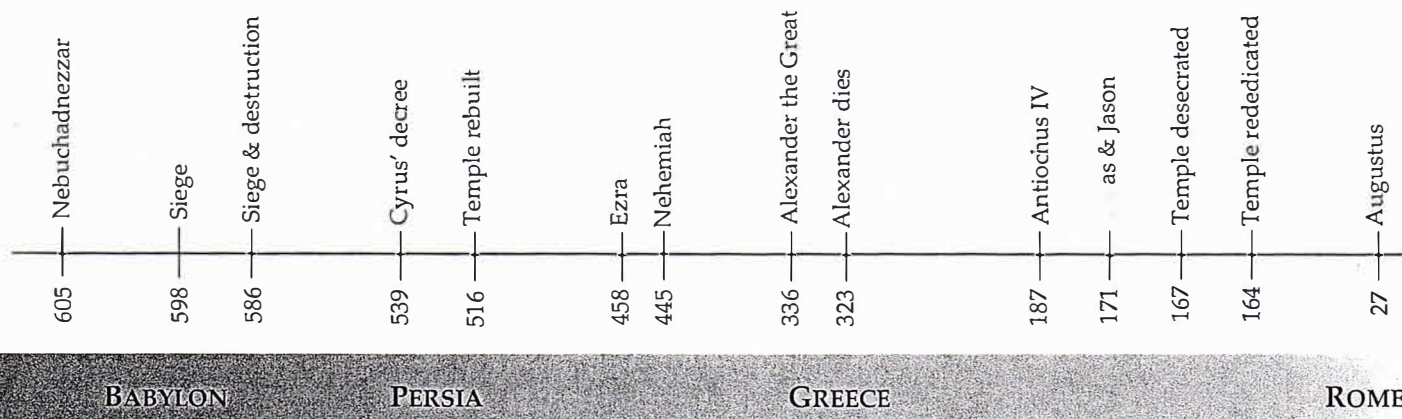


DANIEL 7

The Book of Daniel



Daniel 7

Reading Apocalyptic Texts

Set a modest goal and approach with humility

"There's no use complaining that these statements are difficult. Christianity claims to be telling us about another world, about something *behind* the world we can touch and hear and see. You may think the claim false; but if it were true, what it tells us would be bound to be difficult—at least as difficult as modern Physics, and for the same reason."¹

Take imagery, symbolism and numbers seriously, but not literally

"apocalyptic is a metaphor-rich genre. . . . As such, images speak truly and accurately, but not precisely. We often do not know when the analogy stops. In this way, images preserve mystery about ideas that are ultimately beyond our comprehension."²

Understand the central message being conveyed by the imagery

"it is more hope for the future than information about the future."³

¹ C. S. Lewis, *Beyond Personality: The Christian Idea of God* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1944), 11-12.

² Tremper Longman, *Daniel* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 178.

³ D. Brent Sandy and Martin G. Abegg, "Apocalyptic," in *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament* (ed. D. Brent Sandy and Ronald L. Giese; Nashville: B&H, 1995), 188.

Find the meaning in context

“Unless we become students of the biblical world and the mind-set of that era, we will err in our understanding of what the Bible intends to reveal.”⁴

Observe the pastoral concern

Keep all options open regarding fulfilment

Application(s) should come from the text’s main point(s)

(Re)Reading Daniel 7

Apply the above guidelines to Daniel 7. What is this passage about and how does it fit into its historical and literary (Daniel & OT) contexts? How might this passage be intended to function for its original readers and for us (be specific!)?

⁴ Sandy and Abegg, “Apocalyptic,” 187.