

Dr. Wendy Widder, Daniel, Session 16, Daniel 10-12 – Conflict and God’s Final Victory Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Widder, Daniel, Session 16, Daniel 10-12 – Conflict and God’s Final Victory, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture focuses on Daniel 10-12, specifically Daniel's last vision, found in those chapters. The lecture provides an in-depth analysis of this complex vision, including the historical context, the roles of angelic beings, and the promise of future reward and judgment. **Widder explores different interpretations, including the ex-eventu prophecy view and the traditional view that sees an Antichrist figure.** She emphasizes the challenges in fully understanding these prophecies, acknowledges the mystery surrounding some details, and notes the comfort it gave to Daniel and continues to give believers about future reward and judgements from God. **Ultimately, Widder encourages continued study and reflection on the enduring themes of the book of Daniel while acknowledging it will remain challenging.**

**2. 9 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Widder, Daniel, Session 16 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Major Prophets → Daniel).**



**Widder_Daniel_Ses
sion16.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Widder, Daniel, Session 16, Daniel 10-12 – Conflict and God's Final Victory

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture on Daniel 10-12:

Briefing Document: Daniel 10-12 – Daniel's Last Vision

Overview: This briefing covers Dr. Widder's analysis of Daniel 10-12, which she identifies as Daniel's final and most complex vision. This vision, unlike previous ones, is not symbolic, but rather a detailed revelation delivered by a divine messenger. It provides a historical overview and a look into the future, focusing on the struggles and eventual vindication of God's people.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. Structure of the Vision:

- **Chapter 10: Introduction and Preparation:** Daniel is introduced mourning and fasting, receiving a vision of a powerful, possibly divine messenger. This prepares him to receive the weighty revelation.
- **Chapter 11: The Revelation:** A detailed prophecy covering several eras: Persia, Greece (Alexander the Great), Ptolemaic Egypt and Seleucid Syria, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and an ambiguous "king who exalts himself."
- **Chapter 12: Epilogue:** Concluding remarks about the end times, resurrection, and final judgment.

1. The Divine Messenger:

- The messenger's description (dressed in linen, face like lightning, eyes like torches, etc.) closely resembles theophanies described in Ezekiel, leading Dr. Widder to believe this could be an appearance of God himself, or a pre-incarnate Christ, rather than a named angel like Gabriel.
- The messenger's explanation for his delay – being held up by the "prince of Persia" – raises questions about spiritual warfare. Dr. Widder acknowledges that such events are a mystery and the Bible doesn't provide specific answers. She also notes that the idea of divine beings ruling over nations is prevalent in the Ancient Near East and the Bible.
- The messenger's urgent tone highlights the importance of the message for Daniel.

- She questions if the messenger could be Gabriel since it is not explicitly mentioned in Daniel 10, as it was in Daniel 9.

1. **Daniel's Response:**

- Daniel's physical and emotional reactions (weakness, terror, falling into a deep sleep, needing multiple acts of strengthening) emphasize the intensity and importance of this revelation.
- He is described as a man "of high esteem" repeatedly.
- He struggles to understand the message and even asks for clarification, which makes the text relevant to readers as it demonstrates a human being dealing with difficult and puzzling prophetic material.

1. **The Prophecy in Chapter 11:**

- **Persian Kings:** The prophecy starts with a prediction of four Persian kings (3 + 1) which Dr Widder thinks is a number of completion, and the last king will "arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece."
- **Alexander the Great:** Referred to as the "strong king" who conquers and establishes a vast empire that is quickly divided after his death.
- **Ptolemies and Seleucids:** The prophecy details the complex political interactions between the Ptolemaic kings of Egypt ("king of the south") and the Seleucid kings of Syria ("king of the north"), a period of conflict lasting around 200 years. It includes many specific historical details such as the marriage between Berenice and Antiochus II.
- **Antiochus IV Epiphanes:** Referred to as a "despicable person" who desecrates the Temple in Jerusalem, outlaws Jewish practices, and initiates a period of intense persecution. This is a very detailed portion of the prophecy which matches up with history.

1. **Ex-Eventu Prophecy:**

- Dr. Widder revisits the concept of *ex-eventu* prophecy, where a prophecy is written after the events it describes. She explains this viewpoint, which suggests that the author of Daniel was a second-century Jew writing in the guise of the historical Daniel.
- This view states that the author is writing the historical account until Daniel 11:36 and then moves into future predictions.

- The theory also argues the author made mistakes, such as confusing Cyrus with Darius. Dr. Widder expresses her skepticism about the idea that the author is making mistakes in history.
- She notes that the detailed, accurate historical portion of Daniel 11 is unusual for biblical prophecy, making *ex-eventu* prophecy a plausible explanation for some scholars.

1. **The Shift at Daniel 11:36 & the “King Who Exalts Himself”**

- A major point of debate arises at this verse, because the narrative transitions to a king that is not clearly identified in historical accounts.
- Critical scholars argue that the passage is still about Antiochus IV, the details of which are imagined and not accurate.
- Traditional scholars suggest a shift here to an eschatological figure, possibly the Antichrist, drawing connections to the book of Revelation and other biblical texts. She explains that Christian commentators such as Jerome have historically taken this view, and cites the "telescoping" nature of prophecy as a reason to view this section as such.
- Dr Widder leans towards the traditional interpretation where Antiochus' acts are seen as a foreshadowing of a future eschatological figure.

1. **The Time of Distress and Resurrection:**

- Chapter 12 introduces a time of unprecedented distress followed by the appearance of Michael and the resurrection of the dead. It is here we get a clear picture of bodily resurrection, though the exact nature and scope of this resurrection remains debated.
- Dr Widder sees the concept of resurrection and the promise of reward and judgment as a source of hope and comfort for the persecuted.

1. **The Sealed Book and the End of Time:**

- Daniel is instructed to conceal the prophecy until the end times, and that knowledge will increase (12:4).
- The messenger sets a specific timeframe that ends with the breaking of the power of the holy people.

- She highlights the mysterious and difficult to understand 1,290 and 1,335 days, and references Carol Newsome as a source for patterns and possible meanings of the time periods.
- She emphasizes the idea that the reader must wait for God.

1. **Final Thoughts:**

- Dr. Widder acknowledges the challenges in interpreting this book and encourages further study. She emphasizes that the prophecies transcend their historical setting and offer timeless truths about God's control and the hope for the faithful.
- She reiterates that even Daniel struggled to understand the message and that that is okay.

Key Quotes:

- "This book of Daniel goes out with a bang of difficulty..."
- "This is a vision of Israel's future that's going to go beyond this period in time in which they will experience great suffering, and it's going to promise finally that reward for which the suffering people await, resurrection."
- "This really sounds like a theophany. It sounds like an appearance of God."
- "The Bible itself offers very few definitive answers, so I'm going to leave my hands off that topic."
- "This book seems to contain the course of history for the nations and for God's people."
- "This promise is a great promise for the persecuted people, that there is hope of resurrection and reward and resurrection and even punishment."
- "Go your way, Daniel."

Conclusion: Dr. Widder's lecture provides a comprehensive look into Daniel's final vision, highlighting its complex structure, historical context, and eschatological implications. She encourages a thorough reading of the text and admits that while much can be learned, some elements of the vision will always remain a mystery, similar to the experience of Daniel himself.

4. Study Guide: Widder, Daniel, Session 16, Daniel 10-12 – Conflict and God's Final Victory

Daniel 10-12 Study Guide

Short Answer Quiz

1. What is the significance of Daniel's mourning and fasting in Daniel 10? Daniel mourns and fasts for three weeks during the time that should be a celebration of Passover. This shows he may be mourning the lack of progress of restoration of the temple in Jerusalem and seeking understanding about God's plans.
2. Describe the heavenly messenger in Daniel 10 and what makes this particular messenger unique compared to other angelic figures in Daniel? The messenger appears with a body like beryl, a face like lightning, eyes like flaming torches, and a voice like a tumult. These are similar to descriptions of God, suggesting this could be a theophany, not just a regular angel, as he is not identified as Gabriel as in previous visions.
3. What is the "book of truth" mentioned in Daniel 10:21, and what is its purpose in the vision? The "book of truth" is a heavenly record containing the course of history for nations and God's people. It charts the future path and is similar to the Babylonian tablets of destiny.
4. Briefly outline the five areas of prophetic concern that the angel addresses in his revelation in Daniel 11. The angel's revelation covers five eras: Persia, Greece (led by Alexander), the Ptolemies (Egypt), the Seleucids (Syria), and Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Then there's a fifth section about a king who exalts himself that might be Antiochus IV or an eschatological figure.
5. What is *ex-eventu* prophecy, and how does it relate to the interpretation of Daniel 11? *Ex-eventu* prophecy is a literary device where a prophecy is written after the events it describes, giving the appearance of accurate prediction. Some scholars believe that the author of Daniel is using this device and is writing from the second century with the historical setting as a kind of veiled prophecy.
6. Who is Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and what actions of his are described in Daniel 11? Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a Seleucid ruler who persecuted the Jews in the second century BC. The vision describes his desecration of the temple and the outlawing of Jewish religious practices.

7. Explain the shift in focus in Daniel 11:36, and what different interpretations arise because of it. At 11:36, the text shifts from historically accurate details of Antiochus IV to a "king who exalts himself". Conservative interpreters see this as an eschatological shift to an Antichrist figure, while critical scholars believe this still refers to Antiochus but in more imaginative and not historically verifiable ways.
8. What promises are made in Daniel 12 about the future for those who have suffered during this period? Daniel 12 promises that there will be a resurrection of the dead, some to eternal life and others to eternal contempt. The righteous will shine and lead others to righteousness.
9. What are the mysterious numbers given in Daniel 12:11-12, and how are they generally interpreted? Daniel 12 gives the numbers 1290 and 1335, which are most likely a coded message with significance that connects with other symbolism and time periods in Daniel. They may indicate the length of the persecution and an even longer period of waiting that people are meant to endure.
10. What is the significance of Daniel being told to "go your way" at the end of the vision? Daniel's being told to "go your way" suggests that it's not necessary for Daniel to fully understand everything revealed in the vision. It's okay to not grasp it all and trust that God's promises will come to pass in their time.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the imagery and descriptions of the heavenly messenger in Daniel 10. How do these details contribute to the overall message of the chapter and the book of Daniel as a whole?
2. Compare and contrast the historical and eschatological interpretations of Daniel 11:36-45. What are the key arguments for each perspective, and how do they impact our understanding of the book of Daniel?
3. Analyze the role of suffering and persecution in Daniel 11-12. How does the vision provide hope and assurance to those who experience hardship for their faith, and what are the implications of the resurrection for those who endure great pain?
4. Evaluate the use of *ex-eventu* prophecy in the book of Daniel. What are the arguments for and against its presence, and how does it relate to our understanding of biblical authority and interpretation?
5. Discuss the importance of the vision in Daniel 10-12 as a climax of the entire book of Daniel. How does this vision bring together the key themes and concepts from earlier chapters, and how does it provide a sense of completion and resolution for the story?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Theophany:** A visible manifestation of God to humankind.
- **Ex-Eventu Prophecy:** Prophecy written after the events it claims to predict, often used in apocalyptic literature to encourage faith by showing God's control over history.
- **Ptolemies:** A Hellenistic dynasty that ruled Egypt after the death of Alexander the Great.
- **Seleucids:** A Hellenistic dynasty that ruled Syria and parts of the Middle East after the death of Alexander the Great.
- **Antiochus IV Epiphanes:** A Seleucid ruler who is known for persecuting the Jews in the second century BC.
- **Abomination of Desolation:** A desecration of the Jewish temple, usually referring to the paganization of the temple by Antiochus IV.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end of times, or the last things.
- **Antichrist:** A figure who is said to oppose Christ and God, often associated with the end times.
- **Kittim:** Biblical term often associated with the people of Cyprus, but can also be used in a more general way for the Western nations including the Romans.
- **Maccabees:** Family of Jewish freedom fighters who led a revolt against the Seleucid Empire and religious persecution during the second century.

5. FAQs on Widder, Daniel, Session 16, Daniel 10-12 – Conflict and God’s Final Victory, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on Daniel 10-12

- **What is the significance of Daniel 10-12 within the book of Daniel?** Daniel 10-12 presents Daniel's final and most detailed vision, serving as the climax of the book. It shifts from symbolic visions to a more historical and prophetic revelation, promising reward for the faithful and judgment for their oppressors. Chapter 10 sets the stage for the revelation, chapter 11 contains the bulk of the detailed prophecy, and chapter 12 serves as an epilogue, drawing the vision together and ending with puzzling numerical references.
- **What is the nature of the heavenly being that appears to Daniel in chapter 10, and why is there debate about its identity?** The heavenly being is described as having characteristics reminiscent of a theophany (an appearance of God) with a face like lightning, flaming eyes, and a voice like a tumult. While some commentators believe this figure to be the angel Gabriel, others suggest it is a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ or God himself due to its powerful and divine-like attributes. The debate arises because the being later speaks of being delayed by the "prince of Persia" and needing Michael's help, which some consider inconsistent with the nature of God.
- **Why is Daniel in mourning and fasting before receiving his final vision?** Daniel mourns and fasts for three weeks, possibly due to the slow progress of the restoration of Jerusalem or a desire to better understand God's plans during a confusing time. This period of mourning overlaps with the Jewish feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread, indicating the seriousness of his concern. His weakened state from fasting may also contribute to the overwhelming nature of the revelation he is about to receive.
- **What is the "book of truth" mentioned in chapter 10, and how does it relate to the prophecy in chapter 11?** The "book of truth" is a heavenly record containing the course of history for both nations and God's people. It is similar in concept to the "tablets of destiny" in Babylonian mythology. The angel reveals the prophecy of chapter 11 by using this "book of truth", providing a detailed overview of historical events and future conflicts that would affect Israel. It also contains God's plan, at least for this part of history, that is about to be made known.

- **How does chapter 11 cover the history of Persia, Greece, and the conflict between the Ptolemies and Seleucids?** Chapter 11 outlines a chronological progression of empires and conflicts. It starts with the kings of Persia, then transitions to the rise of Alexander the Great and his Greek empire. It then focuses on the conflict between the Ptolemaic kings of Egypt (the "king of the south") and the Seleucid kings of Syria (the "king of the north"). This section of the chapter covers a period of approximately 200 years, detailing battles, alliances, and betrayals between these powers, all with very specific historical references.
- **Who is Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and what role does he play in Daniel's prophecy?** Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a Seleucid king known for his oppressive actions against the Jewish people in the 2nd century BC. Daniel's prophecy includes a lengthy account of his desecration of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, outlawing Jewish practices, and the establishment of pagan worship. Antiochus is referred to as a "despicable person" and his actions led to the Maccabean revolt, which plays a part in the background of the prophecy. His actions can also be viewed as a smaller scale representation of end times wickedness.
- **What is "ex-eventu prophecy," and how does it relate to the interpretation of Daniel 11?** "Ex-eventu prophecy" is the idea that a prophecy is written after the events it describes, giving it a sense of divine foresight. Some scholars believe that the detailed historical accounts in Daniel 11, particularly before verse 36, were written by an anonymous second century Jew around 167 BC using the persona of Daniel. These scholars assert that the author was primarily recounting already completed history, thus the specificity of the details, rather than genuinely foretelling the future.

- **How do interpretations of the later parts of Daniel 11 (after verse 36) differ, and what is the significance of the references to resurrection and the time of the end?** Interpretations diverge significantly after verse 36 of Daniel 11. Critical scholars argue that the text continues to refer to Antiochus IV and his imaginative downfall, while traditional interpreters see a shift to an eschatological figure - often seen as the Antichrist. This shift involves a more cosmic language and events that do not match the historical record of Antiochus. The mention of resurrection in chapter 12, is understood by many as a literal bodily resurrection of the faithful, which serves as a promise of reward for those persecuted, while also having a promise of judgement for the wicked. This section also includes numerical references which have been interpreted in a variety of ways through history.