

# Book of Daniel

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## Setting

- Northern Kingdom of Israel falls to the Assyrians in 722 BC
- Southern Kingdom of Judah falls to the Babylonians in 586 BC
- Daniel (and his friends) are taken into captivity in 605 BC



Book of Daniel



# THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE c. 600 BC

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Today I call on heaven and earth as witnesses against you. If you break my covenant, you will quickly disappear from the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. You will live there only a short time; then you will be utterly destroyed. <sup>27</sup> For the LORD will scatter you among the nations, where only a few of you will survive. <sup>28</sup> There, in a foreign land, you will worship idols made from wood and stone-- gods that neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. <sup>29</sup> But from there you will search again for the LORD your God. And if you search for him with all your heart and soul, you will find him. <sup>30</sup> "In the distant future, when you are suffering all these things, you will finally return to the LORD your God and listen to what he tells you. <sup>31</sup> For the LORD your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon you or destroy you or forget the solemn covenant he made with your ancestors.

Deuteronomy 4:26-31 NLT

## The 3 Primary Reasons God Judged the Nation

1. Covenant disloyalty (Jer 11:10; Eze 39:23-24; Hos 8:1-3)
2. The worship of idols (Isa 10:10-11; Jer 16:11; Amos 5:26-27)
3. Trusting in other nations (Isa 30:1-2; 31:1; Hos 3:13-15)

## The Names of Daniel and His 3 Friends

1. Daniel (God is my judge) becomes Belteshazzar (Bel protects his life)
2. Hananiah (The Lord is grace) becomes Shadrach (Command of Aku)
3. Mishael (Who is God) becomes Meshach (Who is Aku?)
4. Azariah (The Lord helps) becomes Abednego (Servant of Nego)

## The Second and Third Deportations

1. The second one takes place in 597 BC, and includes a young Ezekiel. More national treasures are carted away.
2. The third deportation is in 586 BC. This time, the Temple is burned and Jerusalem is left in ruins. Only the most destitute and poor are left behind. All others are carted off to Babylon.

# The Ministry of Daniel

- Daniel's ministry appears to have spanned the entire 70 years the nation was in exile.
- From the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus





**What does the Cyrus Cylinder say?**


*'I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, legitimate king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four rims [of the earth], son of Cambyses, great king, king of Anshan, descendant of Teispes, great king, king of Anshan, of a family (which) always (exercised) kingship'.* (Extract from the Cyrus Cylinder)

The Cyrus Cylinder is one of the most famous historical documents of the Achaemenid Empire. It was written by a Babylonian scribe in cuneiform script, in the 6th century BC. The cylinder records Cyrus' peaceful capture of Babylon in 539 BC

and how he rebuilt the main temple of the city god Marduk. Cyrus claimed he had restored temples and cults in neighbouring cities and returned their deported people and gods. He strengthened Babylon's fortifications by completing the city wall and installing doors of cedar clad with bronze at the city gates. The cylinder was placed in the foundations of Babylon's city wall.

For a full translation of the text, visit [www.britishmuseum.ac.uk](http://www.britishmuseum.ac.uk)





Daniel (and his friends) personify what it means to live in the “fear of the Lord”.  
The central proverb of the wisdom literature

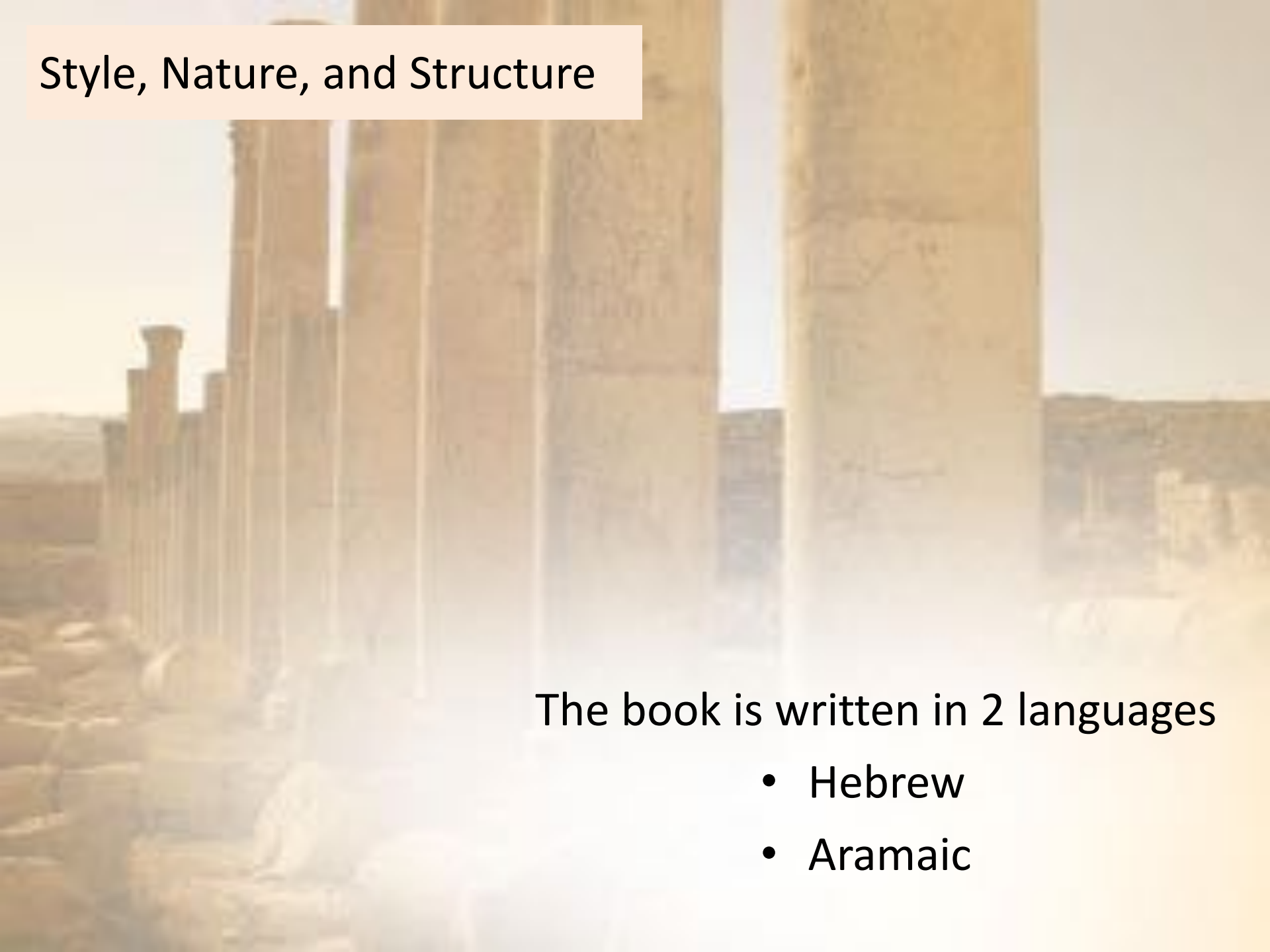
## Authorship and Date

- Internal: The usage of “I Daniel” (8:1; 9:2, 20; 10:2)
- External: Jesus, in Matthew 24:15 quotes 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 as coming from the prophet Daniel.

## Authorship and Date

- Daniel, therefore, not only presents an authentic first person view of life during the exile, but a detailed account of the Persian era (538 BC), and into the Greek period to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees (165 BC).

# Style, Nature, and Structure

The background of the slide is a photograph of ancient stone columns in a desert setting. The columns are tall and weathered, with some showing hieroglyphs. The scene is hazy, suggesting a hot, dry environment. The columns are arranged in a row, with some in the foreground and others receding into the distance.

The book is written in 2 languages

- Hebrew
- Aramaic

Daniel has 3 major genres of literature

1. Historical Narrative
2. Wisdom
3. Apocalyptic



		Chapter	Language	Focus	
Historical Narratives		1	Hebrew	Prologue	
	Messages of faith and hope for the exiles	2	Aramaic	Nebuchadnezzar's dream and the four kingdoms	
		3			The valour and rescue of faithful servants
		4			The insanity and humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar
		5			The humiliation of Belshazzar
		6			The valour of Daniel
		7		Daniel's vision of the four beasts/kingdoms	
Visions	Three final prophecies	8	Hebrew	Daniels vision of the ram and goat	
		9		Daniel's vision of the 70 weeks	
		10		Daniel's vision of the end times	
		11			
		12			



## The 4 difficult questions Daniel helps to answer

1. Is God really in control?
2. Is God good?
3. Why is suffering allowed?
4. How far do we engage with culture?

