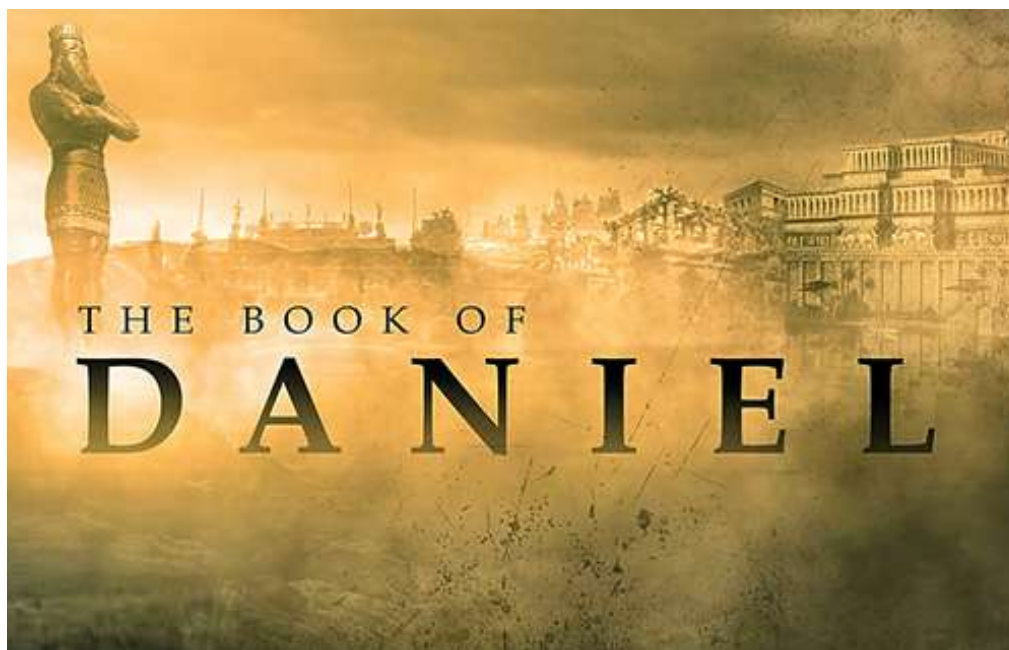


# Let's Worship God

29th Nov. - 4th Dec. 2021

Daniel



# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Monday - Daniel 7:13-14, 18, 27-28 - One Like a Son of Man**

What glorious verses we're looking at today! Here we are shown a glimpse of our Saviour Jesus, hundreds of years before he stepped into history as Jesus of Nazareth. How do we know that Christ is in view? For starters, this figure is clearly divine - he is on a par with the Ancient of Days whom we looked at yesterday and is worthy of the worship of the entire world.

Yet, as well as being God, this figure's humanity is also in view - he is "like a son of man". Of course, Daniel may not have had a full understanding of the fact that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man (nor can we get to the very bottom of such a glorious mystery!), yet here we see that truth being gradually unveiled in the Old Testament. "In him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily" (Colossians 2:9) Is it any wonder that Jesus himself so often referred to himself as "the Son of Man"? (e.g. Mark 14:62)

So, having identified this figure as the Son of God, what do we learn about him in this passage? For one thing, he (unlike the four beasts) has an everlasting kingdom that will never be destroyed. We have already seen this kingdom in the rock of chapter 2. Yes, Christ's kingdom can look precarious to us when we see the travails of our local congregations, but in reality it is as secure and as glorious as they come.

As we look at the chapter as a whole we see another eye-popping truth - not only is this Christ's kingdom and Christ's victory, it is our kingdom and our victory too! We are united with him in his death but also in his resurrection and victory (Romans 6:5). As our king marches in triumphant procession, we march in his wake. What a staggering, astonishing, mind blowing blessing we have in Christ Jesus!

### **Questions**

1. How does it feel to see Jesus Christ pictured so unmistakably so many years before his birth?
2. Read v27 and put your own name in. How does it feel?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Praise God for our Saviour Jesus - fully God and fully man!
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name." Daniel 9:18a

**Praise: Psalm 46 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Tuesday - Daniel 8:1-14 - “Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!”**

The booming voice reverberated around the palace. “Do not arouse the wrath of the great and powerful Oz!” Dorothy and her friends were petrified as the fire and smoke blasted out from the throne of the terrifying Wizard. Yet, if you’ve seen the movie you’ll know what happens next. Dorothy’s dog scampers off and finds a curtain. As he bites on the edge the curtain falls back and reveals a machine; this machine is covered with buttons and levers and has been controlling the fire, smoke, and booming voice. There, standing behind the curtain pulling the levers is a feeble old man.

The old conman tries desperately to cover up the truth. Using the machine’s big booming voice one more time, he says, “Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!” Yet, it’s too late. There is no “great and powerful Oz”. There’s nothing but a puny old man.

The second half of Daniel is what we call “apocalyptic” literature. You don’t need to be intimidated by that word! “Apocalyptic” comes from the Greek word for “uncover” and that is really what Daniel 7-12 is all about. Like Dorothy’s dog, it pulls back the curtain and shows what lies behind.

The first readers of the book were believers who were going to face intense, agonising persecution. Daniel’s visions do a great job of showing how ghastly and terrifying that will be. Yet, God also reveals the truth about the enemy. Behind all of Satan’s swords, soldiers, tyrants and terror...lies an enemy that is weak, frail, and beaten.

Few of us will face the persecution that Daniel’s first readers faced. Yet we do face opposition, temptation, ridicule, indoctrination, false teaching and many of Satan’s other schemes. That’s why we need these chapters - they show us how the serpent is crushed by God’s chosen king. Satan will do his utmost to distract us from this truth - “Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!” he cries. Don’t listen to him. Listen to the word of Christ instead.

### **Questions**

1. Many Christians tend to stay well clear of these chapters and parts of the Bible like Revelation. Why do you think this is?
2. Do you agree that the message in these sections is actually fundamentally a simple one?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks for how our great enemy is a defeated foe who has been conquered by Jesus Christ.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

“O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name.” Daniel 9:18a

**Praise: Psalm 47 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Wednesday - Daniel 8:1-4, 15-20 - The Horoscope Hustle**

I've just done something that I've never done before: I looked up my daily horoscope. Here are the predictions for today: 1) "You are about to go through a period that is closely linked to your past" 2) "The changes you've been going through lately aren't completely finished." Profound eh? It takes a real genius to work out that what I did yesterday might just affect what happens to me today! As for the second prediction? I suppose it's good to be forewarned that my newly acquired grey hairs are unlikely to be my last!

Horoscopes are an utter scam, aren't they? The key to their success is that they are vague enough to moulded around just about anybody's current situation. It's sad that so many get sucked in by the con.

Daniel chapter 8 is crammed full of predictions about the future. Yet it could hardly be more different from what we see in horoscope columns. Rather than playing it safe with ambiguous platitudes, God foretells future events with amazing clarity and detail. He tells us about two different world empires, a momentous war, four fractured kingdoms, two noteworthy kings, and an untimely death. He even hints at intra-kingdom power struggles and military capability!

Let's quickly look at the first aspect of this vision (v1-4) which is explained in v20. Daniel sees the vision during the time of the Babylonian Empire (v1) and is given a glimpse of the powerful Medo-Persian Empire which will overthrow it in chapter 5 (remember that the second half of Daniel does not follow chronologically from the first). The Medo-Persian Empire is represented here as a powerful ram with two horns (the first horn being the Medes and the second, more powerful horn being the Persians). This vast empire appears to be indestructible, yet, like all other earthly kingdoms, it will fall when God says its time is up.

We'll see more of its fall tomorrow. For now, just marvel at the fact that God makes detailed prophecies and that those prophecies come true.

### **Questions**

1. Look up either chapter 2 or chapter 7. How do these events fit in with the predictions made in those chapters?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray for those who are looking for guidance in the wrong places. Pray that they would come to know the God of prophecy instead.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name." Daniel 9:18a

**Praise: Psalm 48 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## Thursday - Daniel 8:5-8, 21-22 - A Surprising Superpower

Suppose I was to ask you to guess which country will be the most powerful in the world in the year 2221. Who would you choose? Would you go for the status quo and pick the USA? Would you look at their influence in the Middle East and plump for Russia? Would you, like many others pick out China as the most likely candidate? Or would you go for an enormous country with increasing economic muscle such as India?

I'm not sure who you would pick, but I could safely draw up a list of countries you wouldn't choose. No-one in their right mind would pick Burundi or Uzbekistan as potential superpowers of the future. We may not be able to tell the future, but we can sure make an educated guess.

In Daniel 8, God predicts not just the next world superpower, but the one after that as well. Persia may not have been a massive surprise to some, but the identity of their eventual conquerors would have seemed like it was part of an outlandish joke. Greece wasn't even a unified country at this point, it was a bunch of independent city states. The states weren't conquering empires; they were kicking lumps out of each other instead. The idea of ancient Greece conquering the world seemed about as ludicrous as Cambodia conquering China today.

And yet, this prophecy came to pass. Alexander the Great came from the west at terrifying speed (v5, 21). He conquered Persia (v6-7), became the most powerful man on the planet... and then died suddenly and unexpectedly at the age of just 32 (v8). The bulk of his kingdom was then split up between four of his most prominent generals (v8, 22).

God's prophecy is anything but "an educated guess". Only a fool would have predicted this meteoric rise to power...a fool or the God of history himself! God proved himself spectacularly right in this passage. Are you ready to take him at his word?

### Questions

1. How does this chapter help you to trust others parts of God's Word?

### Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for how the fulfilled predictions in God's Word help us to trust those passages that have not yet been completely fulfilled.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### Memory Verse

"O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name." Daniel 9:18a

**Praise: Psalm 49 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**



# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Friday - Daniel 8:9-14, 23-27 - Christ's Heart for his People**

He died more than two thousand years ago yet Alexander the Great is still a household name. Libraries have entire shelves devoted to his career, podcasts chronicle his life, YouTube videos and computer games continue to celebrate his achievements. Some of you may even know the famous saying, "Alexander wept for there were no more worlds to conquer."

Antiochus Epiphanes on the other hand? He's an obscure historical figure whose achievements were but a shadow of his famous predecessor. Sure, he might appear in a few books in the library, but the shelves are unlikely to creak under their weight.

Yet notice how lopsided Daniel 8 appears to be. Alexander the Great is described in just a few verses while his far less illustrious successor is the primary focus. How do we explain this apparent imbalance?

It's very simple. Antiochus would be the most vicious persecutor that God's people had ever had to face. He fixed the promised land in his crosshairs (v9), murdered the saints (v10), outlawed true worship (v11), and strove to stamp out God's Word (v12). You can read all about it in historical sources written during and after his reign. It was an agonising time for God's faithful followers and it seemed like the true faith was dangling by a thread.

Doesn't the contrasting amounts of ink shed on these men tell us something about the heart of our Saviour? While the focus of the world is on the movers and shakers, his gaze is fixed upon his ordinary, hurting people - Christians in North Korean labour camps, believing widows in Nigeria, those in Iraq who have been forced to choose between Christ and their livelihoods.

We may not be facing the threat of violence, but many western Christians also face degrees of hardship on account of their loyalty to Christ. What a comfort to know that Christ really and truly cares. There's nothing lopsided about this passage. It shows us Christ's heart for his people and gives us hope in the midst of our trials.

### **Questions**

1. Read Psalm 56:8 and Psalm 116:15. How do they make you feel?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks for Christ's deep compassion for his suffering people.
2. Pray that God would give you a more Christlike concern for believers who are undergoing persecution.
3. Use prayer points from your congregation.
4. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name." Daniel 9:18a

**Praise: Psalm 50 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Saturday - Daniel 8:9-14, 23-27 - The Madman**

Let's look a little more closely at this wicked persecutor and the havoc he unleashed. Antiochus was the ruler of the Seleucid kingdom - one of the smaller nations that rose up as Alexander's empire broke apart after his death (v22). "Antiochus Epiphanes" was a self-given title which can be translated as "God manifest". Having said that, when there were no prying ears nearby, most people called him "Antiochus Epimanes" instead - "the madman". One name demonstrates how he dared to exalt himself above the one true God, the other how his sadistic hatred knew no bounds.

Antiochus was a smart man. He carefully crafted his campaign against God's people in order to wipe out everything about them that made them special. He marched into the temple and had a pig sacrificed on the altar. He forced the Jews themselves to make unclean sacrifices on the pain of death (v11). He made circumcision illegal: any baby discovered receiving the covenant sign could be thrown from the city walls. Some were burnt for daring to observe the Sabbath day and it was a capital offence to possess a copy of God's Word. It genuinely looked like this was the end.

That's why God gave Daniel this vision - so he could encourage those who would have to endure this fiery trial. Notice the key encouragement in v14: this ordeal would go on for as long as God decreed and then it would be no more. Unknown to even the madman, God had marked the date of deliverance on his calendar.

The same applies to Satan's attacks on God's people and world today. Abortion, pornography, the LGBT agenda, political corruption and terrorism will not go on forever. God has marked a date of deliverance on his calendar when the Lord Jesus Christ will return and we will be delivered by no human hand (v25).

In the mean time, let us "wait for our blessed hope, the appealing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13)

### **Questions**

1. What are you most looking forward to being delivered from when Jesus Christ returns?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks for the fact that Jesus Christ is going to return! Pray that this fact would change the way you live today.
2. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
3. Use prayer points from your congregation.
4. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name." Daniel 9:18a

**Praise: Psalm 51 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that  
Ezra read from  
the book of the Law  
day after day  
and that  
the people of God  
were filled with joy!**

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