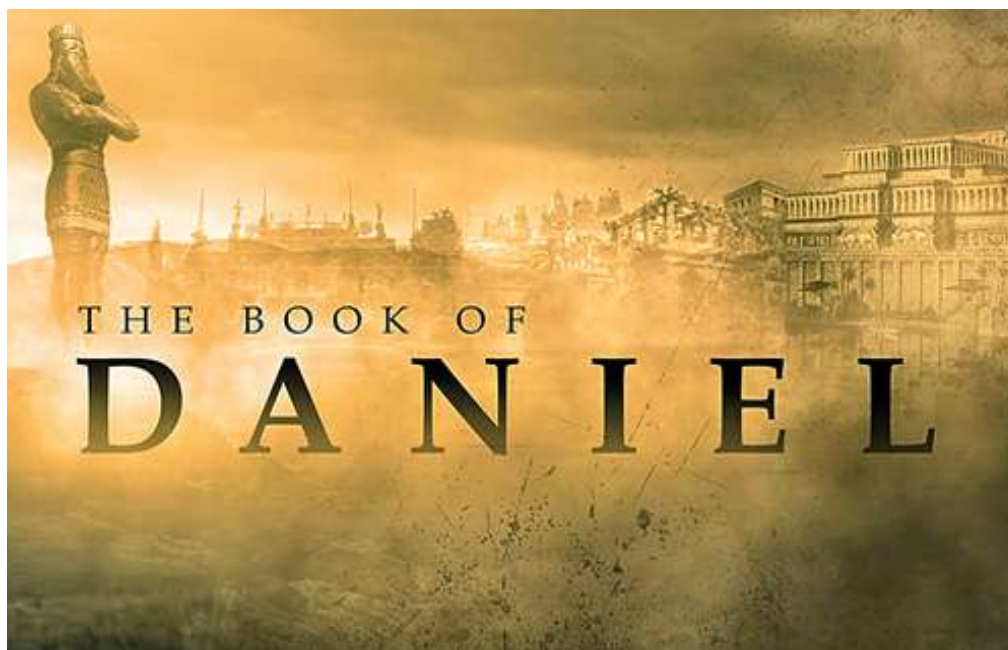


# Let's Worship God

13th-18th December 2021

Daniel



# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Monday - Daniel 10:1-4 - OAP/SAS**

In chapter 9, Daniel had been praying that God's people would be able to return to the promised land. We know from elsewhere in Scripture that this is exactly what happened in the first year of Cyrus' reign over Babylon (Ezra 1). We also know that the mammoth task of rebuilding Jerusalem was no walk in the park; in fact, it was a thoroughly discouraging task (Ezra 4:4-5).

Two years on (10:1) we see Daniel in a period of intense, heartfelt mourning. Why? More than likely he has received an update on the progress in the holy city and is grieved at the difficulties being faced.

But why hasn't Daniel gone back? If he's so passionate about the promised land, why has he stayed behind? The answer is probably quite straightforward. Daniel is in his 80s at this point and the journey to Jerusalem is long and dangerous. Even if he was to get there, he would probably be of little use in the arduous environment of a building site. To be blunt, Daniel is an Old Age Pensioner - an OAP.

Yet as I look at Daniel another three letter abbreviation springs to mind - SAS. Sometimes we describe certain Christians as prayer warriors; in that case Daniel is a special forces soldier! At an age where he would be entitled to take it easy, Daniel cuts out every creature comfort and embarks on a rigorous three week period of focused prayer for God's people in Jerusalem.

In doing this, Daniel teaches us two lessons. Firstly, usefulness in Christ's church is not defined in the way the world defines it. You can be old, shy, chronically ill, or tied up with family responsibilities and still make a vital contribution to Christ's kingdom.

Secondly, we can all engage in the task of world mission. Few of us will bring the gospel of Christ to lands where it has never been heard, yet even from a distance we can lift up this vital work in prayer. Will you answer the call?

### **Questions**

1. Is there a circumstance of your life (physical or otherwise) that makes you think you cannot play a useful role in the church?
2. Is there a particular mission situation you can commit to praying for from afar?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray for the mission situation you chose. You can find some ideas at [rpglobalalliance.org/missions](http://rpglobalalliance.org/missions)
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act." Daniel 9:19a

**Praise: Psalm 58 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Tuesday - Daniel 10:5-19 - Christ Appears to Daniel**

Who is this terrifying figure that leaves Daniel flat on his face? I believe that this is none other than the Son of God himself: the Lord Jesus Christ appearing to one of his servants.

Why have I reached that conclusion? (I should point out that not everybody does.) Partly it's because the description of this figure is remarkably similar to the description of Christ in Revelation 1. Partly it's because of the effect on Daniel: he is blown off his feet and overwhelmed in a way that didn't happen when Gabriel came barging into his house in chapter 9.

Having seen this incredible manifestation of Christ's glory, it was inevitable that Daniel would end up in a crumpled heap. Yet that was not Christ's purpose in coming and he made sure not to leave Daniel in that state. It is interesting that so much of the chapter is spent narrating how Christ helps Daniel off the ground (v10) and onto his feet (v11), while also taking time to deliver this godly man from his dumbstruck state (v14). In a nutshell, Christ makes sure to give his servant the strength that he needs (v18).

In fact, that was Christ's very reason for appearing in the first place. He has a message which Daniel is to record for the benefit of the covenant people. This message is designed to strengthen them. In time, they will face agonising trials that will leave them, like Daniel, in a crumpled heap. Yet Christ, through his revealed word, will help them off the ground and onto their feet.

Primarily, Christ was supporting his people who lived in the centuries between Daniel's day and his own birth in Bethlehem, but he also works in the same way today. As we face opposition yet look to Christ and his word for hope, we too hear the words of our saviour in v19: "Fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage." Are those the words you need to hear today?

### **Questions**

1. Is there a situation in your life now that you need Christ's strengthening to face?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Re-read the description of Christ in v5-6 and praise him for this glimpse of his glory.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act." Daniel 9:19a

**Praise: Psalm 59 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Wednesday - Daniel 10:12-14, 20 - 11:1 - Behind the Scenes**

Our eyes are amazing, yet there is much they cannot see. Visible light is just a tiny part of the electromagnetic spectrum; all around us are radio waves, micro waves, UV and infrared light that they can never hope to detect. Yet just because something cannot be seen, doesn't mean it isn't there. Every time we change the TV channel, send a WhatsApp message or get GPS directions, we see the visible effects of these invisible waves.

There is another realm we cannot see that has a definite impact on the realm we can. Christ explains in this passage how all around us there is a spiritual war between the forces of righteousness and the forces of darkness.

We are shown a glimpse of the enemy forces in v13 and v20. Who are these "princes"? They cannot be the rulers of those countries, but rather they are generals in Satan's army. Just as radio waves dictate what images your TV screen will show, their goal seems to be to influence the decisions of those in the royal court. Their ambition is to thwart the work of Christ's kingdom and to lash out against his people.

It's vital that we understand this. Our enemies are not primarily lobbyists, media companies or even politicians. Our true enemies are in the unseen realm. Our primary weapon is not political or online engagement. No charismatic politician can be our saviour, no matter what his policies and no matter many votes he can muster. To fight with those weapons would be like fending off radio waves with a baseball bat. It just doesn't work!

What does work? Prayer works. Daniel prayed and in direct answer to that prayer, the Lord Jesus arrived. Like a pinned down infantryman, Daniel radioed HQ and his Commander-in-chief responded by dispatching overwhelming aerial support.

To survive in this war we need to know our enemy. To win this war we need to know the overwhelming power of Christ himself. We only do that through prayer.

### **Questions**

1. If someone living a few hundred years ago tried to talk about radio waves, X-rays or UV light, how would people have responded?
2. Is there a parallel with people's scepticism about the spiritual realm?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray that Christ would dispatch his overwhelming support to those in the thick of spiritual warfare.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act." Daniel 9:19a

**Praise: Psalm 60 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## Thursday - Daniel 11:1-9 - Christ Reveals the Future

Imagine it's the year 1605. Guy Fawkes has just been arrested for his role in "The Gunpowder Plot", William Shakespeare is working on his latest play, and it would be over a decade before the Pilgrims would board the Mayflower and set sail for North America. The world is a very different place.

Yet imagine that in 1605, a man made a prophecy. This "New World" across the ocean would become an independent nation and would rise to be the most powerful in the world. It would descend into civil war where North would triumph over South. It would fight in two wars that would engulf the whole world - fighting on the ground, in the air, and beneath the sea. It would end the second war with an unimaginably powerful weapon that could reduce a city to dust.

Imagine if this prophet alluded to future leaders of this as yet non-existent nation. Washington's surprise attack at Trenton. Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. Kennedy's trip to Dallas.

Imagine he declared that one day a citizen would plant a US flag on the surface of the moon. Anyone living in that day would laugh him out of the room; anyone living today would be gobsmacked by how it came true.

That's basically what we have in Daniel 11. At first glance, it seems like a confusing list of kings and kingdoms but it's really so much more. These kings had not yet been born and these kingdoms did yet exist! The Lord Jesus revealed this in the year 537 BC (10:1) and he described events which were over 360 years away. More than that, he described these events with jaw dropping precision - by my count, there are 15 kings (and several commanders) who can be identified by name in secular history books. In today's passage alone we see Xerxes (v2), Alexander (v3), Ptolemy I and Seleucus I (v4).

There's nothing dry about this passage. Jesus Christ, the lord of history itself has powerfully demonstrated his authority. This passage should blow our minds.

### Questions

1. Jesus Christ predicted all these events centuries before they took place. How does that make you feel?

### Prayer Points

1. If you aren't usually into history, pray that the Holy Spirit would excite you as we journey through this chapter.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### Memory Verse

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act." Daniel 9:19a

**Praise: Psalm 61 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Friday - Daniel 11:10-20 - Pictures of Futility**

The tide comes in. The tide goes out. The tide comes in. The tide goes out. Day after day the sea greedily swallows up territory only for the beach to reclaim the ground it has lost. Day after day onlookers see this transformation, yet day after day things return to exactly as they were before. It's a picture of futility.

Daniel 11 is a bit like that. It outlines the long running rivalry between Syria (the North) and Egypt (the South). At times the South is on the front foot (v7) but inevitably the North turns the tables. At other times the North is gobbling up territory, but their achievements are too fragile to withstand unforeseen changes in fortune (v18).

Just like the tide, the boundary between these two empires was constantly shifting in and out. Just like the tide, their victories never lasted long. It's a picture of futility.

This is seen strikingly in two incidents that happened sixty years apart. In 252 BC, Ptolemy II sent his daughter Berenice to marry Antiochus II (v6). In 193 BC we see the exact reverse, Antiochus III sent his daughter Cleopatra to marry Ptoelmy V (v17). In both cases the aim was to destabilise and manipulate the enemy but both plans failed miserably. They're pictures of futility.

That futility comes across so clearly throughout the chapter. Notice the number of times we see the word "but" – v5, 6, v11. It is summed up most clearly in v17, "but his plans will not succeed or help him." Behind the scenes, Christ sits on the throne and frustrates the plans and ambitions of these godless kings.

This chapter reminds us of the central message of the book of Daniel – there is only one kingdom that lasts forever. The Ptolemaics (kings of the South) and Seleucids (kings of the North) were always doomed to fail. Likewise our proudest accomplishments are beset by futility. Only Christ's kingdom lasts forever (2:44). Remember that when you next see the tide coming in.

### **Questions**

1. Is your focus in life on accomplishments that will not stand the test of time?
2. How can a better understanding of Christ's kingdom help to give you a better focus?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Thank God again for this amazingly detailed and accurate chapter of his Word.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act." Daniel 9:19a

**Praise: Psalm 62 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# THE BOOK OF DANIEL

## **Saturday - Daniel 11:21-35 - The Refiner's Fire**

So far, Daniel 11 has progressed at breakneck speed, covering hundreds of years of history. In today's passage, we go into slow motion. Like a sports programme chewing over the key moment in the match, this passage analyses a key period in the history of the church.

This section is all about Antiochus Epiphanes, a man we have already met back in chapter 8. In these verses it is possible to pinpoint particular events in his life including his deceptive and murderous rise to power (v21), his military ambitions (v25) and his humiliation at the hands of the Roman consul Gaius Popillius Laenas (v30).

Most importantly however is the savage persecution that the Jews would face during his reign. Antiochus did his utmost to suppress the word of God, to obliterate the Sabbath, and to compel the Jews to blaspheme the one true God. Many Jews remained faithful even on to death; many more abandoned the faith under pressure.

As horrific as this section of God's Word is, it does offer us some encouragements. Firstly, it is apparent that Christ remains in control even in the midst of this persecution; how could he not be if he is explaining all of this 350 years before it took place? That should offer us great hope in our hardships.

Secondly, we see something of Christ's great purpose for his hurting people in this chapter. V35 gives us the picture of a refiner purifying his precious metal. The only way to do this is to subject the metal to incredibly intense heat. Yet, it is not random heat; it is carefully designed to make the metal all the more precious. It is vital that the refiner ensure that the furnace is neither too hot nor too cold. It is vital that he doesn't stop until the gold glistens and gleams.

Is that not what Christ does with his people? The heat can be almost unbearably intense, but it is not random heat. Our refiner will not stop until we glisten just like he does.

### **Questions**

1. Can you think of ways in which you might be less Christ-like if you had not had to undergo times of hardship?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray for persecuted believers and for other Christians who are experiencing the refiner's fire. Pray that Christ would cause them to glisten for his glory.
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 Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act." Daniel 9:19a

**Praise: Psalm 63 - 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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