

The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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~ All articles are written by Terry Carter unless otherwise stated ~

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Jesus is the Greater Daniel

--Submitted by Wade Allen

The Book of Daniel has always been one of my favorite books in the Bible. This is partly due to the fact that my middle name is Daniel.

I do not know what your reaction is when you read or hear the name 'Daniel', but my initial reaction is to think I'm in trouble! You know when your mom uses your middle name that the situation is serious.

I also love the Book of Daniel because some of the best Bible stories I learned as a kid are included in this book.

If you were blessed to grow up in the church like I did, you likely think of Daniel being in the lions' den or his friends being thrown into the fiery furnace. There are some incredible adventures that take place in the Book of Daniel.

However, if we are not careful, we can make two big mistakes when it comes to our approach to the Book of Daniel.

The first mistake is to make this strictly an adventure book where as long as I do the right thing, God is going to rescue me and protect me from all harm.

Nothing could be further from the truth! Some of God's best people in

this world have suffered the most. The Apostle Peter even shared in **1 Peter 4:19** that it may be God's Will for your life to suffer for God's glory. That's not a popular verse for Christian T-shirts or coffee mugs.

The second mistake we make is to view this book strictly as a prophecy book. There are many strange dreams and prophecies recorded in Daniel. But if we do a deep study on this text and only come away with charts and timelines and theories for future events, we have missed the greatest message of this book.

I believe the Book of Daniel is written to point us to Jesus.

It is much easier to preach and teach this book as an adventure story. It is simple to tell of an Old Testament hero who stood for his faith in a culture that opposed God. "Dare to be a Daniel" is how I've often heard this book preached. And there is much to appreciate and imitate from Daniel's life. But Daniel is not the main point of this book.

The main point of any Old Testament story is not always the obvious or apparent point. The Old Testament was not written to give us heroes to imitate, but to point us to a Savior we should worship.

If you try to copy the example of Daniel, David, Abraham, Esther, or

Ruth, you will likely end up discouraged by your failure, or feel that God let you down when your story doesn't end up exactly like their story.

But when you understand that Daniel's story, like all of the other events in the Old Testament, are pointing us to Jesus, this story takes on a new meaning.

Take the event of Daniel being thrown into the lions' den in **Daniel Chapter 6**. There are a lot of parallels between what Daniel went through and what Jesus went through.

CONSIDER:

× Both Daniel and Jesus are pictures of innocence. Daniel is one of the few men in the Old Testament about whom there is no mention of a single flaw. The prophet Ezekiel lists Daniel as one of the three most righteous people ever to live. Jesus, of course, lived totally without sin.

"Even if these three men, Noah, **Daniel**, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,' says the Lord GOD." **Ezekiel 14:14 (NKJV)**

× Both Daniel and Jesus had jealous political leaders drum up false charges against them to get them killed.

× Both Daniel and Jesus had the primary judge in charge declare

"I Believe the Book of Daniel was Written to Point us to Jesus."

them innocent and try to rescue them from death. For Daniel, that would have been Darius; for Jesus it would have been Pilate.

- ✘ Both Daniel and Jesus were thrown into a hole and left for dead. Both men had the entrance covered by a large stone and sealed with a government seal.
- ✘ Both Daniel and Jesus had loving friends run to their tomb early in the morning.
- ✘ Both Daniel and Jesus walked out of the tomb alive in the morning.
- ✘ Both Daniel and Jesus, after their ordeal, were raised up as 2nd in command over the kingdom. Daniel under Darius; Jesus to sit at the right hand of God, the Father, in Heaven.

There are many parallels between Jesus and Daniel.

But there is one BIG difference between Daniel and Jesus...

Daniel eventually died... but Jesus defeated death.

Jesus went to the cross. And **Psalms 22**, (especially **verses 13 and 21**), teaches us that Jesus was thrown to the 'lions of judgment' by going to the cross. But unlike Daniel, there was no angel to come and shut the mouths of the lions for Jesus.

Jesus' body was ripped to shreds. Jesus' body was buried in the tomb for 3 days. But Jesus' body was bearing our sins.

That's the difference between Jesus and Daniel. Jesus went into that pit for me. He went into the pit for you. And because Jesus took our sins upon Himself, the Divine Judge now looks at you and me who are in Christ and declares, "Not guilty! There is no condemnation for you."

Jesus was the good and better Daniel. He went through the hell you and I deserve so we can gain the reward of Heaven that we do not deserve.

Knowing that Daniel's life points me to Jesus gives me the courage to face danger like Daniel. It gives me boldness to be consistent like Daniel. And I am encouraged to keep on going when I haven't been consistent, because I know Jesus is the greater Daniel and He offers His forgiveness and grace.

We should always thank God for examples of men like Daniel, but let us worship Jesus, who took on the lions of judgment and gives us the strength to live for Him today.