



Unit .16

Session .04

God's Promises Sustain His People

Scripture



Daniel 7:1-14

1 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream with visions in his mind as he was lying in his bed. He wrote down the dream, and here is the summary of his account. **2** Daniel said, “In my vision at night I was watching, and suddenly the four winds of heaven stirred up the great sea. **3** Four huge beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. **4** “The first was like a lion but had eagle’s wings. I continued watching until its wings were torn off. It was lifted up from the ground, set on its feet like a man, and given a human mind. **5** “Suddenly, another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, with three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, ‘Get up! Gorge yourself on flesh.’ **6** “After this, while I was watching, suddenly another beast appeared. It was like a leopard with four wings of a bird on its back. It had four heads, and it was given dominion. **7** “After this, while I was watching in the night visions, suddenly a fourth beast appeared, frightening and dreadful, and incredibly strong, with large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and it trampled with its feet whatever was left. It was different from all the beasts before it, and it had ten horns. **8** “While I was considering the horns, suddenly another horn, a little one, came up among them, and

three of the first horns were uprooted before it. And suddenly in this horn there were eyes like the eyes of a human and a mouth that was speaking arrogantly. **9** “As I kept watching, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was white like snow, and the hair of his head like whitest wool. His throne was flaming fire; its wheels were blazing fire. **10** A river of fire was flowing, coming out from his presence. Thousands upon thousands served him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was convened, and the books were opened. **11** “I watched, then, because of the sound of the arrogant words the horn was speaking. As I continued watching, the beast was killed and its body destroyed and given over to the burning fire. **12** As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was removed, but an extension of life was granted to them for a certain period of time. **13** I continued watching in the night visions, and suddenly one like a son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him. **14** He was given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; so that those of every people, nation, and language should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

What are some ways our society shows hostility toward God?

How can we overcome evil influences around us?



99 Essential Doctrines

God is Infinite

God's infinity means that there are no boundaries on His qualities and existence (Job 11:7-9; Ps. 147:5). For instance, God is infinite when it comes to space and time, meaning He is not confined by material space nor is He restricted by time since He is timeless (Ps. 90:1-2). God's infinity also extends to His knowledge of things as well as His power to do all things according to His will.

Main Point

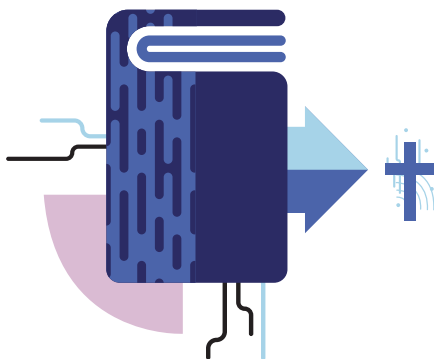
God is forming an eternal kingdom under the reign of Jesus.

How should these prophecies motivate us to pray for and serve the nations?

Why should the future overthrow of all evil be a constant expectation among God's people? How should we live until that happens?

Christ Connection

Daniel's vision depicted worldly kingdoms that were set against God and passing away. Daniel also saw the coming of the Son of man who would be given dominion over an everlasting kingdom of every people, nation, and language. Jesus is the Son of man, the King of kings, who purchased a people for God through His life, death, and resurrection.



How does the future exaltation of Jesus enhance our worship of Him now?

In Defense



“One like a son of man’ has been interpreted in three primary ways—as an angel (Michael), a personification of the people of God (Israel), and the Messiah. The NT apostles (see John 12:34) and Christ Himself (Mark 14:61–62) confirm the latter view, specifically that the ‘son of man’ is Jesus of Nazareth. Early post-biblical Jewish literature (e.g., 1 Enoch 46:1; 48:10; 4 Ezra 13) also reflects the messianic view. That the ‘son of man’ of verse 13 was considered a divine personage is affirmed by the high priest’s charge of blasphemy (Mark 14:64) when Jesus identified Himself as the One ‘coming with the clouds of heaven’ (Mark 14:62). Jesus’ use of this title for Himself is one of the strongest evidences that He claimed to be the Messiah. ‘Son of man’ is especially common in eschatological passages (see, e.g., Matt. 16:27,28; 19:28; 24:30; 25:31), and the phrase ‘a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven’ is an allusion to the second advent of Christ, as Matthew 24:30 makes clear.”— Stephen R. Miller, “Daniel,” *The Apologetics Study Bible* (Nashville: B&H, 2007), 1282.



Head

What are some lessons we can learn from this account as it applies to Christians living in various parts of the world today?

Specifically, what type of posture should Christians have toward their government in light of this account?



Heart

How has this session challenged or corrected any beliefs you've had about the end times?

What do you most look forward to in Christ's everlasting kingdom?

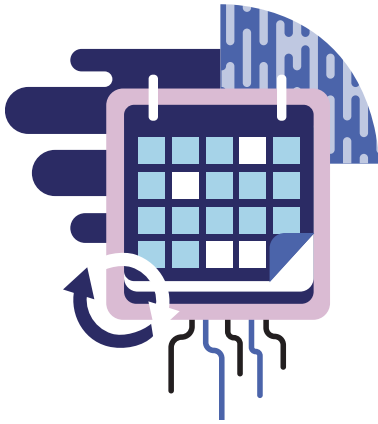


Hands

What are some ways we can show Jesus our allegiance each day?

What are some tangible ways we can serve others in the Kingdom of God this week?

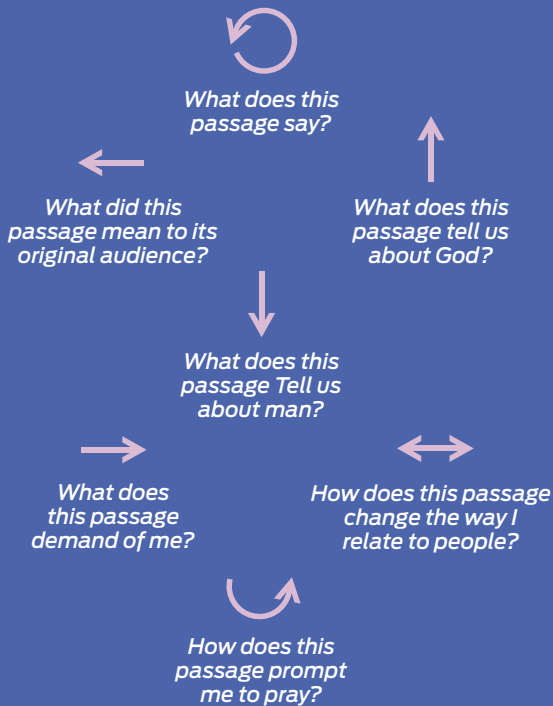
Daily Devotions



Day 1

Daniel 7:1-8

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



As we move into the prophetic material of Daniel, God's future reign over the kingdoms of the earth becomes apparent. The four beasts described in these verses represent the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Because these nations war against God's agenda for humanity, the world's hostility toward Christianity and Scripture should not surprise us. Rather than be dismayed, however, we ought to rejoice knowing that today's satanic influences are temporary. Though the whole earth is under the power of the wicked one (1 John 5:19), the Son of God gives us eternal life. The accelerated wickedness we see today is but a forerunner to God's final word of vengeance.

Until Christ comes, we must be diligent to resist the lawlessness that is already at work around us. Knowing that rebellion will increase before the Day of the Lord due to the spirit of antichrist, we should be careful to hold fast to the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Ours are not hopeless days, but we cannot afford to be careless either.

**What evidence do we see of Satan's influence in our world today?
What should be our response as Christians?**

Daniel 7:9-12

Do you ever feel weary due to the wickedness of our world? These verses remind us that, though God has a purpose for the evil around us, He will not allow it to continue forever. Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days reminds us God's reign is eternal and that He will judge the nations who rebel against Him with swift judgment. Though Satan's kingdom is extensive and damaging, the Lord will exercise His authority over His sinister enemies as He rids the earth of all unbelievers and demonic forces. Christ will rule over all creation as the King of all kings.

Daniel's message is just as encouraging today as it was to ancient Jews who lived in captivity outside of Israel. Despite the dismal forecast on the nightly news, God's victory is coming without delay. Though our world is broken, our great Savior will restore our fallen home to Himself. No matter the pain that soils your life, God will make all things new.

How should we respond to injustice of our world in light of God's future victory over it?

Daniel 7:13-28

The glory of a new heaven and earth is often lost on us. Contrary to the fallen kingdoms chronicled in Daniel's vision, the glory of our eternal dwelling place is unparalleled. With a dominion that will last forever, Jesus Christ will restore what was lost in the Garden of Eden. He will dwell among us as our God, and the wounds of our fallen past will be wiped away. With the curse removed, we will enjoy the presence of our God like never before. Through Daniel's interpretation of his vision, we learn that earthly realities will get much worse before than improve. But history is working toward the enthroning of the Lamb who died to take away our sins.

How are we to live in the meantime? What do these realities mean for us today? First, they remind us that no sacrifice is too great in order to follow our King. Second, we rest knowing that our heartaches and troubles are temporary. Finally, we devote our lives to helping others discover the hope and rescue that is ours in Christ Jesus.

How might your temporary trials strengthen your perspective about eternity?

Daniel

8:1-9:27

With a second vision regarding the demonic kingdoms of history, Daniel learned of the coming hardship that God's people were going to face. By focusing on the harsh reigns of the Medo-Persian empire and Greece, the need for God's sovereign authority over the nations once again comes into focus. Realizing the depth of Israel's sin, Daniel repented before the Lord and pleaded for mercy. Because of the interpretive guidance of Gabriel, we understand the revealed seventy weeks to be partially, though not entirely fulfilled. The period known as the Great Tribulation will mark the conclusion of these prophetic words.

How should we live in light of challenging verses like these? Despite what might be difficult for us to understand, again we observe the clear, abiding sovereignty of the Lord over the affairs of history. God disciplines His own and condemns those who reject Him. Though He uses the destructive agendas that dominate the earth, He will also bring them to a screeching halt as Jesus is exalted over all creation. We should take comfort in the fact that the God who rules the universe is also in control of the daily events in our lives.

How does the certainty of history's conclusion give you peace about your present challenges?

Daniel

10:1-12:13

This final vision in the book of Daniel again speaks vividly about future events. Because the angel speaking was initially unable to communicate with Daniel due to demonic resistance, we know that Satan aggressively opposes and resists God's agenda for His people (Dan. 10:13-14). We also learn from these verses that God sends His angels to influence the world's political realities for His kingdom (11:1). Again, the Lord reveals numerous leaders who would influence the trajectory of history toward its conclusion. The vision culminates with a description of the coming antichrist who will compete for God's glory by attempting to hinder His work. Though the timing of these events remained unclear, Daniel's vision established their certainty.

Again, we must consider how prophecies like these should shape our faith. And, just as in previous devotions, we should celebrate the assurance of our eternal victory through Jesus Christ. Living with conviction and faith requires believing in what we have yet to see (Heb. 11:1). Daniel's words urge us to remember that we will win in the end precisely because our Savior will not be denied the glory due His name.

How does the satanic resistance to God's kingdom help us frame the evil we see in the world today?