistles](#) and the [Acts of the Apostles](#) report that, after his initial focus on the conversion of Hellenized Jews across Anatolia, Macedonia, Thrace and Northern Syria without criticizing their laws and traditions,^{[22][23]} [Paul the Apostle](#) eventually preferred to evangelize communities of Greek and Macedonian [proselytes](#) and [Godfearers](#), or Greek circles [sympathetic to Judaism](#). The attractiveness of Christianity may, however, have suffered a setback with its being explicitly outlawed in the 80s CE by [Domitian](#)



Synagogues

- A community house of worship for liturgical services, assembly, and study.
- Oldest dated evidence of a synagogue is from the third century BC, but may have an older history.
- Synagogues flourished with the temple during Jesus' day.
- Took on a greater importance after the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD.
- First century AD history refers to synagogues in Palestine, Rome, Greece, Egypt, Babylonia, and Asia Minor

Synagogues were a central part of Jewish life in the first century, and were used in towns and cities throughout Judaea Province and the Roman Empire. **A synagogue**, in [Judaism](#), is a [community](#) house of [worship](#) that serves as a place not only for liturgical services but also for assembly and study. The term *synagogue* is of Greek origin (*synagein*, “to bring together”) and means “a place of assembly.”

First-century synagogues were public buildings with benches along the walls, and lacked the "Jewish" features found in later synagogues, such as worship furnishings and Jewish art and inscriptions. However, they did share some common features, including inner walls surrounded by benches, a central space defined by a colonnade, and heart-shaped columns at the rear of the colonnade that may have supported a clerestory roof. These interior arrangements allowed for plenty of light and ventilation, making the buildings comfortable and pleasant spaces for public gatherings. The synagogue building was often designed to face toward Jerusalem, and while most appear to have been constructed in a rectangular fashion, analysis of ancient synagogues reveals that there was no standard architectural plan.

The oldest dated evidence of a synagogue is from the 3rd century BC, but

synagogues doubtless have an older history. Some scholars think that the destruction of [Solomon's Temple of Jerusalem](#) in 586 BCE gave rise to synagogues after private homes were temporarily used for public worship and religious instruction. Other scholars trace the origin of synagogues to the Jewish custom of having representatives of [communities](#) outside [Jerusalem](#) pray together during the two-week period when priestly representatives of their community attended ritual sacrifices in the Temple of Jerusalem. Synagogues flourished side by side with the ancient Temple cult and existed long before Jewish [sacrifice](#) and the established [priesthood](#) were terminated with the destruction of the Second Temple by the Roman emperor [Titus](#) in 70 CE. Thereafter synagogues took on an even greater importance as the unchallenged focal point of Jewish religious life.

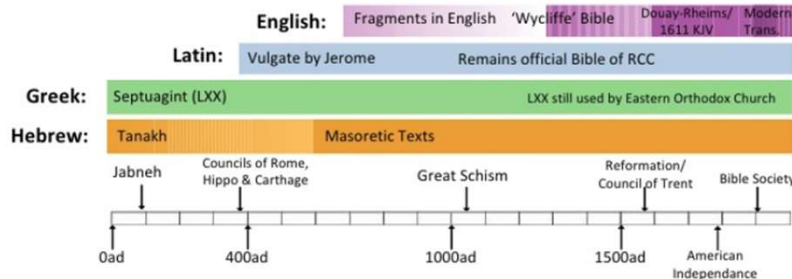
Literature of the 1st century CE refers to numerous synagogues not only in Palestine but also in Rome, Greece, [Egypt](#), Babylonia, and [Asia Minor](#). By the middle of that century, all sizable Jewish communities had a synagogue where regular morning, afternoon, and evening services were held, with special liturgies on the [Sabbath](#) and on religious festivals.

By the time Jesus' ministry began, [a synagogue was found in most towns of Galilee](#).

Modern synagogues carry on the same basic functions associated with ancient synagogues but have added social, recreational, and philanthropic programs as the times demand. They are essentially democratic institutions established by a community of Jews who seek God through prayer and sacred studies. Since the liturgy has no [sacrifice](#), no [priesthood](#) is required for public worship. Because each synagogue is [autonomous](#), its erection, its maintenance, and its [rabbi](#) and officials reflect the desires of the local community.

There is no standard synagogue [architecture](#). A typical synagogue contains an [ark](#) (where the scrolls of the [Law](#) are kept), an “[eternal light](#)” burning before the ark, two candelabra, pews, and a raised platform ([bimah](#)), from which scriptural passages are read and from which, often, services are conducted. The segregation of men and women, a practice that is still observed in [Orthodox](#) synagogues, has been abandoned by Reform and [Conservative](#) congregations. A [ritual bath](#) ([mikvah](#)) is sometimes located on the [premises](#).

The Bible in English



- Douay-Rheims Bible (1582-1610), Kings James Version (1611) – included apocrypha
- From 1630, some editions of Geneva Bible bound without apocrypha
- Westminster Assembly (1647 - Calvinist/Puritan) declares the apocrypha non-canonical.
- From 1769, American printers remove apocrypha from the KJV to reduce printing cost and increase market appeal to non-Anglican Protestant readers
- From 1826, the British and Foreign Bible Society stops printing apocrypha
- Revised Version (1881-1894) released in Britain – includes apocrypha

The Bible has been translated into many languages from the biblical languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. As of September 2023 all of the Bible has been translated into 736 languages, the New Testament has been translated into an additional 1,658 languages, and smaller portions of the Bible have been translated into 1,264 other languages according to Wycliffe Global Alliance. Thus, at least some portions of the Bible have been translated into 3,658 languages. The Old Testament, written in Hebrew (with some sections in the book of Daniel in the Aramaic language) was translated into Aramaic (the so-called Targums, originally not written down), Greek and Syriac. The New Testament, written in Greek, was first translated into Syriac, [Latin](#) and Coptic – all before the time of Emperor Constantine.

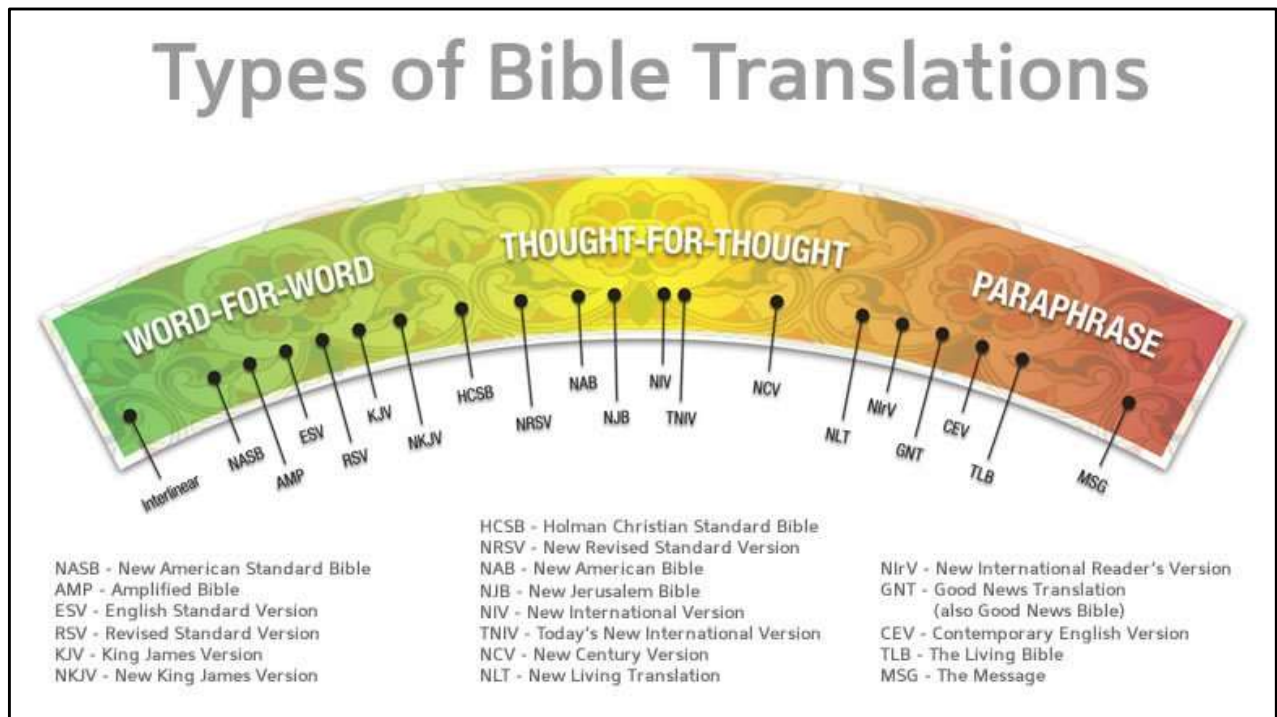
Jerome's 4th-century Latin Vulgate version, a revision of earlier Latin translations, was dominant in Western Christianity during the Middle Ages. The Latin-speaking western church led by the Pope did not translate the Scriptures or liturgy into languages of recently converted peoples such as the Irish, Franks or Norsemen. By contrast, the Eastern Orthodox Church, centered in Constantinople, did, in some cases, translate the Scriptures and liturgy, most successfully in the case of the Slavonic language of Eastern Europe. By the year 500, the Bible had been translated into Ge'ez, Gothic, Armenian, and Georgian. By the year 1000, a number

of other translations were added (in some cases partial), including Old Nubian, Sogdian, Arabic and Slavonic languages, among others.

Early Modern English Bible translations are of between about 1500 and 1800, the period of Early Modern English. This was the first major period of Bible translation into the English language. Wycliffe's Bible is a name given for a sequence of [Middle English](#) Bible translations believed to have been made under the direction or instigation of English theologian John Wycliffe of the University of Oxford. They are the earliest known literal translations of the entire Bible into English (Middle English). They appeared over a period from approximately 1382 to 1395. Two different translations have been identified, a word-for-word translation known as the Early Version (EV) and the more sense-by-sense Later Version (LV). The translators worked from the Vulgate, the Latin Bible that was the standard Biblical text of Western Christianity.

The Tyndale Bible refers to the body of biblical translations by William Thydale into early modern English. The first complete edition of his New Testament was in 1526. William Tyndale used the Greek and Hebrew texts of the New Testament (NT) and Old Testament (OT) in addition to Jerome's Latin translation. He was the first translator to use the printing press – this enabled the distribution of several thousand copies of his New Testament translation throughout England. Tyndale did not complete his Old Testament translation. The first printed English translation of the whole Bible was produced by Miles Coverdale in 1535, using Tyndale's work together with his own translations from the Latin Vulgate or German text. The first authorized version was printed and known as the Great Bible of 1539. The first complete Catholic Bible in English was the Douay–Rheims Bible, of which the New Testament portion was published in Rheims in 1582 and the Old Testament somewhat later in Douay in Gallicant Flanders. The Old Testament was completed by the time the New Testament was published but, due to extenuating circumstances and financial issues, it was not published until nearly three decades later, in two editions: the first released in 1609, and the rest of the OT in 1610.

Types of Bible Translations



There are more than 60 English language versions of the Bible available today and we can divide them into three main types of Bible translations: word-for-word, thought-for-thought and paraphrase. A word-for-word translation attempts to translate each Hebrew or Greek word into a corresponding English word. However, some consider a word-for-word translation harder to understand, particularly when it comes to figures of speech that are not used in modern culture. Two examples of word-for-word translations are the King James Version and the New King James Version. The thought-for-thought translations seek to express the meaning of each sentence or paragraph from the original language in simple up-to-date English without being tied to translating every word. As such, these types of translations should not be exclusively relied on for doctrinal study. The New International Version is perhaps the most well-known of the thought-for-thought translations. A paraphrased translation has the primary goal of conveying the Bible in a simple, easy-to-understand language without regard to word-for-word or even thought-for-thought expressions of the original languages. The authors often exercise "poetic license," leaving great room for personal religious ideas.

The Culture at the Time of Jesus' Birth

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7OhlZg7gp4>



The Roman Period

- The Romans conquered the Greek empire and took charge of Palestine in 63 BC.
- 4 political divisions: Galilee, Samaria, Perea, and Judea
- Jews had religious freedom and some political autonomy but resisted Roman domination.
- Jews looked for their Messiah as a political deliverer.
- Pax Romana and Roman infrastructure both helped spread the Gospel.



The Romans gradually conquered the Greek Empire and established the Roman Empire. The Romans took charge of Palestine in 63 BC. They embraced Greek culture and the common people of the Roman Empire continued to speak koine Greek. This “universal” language later helped in the spreading of the Gospel.

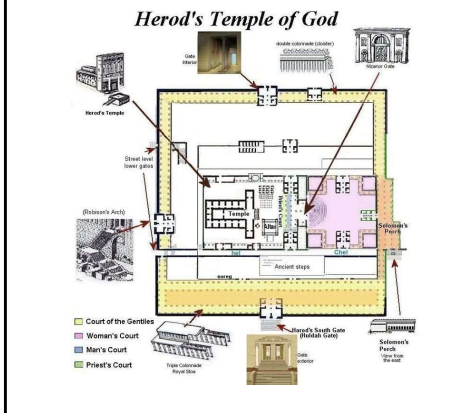
The Romans imposed heavy taxes on the Jews and assigned Roman governors to rule the 4 main geographical divisions of the Holy Land: Galilee, Samaria, Perea, and Judea. The Jews were given religious freedom and some degree of political autonomy but found Roman domination repugnant. The Jews scoured their scriptures for God’s promises concerning the Jewish Messiah. They wanted a political deliverer.

The Romans built a vast network of roads throughout the Roman Empire. These roads later helped spread the gospel. The presence of huge Roman armies assured peace throughout the empire. This widespread peace (Pax Romana) later also helped in the spreading of the gospel.



King Herod the Great

- An Edomite appointed by Rome to govern Palestine from 39-4 BC. He lived from 72-4 BC.
- Some believe Herod's family converted to Judaism, but his religious commitment was questioned by Jewish society.
- Ordered the execution of all male babies born in Bethlehem after Jesus' birth.
- Remodeled the Jerusalem temple to win favor with the Jews. This is the temple of the New Testament.
- Upon his death, the Romans divided his kingdom among three of his sons and his sister. Herod Antipas governed Galilee and Peraea. Herod Archelaus governed Judaea, Samaria, and Idumea..
- Temple destroyed by Romans in 70 AD.



Herod (72-4 BC) was an Edomite (a descendant of Esau). Herod's father had been an advisor to the first Roman official in charge of Palestine and secured a political position for Herod. Eventually Herod was put in charge of all of Palestine. Some believe Herod's family converted to Judaism, but his religious commitment was questioned by Jewish society. He ruled from 39BC to 4 BC. This is the Herod who ruled Palestine when Jesus was born and who ordered the execution of all male babies born in Bethlehem.

Upon his death, the Romans divided his kingdom among three of his sons. And his sister. Herod Antipas governed Galilee and Peraea. Herod Archelaus governed Judaea, Samaria, and Idumea. Philip governed the territories north and east of the Jordan River and his sister Salome governed the cities of Jabneh, Ashdod, and Phasaelis.

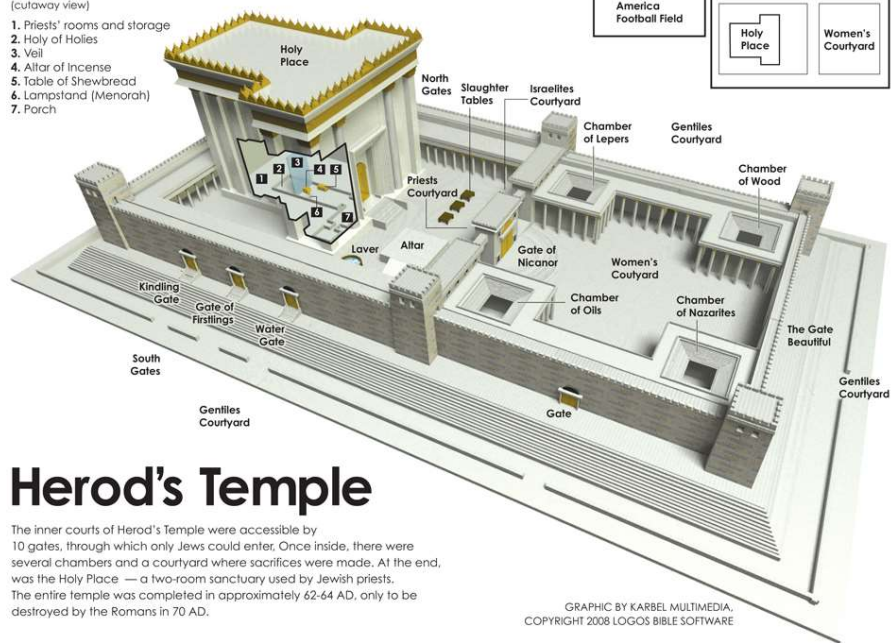
In an effort to conciliate the Jews who hated him for his Edomite heritage, Herod remodeled the Jewish temple in Jerusalem and added a huge courtyard surrounded by patio covers. These porches created delightful shady places for Jewish teachers to hold outdoor classes. The Jews continued to hate Herod. This remodel and expanded version of Zerubbabel's Temple is called Herod's Temple by Bible historians. This is the Jewish Temple of the entire New Testament period. The temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

Without the temple, the Jews could no longer perform animal sacrifices.

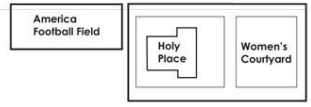
Herod also built the Western Wall, various fortresses, and the Caesarea Maritime harbor. He also built pagan cities to appeal to the country's substantial pagan population.

INSIDE THE HOLY PLACE
(cutaway view)

1. Priests' rooms and storage
2. Holy of Holies
3. Veil
4. Altar of Incense
5. Table of Shewbread
6. Lampstand (Menorah)
7. Porch



Size comparison (approximate):



Herod's Temple

The inner courts of Herod's Temple were accessible by 10 gates, through which only Jews could enter. Once inside, there were several chambers and a courtyard where sacrifices were made. At the end, was the Holy Place — a two-room sanctuary used by Jewish priests. The entire temple was completed in approximately 62-64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

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Discussion

Are there any questions regarding the times leading up to the New Testament?

The New Testament

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0BrP8bj0c>



Jesus' Birth and Ministry

- God took on a human nature to establish a new covenant with his people.
- Jesus became fully human and remained fully God.
- Not much is known of his early years, but he was not rabbinically trained, yet taught with authority.
- He broke the laws of the religious leaders, but not the laws of God.
- He claimed to be God and was called a blasphemer.



God chose to take on a human nature in order to pay for all sins for all time and to establish a New Covenant with all people. The incarnation means the “in-flesh-ation” of God. When Jesus was conceived in Mary’s womb, He became fully human and remained fully God. This is a mystery.

When Jesus took on a human nature, He did so permanently. Jesus still has a human nature today. His ministry began when he was baptized by John the Baptist (his second cousin) in the Jordan River. Jesus had no rabbinical training yet he taught with authority. He broke the laws of the Jewish religious leaders (but never the laws of God) and drew enormous crowds. He hung out with the low lives. The Jewish religious leaders hated him and eventually plotted to kill him.

Jesus clearly claimed to be God (the I AM of the Old Testament) and to have the power to forgive sins. Blasphemy was the crime of being disrespectful of God. Claiming to be God was considered to be the ultimate blasphemy.

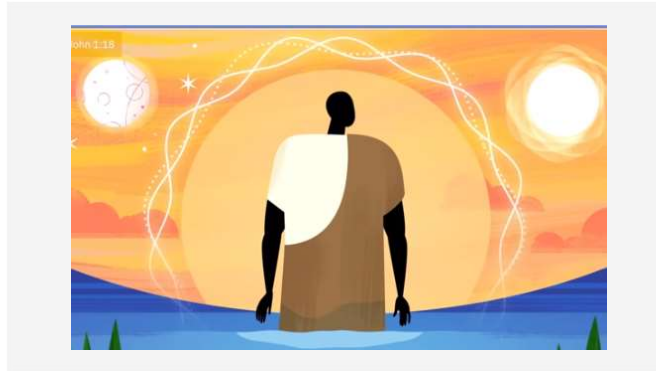
Date	NT Event	NT Book	Roman Emperors/ Event
4 B.C.—AD 30	The Life of Jesus	Matthew	Augustus 30 B.C.—A.D. 14
4 B.C.	Birth of Jesus	Mark	Tiberius A.D. 14-37
A.D. 8	Jesus in the Temple	Luke	
A.D. 26	John the Baptist starts his public ministry. Jesus starts his public ministry	John	Pontius Pilate, Roman procurator (A.D. 26-36)
A.D. 27-28	John the Baptist imprisoned		
A.D. 29	John the Baptist beheaded Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles		
A.D. 30	Jesus is crucified and Rises Again Jesus's ascension The Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost		
A.D. 30— A.D. 100	The Early Church	Acts	
A.D. 37	Saul of Tarsus is converted (Paul)		Caligula A.D. 37-41
A.D. 44	James (John's brother) is martyred	James	Claudius A.D. 41-54
A.D. 47-49	Paul's First Missionary Journey		

Date	NT Event	NT Book	Roman Emperors/ Event
A.D. 50	The council meets at Jerusalem	Galatians	
A.D. 51-53	Paul's Second Missionary Journey	1 & 2 Thessalonians	
A.D. 54-57	Paul's Third Missionary Journey	Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians	Nero A.D. 54-68
A.D. 58	Paul arrested in Jerusalem		
A.D. 60	Paul appeals to Caesar		
A.D. 61-62	Paul's 2-year house arrest in Rome	Ephesians, Colossians	
~A.D. 62	James (Jesus' brother) martyred	Philemon, Philippians	Nero Burns Rome (A.D. 64)
A.D. 66	Paul's second imprisonment in Rome	1&2 Peter, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Jude	
~A.D. 67-68	Peter and Paul martyred in Rome		Galba, Otho, Vitellius A.D. 69 Vespasian A.D. 69-79
A.D. 70	Jerusalem falls The Temple is destroyed	Hebrews	
A.D. 81-96	Christians persecuted by Domitian		Titus A.D. 79-81
A.D. 90-5	Apostle John exiled on Patmos	1, 2, 3 John, Revelations	Nerva AD. 96-98

Jesus: The Word of God

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgsICbXOOIE>



John the Baptist

- Luke begins Gospel with birth of John the Baptist, representing the old prophetic age with the new age represented by Jesus.
- John born to parents who were faithful in worshipping God and keeping his commandments. They were old and his birth was a reversal of Elizabeth's barrenness.
- An angel of the Lord announced John's conception and mission.
- John circumcised on the 8th day and Zechariah could again speak.
- Zechariah sings a song of praise to God at his circumcision.



Luke begins his gospel by presenting the birth and childhood accounts of John the Baptist and Jesus. Parallels between the two highlight the continuity between the old (represented by John the Baptist) and the new (represented by Jesus) ages. This narrative emphasizes both Jesus' continuity with the prophetic traditions of the past and his unique identity as the Messiah and Son of God.

John the Baptist born c 7BC in accordance with the promise the angel Gabriel made to Elizabeth. John born to parents who were faithful in worshipping God and keeping his commandments. Like many OT birth stories (e.g., [Gen 18; 25; 30](#); [Judg 13](#); [1 Sam 1–2](#)), this account evokes the theme of barrenness to highlight that God is present among his people. God's reversal for one family signifies that he is present to save and deliver his entire people. The grace that Zechariah and Elizabeth receive follows the pattern of God's intervention on behalf of his people. Zechariah told that John would usher in a new era. Reference made to Old Testament prophecy concerning the future Elijah in Malachi and preparing the way for the Messiah in Malachi and Isaiah.

Zechariah shocked and expresses disbelief, for which he is made silent by God until John's arrival. John was given the name given by God, circumcised on the 8th day after his birth and because he was obedient, Zechariah could again speak. The name John

means “the Lord is merciful.”

At the circumcision of John the Baptist, Zechariah praises God. It is a song of Thanksgiving. From its opening word in the Latin Vulgate, Zechariah’s Song is known as the “Benedictus” (“Praise be”). It praises God for faithfully keeping his promises to David (v. [69](#)) and Abraham (v. [73](#)), and it highlights the relationship between John and Jesus (vv. [76–79](#)). The first part is a song of Thanksgiving. While the Jews had impatiently borne the yoke of the [Romans](#), they had continually sighed for the time when the [House of David](#) was to be their deliverer. The deliverance was now at hand, and was pointed to by Zechariah as the fulfilment of God's oath to [Abraham](#); but the fulfilment is described as a deliverance not for the sake of worldly power, but that “we may serve him without fear, in holiness and justice all our days” The second part is an address to his son, who was to take so important a part in the scheme of the Redemption; for he was to be a prophet, and to preach the remission of sins before the coming of the Redeemer from on high. .



Birth of Jesus Announced

- Mary told she would conceive the Messiah.
- Mary visits Elizabeth
- Mary sings a song of praise – the Magnificat
- Mary’s experience is not only a personal one but reflects the reversal of fortunes that people will experience through Jesus.
- Joseph accepts Jesus as his son.

The birth of Jesus is foretold after telling of the birth of John the Baptist. Jesus is not just a prophet like John, but the Son of God who is to sit on the throne of David. Mary has a special role in God’s plan. Many OT passages created to reference the unique and special nature of Jesus.

Mary visits Elizabeth. This meeting of the two mothers is important in two ways. First, John’s leaping in his mother’s womb shows that he recognizes that he is in the presence of someone greater than himself; Jesus is not just a prophet like John. Second, the first blessing identifies Mary’s blood relationship with Jesus (v. [42](#)), while the second focuses on Mary’s faith and obedience (v. [45](#)). Luke later clarifies that faith and obedience are more important than physical relationship ([8:19–21](#); [11:27–28](#)), which paves the way for his later emphasizing that God’s people include those who are not related to the Messiah of Israel by blood (i.e., Gentiles).

Mary’s song is known as the Magnificat, based on its opening word in the Latin Vulgate Bible. Mary’s experience is not only a personal one but also reflects the reversal of fortunes that people will experience through her son (vv. [52–55](#)). This song’s themes and language resemble those of Hannah’s song ([1 Sam 2:1–10](#)); both foreshadow God’s acts of deliverance. It also echoes OT psalms of thanksgiving that contain both a note of thanksgiving and the reasons for such thanksgiving ([Pss 30](#); [34](#); [138](#)).

Jesus had no human paternity but was supernaturally conceived by the power of God. Mary and Joseph were engaged at the time Mary found herself pregnant with Jesus. Engagement was a legally binding commitment in ancient Judaism. Jewish couples often wed when the young man was about 18 and the young woman was in her very early teens. Prior to marriage they would not live together and were expected to refrain from sexual relations until after their wedding ceremony. Jewish tradition required divorce in the case of adultery. (Sexual relations with another partner even during engagement constituted adultery.) Joseph does not initially believe Mary's story that she is pregnant without another man having been involved. Joseph wanted to fulfill the law but also show compassion to his fiancée. It takes a supernatural appearance of an angel to convince Joseph that Mary has not been unfaithful and that they may proceed with their wedding plans. The angel addresses Joseph as "son of David" to prepare him for the promise that Mary "will give birth to a son" who will fulfill the role of Messiah. But instead of the political liberator for which many Jews longed, this child will grow up to die and bring spiritual salvation to Israel. Joseph obeys the angel's instructions. We do not know when Mary and he had their actual wedding ceremony, but they remain chaste until after Jesus is born.

Her being a virgin fulfilled prophecy

Jesus' Birth and Early Life

- Jesus' genealogy provided
- Jesus' birth fulfills ancient promises and his kingdom, unlike Augustus' will last forever.
- Jesus is presented at the temple for circumcision. Jesus both obeys and fulfills the law of Moses.
- The magi follow the new celestial light believing it represents the birth of a king. Gentile pagans come to know the true king of the universe, but key leaders in Israel reject him.
- Herod's call to execute children two years and under suggest more than a year had elapsed from Jesus' birth.
- Joseph and the family escape to Egypt. "Out of Egypt I called my son"



Matthew provides Jesus' genealogy at the start of his Gospel with a select list of Jesus' ancestors from Abraham onward. Luke provides a longer but still selective list that moves backward from Jesus to Adam and the God. Matthew provided the legal or royal line and Luke the biological line. Jesus is identified as a Jew and a descendant of David. The mention of 4 non-Jewish women anticipates the Gospel's conclusion that calls for the evangelization of all nations.

There is not a lot of Scripture related to Jesus' birth and early life. Luke begins his narrative by presenting the birth and childhood accounts of Jesus. Although the Roman emperor appears to be in control, Jesus is the sovereign Lord of all. According to Roman imperial propaganda, Caesar Augustus is the savior who will proclaim the good news of peace. In reality, Jesus is the real "Savior" (v. [11](#)) who will proclaim the "good news" (v. [10](#)) of "peace" (v. [14](#)). For Jewish readers, Jesus fulfills the ancient promises. There are several parallels to [Isa 9:2-7](#): light and darkness (vv. [8-9](#); [Isa 9:2](#)), joy (v. [10](#); [Isa 9:3](#)), the birth of a child (v. [11](#); [Isa 9:6](#)), a Davidic Messiah (v. [11](#); [Isa 9:7](#)), and a new era of peace (v. [14](#); [Isa 9:6-7](#)). As such, Jesus' "kingdom" will last "forever" ([Isa 9:7](#)).

On the 8th day after birth, Jesus is presented at the temple for circumcision. Each of the first three verses of this section mentions "the Law"; Luke emphasizes that Jesus both obeys and fulfills the law of Moses. The rest of the section further develops how Jesus' life and

ministry is significant for both Jews and Gentiles (vv. [25–40](#)). Temple is a significant theme throughout the gospel of Luke.

Matthew seems to assume his audience knows about Jesus' birth from the gospel of Luke. He moves immediately to the account of the visit of the Magi. The magi were Astronomers or astrologers who served in royal courts in Persia and Arabia. The appearance of a new celestial light above a certain land was often believed to portend the birth of a king in that country. Although various attempts have been made to equate the "star" with a comet, a conjunction of planets, or some other natural phenomena, a supernatural explanation is better, especially because the star guides the Magi from Jerusalem to Bethlehem (v. [9](#)). The magi did not visit the baby Jesus at the manger on the night of his birth – they would have come months later. The adoration of the magi show that Gentile pagans come to know the true king of the universe, whereas key leaders in Israel reject him.

Jesus' birth in Bethlehem fulfills a direct predictive prophecy from [Mic 5:2](#) and may also allude to [2 Sam 5:2](#). Matthew reflects that once the Messiah is born in this small village, it will no longer be "least among the rulers of Judah," as it had been. Herod was concerned about the birth because he was not a legitimate king of Israel by birth and was threatened that the Jews would look to this child as their king.

Herod's call to execute children two years and under suggest more than a year had elapsed from Jesus' birth to the Magi's visit. Since Herod died in 4 BC, Jesus may have been born in 6 or 5 BC. Ancient calculations leading to the division of the calendar into BC and AD did not consult the work of the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, from which we now derive more accurate dates.

A sizable Jewish community existed in Egypt, outside of Herod's jurisdiction, so this is a natural place for the angel to command the young family to find refuge from Herod's murderous assaults. **Out of Egypt I called my son.** This quotation from [Hos 11:1](#) originally referred to God's calling the nation of Israel out of Egypt in the time of Moses. But Matthew, under the inspiration of the Spirit, applies it also to Jesus. He sees the history of Israel (God's "son") recapitulated in the life of Jesus (God's unique Son). Just as Israel as an infant nation went down into Egypt, so the child Jesus went there. And as Israel was led by God out of Egypt, so also was Jesus.



Jesus the Son of God and Man

Matthew 2:22-5:48; 8:1-4, 14-17; 9:1-17; 12:1-21

Luke 2:39-6:36

Mark 1:1-3:19

John 1:19-4:45

I've included some summary information on the New Testament at the end of these slides for Those who would like to review it.

Closing Hymn

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qe8dJUViL3M>



Magnificat anima mea Dominum means: My soul magnifies the Lord

Old Testament History

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7Ue7jb9olY&t>



The Old Testament in 5 Minutes

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l400jhY2DF0>



The Hope of a Future Deliverer

JULY 22-29, 2024

ZEC 9-14; DA 7-12; JN 1; LK 1-2; MT 1-2

Week 38

Zechariah and Daniel spoke the right words at the right time to inspire and encourage God’s people. God has a future plan for his people. God is in control of everything, and the future holds no fear when we remain obedient to God. Nothing we do for God is unimportant or meaningless. We move into the New Testament where we are introduced to Jesus as God and Creator – The Word Become Flesh, the long awaited Messiah. We also meet Mary and Elizabeth -- two women who worship God and willingly follow God’s plan for their lives. We continue with new chapters in the fulfillment of God’s great redemptive plan for His people.

Weekly Reading Plan (pg. 1058-1096)

Day 1: ZEC 9:1-10:12
 Day 2: ZEC 11:1-14:21
 Day 3: DA 7:1-8:27
 Day 4: DA 9:1-27
 Day 5: DA 10:1-12:13
 Day 6: JN 1:1-18; LK 1:1-80;
 MT 1:1-17
 Day 7: MT 1:18-25; LK 2:1-38;
 MT 2:1-21

Outline

The Apocalyptic Visions of Zechariah [Day 1]
 The Vision of the Shepherds [Day 2]
 The Last Battle Won [Day 2]
 The Apocalyptic Visions Of Daniel [Day 3]
 Daniel and Alexander [Day 3]
 The Seventy Sevens [Day 4]
 Daniel and the Greeks [Day 5]
 The Prehistory of Jesus [Day 6]
 The Birth of John the Baptist [Day 6]
 The Genealogy of Jesus [Day 6]
 The Birth of Jesus [Day 7]
 Jesus Presented in the Temple [Day 7]

Key Characters

Zechariah	Daniel
Shepherds	Darius
Cyrus	Jesus
John the Baptist	John
Elizabeth	Zechariah
Mary	Joseph
The Magi	Herod

Key Locations

Zion
 Judah
 Jerusalem
 Nazareth
 Bethel
 Egypt

Key Terms

Jerusalem
 Judgment
 Prophecy
 Visions
 Dreams
 The Word
 Messiah

Key Verses

Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your name. [DA 9:18-19]

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [JN 1: 1]

My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. [LK 1:46-47]

EPOCH 6
(586-322 BC)

EPOCH 7
(322-37 BC)

EPOCH 8
(37 BC – A.D. 30)

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Zec9: The LORD is against Hadrach, Tyre and Philistia. Rejoice, O Zion! Behold your king, riding on a donkey. The LORD will save his people.

Zec10: Ask the LORD for rain. From Judah will come the cornerstone. "I will save Judah for I am the LORD their God. I will bring them home."

Zec11: The cedar has fallen! The LORD said, "Shepherd the doomed flock." I broke the two staves. The LORD said, "Woe to the idle shepherd!"

Zec12: The LORD said: "I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock. They will look upon me whom they have pierced. And they will mourn alone."

Zec13: "There will be a fountain to cleanse from sin. I will remove prophets from the land. Strike my shepherd and the sheep will scatter."

Zec14: A day is coming when the LORD will go into battle. Jerusalem will dwell in security. All the nations will worship the LORD of hosts.

Da7: Daniel saw visions. I saw four great beasts. The Son of Man was given an everlasting kingdom. The fourth beast shall be destroyed.

Da8: I saw a ram with two horns. A goat with a large horn struck the ram. Gabriel said: "The ram is Media and Persia, the goat is Greece."

Da9: I read the book of Jeremiah. I prayed, "Israel has sinned. O God, forgive." Gabriel said, "Seventy weeks are decreed for atonement."

Da10: As I mourned I saw a man with a face like lightning. He said, "The prince of Persia delayed me. I came to explain the latter days."

Da11: "The king of the south will fight the king of the north. The king of the north will desecrate the temple. He will exalt himself."

Da12: "There will be a time of distress." I said, "How long?" He said, "Time, times and half a time. These words are sealed until the end."

Jn1: The Word of God became flesh and dwelt with us. John the Baptist bore witness to him. Andrew told Simon Peter and they followed Jesus.

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Lk1: The angel Gabriel foretold the birth of John. He told Mary, "You will have a son named Jesus." Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord!"

Mt1: The record of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham. Mary bore a son by the Holy Spirit. An angel told Joseph to name him Jesus.

Lk2: Mary gave birth in Bethlehem. Angels sent shepherds to see the child. Jesus was presented at the temple. He grew in wisdom and stature.

Mt2: Wise men came from the east to worship the child. King Herod ordered that all the baby boys be killed. An angel warned Joseph to flee.

Teachings About God

- God will be victorious in the final war against Jerusalem.
- God's ultimate purpose is to give dominion to the son of man (DAN 7:13-14).
- God's kingdom will triumph through the Son of Man.
- Jesus perfectly reveals God (JN 1:18)

Teachings About Humanity

- Humans are sinners in need of a Savior.
- Humans are dependent on God for their salvation.
- Luke written to provide an orderly account of the beginnings of Christianity so readers would have reliable information about Jesus

Teachings About Salvation

- Salvation will follow the horrible "day of the LORD" when God will defeat that nations that have come against Jerusalem (ZECH 14). All those who share in this salvation will enjoy a city where the holiness that once resided in the temple will be pervasive throughout the city.
- DAN 9:24 anticipates "everlasting righteousness."
- Matthew shows Jesus' fulfillment of the Scriptures as the promised Messiah more emphatically than any other Gospel, often quoting from the OT.
- Luke emphasizes that Jesus offers salvation to Jew and Gentile alike.

Reflections of Christ/Holy Spirit

- Jesus' royal entrance into Jerusalem is predicted in ZECH 9:9
- Judas' betrayal of Jesus for 30 pieces of silver is predicted in ZECH 11:12
- The piercing of Jesus' body is foreshadowed in ZECH 12:10.
- Jesus' role as a shepherd is predicted in ZECH 13:7.
- Christ's second coming is prophesied in DAN 7:13
- Christ's crucifixion on behalf of his people described in DAN 9:26 and Jesus' first coming may be predicted in DAN 9:27.
- The clearest OT statement about a future bodily resurrection is DAN 12:2-3.
- Jesus portrayed as Lord and God.
- Jesus is the Logos, the word of God.

Literary Genres/Techniques

- Zechariah 9-10 are primarily poetry and the rest in prose.
- Daniel 8-12 written in Hebrew and contained prophecy of the future people of God.
- The Gospel of Matthew, Luke, and John are written in Greek.
-

Author/Date of Writing/Audience

- The last chapters of Zechariah likely written after the temple was completed in 516 BC and may have been written by an unknown prophet.
- Daniel 11 details Hellenistic Greek kingdoms that succeeded Alexander. These chapters of Daniel written when Daniel was an old man, shortly after the Persians defeat Babylon.
- John written c AD 80-90 to Christians living in Roman Asia.
- Luke written c AD 60-61 to the gentile Theophilus.
- Mark written c AD 55-85 by Matthew to Jewish Christians in Syria.

What did I learn about God?

- In history (c. 333 BC) God used Alexander the Great to deal convincingly with those who opposed his will. Thus was the oracle in Zechariah 9 fulfilled. What lessons does that teach you about God's love and holiness? About the authority of God's word spoken through prophets?
- Where have you seen God active in violent world affairs?
- What about Jesus stands out to you the most? His conception by the Holy Spirit and a virgin? His humanity as a man who can relate to us? His deity as God's only Son? His authority as an eternal King? His mission as savior? Other?
- God appeared to Zechariah, Mary and the shepherds when they were just being themselves. What does that imply about what it means to be "spiritual"? How has God spoken to you in the ordinary flow of life?
- Jesus was called Immanuel (God with Us). How do you feel about viewing Jesus as a role model? Does his divine nature make him feel too different from you or make Him the ultimate role model?

What did I learn about human nature?

- In Daniel 7, we are shown that God doesn't always side with the strong or victorious (athletes, candidates or military) but with the defeated, oppressed and exiled. How might this affect us in our thinking about God? In our daily lives?
- The bottom line for Daniel is that the royal power of the Most High God always triumphs over the kingdoms of men. How is that evident for Daniel personally? For the kings and subjects he treats? For the readers he comforts? For us?
- In John 1, what motivated the disciples of John to follow Jesus? How would these first disciples be accepted into leadership roles in a church today?
- What do the star, the Magi, the gifts, the homage, the hostility and the prophecy teach about the significance of Jesus in Matthew 2:1?
- How did God use prophecy, dreams, faith and circumstances to guide Joseph? What can you learn about faith and obedience from Joseph?

What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- Are you doing any of the things targeted in Zechariah 9's oracle for judgement: hoarding wealth? Victimitizing others? Trusting in your own strength? How has God dealt with you in this area? Unlike the Syrians, Phoenicians, Philistines or Jebusites, what can you legitimately take pride in that is of eternal value, knowing that it will never be taken away?
- What aspects of God move you to pray? Why? Who do you pray for most frequently? What prayer agenda does Daniel 9 suggest?
- If an angel today were to reveal God's plan for your life (as with both Elizabeth and Mary), what would you do? Ask a lot of questions? Wonder if you had any say about it? Rejoice that God could use you? Worry about your ability to do it? Run away scared? Gladly obey? Other?
- In Luke 2:34 we are told that Simeon blessed Mary and Joseph. How might God want you to "bless" a person in your life?
- In your journey toward God, how are you like the Magi? Unlike them? Have you had to leave anything to follow Jesus? What is the gold, incense and myrrh in your life?