

# Daniel in the Lion's Den



**Daniel's Answer to the King**  
Briton Rivière, 1890



**Daniel**  
Briton Rivière, 1872

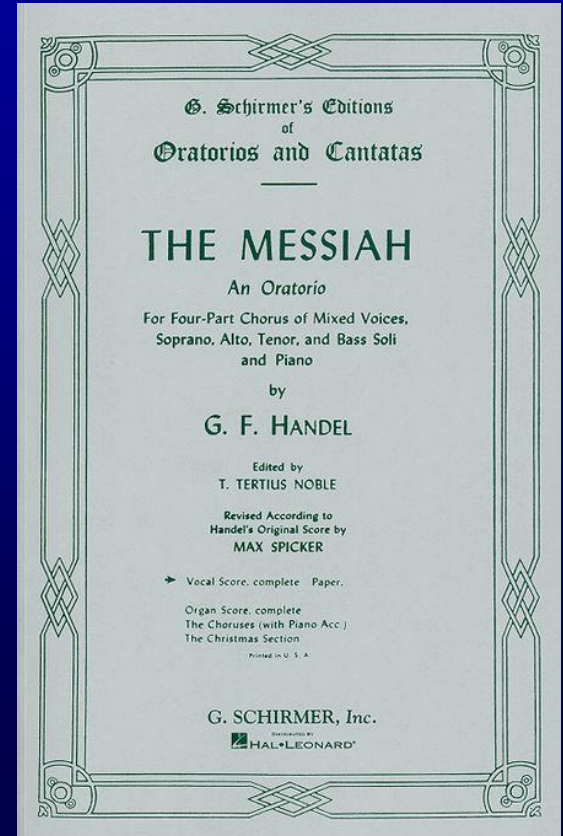
# Handel's Messiah: Bringing Scripture to Life



**Week 6 of 7**

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## Daniel in the Lions' Den - Dan. 6

- One of the most familiar events in the Old Testament
- Focus is on one day in Daniel's life
- Same amount of Scripture as Daniel chapter 7
- Daniel 7 is the panoramic view of *world history*
- The lions' den was *very significant* to God
- Why did the lions' den mean so much to God?

## **The darkest hour is just before dawn**

- **Daniel's enemies set a trap to kill him**
- **Daniel obeyed God rather than men**
- **Same as John & Peter in Acts 4:19-31, 5:29**
- **The king had no choice; he sent Daniel to the lions**
- **The king ran back at dawn, hoping Daniel survived**
- **Daniel is alive: Dan.6:21; Isaac: Gen.22:10-12; Joseph: Gen.45:28; Jesus is alive: John 20:14-16**

## **Not of the world – John 17:16**

- **Why should we care about Daniel's story?**
- **The early church was *still* being fed to the lions**
- **Believers today are being thrown the “lions”**
- ***We are out of step with the world***
- **Daniel's 3 friends stood while everyone else bowed; Daniel kneeled while others stood. Dan.3, 6**
- ***We live every day in a lions' den we call the world***
- **Satan wants to devour our soul. 1 Pet.5:8**

## **The Resurrection of God's Son**

- **The king thought Daniel would die; Abraham thought Isaac would die; Jesus really died**
- **Compare King Darius coming at dawn, and his joyous reunion with Daniel, to Matt.28:1-9**
- **The lions' den is important to God because it foreshadows *the resurrection of His Son***
- **The king destroyed Daniel's enemies, then proclaimed Daniel's God throughout the kingdom**
- **The return of Christ will destroy God's enemies**

# The Return of God's Son

- The lions' den is also important to God because it foreshadows *the return of His Son*
- The lions' den pictures Christ's resurrection & return
- Easter vs. Armageddon, salvation vs. condemnation
- What makes the difference between these outcomes?
- Each person must choose to call on Christ. Heb.11:6
- There is no other way to be saved

**Rom.10:13 = Acts 2:21 = Joel 2:32**

## **With power and great glory – Matt.24:30**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Coming of Jesus: the suffering servant of Isa.53**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Coming: He will return to earth in power & great glory as King. Mt.24:30; Rev.19:16; Zec.14:4-5**
- **The last time the world saw Jesus, His body was being carried from the cross to the tomb. John 14:19**
- **The next time they see Him, He will appear in power & glory to judge. Phil.2:8-11; Rev.1:7**



# The Breath of God

- God spoke the universe into existence. Gen.1:3
- God breathed life into Adam. Gen.2:7
- Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit on others. John 20:22
- All Scripture is God-breathed. 2 Tim.3:16
- In Dan.2:31-35, the rock is the returning Christ
- Antichrist will be the most powerful king in history
- Christ will destroy Antichrist with a *puff*. 2 Thes.2:8



## **Why do the nations Psa.2:1-2 = Acts 4:25-26**

**Why do the nations so furiously rage together,  
and why do the people imagine a vain thing?**

**The kings of the earth rise up,  
and the rulers take counsel together  
against the Lord, and against His Anointed.**

## **Let us break their bonds - Psalm 2:3**

**Let us break their bonds asunder,  
and cast away their yokes from us.**



## **He that dwelleth in heaven – Psalm 2:4**

**He that dwelleth in heaven  
shall laugh them to scorn;  
the Lord shall have them in derision.**

## **Thou shalt break them - Psalm 2:9**

**Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;  
Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.**

# Handel Sculptor: Luis-Francois Roubiliac (1702-1762)



Vauxhall, 1738



Westminster Abbey, 1761

# America's Sculptor: Daniel Chester French 1850-1931



Minute Man, 1876



Lincoln Memorial, 1922

## Amidst the blaze of noon

- Handel was partially paralyzed by a stroke in 1737
- During the last 7 years of his life, he was blind
- Soon after his eyes failed, *Samson* was performed
- The once-mighty organist had to give up his keyboard
- The tenor sang Handel's text: *“Total eclipse - no sun, no moon; All dark, amidst the blaze of noon”*
- The irony of a blind Samson, and a blind composer no longer able to perform, moved the audience to tears

## **One of the first**

- **Handel was internationally famous in his own lifetime**
- **His music dominated Britain 150 years after his death**
- **"Handel was the master of us all." - Franz J. Haydn**
- **"Handel was the greatest composer that ever lived." - Ludwig van Beethoven**
- **Handel was one of the first composers to have:**
  - a biography written of him (1760)
  - centennial celebrations of his birth (1784-1786)
  - a complete edition of his music published (1787-97)



# Following Handel's Footsteps

- **Handel's legacy includes:**
  - Joy to the World (words by Isaac Watts)
  - Thine is the Glory (Risen, conq'ring Son)
  - English Oratorio → hymns & choir anthems
- **Handel inspired great composers:**
  - **Beethoven:** 'Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee'
  - Beethoven's 'Hallelujah' (from *Mount of Olives*)
  - **Haydn:** *Creation* ('The Heavens are Telling')
  - **Mendelssohn:** 'Hark! The Herald Angels Sing'



# “And With His Stripes” (Beethoven’s handwriting)

A handwritten musical score on aged, yellowed paper. The score is written in dark ink and consists of three staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The middle and bottom staves begin with a bass clef. The music is written in a cursive, handwritten style. The lyrics are written in German and are placed below the notes. The paper shows signs of age, including some staining and discoloration. The handwriting is fluid and characteristic of Beethoven's style.

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# From Handel to Beethoven

- Handel's life work was published in 40 volumes
- Beethoven cherished his set; he copied it by hand
- Beethoven greatly admired Handel's work
- Handel's Messiah permeated Beethoven's mind
- On his deathbed, Beethoven quoted from Messiah
- He said "If there is a physician that can help me now His name shall be called Wonderful"

## **We Shall See Him - 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor.13:12**

- **We know that we shall see the great Physician**
- **God is faithful. Psa.145:13; 1 Cor.1:9; 2 Cor.1:20**
- **How do we know we will go to heaven?**
- **Because of:**
  - the **price** He paid - 1 Thes.5:9-10
  - the **promise** He made – John 14:1-6
  - and the **prayer** He prayed - John 17:24
- **We will see His glory in heaven**

## **Our Messiah's Anthem**

- **Our citizenship is in heaven. Phil.3:20**
- **For all eternity, we will sing glory to God**
- **There is a Hebrew word meaning “Praise God!”**
- **It occurs only 4 times in the New Testament, all in the 1st 6 verses of Rev.19 when Messiah returns**
- **The word is *Hallelujah***



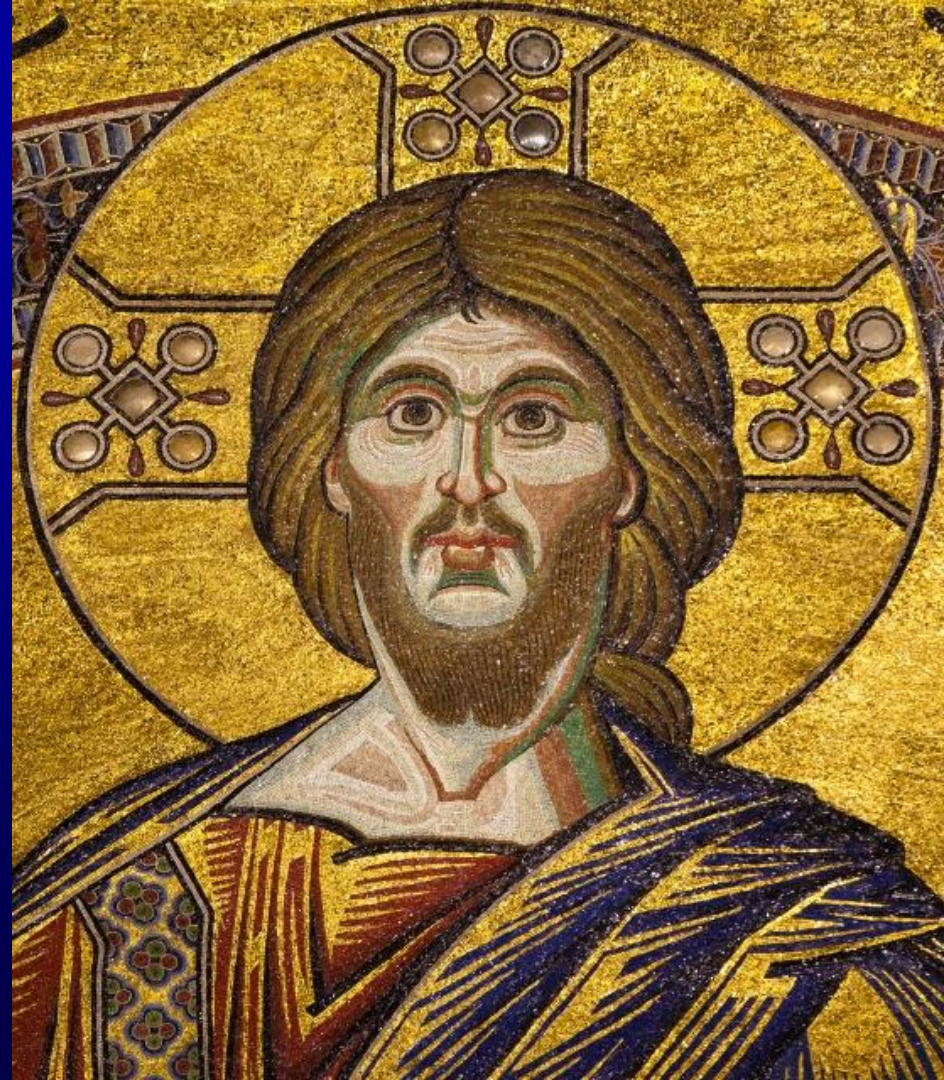


# Hallelujah

**Rev.19:6,11:15,19:16**

**Hallelujah! For the Lord  
God omnipotent reigneth.  
The kingdom of this world  
is become the kingdom of  
our Lord, and of His Christ;  
and He shall reign forever  
and ever. King of Kings, and  
Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!**

**Christ in Majesty, ceiling mosaic  
Florence Baptistery, Italy, 1250 AD**



## Many convincing proofs – Acts 1:3

- **If the resurrection didn't happen:**
  - our faith is futile;
  - those who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost;
  - you are still in your sins. 1 Cor.15:12-19
- **But we have eyewitness testimony**
- **Our risen Lord appeared to many people during the 40 days between the first Easter and His ascension**
- **500+ people saw Him *at the same time*. 1 Cor.15:3-8**

# Evidence for the Resurrection

- The *changed lives* of the apostles
- They came out of hiding as courageous leaders
- They risked their lives to preach His resurrection
- Dramatic conversions and transformations of James, Paul, many Jerusalem priests. Acts 6:7
- Thousands were convinced that Christ was risen
- The early church grew explosively. Acts 2:41, 4:4

## **Knowledge of the truth – 1 Tim.2:4; 2 Tim.2:25**

- **Christianity became a religion separate from Judaism**
- **Christians stopped worship on the Saturday Sabbath**
- **They met on Sunday to celebrate the resurrection**
- **Carefully examining the Gospels led many to faith:**
  - Simon Greenleaf (wrote the textbook on evidence)
  - C.S. Lewis (author)
  - William Ramsay (Oxford scholar, archaeologist)
  - Josh McDowell (author: apologetics, youth ministry)
  - Lee Strobel (journalist)



## **Women told the apostles – Luke 24:10**

- **Women comforted Jesus, confronted Peter, and warned Pilate. Matt.26:6-10, 69-72, 27:19**
- **Women observed His burial. Matt.26:56b, 27:61**
- **Women were the last to leave the cross, and first to arrive at the empty tomb. Mark 15:40-41, 16:1-4**
- **1st witnesses: Women couldn't testify in Jewish court**
- **If resurrection was fiction, why women in lead roles?**
- **These details would not appear *unless they were true***

# Pietà

- Marble statue
- Mary holding the body of Jesus
- Michelangelo age 24

Michelangelo  
St. Peter's Basilica  
Vatican, 1499



# The Empty Tomb and the Missing Body

- *Jewish* historians admit that the tomb was empty
- In Jerusalem, preaching the resurrection would be foolish *unless everyone knew the tomb was empty*
- Temple authorities couldn't counteract the apostles' preaching; *they couldn't find the body of Jesus*
- They would have paid a fortune for information
- Instead they were so desperate to silence Christians that they had to resort to persecution

## **Natural explanations for the resurrection**

- **Paul & early Christians were absolutely convinced of the resurrection. 1 Cor.15:3-4, 14-19; 1 Thes.4:14**
- **All the proposed “natural explanations” for the empty tomb are unconvincing, weak and improbable**
- **These alternative theories all require at least as much faith as believing the resurrection itself**
- **After trying for 2000 years, here are the top 6 alternatives proposed by critics**

## Natural explanation #1

- *Stolen body* - oldest & simplest theory. Obstacles:
- Robbery of a guarded tomb (Matt.27:62-66) required strong incentive & courage. Who had these traits?
- Not the disciples; they were dejected and fearful
- Not Pilate; he was glad his problem was solved
- Not the Jewish leaders; they desperately wanted to prove the corpse was undisturbed on the 3rd day
- If the authorities had the body, why would they accuse the disciples of stealing it? Matt.28:11-15

## Natural explanation #2

- *Wrong tomb*; the women were in the wrong location
- The burial had been hasty; it was hard to see at dawn
- A gardener tried to help, but they ran away in fear
- Obstacles: The 2 Mary's directly observed the burial and size of the stone. Matt.27:61
- Joseph, John, Peter, the Jewish authorities or the guards would have corrected the women within hours

## Natural explanation #3

- “*Lettuce*”; the gardener was upset about curiosity seekers trampling his lettuce patch near the tomb
- So *he* moved the body to disperse the crowd
- This was one of the earliest non-Christian theories
- Obstacles: Roman soldiers and Joseph (owner of the tomb) would have prevented this.
- How would the gardener roll away the stone, and leave the grave cloth undisturbed?

## Natural explanation #4

- “*Swoon*”; Jesus didn’t die, he just *fainted*
- Later in the tomb, He revived, pushed the stone and tiptoed past the guards. Also proposed in 2nd century
- Disciples helped Him recover, but He had a relapse
- He gathered the disciples on the Mount of Olives. He walked off into the fog, then died in the woods
- Obstacles: it goes against all the evidence
- Crucifixion victims did not escape with their lives



## Natural explanation #5

- *Hallucination* - the appearances were mass hysteria
- It was contagious; soon others could see it too
- It was a delusion to help believers in their grief
- Also recorded in the 2nd century. Obstacles:
- 500+ people saw Him *at the same time*. 1 Cor.15:6
- Inconsistent with symptoms of mass hallucinations
- Why did the visions stop after 40 days (Acts 1:3)?
- Doesn't explain the empty tomb

## Natural explanation #6

- Jesus had a *twin brother*, very few people knew
- But after Jesus died, the disciples convinced him to pretend he was Jesus. Obstacles:
- No previous mention that this person exists
- Thomas saw crucifixion wounds (was the twin also wounded?)

## **They *knew* it was true**

- **Apostles boldly preached Christ *at the Temple*; they expected pain, jail, death. Acts 2:46, 3:1, 4:1, 5:12, 5:42**
- **Many are willing to die for what they *believe* is true**
- **But there's no reason to die for what you *know is a lie***
- **The apostles were in a unique position to know for sure what actually happened on the first Easter**
- **They devoted their lives to Him; they *knew* it was true**

## The first-fruits of them that sleep

- For believers, death is like sleep. 1 Thes. 4:13-15; 1 Cor.11:30, 15:6, 18-20, 51-54; John 11:11-15
- The grave is a *temporary* resting place
- Our word *cemetery* comes from a Greek word meaning “a place where strangers rest” Rev.14:13
- The early church used this same word for 2 different places: the church graveyard, and the hotel
- In hotels, people sleep for a while, and then leave

## **The God of Love - Eph.2:4-5, 1 John 3:1**

- **God saved us because of His great love. John 3:16**
- **We were God's enemies; He sacrificed His Son for us**
- **God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Rom.5:6-21**
- **Christ is the firstfruits - the first person who received a permanent resurrection body. 1 Cor.15:20**
- **Firstfruits implies there will a 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.**
- **Because He lives, you also shall live. John 14:19**



# I know that my Redeemer liveth Job 19:25-26, 1 Cor.15:20

I know that my Redeemer liveth,  
and that He shall stand  
at the latter day upon the earth;  
and though worms destroy this body  
yet in my flesh shall I see God.  
For now is Christ risen from the dead,  
the first-fruits of them that sleep

Resurrection window, stained glass  
St Josephs Church, Lakeland FL





## Since by man came death - 1 Cor.15:21-22

Since by man came death,  
by man came also  
the resurrection of the dead.  
For as in Adam all die,  
Even so in Christ  
shall all be made alive.



God Giving Life to Adam, Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel, 1511