

DANIEL

A guided study for Christ Community Church



Chapter 1

Primer questions: Think through a time in your life that was deeply unsettling or shaking. How were you tempted to change the way you think, act, or believe? Why?

Context and Setting *Read Daniel 1:1-2*

For further biblical context, read; 2 Kings 24, 2 Chronicles 36, Jeremiah 24-25:1-14

Who are the leaders of this time for Judah? For Babylon?

What is God's role in this invasion and why?

(Deut. 28:15, 25, 36, 49-52; Dan. 1:2, 2 Kings 24:1-3)

How would you describe these decades for Judah?

Whose hand are they in? Why?

New Reality *Read Daniel 1:3-7*

Who is deported to Babylon?

What traits was Nebuchadnezzar looking for? Why?

Why wouldn't the Babylonians simply killed all the capable young men and soldiers?

In what ways were the Babylonians seeking to assert influence and change on the men from Judah? What impact do names, culture, food, and education have?

Apply: List several ways that our culture seeks to assert influence you to think, act, or believe.

How can we discern what is culturally good or neutral from what is harmful to the life of faith? In what way do biblical passages such as Rom. 12:1-2, Phil 4:8-9, 1 Pet. 4:1-11 help us think about where to draw the lines?

Sinclair Ferguson writes, “*somebody in Nebuchadnezzar’s palace knew enough about the human heart to see that most men have their price, and that good times, comfort, self-esteem, and a position in society are usually a sufficient bid for a soul.*”

What would be a sufficient bid for your soul?

In what ways are you tempted to compromise faith?

Enduring Resolve

Read Daniel 1:8-16

How does Daniel fight back against the Babylonian cultural influence?

How does he go about communicating his intentions? What characteristics do we see displayed in Daniel?

What is God’s role in this situation?

What does favor (towards Daniel) look like here?

If you could ask God to turn someone’s heart toward you for favor, who would it be? And why? What might this favor look like? Is God able?

What might resolve or determination look like in the face of cultural pressure to conform?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-14 and apply it to Daniel’s situation. Then, apply it to a temptation you might be facing.

Enduring Resolve

Read Daniel 1:17-21

Why do you think God equipped these four young men even beyond their natural gifts and abilities?

With the gift of hindsight, how might God's sovereign wisdom be using Daniel amid this hardship?

What is the irony of 1:21?

Chapter 2

Primer question: Think through / describe a time when you were "at the end of your rope". What did it look like and feel like? What did you do in response?

Exhausted Resources

Read Daniel 2:1-13

Why do you think Nebuchadnezzar gets so mad at his councilors?

Why are these 'wise men' so exasperated with Nebuchadnezzar? (v10-11)

What is made clear in the story about the wisdom of man?

What do the gods of Babylon offer? [Read Isaiah 46] What do the idols of our time offer?
What are examples of some of these idols?

Inexhaustible God

Read Daniel 2:14-30

What stops Arioch from carrying out Nebuchadnezzar's plan with haste?

Outline Daniel's response to this crisis. What commitments and wisdom do we see?

What do Daniel and his friends pray for? Why?

When Daniel receives the vision revealing Nebuchadnezzar's dream, what is his response?

List the attributes of God in v20-23.

What are the core emphases of Daniel's early interactions with Nebuchadnezzar (26-30)?

Application

Paul commonly writes about a "mystery long hidden but now revealed." What is it? (Rom. 16:25-27, Eph. 1:7-10; Col. 1:26-27)

Read 1 Cor. 1:18 – 2:16. In this section Paul explains how the mystery is also God's wisdom.

What is the power of God? (18)

What is the wisdom of God? (20-24)

Why do some not accept the wisdom and power of God? (1:20-2:10)

How does this wisdom come to us? (1:30; 2:10)

So, in light of all this, list some practices that are helpful for us to walk in the wisdom and power of God.

How do we 'access' the inexhaustible God in times of need?

Chapter 2, Continued...

Primer question: Who is your king? Who is in charge of your life? To whom or what have you pledged allegiance? Have you “over” assimilated to our present culture? How?

What is your *functional* answer to that question. In other words, it’s not just, as I look at my personal doctrinal statement, my king is supposed to be _____, but instead, it’s _____ As I look at the way I lived this week, my king obviously is _____?

Daniel and the powers

Read Daniel 2:24-30

Why do you think Arioch is slow in carrying out Nebuchadnezzar’s commands? (see also 2:14-16)

In what ways do we see here a continuation of God turning Babylonian hearts to favor Daniel? What purposes are immediately evident in why God does this?

What is the posture of Daniel’s soul before the king?

What is the implied contrast of v27-28, and the irony of Daniel's role in it?
(See also, Psalm 115:1-8)

How does Daniel point to God? What might have been the internal and external obstacles keeping him from testifying in this way?

What do you see and learn about God? How does the portrait of God in this chapter encourage you to trust him with your life and circumstances? How did Daniel's knowledge of God's character reveal itself in his remarks to King Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 27-30)?

The Dream's Content *Read Daniel 2:31-35*

Describe or Draw the content of the dream as written in these verses. What are the distinguishing features of this statue?

What's surprising about the feet of the statue? What can we conclude about this kingdom?

List three qualities of the "rock" from the content of the dream. (see Ps. 2:8-9)

What does the image of chaff bring to mind? (see Ps. 1:4-6)

The Dream's Interpretation *Read Daniel 2:36-45*

What do you find striking or confusing about v37? How does it contrast with the way humanity typically views itself or its powers?

What are the distinguishing marks of the four kingdoms?

What are four details revealed about God's kingdom (35, 44-45)?

For context about the Lord's reign figured as a mountain, read: Isaiah 2:2-3 (Ps 2:6, Ps. 48:1-2). When will this dream be fulfilled? (v45b)

If one studies the history of interpretations of Daniel, Christian or Jewish, folks are given to interpret the signs (including those in this chapter) to their times. The final kingdom overthrown, for instance, has been deemed: Christendom, the Pope, the Germans under Emperor Fredrick, the Turks, the Arab Muslims, the English Monarchy, the French Revolution, the 1967 Arab-Israeli war... just to name a few.

What caution might this give us as we read this book through OUR cultural lens?

What might it say about God that he reveals his future plans through a pagan, tyrannical king?

Read the following texts to see how the New Testament interprets the “rock”.

1 Corinthians 10:4, Romans 9:33 (Isaiah 8:14 & 28:16), I Peter 2:6-8

What hope does this dream give to us, even in its broad, general nature?

Daniel 2:35, 44-45b

See also: Matt. 6:10, Heb. 12:28, Rev 11:15-19

Nebuchadnezzar's Response

Read Daniel 2:46-49

Nebuchadnezzar is awed and pays homage to Daniel and Yahweh... but what does he NOT do in relation to God?

Luke 14:11 states, *For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.* How is this truth enacted here in Daniel 2?

Try to put yourself in Daniel's mind here, especially in light of the recent events of chapter 1. What types of thoughts might he be having? What spiritual battles? What responsibilities before the Lord?

Chapter 3

Primer question: Think through a costly decision you've made. What did you lose? Was it worth it? Why or why not? What led you to make the decision?

Read Daniel 3

This may be a familiar story. Make it come alive by paraphrase it in your own words and being creative with how you tell it.

Why do you think Nebuchadnezzar fashions this 90 foot statue? (Is 2:31 involved? What else)

What are some things we learn about the culture of Babylon and life in this city? (v1-6)

Who worships the image? (v7)

Why? (v4, 6)

What does Nebuchadnezzar reveal about himself in v15? How does this mesh with 2:47?

On what basis did these three young men take their stand? Read and interact with Exod. 20:3-6. See also, for the church, 1 Thess. 1:8-10, 1 John 5:21.

What might be the contemporary equivalent of the pressure to worship Nebuchadnezzar's statue? What images or idols are set up in American culture with the expectation of allegiance?

Spend some time evaluating the response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. (3:16-18)
What words and characteristics describe their response?

In what manner does God ask us to serve Him amid pressure to worship idols? What else is good to accompany our saying "no"?

What happens to Nebuchadnezzar's "unstoppable" power? (3:19-27, compare 3:15)

What seems to have power over your life? Where does it get its power? What would it look like for this power to be undone/undercut/out-matched?

Read Col. 2:13-15. How does Christ triumph over the powers?
What he does do to them? For us?

Describe the totality of their deliverance from Nebuchadnezzar's punishment (27).

Who witnessed this miracle? (24-27)

What is Nebuchadnezzar's response? (28-30)

What does Nebuchadnezzar recognize about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's faith?

Compare Nebuchadnezzar's response here (3:28-30) with his response to Daniel in 2:46-49. What's different and what's similar? What else is revealed about who the true God is?

Chapter 4

Primer question: We live in a time of hospitals, genetic engineering, satellite imagery, 4G internet access, climate control, organic foods, and the list goes on. What advances or comforts of our age are you tempted to rely upon? What form does that reliance take? Have you ever had this sense of trust in something ripped away?

Read Daniel 4

How does the form (the structure of how it's written) of this chapter differ from Daniel 1-3 (hint: 4:1-2)? For what reason? Who's the central character?

Why does Nebuchadnezzar ask Daniel to interpret the dream? (v6-8, 18; cf. 1:17)

When does Nebuchadnezzar have the dream (4:4)? Why might this detail be significant?

Paraphrase Nebuchadnezzar's dream (9-18).

What happens to the tree?

What role do the heavenly messengers play?

Why do you think Daniel's terrified by the dream? (4:19)

Describe his interpretation (v20-26).

What does Daniel urge Nebuchadnezzar to do in response? (v27) Does he do it?

What might keep him (and us) from responding to a spiritual warning? (see possibilities of Mark 4:18-19, 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 1 John 1:15-17)

What are some key human securities, those things on which you rely for day to day life?

When is the dream fulfilled? What is the significance of the circumstances? (4:28-31a). Compare with the ideas of Luke 12:45-46 and 2 Pet 3:8-10.

At what point is Nebuchadnezzar “restored”? What is the three-part progression (v34)?

What does he now see that he didn't see before?

When has it been hardest for you to acknowledge about God, “everything he does it right and all his ways are just” (37)?

Describe a time when your pride was humbled. What were the lingering effects in your life?

How can we take comfort and hope in God's absolute sovereignty represented in v35? What if this were not true?

What does Nebuchadnezzar acknowledge about God (34-37)? List some of these and other attributes of God found throughout this chapter.

What are God's "signs and wonders" (v2) in this chapter?

If this is who God is, what are some of the implications for us?

Chapter 5

Primer question: Where are you most apt to procrastinate? Why? Is there something important you know you've needed to be doing and yet you haven't done it? What have the implications been so far? What could they turn out to be?

Read Daniel 5

5:1-4 paints a vivid scene. In what light is Belshazzar cast? What is a repeated word/phrase from these verses? How does it set us up for the miraculous appearance of the Hand in v5?

What do we learn about Belshazzar throughout the chapter? List some of his characteristics.

What role does the queen play (v10-12)?

Why do you think Daniel won't accept Belshazzar's financial offer (v16-17)?

How is Daniel's attitude different in this incident than with his interactions with Nebuchadnezzar?

What's the purpose of the history lesson in v18-21, even though we know Belshazzar knew it already (22)?

Read v22-23 again carefully. What did Belshazzar DO and NOT DO?

How is God described in these verses?

What comfort is there that God holds our life and our ways in his hand?

Read Psalm 90:7-12. Where does a heart of wisdom come from?

Compare this to the message of Matthew 24:36-51. What does Jesus call for?

With Belshazzar's folly as a warning (see, too, Prov. 6:12-15), are there any areas of your life that you are "setting yourself up against the Lord of Heaven" (Dan 5:23)?

How do we honor God? 1 Cor 6:18-20 provides one example. Extend that to other aspects of life.

How is Daniel's character a foil (or opposite example) of Belshazzar? Evaluate what we've seen in Daniel's life and actions throughout the book (including ch 6 if you have time!)

5:24-31 tell of the end of the Babylonian Empire. Who makes the decision? (See also 5:21b). What reasons are listed? Read Isaiah 47 for more background about the reasons and manner of Babylon's fall (for an even more detailed study, read Jeremiah 50-51).

What effect might this have on our relationship with the kingdoms of this world – the other rules, dominions, powers, whether they're our nation, our economic systems, our localities, etc...? How do we live in the world but not of it (John 17:13-19)?

Chapter 6

Primer question: What does your prayer life look like? Would you be able to describe its content, motivation, or structure? What are its strengths and weaknesses?

Read Daniel 6

By this time Daniel was probably around 80 years old. Keep this in mind as you learn from the passage. He exemplifies the heart cry of Psalm 92, especially v12-15. What about Daniel's life before now has prepared him for this season?

Reflect on this image and write/journal how it moves you
Credit: Briton Riviere (1840-1920)



Now back to the text....

Why was Daniel about to be promoted (3)?

Why do you think the others satraps and administrators tried to “find grounds for charges” against Daniel (v4)?

What do we learn about Daniel’s character (4-5)?

What example does Daniel set for us in how he balanced his reverence for God with his public responsibility?

Describe what was involved with the betrayal of 6:6-13. How was Darius duped? What tact did the other leaders use for manipulation?

Have you experienced betrayal? What did it look like? How did you respond?

In the face of this new law, Daniel prayed “just as he had done before” (10). What does this say about his faith conviction?

God has no command for us to pray in a certain physical direction (like towards Jerusalem), or certain amount of time during the day (3x for instance)... yet we can still learn from the manner of his prayer. What lessons are modeled for us?

Daniel is the only character in this chapter who seems at peace. Why? How is it manifested?

How might you feel if you were Daniel, thrown to the Lions (16) after a lifetime of faithful service to God?

What truths respond to those feelings? (See Matthew 5:11-12, 1 Peter 4:12-16)

The passage gives great detail to show the king's love for Daniel. What are some of the clues of how he feels? (6:14-28)

What else do we learn about Daniel's relationship with God (19-28)? How is it described?

What punishment befalls the men who set up Daniel? How does it continue the contrast between the Kingdoms of light and darkness and lead into Darius' proclamation?
[their wives and children were also punished in keeping with Persian law stymieing revenge]

Compare Darius' edict with that of Nebuchadnezzar in 3:29, 4:3, 4:34-35. What are the similarities and differences?

In Christ, you belong to a kingdom (Heb 12:28) that will not be destroyed, whose dominion will never end. Write out some of the implications of this truth for your life now.

Read Daniel 7

Primer question: What picture comes to your mind when you try to envision God? Why do you think this is? What do those images convey?

Daniel is not written chronologically. At what point in chapters 1-6 does Daniel receive this dream?

Here, in a new twist, Daniel is receiving a dream/vision instead of interpreting another's dream. How does he receive the interpretation (v15-16)?

What does Daniel do with the dream (v1, v28)? Does that show us anything about its purpose?

Apocalyptic literature, common during the period of Daniel's life through the first century, uses vivid imagery and symbols to communicate truth, especially truth about what is ultimate and related to the final days. It comes across as mystery revealed or veiled things made clear. What are some examples of this style of literature in this chapter?

What do the "Four winds of heaven" do (v2)? What is the result (v3)?

What does the "sea" stand for? (see the interpretation of v2-3 in v17). Why do you think the Scripture uses "sea" in this way? (see Gen 1:2, Ps. 69:1-3, Isaiah 57:20, Jonah 2:3, Jude 13)

Read v4-6 carefully. The differences between the beasts are most evident, but what do they share in common? What does this begin to teach us about the beasts?

What sets apart the fourth beast? (v7-8, v19-20)

“Horn” in the Bible connotes strength, dominion, and power, as the honor of the animals that wield them. Here, the horns appear to represent specific leaders within the kingdoms. List some characteristics of the little horn (v8, v11, v19-25).

What is the relationship between this horn and God’s people?

There are many reasons we suffer, such as due to a fallen world, or our own sinful choices. The Scripture regularly posits an additional reason, too – because we belong to God. Daniel 7:21. (see also Matt 5:10-12, John 16:18, 1 Peter 4:12). What is Daniel 7’s response to suffering for this reason?

Daniel 7:9-10 provides compelling images for God’s power and authority, taken up in the New Testament as well. Read and examine some of the cross-references to the following symbols.

Ancient – Is 43:13

White (hair, garments) – Isaiah 1:18, Mark 9:3, Rev 1:14

Thrones – Psalm 93:1-2, Isaiah 6:1, Heb. 1:8, Rev. 4:2

Court – Isaiah 3:13

Fire – Exod 19:18, Deut 4:33, Ps 50:1-6, Rev 1:12-16

Books were opened - Rev 20:12

What is the message these verses (Dan 7:9-10) are sending?

What is the first action of the Ancient of Days (v11-12)?

Contrast the son of man in 7:13-14 with the four beasts of 7:4-8.

Christ frequently speaks of himself with this “son of man” language (Matt. 9:6, Matt. 19:28, Mark 10:45, Mark 14:62). Read some of these passages. How does the way Jesus use this language correspond to the way Daniel uses it? What do we learn about the “son of man” as both are taken together?

Paraphrase 7:17-18. This is the core message of Daniel’s dream, according to this angelic messenger.

What more do we learn about the fourth beast from v19-25?

How long will God's people be handed over to the fourth beast and its 'little horn'? v25. This same enigmatic phrase appears in Daniel 12:7. See parallel time periods in Rev 11:2-3, 12:6, 12:14 and Rev. 13:5.

What does 2 Thess 2:1-12 have to say about this?

How are you tempted to respond to the suffering of this world?

How Big are your enemies? How Big is your God?

What are the main points of encouragement you take from this dream?

How might you take steps to expand your vision of the glory and power of God?

Read Daniel 8

Primer: Think through and list four present-day difficult realities of life that capture your focus and tend to define how you see the world.

Context: *Daniel receives this vision in the year 551bc, 2-3 years following the chapter 7 vision. Like that chapter, this vision occurs chronologically before Daniel 5.*

Who helps Daniel understand the vision? How is he described? (v15-16)

What does the broad content of the vision entail (v17-19)?

Explain Daniel's threefold response to the vision (v27). Food for thought: What would cause this reaction? What is admirable in this?

Key Historical Note: *It's difficult to understand this chapter without the historical events themselves in mind. Unlike chapter 7, God makes known the referents to the ram and goat symbols – they are Media-Persia and Greece, respectively. A long time after the turning-point events led by Cyrus (539bc) and Alexander the Great (334bc), Daniel 8 emphasizes a lesser ruler, the horn of v9 and v23-25. This person, though unnamed here, is universally recognized as a Greek ruler named Antiochus IV, who had control over one of the four territories the Greek Empire had broken into. Antiochus called himself "Epiphanes" (God Manifest), and he brought destruction and sacrilege to the Temple, halting sacrifices for 3 years until the Maccabean Revolt overthrew his oppression in 164bc (an event Jews still celebrate today during Hannukah).*

We'll examine v2-14 and 20-25 with this brief historical sketch in view.

What do you think is the significance of the vision being set in Susa, the capital of Persia, even as he likely still lived in Babylon? (see Nehemiah 1:1, Esther 1:1-3). Remember, the Median-Persian Empire conquered Babylon less than 10 years following this vision.

Describe the Ram (Media-Persia).

Describe the Goat (Greece).

Compare and contrast how the vision describes these two empires.

Where does the small horn come from (v8-9)?

Why do you think the emphasis of this chapter is on Antiochus, though he's a lesser ruler in the eyes of history than Cyrus, Alexander, or any other number of kings?

How does the Scripture describe the “small” horn’s character (v11, v22-25)?

What are three things this horn has “thrown down” (vv9-12)

What is your life, dearly treasured, has been “thrown down”? How did you respond? What has or is the Lord showing you in it?

How long will the small horn’s terror last? What happens upon its completion? (v13-14)

The angel tells Daniel that the vision concerns “the appointed time of the end” (17, 19). What is one thing that “ends” in this chapter? What is the hope for Daniel?

Psalm 94 gives an extended answer to the cry “How long, O Lord!”. What are its answers?

What are clues amid the wreckage of Daniel 8 that God cares deeply for his people and his plans?

What are the clues in Daniel 8 that the heavenly realities hold sway of present earthly realities?

In what ways does God communicate his eternal, heavenly realities to us? (Reflect on Psalm 16 and Psalm 19 here)

Does God promise us an end to our trials? In what way? (see Rom. 8:18-21)

Prayer Response: How does God view your present, defining realities? In what ways might he want you to gain his heavenly perspective? What is he saying over and in those matters? (see Col. 4:1-4)

Read Daniel 9

Primer question: What are you praying for these days? How are you praying? What promises do you hold onto as you pray?

The Setting (vv1-3): *Daniel knows his history. In the same year that Belshazzar and Babylon are overthrown, the Medes and Persians take over, the great Persian king Cyrus establishing Darius the Mede as a short-term regent over Babylon (539bc). Daniel has been in Babylon since, likely 605bc.*

For context on the “70 years” of desolation for Jerusalem, read Jeremiah 25:1-14 and 29:10-14. What are the reasons Jeremiah gives for this exile? What is the hopeful promise he makes?

In Leviticus 26:27-39, what are the punishments God will assign his people? For what reasons?

Read Lev 26:34, 43. How does Moses describe what happens to the land during this time?

Read how Chronicles 36:20-23 speaks of these 70 years. The land “enjoyed its Sabbath rests.” In addition, Moses law commanded a Sabbath year for the land every seven years and a year of Jubilee after “seven “7s” (see Lev 25:8-10). What is implied by the Chronicler and the length of time prophesied by Jeremiah?

Daniel’s Prayer (v4-19)

List the ways Daniel describes who God is.

Which of these divine attributes stands out to you presently, perhaps due to your season of life? How might God want to encourage you with this truth? Use a concordance to find other Scripture references that help fill out this picture of God.

In one sentence, paraphrase Daniel's understanding of God's character from the clues in this prayer.

What leads to the people's sin (v6, 10, 13)?

What is the result of their sin (7, 11-14, 16)?

What phrase captures the heart of Daniel's petition in 9:15-19 for you? Why?

What is behind Daniel's passionate pleas in v17-19? Why do you think he's freed to be fervent?

God's Response (v20-27)

When does the Lord send a response to Daniel's prayer?

Why?

"As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you" (23). What does this imply about the interaction between Daniel's prayer and God's work?

Daniel 9:24-27 have confounded and divided scholars for many years, and there are many streams of interpretation. For a more in-depth comparison of two of the major understandings and a careful defense of one in particular, see this blog post (<https://www.samstorms.com/all-articles/post/daniels-70-weeks>). Our study broadly follows the same conclusions.

List the six purposes of the "70 sevens" of 9:24.

What are the book-end events at either end of 9:25?

How many of the "70 sevens" are spoken of in 9:25?

What is complete by the end of 9:25?

Everything in 9:26-27 take place during the 70th seven. These two verses are not written to be in succession to one another, but – as very common in Hebrew verse – with parallel repetition.

Thus: (A) = 26a
(B) = 26b
(A) = 27a
(B) = 27b

What are the first half of each of the verses (A) describing? How do they describe this event?

Daniel was hoping for a restored Jerusalem (9:15-19), but God answers with the promise of a Messiah to come. In what ways does Jesus fulfill and go beyond Daniel's hopes?

See Luke 4:14-21, Hebrews 9:23-28, Romans 8:1-4

Note the similarities between (B), 26b/27b, and Matthew 24:2, 24:15-28. They are pointing to the era-ending destruction of the Temple in 70ad by the Romans. Why do you think this event is of such significance?

However 9:25-27 works out, we stand firmly on God's decree in v24. Which of these promises brings you the most comfort? The most courage? The most hope?

Are there ways you are limiting God in your mind by what you imagine he can or will do?

Read Daniel 10

Primer question: Have you ever had an encounter with the tangible presence of God? If so, reflect on what stand outs to you from that experience? If not, is the potential more scary, exciting, doubtful, or...? Why?

When does Daniel receive this vision, relative to the one of chapter 9?

What has occurred in between chapters 9-10? (read Ezra 1)

What is Daniel doing before this divine messenger comes? (v2-3)

Where is Daniel when he receives this vision (v4)? What is surprising about this? Why might he be there?

Note: Daniel 10-12 form a unit recording a visionary experience and the vision itself. The experience brackets the vision, beginning and ending this section. The experience is recorded in 10:1-21 and 12:5-13. The vision itself is 11:1-12:4.

List the descriptions of the man Daniel sees in v5-7.

Compare this to the vision in Ezekiel 1 (esp. v25-28) and vision of Christ in Rev 1:12-16. What are the similarities and differences?

How do Daniel's companions respond (v7)? Why?

What is Daniel's response (v8-11)? What can we discern is going on in his mind and soul? What is his posture?

What is the man's response to Daniel (v10-11)?

What is the spiritual condition the messenger seeks to impart to Daniel (v12, 19)? Why?

What does this chapter imply about prayer? See especially v2-3, 12. (bring this together with Daniel 2:18-29, 6:10, 9:20-21)

Daniel 10 pulls back the curtain that we glimpse backstage spiritual warfare (v13-14, v20-21). Describe what is evident to you from the passage, and list questions that remain unanswered. (see also 2 Cor 2:11, Eph. 6:11, Jude 1:9)

What is the messenger doing as he touches Daniel's lips (16)? Compare to Isaiah 6:7 and Jeremiah 1:9. What is the role of a prophet?

Why do you think Daniel was left so physically worn out (v8-9, v15-17) by this experience?

If the vision itself is in chs11-12, what does chapter 10 reveal for us? Why might God have preserved this for his Church?

V19 reveals the true reality that God can give spiritual strength and peace. How does it happen? For what reasons might you need strength and peace in this day? Where/How are you looking to receive them?

REMINDER: These chapters form a unit recording a visionary experience and the vision itself. The experience brackets the vision, beginning and ending this section. The experience is recorded in 10:1-21 and 12:5-13. The vision itself is 11:1-12:4.

Read Daniel 11-12

Note: Daniel 11 is particularly challenging and confusing for us who lack knowledge of the ancient near east in this time – the fact that it's written in clocked prophetic style adds to the mystery. For now, know that it's enough to realize that v5-20 are describing the history of relationship / conflict between two of the Greek successor states to Alexander the Great's Empire occurring in the 2-3rd centuries BC (the South Ptolemies and the North Seleucids). From 11:21 through at least v35, the chapter focuses again on Antiochus Epiphanes, the character we explored at length in Daniel 8. The vision's emphasis comes at the end, in chapter 12, and then Daniel seeks to make sense of what he has seen.

Primer question: Describe a time when you felt or experienced deliverance. What was glorious about that deliverance? What was lacking or unsatisfying?

What is the center, reference point that looks either “north” or “south” in this vision? (hint: 11:16, 41)

Daniel 11 records many warring and scheming activities of the kings of the north and south over a long period. God sees them all beforehand and reveals them to Daniel. What does this assume about history?

What is said to occur “at the appointed time” (a phrase seen twice in 11:29-35)?

Go back and read 8:17-25. What occurs at “the time of the end” there? See also perhaps 8:13 and 9:27. What occurs at the “time of the end” in this section? (11:35, 40, 12:4... perhaps 12:1)

10:13 calls the Michael “one of the chief princes”. What else do we learn about him from 11:1 and 12:1? See also Jude 9 and Rev 12:7.

Angels act with many purposes. See, as a sampling: Psalm 103:20, Luke 1:26-38, Luke 2:13-14 Hebrews 1:14. What does this teach us about the nature of this universe?

Jesus alludes to Daniel 12:1 in Matthew 24:21 (see Mt 24:15-21). Some think this refers to the destruction of the Temple in 70AD, while others to end-time events. Either way, where does Jesus point us amid the distress (24:30-31)? And how does this relate to Daniel 12:1?

What is deliverance according Daniel 12:1-3?

Find three descriptions in 12:1-3 of those who are delivered.

What will the deliverance be like (v2-3)? Compare to 1 Cor 15:50-54 and Phil 3:21?

Note: Daniel 12:5-13 is back to the setting of 10:1-21, post-vision. And Daniel is now trying to make sense of what he's just seen.

Remind yourself: Which river? And who is the man clothed in linen? (10:4-6)

Compare Daniel 12:5-7 with Daniel 7:25 and 8:13-14.

When will these atrocities be finished situationally (not chronologically)? See end of 12:7

12:8: "I heard but I did not understand". What is something of God or his work in your life that you're still grappling to understand?

What response is given to Daniel to his question of v8? (see v9 and v13).

What does it look like for Daniel to "go his way till the end"? See Paul's version of this charge in 2 Timothy - especially 1:6-14, 2:1-13, 4:6-9.

Connect 12:13 with 12:2-3. For the idea of a godly 'rest' see also Isaiah 57:1-2, Heb. 4:9-11, Rev 14:13.

Daniel's vision is "rolled up and sealed" (12:4, 9)... until when? What is assumed by this regarding their specific application to Daniel's day?

What does God ensure Daniel knows about what occurs during this time (v10)? Apparently, God doesn't think it's important that Daniel understands more! (see Prov 1:7).

In 12:11-12 there are two new time periods given, what are they?

Many see a similarity between these and the periods of Daniel 7:25 and 8:14. And many potential answers are given for the extra 30 and 45 days, most related to the activities of Antiochus Epiphanies... but no one really knows!

Concluding Thoughts and Applications

Could you paraphrase the message of Daniel in a few sentences?

Look back over the whole of Daniel. What are the 2-3 key verses that the Spirit of the Lord is highlighting for you at this time?

What is a key truth God has been teaching you? To what situation(s) in your life does it apply?

What changes do you feel God is inviting you to make?

Much of the first half of Daniel sought to build our faith for trials and pressures of ungodly cultural climates. What's one way God might want to build your faith in an area or battle you're facing?

Much of the latter half of Daniel looked ahead – what do we learn from Daniel's reception and processing of that 'forward' look? How do we face the future?

How do you plan on living now with a back stage pass?

Recommended Resources for further detailed study:

Daniel by Sinclair Ferguson (The Preacher's Commentary Series)

Daniel by John E. Goldingay (Word Biblical Commentary)

Sam Storms blog, "Enjoying God". Articles → Daniel.

<https://www.samstorms.com/all-articles/keyword/daniel>