Survey of God's Program with Israel

Daniel — Introduction and the 1st Revelation

A 6-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

These are Lessons 1–6 of the 38-lesson eighth part of Keith Blades' Survey of God's Program with Israel, which takes up the Book of Daniel. They open the 6th of the seven major doctrinal issues in the 5th-course prophets — the time schedule — and cover Daniel 1, an overview of the five revelations given to Daniel, the 1st revelation in Daniel 2, and an introduction to Daniel 7 and 8. God gave Israel a time schedule, especially through the prophet Daniel, that set units of time upon the five installments of the 5th course; Keith pictures it as the hub of a wheel, with the other doctrines coming in on the spokes. Daniel 2 is the foundational revelation: the five installments parallel the five component sections of Nebuchadnezzar's image, and the 5th course of punishment is the times of the Gentiles. In giving the 1st installment 70 years through Jeremiah, God also gave the unit of time the rest of the time schedule operates on — years — so the days and months in Daniel are literal. Keith keeps the times of the Gentiles, a description of the 5th course in God's program with Israel, distinct from the fullness of the Gentiles in Romans 11:25, which is exclusive to this dispensation of Gentile grace. Lesson 6 shows that the 2nd and 3rd revelations, Daniel 7 and 8, go together like part A and part B of the same revelation, and that chapter 7 cannot be understood without understanding chapter 2 already.

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Lessons at a Glance

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L1	The Time Schedule: Five Major Revelations to Daniel — Daniel 1; Overview of Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10–12
L2	Seventy Years and the Base Unit of Time — Jeremiah 25 and 29; Daniel 9:24–27; Numbers 14; Daniel 8:14 and 12
L3	The First Revelation: An Image of Five Sections — Daniel 2:1–45; the Latter Days; Isaiah 28:11; "these kings"
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	Kingdom of Heaven at Hand; Introducing Daniel 7 and 8

Lesson Summaries

L1

The Time Schedule: Five Major Revelations to Daniel *Daniel 1; Overview of Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10–12*

The Sixth of the Seven Major Doctrinal Issues

- God gave Israel a time schedule, especially through the prophet Daniel, that set units of time upon the five installments; the time schedule did not have the dispensation of grace in view
- It is the sixth of the seven major doctrinal issues and a kind of pivotal issue; the seventh will be the 5th-course prophets' description of the blessings and glory of the kingdom
- By Keith's rough estimate, about ninety-five percent of the details of the 5th course's time schedule are set forth in Daniel's prophecy

Daniel: The Hub of the Wheel

- Keith illustrates the time schedule as the hub of a wheel, with all the other doctrines coming in on the spokes, each having a particular place on that time schedule
- The 5th-course prophets are not put together in a haphazard manner; the doctrinal issue sitting in the middle of them is the Book of Daniel, and all the information in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Lamentations can be placed on its time schedule
- Major and minor prophets are not distinguished by importance; the minor prophets take you back to the beginning and start the issue of the 5th course over with amplifying details

Daniel 1: Taken at the Commencement of the 5th Course

- Daniel 1:1–2 is historically the commencement of the 5th course of punishment upon the southern kingdom; Daniel lives through the entire 1st installment and is there for the commencement of the 2nd
- Daniel's refusal of the king's meat and wine is in connection with the Mosaic law; a divine orchestration puts him in a position to function in a very special way, both for Israel and in connection with the Gentiles
- God gave the four their knowledge and skill, but Daniel is singled out in verse 17: he "had understanding in all visions and dreams"

Five Revelations

- All the time schedule information comes through Daniel in five revelations that build upon one another; things such as Daniel in the lion's den have nothing to do with the time schedule
- The 1st revelation is chapter 2, the 2nd chapter 7, the 3rd chapter 8, the 4th chapter 9 — given in response to Daniel's prayer for the knowledge of time — and the 5th chapters 10, 11 and 12, which comprise one revelation
- Chapter 2 is the foundational revelation: the five installments parallel the five component sections of the image, and it gives the general scope without

putting any units of time on it

From Milk to Meat

- By the 2nd revelation the head of gold has ceased to reign and the 1st installment is past; what chapter 7 focuses on now is the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th installments
- Chapter 9 gives the time for the whole thing, and chapters 10–12 focus on the 5th installment
- Every revelation amplifies: God gave the general scope first, then increased it, and finally gives all the details about the 5th installment — a milk-to-meat order, with chapter 2 the most general

L2 Seventy Years and the Base Unit of Time *Jeremiah 25 and 29; Daniel 9:24–27; Numbers 14; Daniel 8:14 and 12*

Five Revelations, Progressive in Content

- The book has 12 chapters but only five time schedule revelations; they build upon one another, the first being the most basic and the last the most detailed
- The whole issue of the day of the Lord, the tribulation period and the book of the Revelation rests upon this time schedule given to Daniel
- The first revelation designates the 5th course as the times of the Gentiles' dominion over Israel — times, plural — and is the only one with no time given to it

Jeremiah: 70 Years for the 1st Installment

- Before reaching Daniel, Jeremiah 25 and 29 already showed that the 5th course has more than one installment, and that the 1st installment has 70 years to it
- Jeremiah is told the 1st installment will last 70 years under Babylonian dominion; God judging the Babylonian Empire after 70 years is not the end of the 5th course for Israel
- Jeremiah does not say how many other kings and nations will serve themselves of Israel; Daniel's first revelation gives five dominions that fulfill it

Daniel 9: Seventy Sevens

- Daniel 9:24–27 is not the whole time schedule of the 5th course but the time schedule for the 2nd installment through the 5th; for Daniel the 70 years have already gone by
- The Hebrew behind "weeks" is simply the number seven — literally seventy sevens; seventy sevens are 490, but the verse gives only a number, not a unit of time
- Put the 70 years with the 490 years, and the entire time schedule for the 5th course comes up to about 560 years

Years: The Base Unit of Time

- In giving the 1st installment's time schedule, God also gave the unit of time the rest of it operates on: years. He assumes you have dealt with Jeremiah before you ever get to Daniel
- When God speaks of days He means literal days, and of months, literal months; knowing the base unit, the numbers can be taken for exactly what they say

Literal Days, Not Day-Years

- Jehovah's Witnesses take Daniel's days as day-years; Charles Taze Russell built a system on it, the source of his 1874 coming of the Lord, later revised to say the Lord came invisibly
- The only place God ever says to count a day as a year is Numbers 14, in connection with Israel's wanderings; the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14 are literal days, a section of the last installment

Daniel 12: Time, Times and a Half

- A time is one base unit, times is a dual in the Hebrew — two — and a half is half a base unit: three and a half years
- The 1,290 days of verse 11 and the 1,335 days of verse 12 are literal days too; the seventy-five days that follow the end of the time schedule do not accomplish anything in the 5th course
- One thing they pertain to is the resurrection of the Old Testament saints, who come forth right into the glory of the kingdom, not into the cleaning up after the Lord's day of wrath

L3 The First Revelation: An Image of Five Sections *Daniel 2:1–45; the Latter Days; Isaiah 28:11; "these kings"*

A Revelation Given to Nebuchadnezzar

- The first revelation gives the entire scope of the 5th course; it is given to Nebuchadnezzar, though the information pertains to God's program with Israel, and he is involved only in the 1st installment
- When none of the wise men can tell the dream, Daniel with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego prays for understanding, and Daniel makes sure the God of heaven gets the credit

"what shall be in the latter days"

- The expression has two meanings: where no unit of time or explicit time schedule is in the immediate context, it refers only to the subsequent days
- In Daniel 2 the latter days of verse 28 is amplified in verse 29 by "what should come to pass hereafter" — things in Daniel's lifetime and following, right on until the kingdom is established
- Used again in chapters 10–12, it focuses on the time schedule of chapter 9 and the last seven years of the 5th installment; Joel, quoted by Peter in Acts 2, is dealing with a time schedule and doctrinally follows Daniel

Stammering Lips and Another Tongue (Isaiah 28:11)

- From Daniel 2:4 to the end of chapter 7, God records Daniel not in Hebrew but in the Chaldean language, or Aramaic
- When the 5th course begins, God speaks to them "with stammering lips and another tongue" — the language of their oppressors, first the Assyrians, then the Chaldeans — so Nebuchadnezzar gets the information and Daniel records the interpretation in Chaldean

Five Sections, Five Gentile Dominions

- The image has a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay; the five-installment concept comes from it
- Each section stands for a Gentile dominion that holds sway over Israel; the head of gold represents Nebuchadnezzar's dominion as king of the Chaldean

Empire, and the feet are a separate kingdom from the legs

- The 2nd and 3rd revelations identify the silver and brass as the Medo-Persians and the Grecian; the Roman concept comes from looking back historically, and the kingdom of the 4th installment is described as a broken form of the Grecian Empire
- The little horn is described as coming out of one of the broken sections of the Grecian Empire

"in the days of these kings" (Daniel 2:44–45)

- "These kings" are those reigning in the fifth empire; the feet are part iron, part clay because they are separate entities that unite for a common cause but are not bound together
- At the beginning of the 5th course God's kingdom in Israel had been left to other people, with Nebuchadnezzar ruling over it
- God gives the kingdoms into Gentile hands, but Satan is using them and puts his entire plan of evil at stake in that last kingdom; when God crushes it, He destroys all these kingdoms
- Daniel 2:44 is one of the major passages in Israel's scriptures from which the expression the kingdom of heaven comes

L4 The Fifth Course: The Times of the Gentiles *Daniel 2:31–45; Matthew 23:33–39; Luke 21:5–33*

Five Gentile Empires or Dominions

- The image's five parts are five Gentile empires or dominions that hold sway until the Lord judges them all and sets up His kingdom at the end
- Daniel 7 and 8 identify the silver as the Medo-Persian Empire, the brass as the Grecian Empire, and the legs as a fourfold breakdown of that Grecian empire — and that is how God looks at the empire situation in effect at that time
- The ten toes are nations right around the land of Israel; Daniel 7 and 8 are built upon chapter 2, and chapter 9 gives the time unit factor

"The whole thing is the times of the Gentiles"

- Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold, is a Gentile empire ruling over Israel, and the one after him is not a Jewish empire: the whole thing is the times of the Gentiles
- God allows the Gentiles to run roughshod over Israel and afflict them for a great expanse of time; what goes on in the 5th installment has parallels and similarities to the 1st
- The gospel of the kingdom — the kingdom of heaven at hand — was the good news that the time for the God of heaven to set up a kingdom was at hand

"your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23)

- Leaving the temple, the Lord does what He did at the beginning of the 5th course, when Ezekiel saw God leave His house, the city and the land; He introduces the 5th installment as He introduced the 1st
- Going back to Abel, He will judge the entire satanic plan of evil that has set up its headquarters in His land; Satan walked in when the Lord left at the beginning of the 5th course

Luke 21: The Rest of the Time Schedule

- In the gospel accounts you are in the 4th installment; in Luke 21 the Lord prepares the disciples for the rest of the time schedule once the 4th installment is over
- In verse 8, "the time draweth near": the time is drawing near for that aspect to begin to take place; in verse 9, "must first come to pass" means the thing has already been prophetically outlined and declared
- In verse 20 the Lord zeroes in on the sign Daniel spoke about with the man of sin; the last three and a half years are the days of vengeance, where the Lord avenges His cause with Israel against those nations
- This passage is not talking about what Titus of Rome did in seventy AD, because verse 22 says these are the days of vengeance

Trodden Down Twice; "this generation"

- The 5th course saw Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles twice: Daniel received his revelations when it already had been, and before the city or temple was ever rebuilt he prophesied it would be destroyed again
- In verse 32, "this generation" is not a span of time: this race of rebellious Israel cannot pass away until every one of these things is fulfilled
- Three things pass away in the tribulation period: the rebellious heavens, the rebellious earth, and the rebellious generation of Israel

L5

Times of the Gentiles, Fullness of the Gentiles *Daniel 2:44; Luke 21; Romans 9–11*

Finishing the First Revelation

- Daniel 2 gives no time unit factors yet, but provides the comprehension needed so the time schedule, especially in chapter 9, can be properly overlaid upon it
- Five Gentile empires rule over Israel; then the Lord takes the judgment into His own hands, avenges His cause with Israel, purges the rebellious element, and establishes the kingdom of heaven on the earth
- The feet are a confederacy of kingdoms, especially ten, out of which comes one special ruler, the man of sin

The Times of the Gentiles (Luke 21)

- The concept is in Daniel 2 though the expression is not; the Lord Himself uses the exact expression in Luke 21, a day or so before the cross
- It is God allowing the Gentiles, for times plural, to run roughshod over His people as a rod of discipline, according to the courses of punishment of Leviticus 26; the class is to constantly equate the expression with the 5th course
- The 5th-course prophets describe two sackings of Jerusalem, two destructions of the temple, and two captivities for Israel

Two Expressions Not to Be Confused

- The times of the Gentiles pertains to God's program with Israel; "the fulness of the Gentiles" in Romans 11:25 is exclusive to this dispensation of Gentile grace while Israel's program is set aside. Confusing them confuses the dispensations
- The dispensation of grace has interrupted God's program with Israel between the 4th installment and the 5th

Romans 11: On Hold, Not Cast Away

- In Romans 9–11 Paul teaches that God has put His program with Israel temporarily on hold; the 5th installment did not start, and the man of sin still has not come
- Have they fallen so that they can never be restored? Keith's answer from Romans 11: they will be restored — God will pick them back up and put them back in their position; in the olive tree the tree has not been uprooted — it has been cut down
- When the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, this dispensation of grace ends; "all Israel shall be saved" is not today, but out there
- Paul understands that what is left on Israel's program is the 5th installment. Of Messiah's five names in Isaiah — the Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, King, and Blesser — what remains in the 5th installment is the Deliverer, Avenger, King, and Blesser

Israel's Blindness

- Isaiah, raised up before the 5th course began, was told to produce a blindness upon Israel; following the cross that blindness was lifted through the opening seven chapters of Acts
- Israel stumbled at the Messiah with eyes open and ears unstopped; the stumbling stone refers especially to the one offensive act of the cross
- The blindness of Romans 11 came coincidental to the ushering in of the dispensation of grace and is only temporary; Keith takes "in part" as partial in the sense that it is not permanent — "until"

L6

The Second and Third Revelations Go Together *Daniel 2:44–45 and the Kingdom of Heaven at Hand; Introducing Daniel 7 and 8*

Six Kingdoms in Daniel 2

- A stone cut out of a mountain without hands smashes the image on the feet and toes; God will establish a literal physical kingdom on this earth, reigning personally through Israel in Mount Zion
- Daniel 2 speaks of six kingdoms — five Gentile empires and the sixth, God's kingdom — all literal, physical kingdoms reigning and ruling on this earth
- When God sets that kingdom up He destroys the entire satanic plan of evil in which Satan rules and reigns on this earth

The Kingdom of Heaven at Hand

- When John the Baptist proclaims to Israel that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, he is talking about the very thing Daniel spoke of: God establishing His own kingdom on this earth
- Mark 1:15, "the time is fulfilled": anybody with knowledge of the time schedule never would have said the kingdom of God is at hand until now
- Many Christians take the gospel of the kingdom as how to go to heaven or a spiritual reign in the heart; one of the main reasons is that the average Christian has little comprehension of God's program with Israel

Chapters 3–6: Not Time Schedule Issues

- Chapters 3–6 are not time schedule issues, but they have a great deal to do with information Israel needs to understand and appreciate
- What Nebuchadnezzar does with his great image in chapter 3 — building it unto himself — the man of sin does the exact same thing in the 5th installment

- The handwriting on the wall in chapter 5 fulfills a judgment by which the Babylonian reign of the 1st installment would end and the bringing in of the 2nd installment would be provided for

Part A and Part B: Daniel 7 and 8

- The 2nd and 3rd revelations go together like part A and part B; in 8:1 Daniel points out that this vision came "after that which appeared unto me at the first" — two years earlier, in chapter 7
- Chapter 7 was a vision of the evening and chapter 8 a vision of the morning, and the angel links them: "the vision of the evening and the morning which was told *is* true"
- Bizarre interpretations of chapter 8 come from disconnecting it from chapter 7; the 2,300 days can only be understood through the link, and they take place in the 5th installment and concern the man of sin

Every Revelation Builds on Chapter 2

- Each revelation builds upon the ones before it; in chapter 7 the most information is given about the 4th and especially the 5th installment, and chapter 7 cannot be understood without understanding chapter 2 already
- Anglo-Israelism, ignorant of the dispensation of grace, sees no connection between Daniel 7 and Daniel 2; but the lion with eagle's wings is Babylon, the bear the Medo-Persian empire — not Russia — and the leopard Grecia
- The second biggest problem in commentaries is that at Daniel 7 they forget everything learned in Daniel 2

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Israel's Time Schedule vs. the Dispensation of Grace

The time schedule given to Israel did not have the dispensation of grace in view, and Daniel knew nothing about the dispensation of Gentile grace. The dispensation of grace has interrupted God's program with Israel between the 4th installment and the 5th — right when the 5th installment was ready to begin. There is no time schedule in this dispensation of grace; all Paul can say is that when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, God will resume His program with Israel.

Daniel's Perspective vs. Ours

Keith shows the mystery dispensation on his board but takes it off to look at things from Daniel's perspective, since it was not understood by Daniel or any of the prophets. Daniel did not see the destruction in seventy AD, because he was blind to the dispensation of grace.

Times of the Gentiles vs. Fullness of the Gentiles

The times of the Gentiles, as in Daniel 2 and Luke 21, is an expression in God's program with Israel that describes the 5th course of punishment and does not have this dispensation of Gentile grace in view. The fullness of the Gentiles pertains to what God is doing with the Gentiles in this dispensation of grace —

putting them on the same level with Israel and forming the Church of the Body of Christ — and refers to its end. When Paul speaks of Gentiles in his epistles, he is not speaking of the times of the Gentiles as Daniel referred to them.

The Latter Days in Daniel vs. in Paul

Paul uses the expression the same way it is used in Daniel 2, but with no time schedule in view; in I Timothy 4:1 he describes the historical outflow of this dispensation of grace from the time he wrote. The history of the dispensation of grace will be of ever-increasing intensity as long as it goes on.

The Kingdom of Heaven at Hand — Then, Not Today

Keith says you do not go out today and say the kingdom of heaven is at hand, because it is not at hand: the dispensation of grace is in effect and Israel's program is in abeyance until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. To tell someone today that the kingdom of God is at hand would be preaching another gospel.

Daniel's Prophecy Is Not Being Fulfilled Today

Nothing spoken in Daniel 7 or Daniel 8 is going on in this dispensation of grace; any system teaching otherwise is erroneous. Titus of Rome did not fulfill prophecy; he fulfilled what Paul described God would allow in Romans 11. Fundamental Christianity misunderstands the dispensation of grace and tries to plug it in back in Luke 21. Once the rapture takes place, God will reorient the remnant of Israel to the program in the opening chapter of Hebrews.

Key Scripture References

Leviticus 26	The courses of punishment under which God allows the Gentiles to afflict His people
Numbers 14	The only place God says to count a day as a year — Israel's wanderings
Isaiah 28:11	"stammering lips and another tongue": God speaks through the language of their oppressors
Jeremiah 25:8–15	The 1st installment lasts 70 years under Babylonian dominion; Babylon's judgment is not the end of the 5th course
Jeremiah 29	The 70 years mentioned again for the 1st installment
Daniel 1	Daniel taken at the commencement of the 5th course; singled out for understanding in visions and dreams
Daniel 2:28–29	The latter days amplified by "what should come to pass hereafter"
Daniel 2:31–43	The image of five sections: the five installments; five Gentile dominions over Israel
Daniel 2:44–45	"in the days of these kings" God sets up His kingdom; the stone smashes

	the image on the feet
Daniel 3	Nebuchadnezzar's image parallels what the man of sin does in the 5th installment
Daniel 5	The handwriting on the wall ends the Babylonian reign of the 1st installment
Daniel 7	The 2nd revelation: focus on the 2nd through 5th installments; a vision of the evening
Daniel 8	The 3rd revelation, joined to chapter 7 as part B; a vision of the morning
Daniel 8:14	The 2,300 days — literal days, a section of the last installment
Daniel 8:26	The angel links the vision of the evening and the morning
Daniel 9:1–2	Daniel acknowledges the 70 years given to Jeremiah
Daniel 9:24–27	Seventy sevens: the time schedule from the 2nd installment through the 5th
Daniel 10–12	The 5th revelation — three chapters, one revelation — focused on the 5th installment
Daniel 12:5–7	Time, times and a half: three and a half years
Daniel 12:11–12	1,290 and 1,335 days — literal days; seventy-five days after the time schedule
Matthew 23:33–39	The Lord leaves the temple: the 5th installment introduced as the 1st was
Mark 1:14–15	"the time is fulfilled" — the kingdom of God at hand on the time schedule
Luke 21:8–9	"the time draweth near"; "must first come to pass"
Luke 21:20–24	The man of sin's sign; the days of vengeance; the times of the Gentiles
Luke 21:32	"this generation": the race of rebellious Israel
Romans 9:31–33	Israel stumbled at the stumbling stone — especially the cross
Romans 11:25–27	The fullness of the Gentiles; "all Israel shall be saved" — not today, but out there
I Timothy 4:1	The latter days in Paul: the historical outflow of the dispensation of grace
Revelation 13	A composite beast made up of the ones Daniel sees