

# The Book of Daniel - Number Sixteen

## *Symbols*

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Before we address chapter three of Daniel, we will consider some prophetic symbolism that might allow us to more fully understand the chapter. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah are employed by the Holy Spirit to represent specific prophetic symbols, based upon the context where they are employed. In chapter one, they are represented as four worthies, with no distinction, until the end of the chapter, where Daniel is identified as having the gift of “understanding in all visions and dreams.”

As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Daniel 1:17.

In chapter one, as a symbol of ‘four’ they represent God’s people in the last days throughout the world. ‘Four’ is a symbol that represents worldwide, and all the prophets are speaking of the last days. The four worthies in chapter one represent God’s people of the last days, and in verse seventeen a distinction is first made between Daniel and the three worthies that represents the symbol of a “three-and-one combination.”

The symbol of a “three-and-one combination” is found repeatedly within the inspired word. It represents several truths, depending upon the context. It represents the history of the three angels’ messages that began at the “time of the end” in 1798, and that end at the close of probation. All three messages were represented in the movement of the first angel, and that movement is followed by the fourth angel of Revelation eighteen, thus a three-and-one combination.

In certain contexts, it can represent the movement of the first angel’s message of Millerite history with the number one, in combination with the movement of the third angel’s message with the number three. Thus, the “three-and-one combination” may also be represented as the “one-and-three combination”. The symbolic “three-one combination” works as a symbol by either the one—preceding the three, or the three—preceding the one. In Nebuchadnezzar’s furnace, in chapter three of Daniel, we first see the three worthies, and then a fourth like unto the Son of God.

And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. Daniel 3:23–25.

There is no doubt a perfectly divine reason, and an accurate historical fact, that would inform us why Daniel was not represented in the golden image worship service of chapter three, but one prophetic reason is that if Daniel would have been in attendance, he would have destroyed the

prophetic symbolism of the three-and-one combination in the fiery furnace. With Gideon, it was Gideon and his three bands of one hundred men. Christ was often with three disciples.

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. Matthew 17:1, 2.

One-and-three, or three-and-one; it is the same symbol, for they are all representing some prophetic element of the last days, and the last days are the days of judgment. The days of judgment began in 1798, with the pronouncement that the investigative judgment would commence on October 22, 1844 And the days of judgment continue until human probation begins to close at the soon-coming Sunday law, as God's executive judgments begin and progressively escalate until probation completely closes and the seven last plagues take place. With Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, the three worthies, that were afterwards joined by Christ, represent the ensign. At the dedication of the golden image all of the nations that made up Nebuchadnezzar's empire were in attendance.

And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly. Isaiah 5:26.

The seventy years of Daniel's captivity is another essential symbol to recognize and it is found repeatedly in the inspired word. Jehoiakim to Cyrus represents the actual seventy years of Daniel's captivity. In second Chronicles the seventy years represent the period that the land would rest and enjoy its sabbaths. In Isaiah twenty-three the seventy years represent the history of the United States from 1798, until the Sunday law, and in doing so, they also represent the parallel histories of the horn of Republicanism and the horn of true Protestantism. Sister White aligns the seventy years with the twelve-hundred-and-sixty years of the papal Dark Ages.

"Today the church of God is free to carry forward to completion the divine plan for the salvation of a lost race. For many centuries God's people suffered a restriction of their liberties. The preaching of the gospel in its purity was prohibited, and the severest of penalties were visited upon those who dared disobey the mandates of men. As a consequence, the Lord's great moral vineyard was almost wholly unoccupied. The people were deprived of the light of God's word. The darkness of error and superstition threatened to blot out a knowledge of true religion. God's church on earth was as verily in captivity during this long period of relentless persecution as were the children of Israel held captive in Babylon during the period of the exile." Prophets and Kings, 714.

Once it is understood that as a symbol the seventy years also represent the twelve-hundred-and-sixty years of the Dark Ages, then the illustration of the "three and a half years", or "forty-two months", or "times, times and dividing of time" that symbolically represent the Dark Ages, expand the meaning and application of the symbolic seventy years.

In the book of Daniel, the seventy years are identified as the period from the empowerment of the first message until the judgment. That period exists in every sacred reform movement, and in so doing, the seventy years represent other lines of truth that are not emphasizing the element of time, but address the purpose of the period. For example, the period of seventy years is represented by

Malachi as the period when the messenger of the covenant purifies the sons of Levi. Sister White associated Malachi's cleansing of the Levites with Christ's two temple cleansings. That same period is the period of the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand. It is also the period when the latter rain is progressively poured out. The same period is also the testing time of the image of the beast, which leads to the mark of the beast. The period is also the prophetic "day of preparation", that leads to the Sunday law, which is also the "day of the Sabbath". The period contains scattering times, and gathering times, which are both elements of the "seven times."

In the book of Daniel, Jehoiakim is a symbol of the empowerment of the first message. In relation to the two kings which follow him, he is simply the first of three angels that lead to, and end, at judgment. Cyrus is a symbol of not only the Sunday law, but he is also a "sign" of deliverance. Daniel is an element of the three-and-one combination, and also part of the fourfold worldwide representation of God's people. Daniel is also a symbol of the Elijah messenger and he also typifies John in the book of Revelation. He is also a symbol of those that receive the seal of God. The name "Daniel" means "the judge of God", or "the God of judgment", so he is therefore a symbol of judgment, and also of Laodicea, for Laodicea means "a people judged" or "a people under judgment". The judgment of Laodicea is ultimately premised upon their rejection of the knowledge that is unsealed in the book of Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar is a symbol of both the Republican and true Protestant horn of the United States, and he is also a symbol of the United States from its beginning to its end. When we arrive at Daniel chapters four and five, we will find that Nebuchadnezzar represents "the time of the end" in 1798, and Belshazzar represents the Sunday law. Nebuchadnezzar became, at the end of "seven times" of punishment, a converted lamb-like ruler, but his son ends up speaking as a dragon, just before his destruction.

"To the last ruler of Babylon, as in type to its first, had come the sentence of the divine Watcher: 'O king,... to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.' Daniel 4:31." Prophets and Kings, 533.

Daniel chapter one represents the history of the Millerite movement from August 11, 1840 through to October, 22, 1844. It also represents September 11, 2001 through to the Sunday law. It also represents the first of the three angels' messages that also represent a second prophetic symbol of the history of the United States from 1798 through to the Sunday law.

Perhaps the most important representation of Daniel chapter one, is that it is the first thing mentioned in the prophetic book that is made up of the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation together. It is the first of three prophetic tests for a student of prophecy to master. It is what must be "eaten" in order to pass the following tests.

In Early Writings, as already cited more than once in these articles, Sister White identifies the three-step testing process of Christ's history in a paragraph, and then in the next paragraph she identifies the three-step testing process of Millerite history. She identifies that those in the time of Christ who rejected the message of John, could not be benefitted by the teachings of Jesus. The next paragraph allows one who wishes to see, that the first test for the Millerites was William

Miller, who Sister White identifies was typified by both John the Baptist and Elijah. Those two witnesses of the first test establish that Daniel chapter one is the Elijah message. If chapter one is rejected, there cannot be any benefit from chapters two and three.

Jesus and the second angel followed John the Baptist and the first angel in their respective histories. After Jesus was the judgment of the cross, and the third angel arrived when the investigative judgment commenced. The disappointment of the disciples at the cross typifies the great disappointment of October 22, 1844. Daniel chapter one is Elijah, as represented by John the Baptist and William Miller, but it cannot be separated from chapters two and three. Together those chapters are the everlasting gospel, which is always a three-step prophetic testing message that produces and then separates two classes of worshipers. Therefore, if those three chapters were to be separated it would be another gospel.

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. Galatians 1:8, 9.

Daniel chapter one prepares the way for the messenger of the covenant to suddenly come to his temple, and it also represents the voice that is crying in the wilderness. The wilderness is represented as a period of scattering, where the sanctuary and the host are being trodden under foot. In Daniel chapter one, Daniel is in the wilderness, scattered and enslaved. The message of chapter one, prepares the way for the message of chapter two, where Christ purifies and enters into covenant with the sons of Levi. The sons of Levi are identified as the symbol of God's chosen people, for they stood faithfully with Moses in the crisis of Aaron's golden image, and chapter three of Daniel is also the crisis of the golden image.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are like the Levites that have been purified in advance of the "image of the beast" test of the golden idol. At the ceremony Nebuchadnezzar provides the orchestra, the whore of Tyre sings the songs, and apostate spiritual Israel bows down and then dances naked to the music around the golden idol.

The books of Daniel and Revelation are the same book, and Christ as the Alpha and Omega is now unsealing the book that represents the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The very first truth that He places in that book is the three angels' messages. The first three chapters of Daniel, are the three angels' messages. The truths connected to those three angels' messages in Revelation chapter fourteen, are brought to perfection when it is recognized that they were first mentioned in the first three chapters of Daniel. In Revelation fourteen they are identified as the everlasting gospel, and they are flying in the heavens, thus identifying the message that is presented to the entire world in the last days. In Daniel's first three chapters, the experience of the men and women that carry that message to the world is illustrated. Revelation fourteen is the external line of truth, representing with symbols, the message of the three angels. The everlasting gospel, and the message of each of the three angels, is brought to perfection by the internal line of truth represented in Daniel's first three chapters.

The first three chapters represent many wonderful truths, and one of those truths is that the three messages are a three-step testing process consisting of a dietary test, followed by a visual test, that is followed by a litmus test. There are, no doubt, other ways to label those three tests, but those labels can easily be seen in chapter one, and they can again be seen in chapters one through three. The three chapters must be recognized together as one symbol.

“The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of the messages are still to be proclaimed. It is just as essential now as ever before that they shall be repeated to those who are seeking for the truth. By pen and voice we are to sound the proclamation, showing their order, and the application of the prophecies that bring us to the third angel’s message. There cannot be a third without the first and second. These messages we are to give to the world in publications, in discourses, showing in the line of prophetic history the things that have been and the things that will be.” Selected Messages, book 2, 104, 105.

It does not matter if there was only one day, or one week, or twenty years between the actual history of chapters two and three, they are symbolically illustrating the progressive testing of three tests. Nebuchadnezzar was dazzled and amazed that God, through the prophet Daniel could know his dream, and provide such a sound interpretation of the dream that it could only be understood as truth. Yet in chapter three, Nebuchadnezzar failed the second test of chapter two, for he determined to place his own prideful human desire above the wonderful manifestation of the power of God, which identified the divine meaning of the secret dream.

In erecting the golden image in chapter three, he failed the third—litmus test. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego passed the litmus test. Nebuchadnezzar received the mark of the beast and the three worthies received the seal of God. The first three chapters of Daniel, must be understood in the context of the three angels of Revelation fourteen. As simple as the three chapters are, for they are so clear that they are commonly used as stories for Christian children, they actually represent, perhaps, the most profound three chapters in God’s Word.

We will continue with Daniel chapter three in the next article.

“The vainglory and oppression seen in the course pursued by the heathen king, Nebuchadnezzar, is being and will continue to be manifested in our day. History will repeat itself. In this age the test will be on the point of Sabbath observance. The heavenly universe behold men trampling upon the law of Jehovah, making the memorial of God, the sign between him and his commandment-keeping people, a thing of naught, something to be despised, while a rival sabbath is exalted as was the great golden image in the plain of Dura. Men claiming to be Christians will call upon the world to observe this spurious sabbath that they have made. All who refuse will be placed under oppressive laws. This is the mystery of iniquity, the devising of satanic agencies, carried into effect by the man of sin.” The Youth’s Instructor, July 12, 1904.