



# KINGDOM PERIL

Forty Daily Devotions  
from the Book of Daniel  
(Based on the NKJV)

## Introduction

Approximately 600 years before Christ, God sent some of the most marvelous messages that He ever provided to His people through a man named Daniel. At the time of this prophecy, Israel was in exile and serving as slaves in Babylon. Daniel was one of those who was forcefully taken away to captivity. The first chapters of the book are historical in nature, and in them, we find some of the most well-known stories in the Bible. The final chapters of the book are prophetic. This devotional series is entitled Kingdom Peril because in the Book of Daniel, we see that any kingdom, whether Christian or non-Christian, can suffer severe consequences for disobeying and dishonoring God. However, the most important thing that can be said about this book is that the careful reader can see Jesus Christ on every page and in every paragraph!

## Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	Daniel 1:1-10	12/23/24
2	Daniel 1:11-21	12/24/24
3	Daniel 2:1-9	12/25/24
4	Daniel 2:10-18	12/26/24
5	Daniel 2:19-26	12/27/24
6	Daniel 2:27-35	12/28/24
7	Daniel 2:36-43	12/29/24
8	Daniel 2:44-49	12/30/24
9	Daniel 3:1-7	12/31/24
10	Daniel 3:8-18	1/01/25
11	Daniel 3:19-30	1/02/25
12	Daniel 4:1-7	1/03/25
13	Daniel 4:8-14	1/04/25
14	Daniel 4:15-18	1/05/25
15	Daniel 4:19-27	1/06/25
16	Daniel 4:28-37	1/07/25
17	Daniel 5:1-7	1/08/25
18	Daniel 5:8-14	1/09/25
19	Daniel 5:15-22	1/10/25
20	Daniel 5:23-31	1/11/25

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	Daniel 6:1-9	1/12/25
22	Daniel 6:10-17	1/13/25
23	Daniel 6:18-28	1/14/25
24	Daniel 7:1-8	1/15/25
25	Daniel 7:9-18	1/16/25
26	Daniel 7:19-28	1/17/25
27	Daniel 8:1-9	1/18/25
28	Daniel 8:10-18	1/19/25
29	Daniel 8:19-27	1/20/25
30	Daniel 9:1-9	1/21/25
31	Daniel 9:10-18	1/22/25
32	Daniel 9:19-27	1/23/25
33	Daniel 10:1-10	1/24/25
34	Daniel 10:11-21	1/25/25
35	Daniel 11:1-10	1/26/25
36	Daniel 11:11-19	1/27/25
37	Daniel 11:20-28	1/28/25
38	Daniel 11:29-36	1/29/25
39	Daniel 11:37-45	1/30/25
40	Daniel 12:1-13	1/31/25

## Day 1: Daniel 1:1-10 (Philippians 3:17-21)

*“Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.” (Daniel 1:6-7)*

When Nebuchadnezzar plundered Israel, he “instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel” (v. 3) back to Babylon so they could be trained “to serve in the king’s palace” (v. 4). But the king’s servant was to be particular as to whom he brought to Babylon with him. He was instructed to bring only “some of *the king’s descendants* and some of *the nobles*” (v. 3). From those people the king’s servant was to select the best of the best: “young men in whom there was no blemish...good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand” (v. 4). Because the king intended to make these young men serve in his palace, he immediately put them on the same diet as those who currently served there (v. 5). We are told that the king “appointed for them a daily provision” and “three years of training” (v. 5). But the king’s servant also “appointed” these young men some new names. Their Hebrew names were: Daniel (“God is my judge”); Hananiah (“Jehovah is favored”); Mishael (“Who is like God?”); and Azariah (“Helped by Jehovah”). The names they were given by the Babylonians were: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego – all names that refer to some Babylonian deity or god (v. 7). The wise servant of the king knew that was the best way to help these young men *adapt* to their new location and *adopt* Babylon as their new nation! He wanted them to see themselves as citizens of Babylon and not Israel – or *his* and not *His*!

**Prayer Emphasis: Refuse** to more closely resemble a citizen of this world than you do a citizen of heaven! **Remember** that Jesus said we “are not of the world” (John 17:16). **Read** Philippians 3:20 and **declare** your citizenship!

## Day 2: Daniel 1:11-21 (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)

*“As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” (Daniel 1:17)*

We read yesterday where the king “appointed” a specific diet for the young Israelites whom he had chosen to become servants in his palace. The word that is translated “appointed” is rendered “assigned” in several translations of the Bible. One might imagine that most people would simply eat what the king told them to eat – especially if they were young men who were now living under the control of a foreign government. However, we also read where Daniel “purposed in his heart” that he was not going to “defile himself” with the king’s assigned diet and “requested of” his captors that he and his friends eat only vegetables and avoid the “delicacies” and drink they were assigned. The king’s servant who was responsible for the captives feared they would begin to appear weak and diminished on the requested diet – but agreed to allow them to try it for 10 days (v. 12). You know the rest of the story! “At the end of ten days” the “features” of the Hebrew children “appeared better...than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s delicacies” (v. 15). As a result, “the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink” and allowed them to eat the foods of their own choosing (v. 16). But the best part about the story of these young men is not about what the king of Babylon tried to give them, but what the King of Heaven *did* give them. He “gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom” (v. 17). Daniel was also given “understanding in all visions and dreams” (v. 17). When the king “interviewed” faithful Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, he found that they were “ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm” (v. 20). Perhaps Daniel was familiar with Solomon’s proverbs: “Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure with trouble” (Proverbs 15:16).

**Prayer Emphasis: Develop** an appetite for godly things and not the things of this world. **Believe** that God has given you a gift with which you can serve Him. **Do not allow** Satan to prevent you from being faithful to use it or to provide you with some counterfeit. **Remain** faithful to God no matter *where* you are or *who* you are with! **Read** 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and **choose** God’s gifts over the things this world has to offer.

## Day 3: Daniel 2:1-9 (Matthew 2:13-23)

*“Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.” (Daniel 2:1)*

We will learn more about what the king dreamed in coming days, but needless to say, the dream, and the fact that Nebuchadnezzar could not understand it, troubled him to the point that he was not able to sleep. The king called in his counselors with the intent of having them tell him the meaning of his dreams. In an abundance of caution, the king decided to have his counselors first tell him what he dreamed of before they tried to interpret it. The Chaldeans said to the king, “Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation” (v. 4). Not trusting them to do anything more than offer speculative opinions of what his dream meant, the king held firm to his decision to have them tell him what he dreamed and then interpret it for him. The counselors tried once more to get the king to see things their way, but there was no budging him from his position. In Bible times, people put great stock into dreams. Dreams were one of the ways that God communicated with His people prior to the completion of the Bible. In Genesis 20:6, we are clearly told that God spoke to Abimelech “in a dream.” We later read about men like Jacob and Joseph hearing from God through dreams. But God’s use of dreams to communicate to His people did not end with the Old Testament. In the first book of the New Testament, we find God communicating with Mary’s husband, Joseph, in a dream (Matthew 1:20). We then see the wise men “being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod” after their visit with the Baby Jesus (Matthew 2:12).

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read Matthew 2:13-23 and see how God twice spoke to Joseph through dreams so that Jesus could be safely raised in Nazareth and the words of the Old Testament prophets might be fulfilled. **Thank God** that we do not have to rely on anything less than His written Word to know His will today.

## Day 4: Daniel 2:10-18 (Hebrews 4:14-16)

*“For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.” (Daniel 2:12-13)*

I have heard many stories about hostile work environments, but the one into which Daniel and his associates were introduced, tops them all! When King Nebuchadnezzar’s wise men admitted “there is not a man on earth who (could) tell the king” his dream and then interpret it for him and added that no “ruler (had) ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean” (v. 10), “the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon” (v. 12). The word for “furious” in today’s focus verses is found only this one time throughout the Bible. Perhaps the Holy Spirit is trying to emphasize just how unique the king’s anger was by using such a special word to describe it. It is interesting to note that the root word from which the Hebrew word for “furious” originates is first used in Genesis 40:1-2 where “the king of Egypt...was angry” with two of his officers and had them put into a prison where Joseph was already being held. Oddly enough, the story continues into Genesis 41 where we are told that Pharaoh had two dreams by which his spirit “was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one to interpret them for Pharaoh” (Genesis 41:8). Eventually, Joseph was brought before Pharaoh and was able to interpret the king’s dreams for him. In Joseph’s interpretation of those dreams, Joseph twice said to Pharaoh, “God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do” (Genesis 41:25 & 28). In reward for interpreting the king’s dream, Joseph was elevated to the second highest office in Egypt. It is interesting that when this kind of anger was first mentioned in the Bible, it also was found in the workplace. Encourage someone at your workplace today!

**Prayer Emphasis:** Notice that when confronted with great danger, Daniel and his friends sought “mercies from the God of heaven” (v.18). **Remember** that Hebrews 4:16 teaches us that we can “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

## Day 5: Daniel 2:19-26 (James 1:1-17)

*“Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said: ‘Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His...He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.’” (Daniel 2:19-21)*

Have you ever been in an unbelievably tough situation where God came to your rescue when you cried out to Him? If so, then you have some idea of how Daniel was feeling when he expressed these beautiful words of praise to God. I love the fact that God tells us “the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision.” (This is the first of four times that “night visions” are mentioned in Daniel. Watch for these words when you get to chapter seven.) The Aramaic word that is translated “night” in the first of our focus verses is found only in the Book of Daniel. It might be that the Holy Spirit is trying to tell us that Daniel’s dilemma was one like no other! We all have our own, unique challenges that we must face if we desire to be true servants of the God of heaven! Notice that Daniel declares “wisdom and might” belong to God (v. 20) and “He gives wisdom to the wise” (v. 21). I found it to be remarkably interesting when Daniel praised God for giving wisdom to the “wise,” that he used the same word to describe himself as was used to describe the other “wise” men of Babylon (2:12). In that, I see that Daniel did not believe himself to be anything more than a man and he fully realized that only God was to be glorified for any good thing that came from his life. James wrote to some New Testament believers who were experiencing “various trials” (James 1:2) and encouraged them to ask God for wisdom. His divinely inspired words were written for us just as well as they were written for the believers who lived in that day. From his own life experiences, James, the half-brother of Jesus, had come to the divine conclusion that “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Look** to God in the “night” seasons of your life and **believe** that He loves you just as much as He loved Daniel, James, or any other person who has ever lived. **Tell** your problems to God today and **seek** His wisdom and help in your time of need.

## Day 6: Daniel 2:27-35 (2 Peter 3:1-9)

*“But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days...” (Daniel 2:28)*

It is sometimes difficult to accept the fact that when God “so loved the world” (John 3:16), He even loved men like Nebuchadnezzar! We only have to look back a few verses from today’s reading to see where this king “came to Jerusalem and besieged it” and ultimately took “some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god” (1: 1-2). Earlier in chapter two, we read where this king threatened to “cut in pieces” his own servants and make “an ash heap” of their homes simply because they could not tell him his dream and then interpret it for him (2:5). He was obviously a man who believed that fortune and fame were the answers to everything because he offered “gifts, rewards and great honor” (2:6) to anyone who could help him understand the meaning of his dream. Yet, we read in today’s focus verse that God still reached out in love to this seemingly horrible man in an effort to show him where his way of life was taking him. Now, because Daniel and a few of his young friends decided to stand firm in their faith in God, this sinful man was going to learn that God loved him and wanted to show him a better way than the one he was living. I am sure Daniel, while being taken away from Jerusalem as a captive, never dreamed that some of his greatest opportunities to witness for God would be in Babylon! We are all familiar with 2 Peter 3:9 where we read that “The Lord is...not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” However, when we read the verses that precede that wonderful promise (2 Peter 3:3-4), we see that Peter was speaking of “scoffers” who walked “according to their own lusts” asking aloud, “Where is the promise of His coming?”

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Believe** that God loves everyone – even the people that we might find it exceedingly difficult to love! **Remind** someone today that God loves them and it is His desire that they come into a living relationship with Him.

## Day 7: Daniel 2:36-43 (2 Timothy 3:1-2)

*“This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.” (Daniel 2:36)*

Yesterday, we read where Daniel stood “in the presence of the king” and defended the king’s counselors by stating that “The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers *cannot* declare” (2:27). Daniel 2:13 indicates that the killing of the wise men of Babylon had already begun before Daniel was able to step forward and save some of them. He informed the king that the issue wasn’t that his counselors *wouldn’t* help him but, rather, that they *couldn’t*. He went on to tell the king that the dream and its interpretation had not been “revealed” to him because he had “more wisdom than anyone living” (2:30) but so that God’s will could be revealed. It was obvious that Daniel wanted only God to receive the glory for what Nebuchadnezzar was about to learn. Then Daniel explained the dream to the king. In today’s verses, we find Daniel now giving the king the interpretation of his dream. He declared Nebuchadnezzar to be a “king of kings” but only because “the God of heaven” had given him “a kingdom, power, strength, and glory” (v. 37). Daniel then explained that all Nebuchadnezzar had, “He (God) has given them into your hand, and made you ruler over them all – you are the head of gold” (v. 38). Then Daniel went on to explain that Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom would not last forever and other, weaker, kingdoms would follow. Notice how the materials from which the statue was made descend in value the farther down the statue one looked. Its head was “of fine gold” (v. 32) but its feet and toes were made “partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron” (v. 41). Because of that fact, the final kingdom represented in the king’s dream would be “partly strong and partly fragile” (v. 42). How opposite this is from what some think today. Obviously, God’s Word teaches that man does not get better, but worse, with the passing of time.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read today’s companion text and see that perilous times produce perilous men. Review Daniel’s interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream and realize that man is not *evolving*, but *dissolving*!

## Day 8: Daniel 2:44-49 (Revelation 17:1-12)

*“Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. The king answered Daniel, and said, ‘Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.’” (Daniel 2:46-47)*

Nebuchadnezzar’s reaction to Daniel’s interpretation is a clear indication that God had truly given Daniel the interpretation to the king’s dream. It had probably been an exceptionally long time, if ever, since this man bowed to anyone, much less a Hebrew servant! You must admire the fact that Daniel presented this information to the king in a way that led Nebuchadnezzar to glorify God. Because Daniel was faithful to God, the lives of many people were spared, and Daniel’s life was greatly blessed. I have no doubt that King Nebuchadnezzar could clearly remember his dream. It was the dream’s “secret,” or meaning, that he could not understand. In the early part of Daniel’s interpretation, he spoke of world kingdoms that were going to become more divided and weaker as the years passed. A close look at the description of the image in the king’s dream will reveal that “the image’s head was of fine gold” (v. 32). This first part of the dream speaks of one head – in one piece. But notice that the following kingdoms were divided into at least two parts: “chest and arms” and “belly and thighs” (vs. 32-33). Then, the parts of the image became divided into four when Daniel mentioned the “legs and feet.” Eventually, the final kingdom represented in the image was so divided that it was comprised of the ten toes of the image! Daniel then moved from his explanation of world kingdoms to an introduction of a “kingdom” that “the God of heaven (would) set up which (would) never be destroyed” (v. 44). In fact, the kingdom that God was to set up would “break in pieces and consume” all the kingdoms of man’s design. As for the kingdom that God was going to establish, Daniel prophesied that it would “stand forever” (v. 44). It is worth a mention that this is the first time in Scripture that the Messiah is referred to as a “stone.” You see similar language to this in Psalm 118:22, Isaiah 8:14 & 28:16, and Zechariah 3:9.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read Revelation 17:12 and note that “ten kings” will do battle with Christ in the end times. Most scholars believe that this end-time enemy will be a revival of the final kingdom (the ten toes) represented in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. **Compare** Revelation 17:14 to our focus verse to see some strong resemblances.

## Day 9: Daniel 3:1-7 (1 Peter 2:1-8)

*“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.” (Daniel 3:1)*

In Daniel 2, God spoke to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream and then sent Daniel to interpret that dream for him. The dream was of a large image (statue) made of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay. God clearly revealed to Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom was the “head of gold” (2:38) but that other, less powerful kingdoms were eventually to follow. The closing verses of chapter two clearly describe a man who has accepted God’s message at face value and praised Him for revealing such valuable information about the future. We are not sure how much time passes between chapters two and three, but it appears that King Nebuchadnezzar decided to take matters into his own hands and put in place a statue that represented one great kingdom of gold with no other kingdoms to follow. In chapter three, the king builds his own counterfeit image and, as such, lays out his own prophecy for his future. Whether or not King Nebuchadnezzar “dreamed up” this idea of creating an image of his own by himself or with the help of his counselors, we are not told. The “sixty cubits” in height would equal about 90 feet, and the “six cubits” in width would be around nine feet. The fact that Nebuchadnezzar made this image “of gold” indicates that he intended to have his kingdom last forever despite what God clearly told him! Like so many people today, Nebuchadnezzar desired to take the future into his own hands. The image Nebuchadnezzar made was all gold, indicating his desire for Babylon to last forever. Modern archaeology has revealed that there is a large, fortified mound just southeast of Babylon that many believe was large enough to be the foundation for this statue.

**Prayer Emphasis: Refuse** to accept Satan’s counterfeits! **Read** Peter’s warning against “deceit” in 1 Peter 2:1. **Desire** only “the pure milk of the word” (1 Peter 2:2) so that you may grow strong in your resistance to the devil’s lies! **Develop** a rock-solid faith in the fact that Jesus is the “chief cornerstone” (1 Peter 2:6) upon whom the eternal kingdom will be established.

## Day 10: Daniel 3:8-18 (Matthew 10:16-20)

*“...Let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.” (Daniel 3:18)*

Yesterday, we read about the image King Nebuchadnezzar set up, but we did not comment on the fact that he commanded all people to “fall down and worship” that gold image at specific times during the day (v. 5). He then decreed that anyone who did “not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” (v. 6). Soon it was reported to the king that “certain Jews,” namely “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego,” had refused to bow down and worship at the appropriate signal and time (v. 12). In a furious rage, the king commanded that those three men be brought before him. When they arrived, he asked them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up?” (v.14). You cannot help but notice that the king’s question was two-fold. Obviously, these three men had not been willing to convert to the worship of the false gods of Babylon, and now they were refusing to bow down to the king’s glorious new image! The king continued, “Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the” designated music, “and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god that will deliver you from my hands?” (v. 15). Well, I am sure that you know the story! The three young Hebrew men were *not* ready to bow down to the king’s image, and they made it known that they would *never* be ready to serve any false god! And, even if the king did have them thrown into the furnace, they passionately believed that God could save them from that furnace! However, even if it was not God’s will to save them, the men said, “let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up” (v. 18).

**Prayer Emphasis: Realize** that our Lord warned us that we will have to defend our faith in the face of spiritual opposition and that we might be brought before courts or councils simply for refusing to serve any god but the God of the Bible (Matthew 10:17-18). **Decide** *now* what you will do *then* and **ask** God to strengthen you in that day.



## Day 11: Daniel 3:19-30 (Mark 9:42-48)

*“Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.” (Daniel 3:21)*

In the New King James Version, as well as in several others, the phrase “burning fiery furnace” is found eight times. It might be that your translation refers to this death pit as a “blazing fire” or a “burning fire,” but however it is described, it is mentioned repeatedly. The point that I want to make to you is that this was a literal furnace that burned with literal fire. The same word that is translated “fiery” in the Book of Daniel is simply translated “fire” in several other places. With that said, we can safely conclude that this is not some symbolic reference to persecution or suffering and that three, literal, living people were cast into a horrible, literal pit of fire. And to make sure that these men died, we are told the king “commanded that they (his servants) heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated” (v. 19). This action was taken, no doubt, because of the confident statement of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego that we read about yesterday where they calmly informed the king that they served the God who was “able to deliver (them) from the burning fiery furnace” and from the hand of the king (v. 17). Verse 23 clearly states that “three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.” Now this is where the story gets even more interesting. Verses 24 and 25 reveal that the king asked his counselors if they had “cast three men bound into the midst of the fire.” When they confirmed that only three men had been cast into the fire, the king replied, “Look!...I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” One can only conclude that God Himself showed this amazing sight to the king and that he had not actually gone and looked down into the burning furnace because, according to verse 22, the flames of the furnace were so hot that the men who cast the three brave believers into the fire were killed while doing so!

**Prayer Emphasis:** Just as surely as I believe that the fire in the furnace in the Book of Daniel was a literal fire, I also believe that the fire in hell, as described in Mark 9, is a literal, eternal “fire” that cannot be “quenched.” **Ask** yourself this subjective question, “What am I doing to prevent my family, friends, and associates from going there?”

## Day 12: Daniel 4:1-7 (Acts 22:1-15)

*“I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.” (Daniel 4:2)*

It is difficult to believe that the same man who uttered the words found in our focus verse is the same man who earlier built an idol unto himself and his kingdom and demanded that all people bow down in worship to it! A quick look back at Daniel 3:4 will clearly reveal that the king’s demand for such public worship was issued to all “peoples, nations, and languages.” Now, after what he has seen for himself – through personal experience – what God can do, he sends a second message out to the same people to whom he sent the first. Daniel 4:1 states, that he, once again, addressed his message to “all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth.” However, this time it is about a second dream that he had. Two things seem very apparent to me from this well-known Bible story. First, someone clearly told King Nebuchadnezzar about the divine attributes of the God of Israel, and second, King Nebuchadnezzar now fully believed everything he had heard! He now gives a personal testimony of his experience with God to everyone he had once tried to deceive and mislead. His testimony about this second dream begins right where a testimony should begin – at the beginning. In today’s verses, he tells everyone residing in his known world about his dream and the extent that he had gone to try to have it interpreted for him. Every time that I read this story, I am reminded of how the apostle Paul would always go all the way back to the Damascus Road when he began to testify about his own personal salvation experience!

**Prayer Emphasis: Review** Paul’s first personal testimony of his conversion experience in Acts 22 and you will see that he began at the beginning. He does the same thing in his testimony before King Agrippa in Acts 26. **Prepare** a concise and consistent personal testimony of your salvation experience and **share** it as often as you can.

## Day 13: Daniel 4:8-14 (Revelation 2:14-22)

*“But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him...” (Daniel 4:8)*

I may be reading between the lines a little, but it sure seems to me that King Nebuchadnezzar is definitely hot and cold in his appreciation for Daniel and God. In chapter one, we read where he besieged Jerusalem and pillaged the temple (1:1-2). But in chapter two, after Daniel was able to interpret his dream, we saw Nebuchadnezzar declaring Daniel's God to be “the God of gods” (2:47). However, in chapter three we see him making “an image of gold” (3:1) and commanding that all people “fall down and worship” it (3:5). Even worse, in that same chapter, we see him attempting to carry out a public execution of three faithful God-followers simply because they refused to bow down to the image as commanded. Then, at the end of chapter three, we see that same man publicly declaring “there is no other God who can deliver” (3:29) like the God of Israel and promoting the same three men he just tried to execute to high offices “in the province of Babylon” (3:30). Then, in the final verses of yesterday's reading, we saw him having a second dream and turning again to “magicians, the astrologers...and soothsayers” (4:7) for its interpretation. Then, he called for Daniel “at last.” (Some translations read “at the last” or “finally.”) In other words, enough time may have passed since Nebuchadnezzar was so awe stricken with the God who could spare His children from a fiery furnace that he once again placed his trust in the wisdom of this world. There are two especially important things to notice in today's focus verse. First, the king refers to Daniel by his Babylonian name which honors the pagan god, Bel. And second, Nebuchadnezzar refers to Bel as “my god.” It sure seems to me that Nebuchadnezzar had enough “hot” and “cold” going to be what God would call “lukewarm.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Decide** to stand firmly in your faith and **refuse** to be a lukewarm Christian. **Read** our verses from Revelation 2 and see God's opinion on those who choose not to take a clear stand for Him.

## Day 14: Daniel 4:15-18 (Colossians 1:9-18)

*“This decision is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones, in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.” (Daniel 4:17)*

In yesterday's verses, we read the first part of the dream that Nebuchadnezzar explained to Daniel. In his dream, the king saw a tree standing “in the midst of the earth” and “its height was great” and appeared to reach “to the heavens” so as to be “seen to the ends of the earth” (vs. 10-11). Verse 12 reveals that Nebuchadnezzar's tree was a source of shade, shelter, and supply to all the peoples of the world surrounding Babylon. So, the king first saw the tree in his dream as strong, prosperous, and growing. Trees are often used in the Bible in symbolic ways and are sometimes used to depict prosperity and growth. In the first Psalm, the man whose “delight is in the law of the LORD” is said to be “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper” (Psalm 1:2-3). I am quite sure that the stump being “bound with a band of iron and bronze” (v. 15) was one of the things that “stumped” Daniel as he sought to interpret this dream. There is no evidence that such actions would be preventative steps to keep a stump from rotting. The word “bound” is important here. It suggests the idea that certain restrictions and limitations are about to be set. In one part of verse 15, the stump is referred to as “it,” and then later in that same verse as “him.” Nebuchadnezzar probably had some idea that this tree represented him and that is why he said, “I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me” (4:5). It is clear that God had been trying to get His message to the king of Babylon for quite some time. Now God is speaking more clearly than ever! God's messenger (v. 13) clearly explains that God was showing Nebuchadnezzar that whatever power and authority he had was a gift from Him.

**Prayer Emphasis: Read** Colossians 1:17 and you will see that Christ “is before all things” and “in Him all things consist.” **Decide** now to allow the God who rules the universe to rule in your own heart and life. **Surrender** to His calling and will for your life today!

## Day 15: Daniel 4:19-27 (Romans 8:12-17)

*“It is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the ends of the earth...the decree of the Most High...has come upon my lord the king.” (Daniel 4:22 & 24b)*

When we consider the harsh message that Daniel is being led to speak to this often-cruel king, we can clearly understand why we read that Daniel “was astonished for a time” and why his thought “troubled him” (v. 19). The word “astonished” in that verse does not imply that Daniel did not understand the interpretation of the king’s dream but may very well imply that Daniel was considering how to best explain it to him. The words used to explain Daniel’s dilemma vary. Different translations read: “perplexed for a time,” “shocked for a bit,” “stricken dumb for a while,” “stunned for a moment,” and “dismayed for a while.” The situation calls to mind the day that Nathan the prophet was forced to go before King David and say, “You are the man” that has committed great sins against God and troubled His people (2 Samuel 12:7). At least Nathan had the knowledge that he was speaking to a believer. Daniel is about to deliver a very disturbing message to a man who thought nothing of killing those who provoked or disappointed him! The good news for Nebuchadnezzar was found in the “command to leave the stump and roots of the tree” which revealed that his kingdom would be restored to him after he came “to know that Heaven rules” (v. 26). Daniel then gave the king some godly advice by telling him to “break off (his) sins by being righteous” (v. 27). We New Testament believers are clearly told that it is only “by the Spirit” that we “put to death the deeds of the body” (Romans 8:13).

**Prayer Emphasis: Believe** that the biblical way to win the war against sin and the flesh is to allow the Holy Spirit to win it for us! **Busy** yourself with doing the good things that God has commanded you to do, and you will have less time and opportunity to give in to the lusts of the flesh.

## Day 16: Daniel 4:28-37 (Galatians 6:1-10)

*“All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. The king spoke, saying, ‘Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?’” (Daniel 4:28-30)*

It is obvious that the fulfillment of the dream was not immediate because a year later we see King Nebuchadnezzar still “walking about the royal palace” (v. 29). And, as he walked, he spoke boastfully about his many magnificent accomplishments. Notice the words spoken by the king: “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built...by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty” (v. 30). One thing seems certain, Daniel’s interpretation of the king’s second dream about the tree did not seem to put a dent in the armor of Nebuchadnezzar’s ego! But we are told that “while the word was still in the king’s mouth,” another voice was heard. That other voice “fell from heaven” and declared that Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was being taken away from him (v. 31). Then the prophecy of the king’s dream became an awful reality, and the king lost his sanity to the point that he lived like an animal for what appears to be seven years. God indicated that it was going to take that long for Nebuchadnezzar to finally learn a very vital lesson, that being “the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses” (v. 32). The king heard these words in his dream (4:17), but now God spoke directly to him, saying you will live in this unpleasant condition “until you know” (v. 32) that what I have told you is true! Apparently the king came to know exactly what God was trying to tell him because his own, personal testimony stated: “At the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation” (v. 34). In verse 35, the king, speaking of God, stated that, “No one can restrain His hand” or question His actions. One thing that Nebuchadnezzar finally learned was that “those who walk in pride He is able to put down” (v. 37).

**Prayer Emphasis: Read** Galatians 6:3 and believe that it is easy for even a believer to deceive himself into thinking more highly of himself than he should. **Note** the word “anyone” in that verse and **realize** that it could mean you!

## Day 17: Daniel 5:1-7 (Jude 1:16-25)

*“They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone. In the same hour the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.” (Daniel 5:4-5)*

When we read that Belshazzar is now “the king” (v. 1) of Babylon and that Nebuchadnezzar is referred to as “his father,” we might fail to understand that there were several people who occupied the throne in Babylon prior to Belshazzar. Since there was no Hebrew or Chaldee word for “grandfather, all those who ruled prior to a current king were referred to as “fathers.” From ancient literature, we learn that Babylon was a much-diminished kingdom in the days of Belshazzar, and we can assume that the armies that we will soon see invading it were already nearby and perhaps even surrounding the city at the time that this new king held his grand feast. During a drunken feast, “Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords...might drink from them” (v. 2). Soon thereafter “they drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone” (v. 4). This listing indicates that they toasted every imaginable pagan god of Babylon that came to mind. Several sources of ancient literature describe the city of Babylon and the mighty walls that surrounded it. It had an outer wall and an inner wall with a moat between the two. The outer walls were reported to be 87 feet thick and 350 feet high. According to some ancient writers, the outer wall was wide enough at the top for four chariots to parade around the walls at the same time. However, we see in today’s reading that no walls are wide or tall enough to keep God out! As Belshazzar mocked God and His temple, God sent “the fingers of a man’s hand” (v. 5) to deliver His message to the king.

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** yesterday’s New Testament reading warned us to “not be deceived, God is not mocked” (Galatians 6:7). **Note** that Jude warned us “there would be mockers in the last time” (Jude 1:18). **Pray** for the many people in this world that Satan has robbed of their respect for God.

## Day 18: Daniel 5:8-14 (Philippians 1:3-11)

*“Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, ‘Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.’” (Daniel 5:13-14)*

A phrase from yesterday’s reading reminds us of just how much God wants to clearly communicate with all people. When God sent “the fingers of a man’s hand” to write a message for Belshazzar, he had the message written “*opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace*” (v. 5). I could not help but think that God had His message written there, in the light, so that it could be clearly seen. But even though the message was clearly seen, it was not clearly understood. Our new king, like his ancestor, “cried aloud to bring in...the wise men of Babylon,” promising great rewards to any of them who could provide an interpretation of the message that had been written on the wall in such amazing fashion (v. 7). And, as it was in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, “all the king’s wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation” (v. 8). It seems evident that Daniel had become somewhat of a forgotten man during the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar’s descendants because in verse 11, we find “father” in singular form and only Nebuchadnezzar’s name mentioned as one who had sought counsel and advice from Daniel. The queen informed Belshazzar that his ancestor, Nebuchadnezzar, had made Daniel “chief” of the wise men in his kingdom (v. 11), a position that Daniel probably no longer held. Notice that, when Daniel was finally “brought in before the king,” Belshazzar did not readily know or recognize him and had to ask if he was “that Daniel whom (his) father the king brought from Judah?” Obviously, what Belshazzar “heard” (v. 14) of Daniel he had just recently heard from the queen.

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** the people that God has used to be a blessing to you and **express** your love and appreciation on a regular basis. **Thank** someone today who has encouraged you in the past and let them know that you have not forgotten them.

## Day 19: Daniel 5:15-22 (1 Peter 5:1-7)

“O King, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor...But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.” (Daniel 5:18 & 20)

I mentioned earlier that Daniel must have become a somewhat forgotten person during the reigns of the men who followed King Nebuchadnezzar. Notice that Belshazzar, a third or fourth generation descendant of that king, stated that he had “heard” of Daniel and not that he “knew” Daniel (v.16). In that same verse, we have to note that Belshazzar said to Daniel, “if (not when) you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you...shall be the third ruler in the kingdom” (v. 16). If you recall, back in Daniel 2:48, we read where Nebuchadnezzar “promoted Daniel...and he made him ruler over all the whole province of Babylon, and the chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.” It seems obvious to me that Daniel’s past promotion and position was not something that was still in place during the reign of this new king. And, it appears that Daniel had no desire to be a part of Belshazzar’s kingdom administration because he stated, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another” and then added, “Yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation” (v. 17). But before he provided the king with the information that he so greatly desired, Daniel provided him with a little history lesson. He reminded Belshazzar that “the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar” the great power that he had possessed (v. 18) and that it was only after “his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride” that “he was deposed from his kingly throne” (v. 20). You might wonder if the “they” who “took his glory from him” (v. 20) might not have been actual people, but his own hardened heart and personal pride.

**Prayer Emphasis: Pray** that your heart will always be tender towards the Lord and that you will always serve Him in humility. **Read** 1 Peter 5:5-6 and **heed** its warning and promise. The warning is that “God resists the proud,” and the promise is that He “gives grace to the humble.”

## Day 20: Daniel 5:23-31 (1 John 5:18-21)

“That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.” (Daniel 5:30-31)

Anyone who knows God, and has learned about Him, would have to readily admit that He is a tolerant God. However, they would also have to recognize that there is a limit to His tolerance and that He does not leave sinful actions unaddressed. Daniel told Belshazzar, when “you lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven” and “brought the vessels of his house before you” and “you and your lords...” drank “wine from them...and you have praised the gods of silver and gold...then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written” (vs. 23-24). First Daniel read “the inscription” (v. 25), and then he gave Belshazzar “the interpretation of each word” (v. 26). It is important to note that the words written on the wall were in a language unknown to the king or any of his counselors. It is equally important to note that Daniel only knew these words, and their interpretation, because God gave him the wisdom to do so. The message read: “MENE, MENE (“numbered”), TEKEL (“weighed”), and UPHARSIN (“divided”) (v. 25). Daniel, through the wisdom that God gifted to him, interpreted these words to mean, “God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it;” “You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting;” and “Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians” (vs. 26-28). As disheartening and disappointing as this message must have been to Belshazzar, he lived up to his agreement and “gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple, and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom” (v. 29). But nothing could keep God’s prophecy from being fulfilled, and “that very night, Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. And Darius the Mede *received* the kingdom” (vs. 30-31). Never forget what we read back in Daniel 4:17: “The Most High rules in the kingdom of men” and “gives it to whomever He will.”

**Prayer Emphasis: Remember** that God has a zero-tolerance level for idolatry. **Read** 1 John 5:21 and **realize** that even Christians need to be constantly warned about and against the sin of idolatry.

## Day 21: Daniel 6:1-9 (1 Timothy 2:1-7)

*“All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.” (Daniel 6:7)*

Tomorrow, we will read where Daniel was cast into the den of lions, but today, we are told *how* he got there. After Darius the Mede conquered Babylon, he “set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom” (v. 1). There is nowhere in the Bible where a “satrap” is clearly defined, but some translations use more familiar terms like “lieutenants,” “captains,” or “princes” for clarification. These political appointees served under the jurisdiction of “three governors, of whom Daniel was one” (v. 2). Because “an excellent spirit was in him,” Daniel “distinguished himself above the governors and satraps” and soon “the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm” (v. 3). While the king *thought* about promoting Daniel, his jealous counterparts “*sought* to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom” (v. 4). However, “they could find no charge or fault” in Daniel “because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him” (v. 4). That is when Daniel’s political enemies “consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except” the king, should “be cast into the den of lions” (v. 7). And so it was, that without having full knowledge of his political appointee’s plans, “King Darius signed the written decree” (v. 9). The word that is translated “fault” in verse four was translated “corrupt” back in Daniel 2:9. One has only to believe that it was because Daniel had “an excellent spirit...in him” (v. 3) that he was protected from the kind of corruption that often accompanies political power.

**Prayer Emphasis: Read** 1 Timothy 2:1-2 and you will clearly see that the Apostle Paul exhorted believers to pray “for kings and all who are in authority, that we (believers) may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.” **Pray** for our political leaders and ask God to protect them from corruption and to guide their actions.

## Day 22: Daniel 6:10-17 (Luke 18:1-8)

*“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.” (Daniel 6:10)*

The phrase “when Daniel knew” discloses that it was with full knowledge of the issuance of the king’s decree that Daniel went to his home and prayed “toward Jerusalem...three times that day.” It is beautiful to note that even while in an extremely dangerous situation, Daniel “gave thanks before his God” (v. 10). Later, in Daniel 9:2, we will see that Daniel had access to the writings of Jeremiah, the prophet. As such, perhaps he had been inspired by some of God’s wonderful promises concerning prayer that are found in that book. In Jeremiah, Daniel may have read, “You will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:12-13). Daniel may also have read, “Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know” (Jeremiah 33:3). It might have even comforted Daniel to know that Jeremiah wrote that last promise while in captivity. In 2 Chronicles 6:34-39, we read where Solomon was in the habit of praying toward Jerusalem and the temple. If you take the time to read those verses, you will see that Solomon specifically stated that God’s people should practice praying in that fashion. When Daniel’s enemies reported that Daniel violated the king’s decree, “the king...was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun” to do so (v. 14). Finally, Darius was forced to consent to the fact that it was “the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree of statute which the king established (could) be changed” (v. 15). So, they took “Daniel and cast him into the den of lions,” with King Darius “saying to Daniel, ‘Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you’” (v. 16).

**Prayer Emphasis: Read** the parable of Jesus found in Luke 18:1-8, and you will see that the Lord wanted believers to understand that they “always ought to pray and not lose heart.” **Notice** that Daniel prayed *privately* in his own home and *persistently* even in the face of great danger.

## Day 23: Daniel 6:18-28 (Ephesians 3:14-21)

*“Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, ‘Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the den of lions?’” (Daniel 6:19-20)*

The closing verse in yesterday’s reading saw the solemn king watching as “a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den” where Daniel was thrown and his sealing “it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed” (6:17). (It is almost impossible to read these verses without thinking about the sealing of the stone that covered the opening to the tomb of Jesus!) After sealing the stone that blocked the entrance to the den of lions, “the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting...also his sleep went from him” (v. 18). And, as our focus verses state, he hurried to the lion’s den early the next morning to see what had become of Daniel. “And when he came to the den, he cried out...to Daniel...saying... ‘Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?’” (v. 20). We can only imagine the joy of the king when he heard Daniel, obviously alive and well, responding from the lion’s den, “My God sent His angel and shut the lion’s mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him” (v. 22). The relieved king “commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den” (v. 23). The king then gave another “command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions – them, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den” (v. 24). Still not finished with his work at hand, King Darius wrote “to all (the) peoples, nations, and languages...in all the earth” saying, “I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end” (vs. 25-26).

**Prayer Emphasis: Note** that the king cried out, asking Daniel if his God had been “able” to save him. **Read** Ephesians 3:20 and make a note of just how “able” our God still is today! Make a point to **brag** on God to someone that you meet today!

## Day 24: Daniel 7:1-8 (Revelation 13:1-5)

*“In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.” (Daniel 7:1)*

While Daniel 1-6 was predominately historical with some prophecy mixed into the story, chapters 7-12 are predominately prophetic with some history mixed throughout. In Daniel 7:2-3, we see Daniel receiving a dream and a vision directly himself rather than interpreting the dreams of others. Daniel 7:2 records Daniel speaking in the first person saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.” Notice that our focus verse states that Daniel had “visions” (plural). We will read about four visions that Daniel received in chapters 7-12, with this one described here in chapter seven being the first. Our focus verse also reveals that Daniel was allowed only to disclose “the main facts” of this vision, and those “main facts” are all that I can really share with you about these visions. The “Great Sea” mentioned in this vision was most likely the Mediterranean Sea since the four nations mentioned in the vision were bordered by it. The first three “beasts” that Daniel saw were likened to ferocious animals with which we are familiar. The fourth beast, however, was not likened to anything within the grasp of our knowledge and is, therefore, left to our imagination. Daniel could only say this fourth beast “was different from all the beasts that were before it” (v. 7). The fact that it was said to have “huge iron teeth” is enough to convince us that Daniel was seeing some strong, future kingdom that would eventually appear on history’s horizon.

**Prayer Emphasis: Read** Revelation 13:1-5 and you will see that the final beast in prophecy will be like all those that Daniel saw combined – and worse! **Compare** the “great things and blasphemies” which the beast of Revelation will speak to the “pompous words” of this fourth beast of Daniel 7:8. **Believe** the Bible is God’s Word and that it reveals great truths about the past, the present, and the future.

## Day 25: Daniel 7:9-18 (Acts 18:24-28)

*“I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.” (Daniel 7:9-10)*

Like Daniel, I want to share with you some of the “main facts” (7:1) about the chapter we are reading and studying from right now. Chapter seven actually precedes chapter five chronologically since we are told that Daniel “had a dream and visions” “in the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon” (7:1). The vision Daniel saw parallels the dream Nebuchadnezzar had back in chapter two. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream revealed four different human governments while Daniel’s “dream and visions” (7:1) tell us more of what those human governments were to be like. As noted earlier, each of these coming governments were depicted by fierce animals that could bring great devastation to humankind. The four beasts of Daniel chapter seven represent the same kingdoms that were represented in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. The lion represents both kings of Babylon. The bear typifies the Medo-Persian empire. The leopard is representative of Greece. And the last, mystery beast represents Rome. So, through his “dream and visions,” Daniel “watched till thrones were put in place” (v. 9). You might want to look at that first phrase in verse nine again and read it more like, “I watched till thrones were put in (their) place.” And they are eventually put “in their place” by “the Ancient of Days” (7:9) who is obviously God the Father. Then, as we look forward to verse 13 of this chapter, we see that the One upon whom God bestows the final, victorious kingdom is none other than “the Son of Man” – Jesus Christ Himself! It is interesting to note that Daniel was “troubled” by his own “visions” (v. 15) and he turned to “one of those who stood by” to make known to him “the interpretation” of them (v. 16).

**Prayer Emphasis: Note** that even Daniel was humble enough to turn to others for counsel and guidance. **Read** the story of Apollos and Aquila and Priscilla in Acts 18 and see how a powerful preacher was willing to receive guidance and counsel from a Christian couple in the church at Antioch.

## Day 26: Daniel 7:19-28 (Revelation 17:1-14)

*“Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet.” (Daniel 7:19)*

Are you seeing what I am seeing in this amazing, prophetic chapter of Daniel? Here we find the man who earlier could interpret dreams and writings that were beyond the understanding of every wise man in Babylon, readily admitting he was at a loss to fully understand everything God was showing him! As we read these verses, we must conclude that part of the “excellent spirit” that was “found in...Daniel” (5:12) was this obvious spirit of humility. Perhaps it was because “the fourth beast” was “different from all the others” and “exceedingly dreadful” (v. 19) that Daniel so desired to understand what kingdom God was trying to show him. It appears that the main way in which this fourth kingdom was “different” was that it would “devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces” (v. 23). It is obvious that this new kingdom, and its leader, would be a world power over all the other nations. Just as this kingdom was “different” than the other kingdoms, a leader would eventually rise to power in that kingdom that was going to “be different” (v. 24) from the rulers that preceded him. This ruler would “speak pompous words against the Most High” and would “persecute the saints” who served Him (v. 25). He would be given power to rule for three and one-half years – “a time and times and a half time” (v. 25) – during which he would lead in the persecution of the followers of the One, true God. But eventually God’s great gavel of justice would fall and “take away his dominion” (v. 26). After that “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.” His kingdom would prove to be “an everlasting kingdom” and “all dominions” would “serve and obey Him” (v. 27).

**Prayer Emphasis: Read** the end-times account given in Revelation 17:1-14 and **note** that just as Daniel foresaw in his prophecy, God wins! **Ask** God to help you walk in *faith* – and not in *fear* – in these last days!



## Day 27: Daniel 8:1-9 (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

*“In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me – to me, Daniel – after the one that appeared to me the first time. I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the river Ulai.” (Daniel 8:1-2)*

By comparing Daniel 7:1 to Daniel 8:1, we can clearly see that two years passed before a second vision “appeared to...Daniel” (8:1). The last part of the verse discloses that this vision came in “the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar” and came “after the one that appeared to (him) the first time” (v. 1). So, just as it was with the events recorded in chapter seven, the events of chapter eight obviously preceded Belshazzar’s rebellion and death, which is recorded in Daniel 5:1-30. Just as it was at the time of Daniel’s first vision, Babylon was still securely in power at the time of this second vision. When we are reading prophecy, we must be careful to remind ourselves that we are reading about future events that are going to happen and not about events that are happening at the time about which we are reading. Personally, I was happy to see that even Daniel was somewhat befuddled by some of the prophetic messages God delivered to, and through, him! Verse two discloses that Daniel “was in Shushan” and later, in verse 27, we will read that he was there doing “the king’s business.” There is something different about the “vision” that Daniel received in chapter eight compared to the one in chapter seven. In Daniel 7:1, we are told Daniel “had a dream and visions,” while in 8:1, we are told he had only “a vision.” Some think Daniel only saw himself “in Shushan” (v. 2) in his vision. Others think that the language here indicates he was actually in Shushan when he had the vision. I say it is just that kind of thinking that distracts us from the real message – that being, God’s judgment was soon to fall on Belshazzar and his kingdom.

**Prayer Emphasis: Note** that the Apostle Paul was careful to deliver to his readers and listeners that which he had “received from the Lord” (1 Corinthians 11:23). **Focus** on sharing what you know to be truth from God’s Word rather than on the discussion of speculative issues. **Realize** that the world is hungry for the truth!

## Day 28: Daniel 8:10-18 (Hebrews 11:1-6)

*“Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, ‘Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.’” (Daniel 8:15-16)*

There are only two angels mentioned by name in the Bible, Gabriel and Michael, and as far as the Old Testament is concerned, they are only mentioned by name in Daniel. These same two angels are also the only angels mentioned by name in the New Testament, with Gabriel being mentioned twice (Luke 1:19 & 26) and Michael twice as well (Jude 9 and Revelation 12:7). I think it is important to note that this supernatural assistance in understanding came only after Daniel had “seen the vision and was seeking the meaning” (v. 15). Some translations say Daniel had seen the vision and was “trying to understand it.” Or that he “sought for the meaning.” Again, I have found myself more than once being appreciative of the fact that Daniel struggled with the meaning of some of these prophecies – and he was the one who actually saw them! The word that is translated “seeking” implies a single-minded pursuit of something. It is the word used in Psalm 27:4 where David said, “One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I *seek*: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple.” Later, in that same Psalm, David disclosed that the LORD had said to him, “*Seek My face.*” In response David said, “Your face, LORD, I will *seek*” (Psalm 27:8). I find no coincidence whatsoever in the fact that as Daniel was *seeking* the meaning of the vision, “suddenly there stood before (him) one having the appearance of a man” (v. 15). Verse 16 clearly reveals that this was no mere man who was sent to help Daniel, but the angel Gabriel. We must not let the word “suddenly” in our first focus verse fool us. We are not clearly told just how long Daniel was seeking before the LORD sent His divine messenger with the answer.

**Prayer Emphasis: Read** Hebrews 11:6 and **determine** to diligently seek the Lord just as that verse commands us. **Remember** that the Lord Himself promised that if we “seek,” we shall “find” (Matthew 7:7)!

## Day 29: Daniel 8:19-27 (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12)

*“And he said, ‘Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be.’” (Daniel 8:19)*

Near the end of yesterday’s reading, we found Gabriel coming “near where” Daniel stood and saying to him, “Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end” (8:17). Now, early in today’s reading, we see where that same angelic messenger was emphasizing to Daniel that he was “making known to (him) what shall happen in the latter time” (v. 19). The one who would come in that “latter time” would have “fierce features” and understand “sinister schemes” (v. 23). “His power (would) be mighty, but not by his own power” (v. 24). In other words, he will be a ruler that acts under the authority of another. In Daniel’s vision, he saw this coming ruler would be able to “destroy fearfully and (would) prosper and thrive” and “destroy the mighty and also the holy people” (v. 24). This coming ruler would be “cunning” and would “cause deceit to prosper under his rule.” This ruler would “exalt himself in his heart” and “destroy many.” Added to that, Daniel saw that this coming ruler would “even rise against the Prince of princes” (v. 25). But, ultimately, this new world leader would be “broken without human means” (v. 25b). In a more immediate fulfillment of these prophecies, Antiochus Epiphanes soon rose to power and accomplished many of the cruelties that Daniel foresaw. However, this prophecy of Daniel spoke more immediately of Antiochus, but ultimately of the Antichrist! Antiochus believed himself to be “God manifested” and even had that title inscribed on the coins of his day. The Antichrist will believe himself to be equal with God and will even dare to sit “as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Just as “deceit” was used to help the ruler of Daniel 8:25 “prosper,” the wicked ruler described in 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 will use “lying wonders” and “unrighteous deception” to accomplish his goals.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Refuse to be deceived by Satan. Believe that he is a liar who would go to any extreme and take any measure to see to it that you are not faithful in your service to Jesus Christ.

## Day 30: Daniel 9:1-9 (James 5:13-18)

*“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus...I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem. Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.” (Daniel 9:1-3)*

If you are at all like me, and many other believers, you have sometimes been jealous of the spiritual insight that God gave some of His past servants through the aid of dreams and visions. However, at least as far as I am concerned, we find Daniel experiencing something even greater than such dreams and visions here in Daniel chapter nine! Here, we find Daniel saying that he “understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet” (9:2). The key word – at least for me – in that verse is the word “understood.” Earlier we read where Daniel was as perplexed as anyone else about what his dreams and visions meant. However, here we find him encountering not a dream, but the written word of God, and afterwards having understanding! I have often said that many who received miraculous signs in past times would gladly trade their signs for one copy of the Holy Scriptures! While reading the Book of Jeremiah, Daniel came to the clear understanding that Israel’s captivity in Babylon would last for only 70 years. After receiving that message from God, Daniel then “set (his) face toward the LORD God to make request” (v. 3) to God for the fulfillment of that prophecy. Many years had passed since Daniel and his fellow Israelites had been taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, and now, according to God’s word, Israel’s ordeal would soon be over. Daniel was so serious about his praying for God’s word and will to be fulfilled that he used every known agency to aid his prayers: “fasting, sackcloth, and ashes” (v. 3). In other words, even though Daniel obviously believed in God’s *sovereignty*, he also believed in man’s *responsibility*.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read James 5:16 and see what effective prayers can accomplish! Ask yourself, “When was the last time that I prayed earnestly about something?” Use one of our church prayer sheets, or one of your own making, and begin to pray earnestly to God every day!

## Day 31: Daniel 9:10-18 (Ephesians 3:1-12)

“O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies.” (Daniel 9:18)

Early into today’s reading, we saw where the Book of Jeremiah was not the only part of the Bible with which Daniel was familiar. In verse 10, Daniel referenced “His laws,” and in verses 11 and 13, he spoke of “the Law of Moses.” I guess you might say Daniel was on a “Bible Binge” and loving every minute of it! God uses the reading of His word to inspire us to pray and then prayer to inspire us to read His word! There is no substitute for Bible reading and prayer in the life of any believer! Without it, we are just as much “captives” to this sinful world as Daniel and the Israelites were to Babylon! I want to admonish you to do three things with your Bible today. First, I would like to ask you to *read* it! Spend some time in God’s word every day simply allowing it to flow through you and do its mighty work within you. Second, I would ask you to *heed* it! When God’s word nudges your heart about some area of surrender or service, immediately acknowledge it, and go about incorporating God’s truth into your personal life. Third, I would ask you to *bleed* it! By that, I am asking you to let its life-giving energy flow out of you and into the hearts and minds of those around you. Believe that God has much to say to the people you know and meet and then believe He would love to speak to them through you! Learn the great lesson taught in our focus verse, that prayer is answered not according to our works or worth but according to the “great mercies” of God. Just as we cannot earn *redemption* – neither can we earn *relationship*. Pray because God has commanded you to do so and do not allow any self-doubt to keep you from God’s great throne of grace!

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read Ephesians 3:3 and see that God revealed His great truth to Paul “by revelation.” Then **note**, “when (we) read” (Ephesians 3:4), we have understanding and boldness so that we can come confidently before the throne “through faith in Him” (Ephesians 3:12).

## Day 32: Daniel 9:19-27 (Matthew 21:1-11)

“Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin... and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God...yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.” (Daniel 9:20-21)

How encouraging it is to see that while Daniel was still “speaking” and “praying” (v. 20), God had already set a plan in place to answer his prayer! Verse 23 records Gabriel revealing to Daniel that it was “at the beginning of (his) supplications” that he was commanded to go to Daniel! Always remember that when believers begin to pray, heaven begins to move! The phrase, “the man Gabriel,” is not really a description, but the actual meaning of the word Gabriel. “Gabriel” is a combination of *gebher* (“man”) and *el* (“God”), hence, “man of God.” It seems that, in answer to Daniel’s prayer, God “caused” Gabriel “to fly swiftly” (v. 21) and to say to Daniel, “I have now come forth to give you skill to understand” (v. 22) “the vision” (v. 23) concerning the “seventy weeks” that God had “determined for your (Daniel’s) people and for your holy city” (v. 24). So, it is important for us to remember that this prophecy is literally about the Jews and Jerusalem and not about the Gentiles or the church. The “weeks” that are prophesied of here are not “weeks” of seven days but seven years. So, we have a prophecy of “seventy weeks” of years – or roughly 490 years. However, since “years” were comprised of only 360 days on the Jewish calendar, this would mean only 483 years of the 365 days with which we measure them today. I will teach some about “Daniel’s Seventy Weeks” soon, but in the meantime, let me just say that the years depicted in this important vision begin with the reconstruction of Jerusalem and the temple (v. 25) and end on the final week of our Lord’s life on this earth – the very week that Jesus rode into Jerusalem riding “on a donkey” (Matthew 21:5).

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Note** that in Daniel’s vision, Christ is called “Messiah the *Prince*” (v. 25) and not the *king*. From that, we know this is not a prophecy concerning the second coming of Christ, when He will come as “King.” **Note** also that there is a little “p” in “prince to come” (v.26). That reference is referring to the longer-term prophecy of the coming of the antichrist.

## Day 33: Daniel 10:1-10 (Acts 9:1-7)

*“In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.” (Daniel 10:1)*

Thus far, we have read where Daniel marked time by “the third year of...Jehoiakim king of Judah” (1:1); “the second year of Nebuchadnezzar” (2:1); the “first” and “third year of the reign of King Belshazzar” (7:1 & 8:1); “the first year of Darius...who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans” (9:1); to today’s mention of “the third year of Cyrus king of Persia” (10:1). As you can imagine, a lot of time has passed since the beginning of Daniel’s story, and the 70 years of Israel’s captivity to Babylon is rapidly drawing to a close. In fact, according to the first two chapters of the Book of Ezra, the first group of Jews was already returning to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple by the “third year of Cyrus.” Notice that before God ever revealed the *content* of this message to Daniel, He confirmed the *character* of the message by saying, “the message was true” (10:1). In verse two, Daniel stated he had been “mourning three full weeks.” Some speculate that Daniel was “mourning” because he was not among those to first leave Babylon for Jerusalem. However, Daniel was probably a man in his mid-80s by that time, and he was probably aware of the fact that he could do his people more good in his government position in Babylon than he could on a construction site in Jerusalem. Most likely, Daniel was mourning over the statement that “the appointed time was long” (v. 1), meaning that although the return to Jerusalem had begun, the Jews still had a long way (and time) to go before they would fully restore the city and the temple. Verse seven discloses that Daniel was not alone but, he “alone saw the vision.” However, the people with Daniel were obviously aware that something supernatural was taking place because it is said that “a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.” Verse eight records Daniel’s reference to this particular vision as “this great vision.”

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read Acts 9:1-7 and **note** that only Paul saw the Lord on the road to Damascus. Others heard “a voice” but did not see what Paul saw or understand what the voice was saying to Paul. **Believe** that God may speak to you on a personal basis and be faithful to **obey** His commands and **fulfill** His will for your life.

## Day 34: Daniel 10:11-21 (John 20:1-9)

*“Then he said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.’” (Daniel 10:12)*

Today’s focus verse contains another great and encouraging message on prayer. From the time that Daniel began his “three full weeks” (10:2) of mourning, “from the first day,” (10:12) his words were heard, and heaven was moved to action! Verse 13 is a great lesson on spiritual warfare. Daniel had been “mourning” and praying for “three full weeks,” and the messenger declared that “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” had “withstood (him) for twenty-one days.” So, for three weeks, Daniel had been praying; for three weeks, heaven had been working; and for three weeks, the enemy had been doing everything possible to hinder the work of the kingdom of God! Verse 14 clearly indicates that God won that victory because the heavenly messenger stated, “Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.” However, God had allowed this messenger to win only a battle (and not the war) because verse 20 clearly explains that there were more battles to fight. The messenger stated, “Now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth” (or “when I leave that battle”), “indeed the prince of Greece will come.” Then, in this small section of Scripture that teaches us so much about prayer and spiritual warfare, we also have a powerful message about the Word of God. After Daniel had fallen to the ground, probably after passing out (v. 9), the messenger began to speak to him. In verse 19, we are told that as Daniel was receiving a word from heaven, he “was strengthened.” What was the source of this strengthening message? “The Scripture of Truth” (v. 21)!

**Prayer Emphasis:** Read today’s New Testament verses and you will see that much of the fear and anxiety that the disciples experienced after the resurrection was because “as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again” (John 20:9). **Seek** strength to survive life’s difficult moments by spending time in God’s Word every day!

## Day 35: Daniel 11:1-10 (2 Timothy 3:10-17)

*“And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.” (Daniel 11:2-3)*

The prophecy contained in Daniel 11 was so accurate that many historians believe that it was written after the fact – or in other words, that it was more history than prophecy! The specificity of detail in this prophecy, and its fulfillment, is one of the great arguments for the divine inspiration of the Bible. After receiving strength from the “Scripture of Truth” (10:21), Daniel was able to “confirm and strengthen” Darius (11:1). Daniel told Darius there would be “three more kings” that would “arise in Persia” before a “fourth” king would take the throne. This fourth king would be “far richer than them all” (v. 2). Perhaps the “all” in that statement meant “all” of Persia’s kings and not just the three that preceded this fourth king. But after that fourth king, “a mighty king” would arise and “rule with great dominion” (v. 3). But, at some time, even his kingdom would be “broken up and divided” (v. 4). Most believe that the prophecy of this “mighty king” was fulfilled in Alexander the Great. It is interesting to note that history records the fact that Alexander died in Babylon at the early age of 32 years. After his death, Alexander’s kingdom was not divided “among his posterity” (his own heirs) but to others who ruled differently than Alexander and “not according to his dominion” (v. 4). Daniel was told of a “king of the South” and a “king of the North” that would eventually “join forces” (vs. 5-6). The phrase “for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement” (v. 6) implies that these two kings joined forces because of a marriage. From that marriage, an offspring was produced that came “with an army” to attack and conquer “the king of the North” (v. 7). This prophecy contained other mentions of “great forces” and “strife” (v. 10). It seems as if the world would become a place wherein no one was safe!

**Prayer Emphasis: Believe** that the Bible is divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit of God and every word in it was given to benefit believers in their walk and warfare until we are all at home in heaven! **Memorize** 2 Timothy 3:16!

## Day 36: Daniel 11:11-19 (Matthew 24:3-8)

*“And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail.” (Daniel 11:11-12)*

Although Daniel was not given any names to include in his prophecy, the historical events that took place thereafter allowed historians to so closely trace the actions of certain kings and kingdoms that they became convinced that someone had written the final chapters of Daniel at some later time and then added them to the book! I will not attempt to turn this devotion into a history lesson, but I would encourage anyone to make their own comparisons and see that the prophecy revealed the history of the known world in that day well before it ever happened! As you can clearly see, much of that section of human history was filled with warfare and violence. But, as we read in our focus verses, no one king ever seemed to “prevail.” In other words, there was no end to the warfare and violence – just as there seems to be no end to the violence that fills our world today. One would think that the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 24:6 were written about the days in which we now live. He said to the people of His day, “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars.” He then added, “See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass.” He went on to say, “For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” (Matthew 24:7). In that same message, Jesus declared that certain things would follow all that warfare, namely “famines” and “pestilences.” We only have to watch the news clips from the war-torn world in which we now live to see that the death and destruction that war introduces into a society continues long after the final shots are fired.

**Prayer Emphasis: Imagine** a world filled with war and violence and **be thankful** for the peace and safety that we enjoy here in America. **Pray** for peace and for the safety of those who defend our country daily. **Remember** to **pray** for our government officials daily.

## Day 37: Daniel 11:20-28 (Titus 1:4-9)

*“There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. (Daniel 11:20-21)*

Yesterday’s Scripture reading ended with the eventual downfall of the king of the North. After that, Daniel wrote prophetically of one who would “arise in his place” and who would impose “taxes on the glorious kingdom,” but there would be only a “few days” before he also would “be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle” (v. 20). This prophecy of the ruler who followed the king of the North was fulfilled in the brief reign of Seleucus III, the eldest son of Antiochus III. History reveals that he sought to tax everyone under his rule, including “the glorious kingdom” (the Holy Land). History further reveals that this greedy king also made plans to attack and pillage Jerusalem and the temple. However, that plan was set aside when he was advised by his counselors to not attack Jerusalem. The phrase “but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle” (v. 20) refers to the fact that Seleucus III was assassinated, most likely by his own brother, Antiochus IV. As is often the case in life, after the death of this king, things would go from bad to worse! Verse 21 prophesied of the arrival of “a vile person” who would “come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue.” Verses 25 through 27 reveal that the “vile” king would attempt to conquer the king of the South but would fail in that effort. Verse 28 is another page right out of ancient history. It perfectly parallels the story of Antiochus Epiphanes, who returning from Egypt after a bitter defeat, turned his anger toward Jerusalem and the Jewish people.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Refuse to allow Satan to use your anger to accomplish his will. **Note** that among the many characteristics of church leaders listed in Titus 1:4-9 is the warning against being “quick-tempered,” or as some translations read, “soon angry.” **Pray** for God to open your eyes to the *danger of anger!*

## Day 38: Daniel 11:29-36 (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

*“Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.” (Daniel 11:36)*

As I have mentioned in earlier devotionals, the prophecies of Daniel were so clearly fulfilled in human history that many people honestly believe that these final six chapters of the book were written at a much later time – looking backward historically rather than looking forward prophetically. For example, verse 29 mentions an “appointed time” when the king of the North sought to “return and go toward the south.” Then verse 30 informs us that “ships from Cyprus” would “come against him; therefore he shall be grieved.” History clearly reveals that as Antiochus Epiphanes sought to attack Egypt, naval assistance (“ships from Cyprus”) met him in battle and helped save the Egyptians from his invasion. This king of the north would eventually enter Jerusalem and “defile the sanctuary” by taking “away the daily sacrifices” and replacing them with “the abomination of desolation” (v. 31). This invading ruler’s flattering speech would “corrupt” only some of the Jews because the prophecy stated, “the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits” (v. 32). Verse 33 prophesied that “the people who understand” would “instruct many” but they would suffer from severe persecution (“sword and flame” and “captivity and plundering”) for not supporting this evil king’s agenda and program. The words “it is still for the appointed time” in verse 35 help us to understand that all of these things are being allowed by God, and they could not happen unless, like in the life of Job, God allowed Satan to have his way for a season. Daniel’s vision clearly revealed that this evil person sought only to “exalt and magnify himself above every god” and to “speak blasphemies against the God of gods” (v. 36). This person would fulfill the prophecy of Daniel’s vision and would represent the one who will eventually come during the tribulation period and be the person so clearly identified in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

**Prayer Emphasis:** Find and read 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. I am aware that we read from this chapter of the New Testament earlier in our devotionals, but the wording is so like that found in Daniel that we simply have to read it again! **Believe** that God’s Word clearly reveals the future and there is coming a day when all people will recognize that fact!

## Day 39: Daniel 11:37-45 (Revelation 16:12-16)

*“He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.” (Daniel 11:37-38)*

Still speaking prophetically of a person who will come in the last days, the words “he shall regard neither the God of his fathers” (v. 37) causes us to believe that this end-time ruler will be a Jew. How else would he be able to deceive so many of God’s own people? This egotistical individual will not only consider and present himself as a god but will “exalt himself above” all other gods. The words “his fathers” are found again in verse 38, strengthening the belief that this last-days, world ruler will be a person of Jewish descent. The phrase “he shall honor a god of fortresses” (v. 38) is a strong indicator that the Antichrist will assume and hold his place of power and world-wide authority through some form of military might. In that same verse, the words “he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things” cause us to believe that the Antichrist will be a person whom the world believes to be the answer to all its economic problems. If you have carefully read your way through The Revelation, then you know the post-rapture tribulation world will be one of extreme poverty and limited supply. Verses 40 through 45 depict a great war that was fought in past history as well as one that will be fought during the great tribulation period. Verse 40 reveals that “at the time of the end” a combined army of many nations will come against this new king (the Antichrist) and a great battle will be fought. The phrase “he shall also enter the Glorious Land” (v. 41) indicates that this battle will be fought in or in the area of the Holy Land. It is purely speculative for anyone to attempt to name the nations that will be included in this great battle. However, we can come to at least one conclusion from the words “he shall come to his end, and no one will help him” (v. 45), that being, that there is no hope for the Antichrist and his followers!

**Prayer Emphasis:** As you read these disturbing verses in Daniel 11 and Revelation 16, **remember** that believers will have already been taken out of the world at the time of the rapture and will, therefore, never have to live through such horrible end-times events. Today might be a good day to just **thank God** for your salvation!

## Day 40: Daniel 12:1-13 (1 Corinthians 15:50-58)

*“But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.” (Daniel 12:13)*

As Daniel neared the end of the recording of the great prophecies that God delivered to him, he had to be both greatly fatigued and greatly concerned about the end-time events that God revealed to him. In his own words, he admitted, “Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, ‘My lord, what shall be the end of these things?’” (12:8). If you recall, there were several times throughout this amazing book that Daniel humbly admitted that he did not understand all that he was seeing and hearing. But we cannot help but notice what he did when understanding escaped him. He asked for wisdom! Even though his question was directed to the heavenly messenger that God sent to him (hence the little “I” in “lord), he, no doubt, was looking past the messenger to God for an answer. God has clearly directed His New Testament saints to do the same thing. In James 1:5, we read, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it (wisdom) will be given to him.” It is beautiful to see God, the One who rules the universe, take the time to speak a special word of encouragement to just one person. David once asked God, “What is man that You are mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:4). The final words to this wonderful book serve as proof positive that God does not hesitate to minister to one, solitary servant in a time of need. God said, “But you, go your way till the end, for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days” (v. 13). Through these words, we hear God telling Daniel to go on with his life – live until you die – and then know that your life has only begun for you will surely “arise to your inheritance.”

**Prayer Emphasis:** **Read** 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 and ask yourself what those verses have in common with this closing remark to Daniel. **Believe** that God will fully reward those who serve Him. **Contact me** at 850-562-8069 or [gary@seminolebc.com](mailto:gary@seminolebc.com) if I can pray for you or minister to you or your family in any way.