

## Getting into the book of Daniel...

### While waiting to begin:

- What do you know about the book of Daniel?
- How do we learn about Jesus in the book of Daniel?

### Daniel in the story of the Bible

Jerusalem = God's holy city

Babylon = city of sinful humanity

In 609BC Nebuchadnezzar (see 1:1-2)  
besieged Jerusalem...  
took temple objects...  
& exiled the Lord's people

### The main message of chapters 1-6

- Understand the tactics of the enemy:**
  - ➔ **inculturation / assimilation** – 1:5-7
  
- The need for wisdom: sometimes God's people can say "yes", sometimes they must say "no"**
  - ➔ **no compromise**
  - Eating from the King's table – 1:8
  - Worshipping the statue – 3:1, 3:5-8, 3:15-16
  - Prayer and the lion's den – 6:3-7, 6:10-11
  
- Don't be afraid: the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom**
  - ➔ **"God gave..."** – 1:2, 1:9, 1:17

## The structure of Daniel

### Different approaches to the structure of Daniel

- a) chapters 1-7 = stories  
chapters 8-12 = visions (mysterious, apocalyptic)
- b) chapters 1-6 = Daniel in public, 3<sup>rd</sup> person (“he”)  
chapters 7-12. Dan in private, 1<sup>st</sup> person (“I”)
- c) 1:1-2:4a and chapters 8-12 are written in Hebrew  
2:4b-7:28 are written in Aramaic.

### Most important: the King of Kings is at the heart of Daniel

- A The Exile and God’s people = ch 1
- B Dreaming of the End of Human Kingdoms = ch2
- C Living in Two Kingdoms = ch3
- D The War of Kings = ch4
- D’ The War of Kings = ch5
- C’ Living in Two Kingdoms = ch6
- B’ Dreaming of the End of Human Kingdoms = ch7-8
- A’ The Exile and God’s Purpose = ch9

Chapters 10-12  
Concerning the End; a heavenly messenger and  
a final revelation.

*A “sandwich” structure:*

**2+7 God’s kingdom, preview of world history.**  
= ch2 tiny stone smashes 4 kingdoms.  
= ch7 four beast-empires destroyed, authority  
to the Son of Man.

**3+6 God’s power: he rescues his people**  
- ch3 Neb acknowledges this.  
- ch6 Darius acknowledges this.

**4+5 God’s judgement**  
- Neb humbled  
- Belshazzar destroyed

## Main message... & key verse (and central verse) = 4:17

**Daniel 4:17, “... the Most High rules the kingdom of men  
and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.”**

God is king, despite all earthly rebellions against his rule. *The Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men.* God’s people are to remain faithful, whatever the consequences, trusting in their future hope.

## To discuss:

From Daniel 1-6 we’ve thought about: the enemy’s tactics... the need for wisdom and courage... and the sovereignty of God that means we do not need to fear. So:

1. What are particular applications for this book for YOU (for your head, or heart, or hands)?

The “youths” of chapter 1 may have been only 15 years old. With this in mind:

2. How do you think these chapters might apply to our young people? How should you be praying for them? How might you be encouraging them by word and by example?