

ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH

STUDY GUIDE

Daniel:

When Faith Is Attacked

includes Easter Lesson

WRITERS

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Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Study Guide

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

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Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Introduction

Daniel is a book of in the Old Testament that tells what will happen in the future to God's people. These words helped to teach the Jews of long ago about what God was going to do for them and through them.

But who was Daniel? He was a good Jewish boy in Israel in the late 600s B.C. (600 years before Christ was born). As a teenager, maybe about 15 years old, an enemy army beat Israel in 605 B.C. That army was from Babylon, a country far north of Israel, led by King Nebuchadnezzar. Next, Babylon moved thousands of Jews to the capital city of Babylon. Enemy armies often took "the best and brightest" — the teachers, business owners, leaders, the wealthy, and all the young people. This would cause a nation to be powerless to fight back.

For Daniel, it meant his life would never be the same. He was in a different culture, a different land, learning a different language, and faced with different religions. He would spend the rest of his life in Babylon. But Daniel was strong in his faith even as a teenager. He chose to live for God no matter what hard times came his way.

Daniel's faith was attacked time and

time again. Yet, Daniel stayed faithful to God his whole life. God caused Daniel to rise to a position of power in Babylon.

Daniel's life is one that we can all learn from. Maybe as a child, you heard the story of Daniel in the lion's den. Maybe as a teen, you heard the story of Daniel praying to God even when it was against the law. As adults, let us read the stories again. We can all learn from Daniel about how to keep our faith strong when we are attacked.

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Janet Roberts wrote lessons 11-14. She has taught ESL since 1976, trains teachers in Plano, Texas, and enjoys traveling to teach English overseas.

Emily Martin wrote the Easter Lesson. She is a librarian at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas and is a freelance writer and Bible teacher.

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

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Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Word List

Lesson 1

attack: to try to hurt, injure, or destroy someone or something

deport: to force a person to leave a country

sovereign: having unlimited power or authority

tragedy: a very bad event that causes deep sadness

Lesson 2

captives: people who are taken away and not allowed to leave

haunted: troubled or upset

psychologists: people who study the way people think, feel, and behave

vivid: something that seems very alive and real

Lesson 3

unreasonable: not fair, sensible, or reasonable

influence: to affect someone or something in an important way

rescue: to save someone or something from danger or harm

respond: to have a particular reaction

Lesson 4

competition: a game or contest that people try to win for a prize or honor; the act or process of competing

matter of life and death: something that is very important and often involves decisions that will determine whether someone lives or dies

jealous: having an unhappy or angry desire to have what someone else has; very concerned about protecting or keeping something

Lesson 5

reluctant: feeling or showing doubt about doing something; not willing or eager to do something

take credit: to say that you alone did something or made something happen

warning: something that tells someone about possible danger or trouble

Lesson 6

consequence: something that happens as a result of a particular action or set of conditions

discipline: to punish someone as a way of making sure that rules or orders are obeyed

excuse: an acceptable reason for something

interrupt: to cause something to stop happening for a time

Lesson 7

in control: to have the power to make decisions

prestige: the respect and admiration that someone gets for being successful or important

set a trap: to act in a way to catch someone without them being aware of it.

under control: handled or managed by someone or something

Lesson 8

deformed: not having the normal or expected shape

reality: a real event or situation

Redeemer: the One who brings goodness and honor, who buys us back from sin and death

senseless: done or happening for no reason

violence: force used to harm or damage

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Word List

Lesson 9

condemn: to make someone or something certain to fail

generation: a group of people born and living during the same period of time

Lesson 10

attract: to cause someone or something to move toward something or someone

blame: to say or think that someone or something caused something bad to happen

confess: to admit that you did something wrong

society: people living together in communities

wasted: not used or spent in a good way

Lesson 11

control: to have power over or to cause to happen in a special way

events: something important that happens

opposite: not the same, as different as possible, such as light and dark

Lesson 12

amazed: feeling and showing great surprise

message: words from one person given to another person

Lesson 13

empire: a group of countries or areas that are controlled by one ruler

exactly: true in every way

Lesson 14

blessing: something from God that helps or brings happiness

similar: close to the same but not exactly the same

Easter Lesson

announce: to make something known in a public or formal way

crucifixion: killing someone by nailing or tying his or her hands and feet to a cross

disciples: one of a group of 12 men who were sent out to spread the teachings of Jesus Christ

preparation: making something ready

resurrection: to cause something that had ended or died to exist again

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Word List in Alphabetical Order

These vocabulary words can found in the lesson listed in each definition; “L8” means Lesson 8.

amazed: feeling and showing great surprise (L12)
announce: to make something known in a public or formal way (Easter)
attack: to try to hurt, injure, or destroy someone or something (L1)
attract: to cause someone or something to move toward something or someone (L10)
blame: to say or think that someone or something caused something bad to happen (L10)
blessing: something from God that helps or brings happiness (L14)
captives: people who are taken away and not allowed to leave (L2)
competition: a game or contest that people try to win for a prize or honor; the act or process of competing (L4)
condemn: to make someone or something certain to fail (L9)
confess: to admit that you did something wrong (L10)
consequence: something that happens as a result of a particular action or set of conditions (L6)
control: to have power over or to cause to happen in a special way (L11)
crucifixion: killing someone by nailing or tying his or her hands and feet to a cross (Easter)
deformed: not having the normal or expected shape (L8)
deport: to force a person to leave a country (L1)
disciples: one of a group of 12 men who were sent out to spread the teachings of Jesus Christ (Easter)
discipline: to punish someone as a way of making sure that rules or orders are obeyed (L6)
empire: a group of countries or areas that are controlled by one ruler (L13)
events: something important that happens (L11)
exactly: true in every way (L13)
excuse: an acceptable reason for something (L6)
generation: a group of people born and living during the same period of time (L9)
haunted: troubled or upset (L2)
in control: to have the power to make decisions (L7)
influence: to affect someone or something in an important way (L3)

interrupt: to cause something to stop happening for a time (L6)
jealous: having an unhappy or angry desire to have what someone else has; very concerned about protecting or keeping something (L4)
matter of life and death: something that is very important and often involves decisions that will determine whether someone lives or dies (L4)
message: words from one person given to another person (L12)
opposite: not the same, as different as possible, such as light and dark (L11)
preparation: making something ready (Easter)
prestige: the respect and admiration that someone gets for being successful or important (L7)
psychologists: people who study the way people think, feel, and behave (L2)
reality: a real event or situation (L8)
Redeemer: the One who brings goodness and honor, who buys us back from sin and death (L8)
reluctant: feeling or showing doubt about doing something; not willing or eager to do something (L5)
rescue: to save someone or something from danger or harm (L3)
respond: to have a particular reaction (L3)
resurrection: to cause something that had ended or died to exist again (Easter)
senseless: done or happening for no reason (L8)
set a trap: to act in a way to catch someone without them being aware of it. (L7)
similar: close to the same but not exactly the same (L14)
society: people living together in communities (L10)
sovereign: having unlimited power or authority (L1)
take credit: to say that you alone did something or made something happen (L5)
tragedy: a very bad event that causes deep sadness (L1)
under control: handled or managed by someone or something (L7)
unreasonable: not fair, sensible, or reasonable (L3)
violence: force used to harm or damage (L8)
vivid: something that seems very alive and real (L2)
warning: something that tells someone about possible danger or trouble (L5)
wasted: not used or spent in a good way (L10)

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Memory Verses

Lesson 1

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, and My ways are not your ways,” says the Lord.” (Isaiah 55:8)

Lesson 2

“The prayer from the heart of a man right with God has much power.” (James 5:16b)

Lesson 3

“I have told you these things so you may have peace in Me. In the world you will have much trouble. But take hope! I have power over the world!” (John 16:33)

Lesson 4

“You must worship no other gods, for the Lord, whose very name is Jealous, is a God who is jealous about his relationship with you.” (Exodus 34:14, New Living Translation)

Lesson 5

“The Lord is not slow about keeping His promise as some people think. He is waiting for you. The Lord does not want any person to be punished forever. He wants all people to be sorry for their sins and turn from them.” (2 Peter 3:9)

Lesson 6

“In His hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all men.” (Job 12:10)

Lesson 7

“Keep awake! Watch at all times. The devil is working against you. He is walking around like a hungry lion with his mouth open. He is looking for someone to eat.” (1 Peter 5:8)

Lesson 8

“And He [Christ] was given power and shining-greatness, and was made King, so that all the people of every nation and language would serve Him. His rule lasts forever. It will never pass away. And His nation will never be destroyed.” (Daniel 7:14)

Lesson 9

“In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice. In the morning I will lay my prayers before You and will look up.” (Psalm 5:3)

Lesson 10

“O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! For Your own good, O my God, do not wait, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” (Daniel 9:19)

Lesson 11

“Our sins are washed away and we are made clean because Christ gave His own body as a gift to God. He did this once for all time.” (Hebrews 10:10)

Lesson 12

“Then the one who looked like a man touched me again and gave me strength.” (Daniel 10:18)

Lesson 13

“But nothing will come of it, for the end will still come at the chosen time.” (Daniel 11:27b)

Lesson 14

“And those who lead many to do what is right and good will shine like the stars forever and ever.” (Daniel 12:3)

Easter Lesson

“He is not here! He has risen from the dead as He said He would.” (Matthew 28:6)

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: *When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 1: Faith in God's Plan

Bible Text

Daniel 1:1-21

Memory Verse

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, and My ways are not your ways,' says the Lord."
(Isaiah 55:8)

Word List

attack: to try to hurt, injure, or destroy someone or something

deport: to force a person to leave a country

sovereign: having unlimited power or authority

tragedy: a very bad event that causes deep sadness

September 11, 2001, was a frightening day for Americans. The United States was **attacked** when planes flew into the World Trade Center. The Pentagon was also attacked. In addition, a plane in Pennsylvania was attacked. Around 3,000 people died in these attacks.

Americans learned about these attacks on television and radio as they were happening. It was a frightening morning. No one knew what was happening. No one knew

what would happen next. Christians in this country gathered to pray. Some prayed at work. Some prayed at church. Others prayed together in their homes.

Craig West is a Baptist minister who remembers that day. He remembers gathering with other Christians to pray on a college campus. They met around noon in the school chapel. They prayed. They cried. They encouraged each other to have faith in God. One of the people who gathered that day said this: "If God was **sovereign** at 6 a.m. this morning, He is still sovereign at noon today."

On the morning of September 11, 2001, no one knew the **tragedy** that was going to happen. But God did know. Looking through human eyes, the world changed greatly on that day. But God never changes. People may not always understand the things that happen in the world. Sometimes it feels like the world is falling apart. But Christians do not trust in what they see. True Christian faith is not destroyed when tragedies happen. Christians can trust in God, even when they can't understand what is happening. They can trust in God even when they do not see His plan.

Daniel's World Changes (Daniel 1:1-7)

Daniel was probably just a teenager when his whole world changed. In about 606 BC, God's people were attacked by the armies of Babylon. These enemies of God's

people destroyed the holy temple where the people worshiped God. They broke up and carried away many treasures that came from God's temple. They killed thousands of innocent men, women and children.

They also captured **deported** thousands of God's people from Judah to Babylonia. They deported people who were skilled craftsmen or powerful soldiers. They left only the poorest people of the land.

Daniel was one of the Israelites the Babylonians deported. They took Daniel away from his home. They took Daniel away from his people. They brought him to Babylon. Daniel's life was forever changed.

Even at a young age, Daniel knew that God never changes. Even when he was far from home, Daniel remembered the truth about God. When hard things happened to Daniel, he trusted God's plan. He showed great faith. He kept obeying God's law. He stayed focused on pleasing God.

In Babylon, things were very different for Daniel. The King of Babylon wanted Daniel and his friends to live like the people of Babylon. The Babylonians did not worship the One True God of Israel. Their language was different (v. 4). Their food was different (v. 5). The King of Babylon even changed Daniel's name. Trusting God in a strange land must have been a very hard thing to do. Yet Daniel set a faithful example

for all Christians.

Daniel Trusts God (Daniel 1:8-10)

The king of Babylon chose some of the best young men in Israel to serve him. He wanted to use their talents and abilities. But first, the king needed to train them. The king needed these young Israelites to become Babylonians. The ways of the Babylonians were not God's ways. They worshiped false gods. They ate food that was offered to false gods. They did not follow the religious laws of the Jews. Following God in Babylon would not be easy.

Daniel stayed focused on God. It would have been easy for Daniel to question God. He must have had many questions about the hard things that happened. Why did God let Babylon defeat Israel? Why did God let the Babylonians destroy the Temple? Why did God let the Babylonians deport him? Daniel knew that God has power over all things. He knew that God could have changed things. Daniel could have been angry about these things. But Daniel made an important choice.

Daniel chose to trust God in the middle of these hard times. Daniel chose to obey God even when things were hard. He knew the king's food was not pleasing to God. The food may have been offered to false gods. Daniel would not eat the food. He "would not make himself unclean" (v. 8). He asked the head

ruler if he could eat different food. And “God gave Daniel favor.” Even though the head ruler was afraid the king would be angry, he let Daniel eat different food.

God Honors Daniel (Daniel 1:11-21)

For ten days, Daniel and his friends ate only vegetables. They did not eat the unclean food. The head ruler was worried. He thought Daniel and his friends would become weak. He knew that would displease the king. But God showed even more favor to Daniel. He and his friends were stronger and healthier than the other young men. With God’s help, Daniel and his friends grew in understanding and wisdom. They were very pleasing to the head ruler and to the king. Because of God’s favor, Daniel and his friends became important servants to the king. Daniel’s obedience brought him great honor during hard times in Babylon.

Things to Think About

1. Have you faced a situation where it was hard to trust in God’s plan?
2. If you had been Daniel, what questions would you have had for God about the things that happened to Israel?
3. If you had been Daniel, would you have spoken out against taking the king’s food and drink? Why or why not?
4. Tell about a time when you saw obedience lead to God’s favor.
5. What part of this lesson is most challenging for you? Why? How will you respond?

Things to Remember

Daniel made a hard choice. He took a great risk to obey God. He knew his choice might make the head ruler angry. He knew his choice might make the king angry. He knew they might punish him. But Daniel stayed focused on obeying God during hard times. He did not question God. He did not become angry at God. He trusted God’s plan even when he did not understand.

Daniel’s obedience brought God’s favor. God’s favor helped Daniel in many ways. Daniel’s body was strong because of the food he ate. Daniel and his friends “looked even better...than all the young men who had been eating the king’s best food” (v. 15). Daniel’s mind became strong, too. “God gave [them] much learning and understanding... in all kinds of special dreams” (v. 17). God’s favor clearly rested on Daniel’s spirit.

Daniel faced many hard things. But he was ready to obey God even though he was young. His choices brought blessings to many people. Daniel was blessed. His friends were blessed. The head ruler was blessed. Even the king was blessed. Obedience always brings blessing. The blessing does not always come right away or in the way you expect. But God is always faithful, especially to those like Daniel who choose to obey during hard times. Will you choose to be like Daniel?

Daniel 1:1-21

1 In the third year that Jehoiakim was king of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came against Jerusalem. His army was all around the city.

2 The Lord let him take King Jehoiakim of Judah, with some of the objects of the house of God. He brought them to the house of his god in the land of Shinar, and put the objects into the store-room of his god.

3 Then the king told Ashpenaz, his head ruler, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, both those of the king's family and of the important leaders.

4 They were to be young men, perfect in body, good-looking, with wisdom, understanding, much learning, and able to serve in the king's house. The king told Ashpenaz to teach them the writings and language of the Babylonians.

5 And the king gave them a share of his best food and wine every day. They were to be taught for three years, and after that they were to serve the king.

6 Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah from the sons of Judah.

7 The king's head ruler gave them new names. To Daniel he gave the name Beltshazzar. To Hananiah he gave the name Shadrach. To Mishael he gave the name Meshach. And to Azariah he gave the name Abed-nego.

8 But Daniel made up his mind that he would not make himself unclean with the king's best food and wine. So he asked the head ruler to allow him not to make himself unclean.

9 Now God gave Daniel favor and pity in the eyes of the head ruler.

10 The head ruler said to him, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has said you were to

have so much and he would see that you were not looking as good as the other young men who are as old as you. The king would cut off my head because of you."

11 Then Daniel said to the man whom the head ruler had chosen to watch over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 "Test your servants for ten days. Give us only vegetables to eat and water to drink.

13 Then compare how we look with the young men who are eating the king's best food. And do with us what you think is best by what you see."

14 So he listened to them, and tested them for ten days.

15 At the end of ten days they looked even better. They were fatter than all the young men who had been eating the king's best food.

16 So the man who watched over them took away the best food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables.

17 God gave these four young men much learning and understanding in all kinds of writings and wisdom. Daniel even had understanding in all kinds of special dreams.

18 At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the head ruler brought them to Nebuchadnezzar.

19 The king talked with them, and found no one like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they became the king's own helpers.

20 Every time the king asked them questions that needed wise and understanding answers, he found that they knew ten times more than all the wonder-workers under his rule who used their secret ways.

21 And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Lesson 2: A Prayer of Faith

Bible Text

Daniel 2:1-30

Memory Verse

“The prayer from the heart of a man right with God has much power.” (James 5:16b)

Word List

captives: people who are taken away and not allowed to leave

haunted: troubled or upset

psychologists: people who study the way people think, feel, and behave

vivid: something that seems very alive and real

Dreams often have a strong effect on people. After my dad died, I often dreamed about him. My dreams seemed very real. Sometimes when I woke up, I felt like I had just been talking with my dad. Both children and adults experience strong dreams. When my children were young, they often had bad dreams. Sometimes they woke up scared in the middle of the night because of bad dreams. Other times they shared funny or strange

dreams. Dreams can have a very powerful effect on people.

There are many stories about dreams. Paul McCartney was a famous singer from England. He wrote the song “Yesterday” after waking up from a **vivid** dream. American writer Edgar Allan Poe was **haunted** by bad dreams his whole life. He created stories and poems from some of these dreams. Dreams are even an important idea in some modern movies like Christopher Nolan’s *Inception*. Famous **psychologists** like Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud studied dreams. They wanted to learn where dreams come from. They wanted to learn what dreams mean.

Dreams also happened during Bible times. In fact, God often spoke to people in dreams. There are 21 stories like this in the Bible. This happened to people like Jacob, Joseph, Solomon, Daniel. In fact, there are three stories about dreams in the Book of Daniel.

In today’s Bible text, two important men had very powerful dreams. These men were from two different nations. Daniel was an Israelite who worshiped the One True God. King Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler of Babylon, a very strong nation. God used these men and their dreams to complete His purposes. God used these men and their dreams to show His mighty power.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Daniel 2:1-5)

Many times people have trouble sleeping because they are sick or because they cannot relax. Sometimes they have trouble sleeping because of loud noises or even because they are not eating right. None of these things was the reason King Nebuchadnezzar could not sleep. The king could not sleep because he had a terrible dream. "His spirit was troubled" because of this dream (v.1).

Many people in the world believe dreams have an important meaning. The people of Babylon believed this. The King of Babylon believed this, too. He needed to know what his dream meant. So he called for all the wise men in his kingdom. He called these men "wonder-workers" (v. 2). These were men who understood many important things. These men had a lot of knowledge. They were men of great learning. Some of these men were magicians who studied the stars (v. 4).

The king asked these wise men to tell him about his dream. The king wanted to know what his dream meant. This was a hard question. It was even harder because the king would not tell them about the dream. But this was not all he wanted. He wanted the wise men to guess what his dream was. He even threatened the wise men.

The king said, "If you do not tell me what my dream was and what it means, you will be torn apart and your houses will be laid waste" (v. 5). The wise men must have been very afraid. They knew that the king was a powerful man. They knew that he could do the terrible things he said.

The Men Who Learned from the Stars (Daniel 2:10-13)

The men who learned from the stars could not do what the king commanded. The stars they studied could not help them. All of their learning could not help them. All of their understanding could not help them. They did not know how to answer the king. They said, "No one can do [this] for you except the gods, who do not live among men."

These wise men did not worship the One True God. They did not worship the God of Daniel. Instead they worshiped false gods. These gods did not have the power to help them. The king became very angry with their answer. He was so angry that he ordered these wonder-workers and "all the wise men of Babylon [to] be destroyed" (v. 12). Daniel and his friends were some of the king's wise men.

Daniel and his friends were not like the king's other wise men. They were not like the men who learned from the stars. Daniel and his friends worshiped the One True God. They

were deported from their homes in Israel when they were young. They were **captives** in Babylon. Even so, God showed them favor in Babylon. They became important servants of the king.

Daniel and his men served as wise men to the king. But their wisdom came from the One True God. Now, Daniel and his friends were in trouble. The king was looking for them. He wanted to kill them just like he wanted to kill the other wise men.

Daniel Prays for Wisdom (Daniel 2:14-23)

Daniel heard that the king was looking for him. He gathered his friends to explain what happened. Daniel asked his friends to pray. Daniel and his friends prayed for God's loving-favor to give them special wisdom to understand the king's dream. They prayed that God would use this to help them answer the king. They knew this was the only way to save their lives.

Things to Think About

1. Have you ever had a vivid dream that was especially troubling?
2. Why do you think King Nebuchadnezzar responded with such anger toward the wise men?
3. How do you respond when you are faced with a threat to you or your family?
4. Tell about a time when you saw God answer prayer in a powerful way.
5. What "secret and hidden" things do you need to understand in your life? Who can you ask to pray with you about these things?

God answered Daniel's prayer. He spoke to Daniel in a dream. "The secret was made known to Daniel in a special dream during the night (v. 18). When this happened, Daniel gave thanks and praise to God. Daniel knew something the men who studied the stars did not understand. He knew wisdom and power belong to God alone (v. 20).

Things to Remember

God can do things people cannot do. He knows the things that are "secret and hidden" in this world. He sees things men cannot see. Daniel understood that only God "knows what is in the darkness" because "light is with Him" (v. 22).

The king was troubled by a dream. He was worried and scared. He reacted with fear, anger, and threats. Daniel was also troubled when he heard about the king's plans. But Daniel acted with wisdom and understanding. He prayed and asked others to pray with him.

Like many people, the king worried about the future. When you are worried, how do you act? When you face trouble, where do you turn for answers? Do you respond with fear and anger like Nebuchadnezzar? Or do you respond with trust and prayer like Daniel? Daniel knew that God alone is the source of wisdom. Knowing God as the source of wisdom makes all the difference in a Christian's life.

Daniel 2:1-5, 10-23

1 In the second year that Nebuchadnezzar was king, he had a dream. His spirit was troubled and he could not sleep.

2 Then the king called for the wonder-workers, those who used secret ways, those who learned from stars, to tell the king what he had dreamed. So they came in and stood in front of the king.

3 The king said to them, "I had a dream that troubles me, and I want to know what the dream means."

4 Then those who learn from stars said to the king in the Aramaic language, "O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will tell you what it means."

5 The king answered, saying, "My word is sure. If you do not tell me what my dream was and what it means, you will be torn apart and your houses will be laid waste.

...

10 Those who learn from stars answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who can do this for the king. For no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any wonder-worker or one who learns from stars.

11 What the king asks is too hard. No one can do it for you except the gods, who do not live among men."

12 Because of this the king became very angry and said that all the wise men of Babylon must be destroyed.

13 So the law was sent out that the wise men must be killed. They looked for Daniel and his friends, to kill them also.

14 Then Daniel spoke with wisdom and

understanding to Arioch, the captain of the soldiers who watched over the king, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon.

15 He said to Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the king's law so hard?" Then Arioch told him what had happened.

16 So Daniel went in and asked the king for time, so that he could tell the king what the dream meant.

17 Then Daniel went to his house and told his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, what had happened.

18 He told them to ask for loving-pity from the God of heaven about this secret, so that Daniel and his friends might not be killed with the other wise men of Babylon.

19 Then the secret was made known to Daniel in a special dream during the night. He gave honor and thanks to the God of heaven.

20 Daniel said, "Let the name of God be honored forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to Him.

21 He changes the times and the years. He takes kings away, and puts kings in power. He gives wisdom to wise men and much learning to men of understanding.

22 He makes known secret and hidden things. He knows what is in the darkness. Light is with Him.

23 I give thanks and praise to You, O God of my fathers. For You have given me wisdom and power. Even now You have made known what we asked of You. You have made the king's dream known to us."

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Lesson 3: The True King

Bible Text

Daniel 2:31-37, 39-42, 44-47

Memory Verse

“I have told you these things so you may have peace in Me. In the world you will have much trouble. But take hope! I have power over the world!” (John 16:33)

Word List

unreasonable: not fair, sensible, or reasonable
influence: to affect someone or something in an important way
rescue: to save someone or something from danger or harm
respond: to have a particular reaction

We all have troubles sometimes. Many of us cry out to God for help when troubles come. But God’s help does not always come quickly. Sometimes our problems seem to get worse before they get better. We might be tempted to question God in our difficulties. We might ask, “Why does He not **rescue** us?”

If anyone had reason to question God, it was Daniel. An enemy nation came in and took over his country when Daniel was a young man. His enemies took him far away to live in another country. Daniel’s whole life was changed by war.

But Daniel stayed faithful to what he had been taught as a boy. He followed God’s laws and tried hard to do what was right. And then more troubles came.

The king had a dream that troubled him. He called in all his wise men to help him understand this dream. But he insisted that they first tell him what he had dreamed. This was an **unreasonable** demand! Who could possibly know what another person dreamed? The king became more and more angry until he decided to kill all the wise men in Babylon. Daniel was one of those men.

And where was God in this crisis? He was right beside Daniel, guiding him and giving him courage and wisdom. Daniel prayed, and God answered. God gave Daniel a vision of the king’s dream and the wisdom to explain it. God did rescue Daniel and his friends. And His timing was perfect.

The Statue (Daniel 2:31-35)

In the very middle of this crisis, Daniel remained calm and focused. He never took his eyes off his God. So when the time came to tell the king his dream, Daniel’s focus was

still on God. He explained that no human could know what another person had dreamed. But then he went on to say, “And He Who makes secrets known has let you know what will happen.” Daniel was quick to say that he did not have the knowledge or power to explain the king’s dream, but God did. From his first moments with the king, Daniel was pointing him to God.

Then Daniel began to describe the king’s dream. Daniel spoke with confidence. His words seem calm and clear. Maybe he spoke slowly in a way to calm the king. Daniel was speaking for God. But he was also speaking to a very upset and dangerous king. God gave Daniel the wisdom and ability to bring peace to a troubled man.

How did the king feel as he heard Daniel speak? Did he remember his dream clearly now? The king had seen a powerful statue with a head of gold, a breast and arms of silver, a stomach and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of iron mixed with clay. And then a stone came and crushed the statue into dust. What could this dream mean?

The Meaning of the Statue (Daniel 2:36-37, 39-42)

Once again, Daniel pointed the king’s attention to God. Yes, that head of pure gold was a picture of King Nebuchadnezzar. But Daniel was clear in his statement, “The God

of heaven has given you the nation, the power, the strength, and the honor.” This was a proud king, and he had reason to be proud. He held great power over many people. But his power did not come from himself. Daniel was not afraid to speak plainly to the king. He knew Who held the real power. Nebuchadnezzar was powerful, but God had more power. And God is the One who gives power to men.

Daniel then explained more about the dream. This statue was a picture of the future kingdoms that would follow. After Babylon, more kingdoms would rise to rule men. But future kingdoms would not have the power and glory that Babylon had. Silver does not have the same value that gold has. Brass is less valuable than silver. Iron is strong, but it is not as valuable as gold, silver, or brass. And iron mixed with clay is weak. Each kingdom to come would be something less than the one before it.

This dream was a picture of the future for King Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel. But for us today, most of it is a picture of the past. People who study the Bible and history agree that the kingdoms that came after Babylon followed this pattern. The Babylonian empire was followed by those of the Medes and Persians, the Greeks, and then the Romans. They all had great power. They all **influenced** our world. But none were as strong and powerful as Babylon.

The Stone (Daniel 2:44-45)

Daniel explained that the stone was a picture of God's kingdom. The stone was not like the statue. It was not made by men. It had the power to crush the statue into tiny pieces. Daniel told the king that God was going to set up a new kingdom of His own. His Kingdom would crush all the kingdoms ruled by men and erase their influence. God's Kingdom would never fall or be destroyed.

This part of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a picture of the future for us, just as it was for Daniel and the king. God's kingdom is still to come. All the other kingdoms pictured by the statue were real, physical kingdoms. And God's Kingdom will be, too. Jesus taught His followers to pray, "Father, may Your name be kept holy. May Your Kingdom come soon" (Luke 11:2). We look forward to the day when Jesus will return and rule as our King. It will be a day when we will forget all our troubles, and we will live in peace with our God.

Things to Think About

1. When troubles come, where do you turn for help?
2. Does God still use dreams to speak to us today? How does God speak to you?
3. How can we prepare for God's coming Kingdom?
4. Do you find it easy or difficult to speak to others about God?

The King's Response (Daniel 2:46-47)

God used Daniel to bring peace to the king. Through it all, Daniel pointed the king to the God of heaven. Daniel showed the king that God is all-powerful and all-knowing. But how would the king **respond**?

A proud king like Nebuchadnezzar could have responded badly. Daniel was brave to speak so plainly to the king. But Daniel understood who had the real power in his life. God gave Daniel the vision of the king's dream and wisdom to understand it. God gave him courage to speak the truth to a dangerous king.

And God gave Nebuchadnezzar the heart to listen. Nebuchadnezzar accepted the truth of Daniel's words. Now the king was calm and reasonable. Now he saw that he had asked for something impossible. But still, God had delivered. The king Nebuchadnezzar gave honor to the King of heaven!

Things to Remember

God allows difficulties in our life, just as He did for Daniel. And sometimes rescue seems to come slowly. But God's timing is always perfect. All of history is in His hands, and He knows what is going to happen. We must keep our eyes on Him and trust Him to lead us. And He will give us the courage to follow. We can point others to God as we wait for Jesus to return. He is our true King.

Daniel 2:31-37, 39-42, 44-47

31 “O king, you were looking and saw a great object. The object was large and very bright, and it was standing in front of you. It filled you with fear and wonder as you looked at it.

32 The object’s head was made of fine gold. Its breast and arms were made of silver. Its stomach and thighs were made of brass.

33 Its legs were made of iron, and its feet were part iron and part clay.

34 While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It fell and hit the large object on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them.

35 Then the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like dust on the grain-floor in the summer. The wind carried the dust away so nothing was to be found. But the stone that hit the large object became a large mountain and filled the whole earth.

36 “This was the dream. Now we will tell the king what it means.

37 You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you the nation, the power, the strength, and the honor.

....

39 After you there will be another nation that is not as great as yours. A third nation of brass will come, which will rule over all the earth.

40 Then there will be a fourth nation, as

strong as iron. Iron crushes and breaks all things. So, like iron breaks things to pieces, this nation will crush and break all the others.

41 Just as you saw the feet and toes made of part clay and part iron, it will be a divided nation. But it will have some of the strength of iron, just as you saw the iron mixed with the clay.

42 As the toes of the feet were made of part iron and part clay, so some of the nation will be strong and part of it will be weak.

....

44 In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a nation which will never be destroyed. And it will never be taken by another people. It will crush and put an end to all these nations, but it will last forever.

45 You saw how a stone was cut out of the mountain by no human hands, and how it crushed the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has shown the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true. And I have given you its true meaning.”

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and gave honor to Daniel. He had a gift and special perfume brought to him.

47 The king said to Daniel, “For sure your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and He makes hidden things known. For you have been able to make known this secret.”

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: *When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 4: Who Has First Place?

Bible Text

Daniel 3:1a, 8-13, 15b-18, 21, 24-28a

Memory Verse

“You must worship no other gods, for the Lord, whose very name is Jealous, is a God who is jealous about his relationship with you.” (Exodus 34:14, NLT)

Word List

competition: a game or contest that people try to win for a prize or honor; the act or process of competing

matter of life and death: something that is very important and often involves decisions that will determine whether someone lives or dies

jealous: having an unhappy or angry desire to have what someone else has; very concerned about protecting or keeping something

Our world loves winners. We give prizes and awards to the best athletes, musicians, actors, scientists, writers, and so on. All around the world people take part in **competitions**. And the winners get the honor. Everyone wants to be in first place!

No one wants to be a loser in a world that loves winners. We all want to feel important. Sometimes that wish leads people to work hard to be the best. Sometimes people try to feel important by making demands on other people. They insist on doing things their own way. They think of their own needs first.

But a person who puts himself first does not live a healthy life. The burden of being important is too heavy. It makes people unhappy. God did not create us to be number one. God’s Word is clear: *He* gets first place. We are not to worship anyone or anything other than the one true God.

God had given King Nebuchadnezzar a lesson about Who was the true King. But the king forgot. He remembered the part about being important. But he forgot the part about being made important *by God*. So he returned to putting himself first.

Three other men did not forget the lesson that God had taught the king. They obeyed God’s commands and gave Him first honor in their lives. Their decision to honor God became a **matter of life and death**. God used it to teach the king and the three men another lesson, one they would never forget!

Another Statue (Daniel 3:1a)

The king had earlier had a dream that upset him. He demanded that his wise men tell him his dream and its meaning. Then he

threatened their lives if they did not. One of those men, Daniel, turned to God for help. He asked his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to pray with him. God answered their prayers. Daniel was able to calm the king with a message from God. God showed Daniel, his friends, and the king that He was all-knowing and all-powerful.

Now, sometime later, the king remembered his dream, particularly the golden head. God had told the king that the head of the statue was a picture of Babylon. But King Nebuchadnezzar was not happy knowing that God said he was important. The king wanted everyone to know it! So he had a very large statue built in his own honor. Then he demanded that everyone bow to his new statue. Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten the lesson of his dream!

A Choice (Daniel 3:8-13)

The king brought all the important people from his kingdom to see his statue for the first time. He gathered musicians to play for the event. And he instructed everyone to listen for the music. They must all bow down and worship the statue at the sound of music.

This was a king who could be dangerous when he was angry. Everyone was surely afraid of him. So they did what he told them to do. All the important people did as the king commanded, except three men.

Those three men knew that God was more powerful than the king. They had already seen God do a powerful thing. He had shown Daniel the secret of the king's dream. Now they had a choice to make. Would they make King Nebuchadnezzar angry? Or would they make God angry? They chose to honor God.

And people noticed. The king placed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in important jobs after Daniel helped him with his dream. Now others were **jealous** of these men. They went to the king and told him who had not bowed to his statue. Of course, the king became angry. And he was a dangerous man when he was angry. He called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to come to him.

True Faith (Daniel 3:15b-18, 21)

The king did not stop to think about what he was doing. He demanded that the men bow to his statue. His words show where his heart was: "And what god is able to save you from my hands?" Nebuchadnezzar's heart was far from God.

But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego trusted God with their lives. They knew that God could rescue them. They believed that He might do it, too. But they also knew that He might not. Their words were clear: "But even if He does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the object of gold that you have set up." They

would not disobey God's commands. They would not bow to the statue.

Faith is easy when life is easy. We can look at all the good things God gives us and say that He is good. But is that real faith? What happens when He allows bad things to happen? Do we still say that He is good then? True faith does not change when life changes. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego trusted God when the king had a bad dream. They trusted God when the king gave them good jobs. They trusted God when the king built a statue. And they trusted God when the king threw them into a big, hot fire.

Another Man (Daniel 3:24-28a)

The fire should have killed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. It was hot enough to kill the men who took them to the fire. Maybe the king expected to hear screams as they were thrown in. Instead, all was peaceful. As he looked into the fire, he saw them walking

around without their hands tied. And instead of three men, he saw four! Who was the fourth man?

God was in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They never wanted to be thrown into that fire. They simply wanted to do what was right. And they did it. So when they were in the middle of the fire, God was there with them. That is when they were closest to God! Did they even want to come out again?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were pulled from the fire without any harm. They had no burns. They did not even smell like smoke! Who was the god who could save them? The One True God of heaven.

Things to Remember

Nebuchadnezzar was an important man. He was the king of Babylon. And God had even told him that he was important. But that was not enough for this proud man. He wanted more.

We, too, can fall into the same trap that caught Nebuchadnezzar. We can try to make ourselves important. We can demand that others notice us. But we are important to God already! We do not need to demand first place. Instead, we can put God first. We can honor Him first in our hearts. And then He will be with us through whatever happens.

Things to Think About

1. What makes you feel important?
2. What tempts you to take your focus off of God?
3. Have you ever experienced a matter of life and death? How did it affect you? Where did you look for help?
4. Has someone ever asked you to do something that you knew was wrong? What did you do?
5. Has your faith ever been tested by a difficult problem? Did your faith grow stronger or weaker?
6. Who holds first place in your heart?

Daniel 3:1a, 8-13, 15b-18, 21, 24-28a

3 King Nebuchadnezzar made an object of gold which looked like a god.

....

8 At this time certain ones who learned from stars came up and spoke against the Jews.

9 They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever!

10 You yourself, O king, have made a law that every man who hears the sound of the horns and harps and all kinds of music is to get down on his knees and worship the object of gold.

11 And whoever does not get down and worship must be thrown into the big and hot fire.

12 There are certain Jews whom you have chosen as leaders over the land of Babylon. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. These men have not listened to you, O king. They do not serve your gods or worship the object of gold which you have set up.”

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar became very angry and called for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. And they were brought to the king.

....

15 But if you will not worship, you will be thrown at once into the fire. And what god is able to save you from my hands?”

16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer to this question.

17 If we are thrown into the fire, our God Whom we serve is able to save us from it. And He will save us from your hand, O king.

18 But even if He does not, we want you to

know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the object of gold that you have set up.”

....

21 So the men were tied up in their coats and head-coverings and their other clothes, and were thrown into the fire.

....

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was very surprised and stood up in a hurry. He said to his leaders, “Did we not throw three men who were tied up into the fire?” They answered, “That is true, O king.”

25 He said, “Look! I see four men loose and walking about in the fire without being hurt! And the fourth one looks like a son of the gods (or the Son of God)!”

26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near the door where the fire was burning, and said, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!” So Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the fire.

27 The captains, leaders, rulers, and the king’s important men gathered around and saw that the fire had not hurt the bodies of these three men. Their hair was not burned. Their clothes were not burned. They did not even smell like fire.

28 Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. He has sent His angel and saved His servants who put their trust in Him.”

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Daniel:
When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 5: A Lesson Learned the Hard Way

Bible Text

Daniel 4:1-2, 4-5a, 8, 19, 25-27, 29-31,
33-34, 37

Memory Verse

“The Lord is not slow about keeping His promise as some people think. He is waiting for you. The Lord does not want any person to be punished forever. He wants all people to be sorry for their sins and turn from them.” (2 Peter 3:9)

Word List

reluctant: feeling or showing doubt about doing something; not willing or eager to do something
take credit: to say that you alone did something or made something happen

warning: something that tells someone about possible danger or trouble

We all have a lot to learn. Babies must learn to walk and talk. Children go to school to learn many things. Young adults still have more to learn after they leave school. They must learn to work and to care for themselves. Learning continues throughout all of life as life changes. Jobs change. Our health changes.

Our world is always changing. And each new change brings new things to learn.

God uses life to teach us. He turns our mistakes into lessons about how to live. He lets things happen to us to teach us to trust Him with our troubles. He uses our joyful moments to teach us to be thankful. He uses the sad moments to show us His comfort. God uses all the moments of our lives to teach us about Himself. He is preparing us to live with Him forever.

But we are slow to learn. So God must often teach us the same lesson over and over again. We do not always learn the first time. Much of our pain in life comes from being slow to learn. But God is patient with us. He continues to call us to Himself. He patiently teaches us all throughout our lives.

King Nebuchadnezzar was also slow to learn. But God did not give up on him. God wanted this mighty king to know Him. So God continued to show Himself to the king of the Babylonians. The lessons continued.

Another Dream (Daniel 4:1-2, 4-5a)

God used a dream about a giant statue destroyed by a piece of a mountain to teach King Nebuchadnezzar that God is the true King who will rule forever. Nebuchadnezzar forgot that lesson.

Later, he built another statue and commanded others to worship it. Three of

God's faithful followers refused to bow. So the king threw them into a big, hot fire. God saved His servants in the fire. God proved that He has the power to save. The king saw God's power with his own eyes. But in the next 30 years, he forgot the lesson again.

In Daniel 4, God teaches King Nebuchadnezzar a lesson he cannot forget. The chapter begins with the king telling the story in his own words. He said that God had done wonderful things for him. And He wanted everyone to know what God taught him. This was a changed man. Had this king finally learned?

Then, King Nebuchadnezzar told the story of what happened to him. Once again, God spoke to the king in a dream. Again, the dream upset him. He became afraid because he did not understand it. Again, he called all the wise men to help him. And again they could not explain the meaning of the dream.

A Warning (Daniel 4:8, 19, 25-27)

The king told that Daniel came "at last." Did Daniel come from far away to help the king? Or had the king forgotten Daniel and not asked for him? We do not know why Daniel did not come first, but we know what he did when he got there.

Many years had passed, and Daniel was now middle-aged. He had stayed faithful to God in all those years, and it showed in his

life. Nebuchadnezzar said that "the spirit of the holy gods is in him." The king could see that something was different about Daniel.

This time the king told Daniel what he had dreamed. And this time Daniel did not have to wait and pray for God to give him the answer. He knew the meaning of the dream right away. But this time he was **reluctant** to tell the meaning to the king. He knew the dream was a **warning**. Bad things were coming for the king. Daniel's words in verse 19 show that he cared for the king. He did not want bad things to happen to the king. Had Daniel learned to love King Nebuchadnezzar?

The king asked for Daniel to speak the truth anyway. So Daniel explained that the beautiful tree that gave life to all around it was a picture of the king. The angel that came and cut down the tree was a picture of Nebuchadnezzar losing his kingdom. The king would be sent away and would live like an animal for a long time. In fact, the king would live outside like an animal for seven years.

But the dream also had some good news. Daniel explained that after seven years, he would become king again. Daniel offered even more hope. He said that maybe this judgment would not have to happen. Maybe God would not punish the king. God hated the pride in Nebuchadnezzar's heart. If the king gave up his pride, maybe God would not punish him after all.

Judgment (Daniel 4:29-31, 33)

Daniel explained the dream. He warned the king to give up his pride and his sin. A full year passed. God gave the king time to change his ways. Maybe he would learn the lesson the easy way.

Then one day King Nebuchadnezzar walked on the roof of his house and looked at the city around him. He forgot Daniel's warning. He saw a beautiful city and **took credit** for it. He spoke with pride about what *he* had done. He thought only of himself.

So judgment fell. The dream came true. Nebuchadnezzar lost his throne, his power, and his mind. He did become like an animal. He lived outside away from people. He ate grass along with the oxen. His fingernails and hair grew long. Seven years passed while the king lived this way. It must have been a terrible time for all of Babylon.

Mercy (Daniel 4:34, 37)

But the judgment did not last forever. At God's proper time, the king's mind and

understanding were returned to him. His wise men came and found him and brought him back to the city. He became king again. But more important, he finally learned his lesson. Now he understood that he was small and weak. All that he had was given to him by God. And it could all be taken away again. Now King Nebuchadnezzar honored the one true King.

Terrible things had happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. God had taught him a painful lesson. But the lesson was a good one. The king called it "wonderful" because it taught him the truth about God.

Things to Remember

We all have lessons to learn. Sometimes the lessons are painful. And sometimes we are slow to learn and must go through difficult times. But God is always patient with us. He does not give up on us when we fail. Instead, he keeps giving us one lesson after another. We can trust that God knows what is best for us. And we can learn to listen for His warnings and avoid His painful punishments. But even the most painful lessons become wonderful when we let God teach us. God's Word tells us that He is making us into new creations. And He is faithful to continue the work until we are ready to live with Him forever.

Things to Think About

1. What are some things you have learned in school, at work, or at home?
2. What lessons has God taught you about Himself?
3. Are there any lessons you have had to learn over and over again?
4. If you saw someone headed for trouble with their choices in life, what would you do to warn them?

**Daniel 4:1-2, 4-5a, 8, 19, 25-27, 29-31,
33-34, 37**

1 King Nebuchadnezzar sent this letter to all the people of every nation and language who live in all the world: “May you have much peace!

2 I am pleased to tell you about the wonderful things which the Most High God has done for me.

....

4 “I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house. Everything was going well for me there.

5 But I had a dream that made me afraid.

....

8 At last Daniel came to me, who was given the name Belteshazzar after the name of my god. A spirit of the holy gods is in him, and I told him about my dream.

....

19 “Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was afraid for a while. His thoughts filled him with fear. The king said, ‘Belteshazzar, do not be afraid of the dream or its meaning.’ Belteshazzar answered, ‘My lord, if only the dream and its meaning had to do with those who hate you and fight against you!’

....

25 You will be driven away from all people and will live with the wild animals of the field. You will eat grass like cattle and become wet with the water from heaven. Seven years will pass until you understand that the Most High is ruler over the nations of men, and gives them to whomever He wants.

26 It was said that the base of the tree and its roots must be left. This means that your nation will be returned to you after you understand that it is Heaven that rules.

27 So, O king, may my words be pleasing to you. Turn away from your sins by doing what is right and good. Turn away from your wrongdoing by being kind to the poor. Then it may be that things will keep going well for you.’

....

29 Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of his beautiful house in Babylon.

30 And he said, ‘Is not this the great Babylon which I have built as a beautiful place for the king? I have built it by my great strength and for the greatness of my power.’

31 Before the king was finished speaking, a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is said: Your power over the nation has been taken from you.

....

33 At once these words about Nebuchadnezzar came true. He was driven away from all people and began eating grass like cattle. His body became wet with the water from heaven, until his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers and his nails like those of birds.

34 “But at the end of that time I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up toward heaven and my understanding returned to me. And I gave thanks to the Most High and praised and honored Him Who lives forever. For His nation lasts forever, and His rule is for all people for all time.

....

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and honor the King of heaven. For all His works are true and His ways are right. And He is able to bring down those who walk in pride.”

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Lesson 6: God's Hand

Bible Text

Daniel 5:1-2, 4-6, 8-11a, 12b-13, 16-17,
23-28, 30-31

Memory Verse

"In His hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all men." (Job 12:10)

Word List

consequence: something that happens as a result of a particular action or set of conditions

discipline: to punish someone as a way of making sure that rules or orders are obeyed

excuse: an acceptable reason for something

interrupt: to cause something to stop happening for a time

We use our hands for more than just doing things. We also use our hands to give messages without words. Some people move their hands when they speak. Some people use their hands to speak sign language. Couples in love hold hands. Mothers hold the hands of their young children when they cross the street. It is an act of protection. We can also offer comfort by holding someone's hand.

The Bible says that God uses His hands, too. Psalm 32:4 tells us that God uses His hand to **discipline** us. In Psalm 145:16, God opens His hand to fill our lives with good things. In Isaiah 41:10, God says, "Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will give you strength, and for sure I will help you. Yes, I will hold you up with My right hand that is right and good." And in John 10:29, Jesus says that no one can take God's people out of His hand. For God's children, God's hand is a place of safety.

Daniel went through many difficult things in his life. An enemy came and took over his country and took him away to a far country. He served a king who needed many lessons from God. But after more than 40 years as king, Nebuchadnezzar died. Belshazzar was his son or grandson, and he became the new king. A new king would surely bring changes for the kingdom and for Daniel. But Daniel did not need to be afraid. God had shown Daniel that He was in control. Daniel was safe in God's hands.

A Message from God (Daniel 5:1-2, 4-6)

Nebuchadnezzar's son had many chances to learn the lessons that God had taught his father. We read in chapter 4 that Nebuchadnezzar told his story all the people in his kingdom about what God had done to him. But surely some people did not listen.

Belshazzar could have learned about God the easy way. He could have listened to his father's story. He might have learned that pride has terrible **consequences**. But Belshazzar did not learn.

Instead, he decided to give a big supper. He wanted to eat and drink to honor himself. But a big party was not enough. So he decided to use the special cups from the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Belshazzar and his party guests drank out of the cups that were only to be used to worship God. But they were not worshipping God as they ate and drank. No, they were worshipping other gods and this new king.

God saw what they were doing. The Bible says that a hand began to write a message on the wall all at once. God was patient with Nebuchadnezzar and gave him many chances to learn. Now Belshazzar needed a lesson, too. This time, God did not wait to send a dream in the king's sleep. This time, God **interrupted** the party to bring his message. It was too important to wait. This was a hand of discipline. And it was scary. The king turned pale and began to shake.

Who Has the Real Treasure?

(Daniel 5:8-11a, 12b-17)

King Nebuchadnezzar had two different dreams from God. Both times he called the Babylonian wise men to help him

understand his dream. But the wise men could not help. Now Belshazzar had a message from God, and he did the same thing that his father did. He called the wise men of Babylon. He promised them riches and honor if they would tell him the meaning of the message. But his treasure could not buy an answer. Once again, the wise men could not help.

Now the king became even more afraid. Who could help him understand this hand and its message? Then the queen remembered Daniel. She had heard of Daniel as a man with wisdom. She told the king to call Daniel for help, and he did.

The king promised the same reward to Daniel if he could explain the message. He saw his power as king as something to be used for his own needs. Daniel knew better. He knew that all the treasure in the world could not buy what he already had. Daniel had a relationship with God. So Daniel had wisdom. He had peace. He had hope for the future. Daniel did not need a king's treasure. He already had a greater treasure: God.

Consequences (Daniel 5:23-28, 30-31)

Daniel did not need time to pray and ask God for the meaning of the message. He knew it already. He remembered all the lessons God had taught King Nebuchadnezzar because he was there. Now he knew this was the same lesson for a new king. Belshazzar

should have learned from his father. But he did not. Now God's patience what short. How many times would He have to teach these kings Who was the Most High King?

Daniel told this new king his father's story. He told how God had humbled Nebuchadnezzar when his pride grew too strong. Then Daniel said, "Yet you, his son Belshazzar, have not put away the pride from your heart, even though you knew all this" (Daniel 5:22). Belshazzar had no **excuse** for his choices. He should have known better. Daniel was brave to speak this hard truth.

Daniel knew that he was safe in God's hands. God had the real power in this moment. But Belshazzar was not safe. Daniel said, "You have not honored the God Who holds your life and your ways in His hand."

God's message was difficult for the king and his wise men because it was only four words: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. Daniel understood what they meant. They were words used for measuring the

weight of things. People weighed things like gold and silver to find their value. Now Daniel explained that the days of the kingdom were coming to an end. God had weighed the king and found his value was too small. The kingdom would be divided and given to enemies. This was bad news. God was ready to judge King Belshazzar. And the judgment came that same night. Belshazzar was killed, and a new king took his place.

Things to Remember

God holds our lives in His hands. God uses His hands to give us good things. His hands are a place of comfort and strength.

But God's hands can also be scary for people who do not know Him. God also uses His hands to discipline us. He is our Judge, and He will punish all who sin.

Jesus came to take our punishment. The scars on His hands show how deep His love for us goes. His hands took the nails that were our punishment. The Bible says, "Now, because of this, those who belong to Christ will not suffer the punishment of sin" (Romans 8:1).

We do not need to be afraid when we think of God's hands. Instead, we can feel safe if we have given Him our hearts and made Him our treasure. He is the greatest treasure we could find. And He is only one prayer away.

Things to Think About

1. For what do you use your hands?
2. How do you react to fear? Where do you look for help when you are afraid?
3. How do you feel about God as your Judge? How do you feel about being in God's hands?
4. What is your greatest treasure?
5. What are you doing to take care of your relationship with God?

**Daniel 5:1-2, 4-6, 8-11a, 12b-13, 16-17,
23-28, 30-31**

1 King Belshazzar gave a special supper for a thousand of his important men, and drank wine with them.

2 When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he had all the gold and silver cups brought which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the Lord's house in Jerusalem. The king sent for them so that he and his important men and all his wives could drink from them.

....

4 They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone.

5 All at once the fingers of a man's hand were seen writing on the wall near the lamp-stand of the king's house. And the king saw the back of the hand as it wrote.

6 Then the king's face turned white, and his thoughts turned to fear. His legs became weak and his knees began shaking.

....

8 Then all the king's wise men came in. But they could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant.

9 Then King Belshazzar was very afraid. His face lost even more of its color, and his important men did not know what to do.

10 The queen heard the words of the king and his men, and came into the room where they were eating. She said, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts make you afraid or your face turn white.

11a There is a man in your nation who has the spirit of the holy gods in him.

....

12b Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what this means."

13 So Daniel was brought to the king. And the king said to him, "Are you that Daniel who is

one of the people whom my father the king brought from Judah?

....

16 Now I have heard that you are able to tell the meaning of such things and give answers to hard problems. If you are able to read the writing and tell me what it means, you will be dressed in purple and wear a chain of gold around your neck. And you will be the third in power in the nation."

17 Then Daniel answered the king, saying, "Keep your gifts for yourself, or give them to someone else. But I will read the writing to the king and tell him what it means.

....

23 You have honored yourself more than the Lord of heaven. The cups of His house have been brought to you. And you and your important men and all your wives have been drinking wine from them. You have praised the gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see, hear or understand. But you have not honored the God Who holds your life and your ways in His hand.

24 So the hand was sent from Him to write on your wall.

25 "This is what was written: 'MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN.'

26 And this is what it means: 'MENE' means that God has numbered the days of your rule and has brought it to an end.

27 'TEKEL' means that you have been weighed and found to be too light.

28 'PERES' means that your nation has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

....

30 That very night Belshazzar the king of Babylon was killed.

31 So Darius the Mede became the king when he was sixty-two years old.

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Lesson 7: Faith Faces Danger

Bible Text

Daniel 6:1-10, 13-23

Memory Verse

“Keep awake! Watch at all times. The devil is working against you. He is walking around like a hungry lion with his mouth open. He is looking for someone to eat.” (1 Peter 5:8)

Word List

in control: to have the power to make decisions

prestige: the respect and admiration that someone gets for being successful or important

set a trap: to act in a way to catch someone without them being aware of it.

under control: handled or managed by someone or something

We live in a dangerous world. There are bad people who rob and steal and kill. There are rulers who are not honest. We need to be aware of these dangers to protect ourselves. But the biggest danger comes from the devil, who wants to make our lives count for nothing. He wants us to think that our success depends on being in control of everything

around us. And he wants us to seek pleasures that can destroy our lives. Our biggest enemy is not other people or our rulers. The evil one is our enemy.

Daniel’s life is an example of how to live in a dangerous world. He knew where to get the power to overcome evil. Prayer and a heart-to-heart relationship with God gave Daniel that power. His life helped others to see more clearly what God is like.

Prestige or Prayer? (Daniel 6:1-10)

We all want **prestige** and power. We want to be respected and admired because we are successful and important. Darius needed help ruling the land. He chose 120 captains to help rule. A captain might have gotten rich by cheating the people. He might think the king would never find out what he was doing. So, Darius chose three men to keep the captains honest. Daniel was one of these top three leaders. He must have been more honest and loyal than the other leaders. The king decided to put Daniel in charge of all the leaders in the land. His prestige and power made the other leaders jealous. They could have worked harder and been more honest to get the king to notice them. Instead they decided to just get rid of Daniel.

But they could not find anything Daniel had done wrong. So, they **set a trap**. They knew Daniel was a praying man. They wanted

a new law that made it a crime to pray. But they needed the king to sign it. If the king signed the law, it could not be changed, even by the king.

But the law had a big problem. It was for only 30 days. What a waste of time to pass a law for only 30 days. “Anyone who asks something of any god or man,” would mean that all government, business, and religion would stop. No one could ask their neighbor for a cup of sugar. Bosses could not ask their workers to work. Leaders could not ask the people to pay taxes. Nothing could happen for 30 days! And Darius would have the biggest job of all. Every problem in the nation would be brought to Darius!

These men said that *all* the leaders of the nation agreed that this was a good law. Wise Daniel did not agree. Other leaders must have seen the problems with the law. But they were willing to tell a lie to make themselves look more important to the king. And so the king signed the law.

And Daniel continued to pray. Daniel did not pray because it was a rule or a habit. He prayed because he loved God and wanted to talk to Him. He knew that God saw his heart. God’s heart answered Daniel’s heart when he prayed.

Daniel wanted his life to matter, to count for something good. But what mattered most was his relationship with God. Three

times a day, he stopped what he was doing and went to a special place to talk to the Lord. He got down on his knees in a window upstairs and prayed facing Jerusalem. He asked God to help. He talked to God about his own needs, the country, his enemies and his friends. And Daniel always gave thanks for all God’s goodness. He knew that his success came from God alone.

In Control or Under God’s Control? (Daniel 6:13-17)

We all want to be **in control**. We want to be the one who decides how things are done. We often think our ideas are the best ones. Surely, Daniel prayed for God to protect him. But he knew that God had everything **under control**. The jealous leaders thought they could control the king and Daniel. The king worked all day to find a way to take control of the problem. But the law was the law and could not be changed.

Daniel’s enemies did not have to wait 30 days to catch him praying. By sunset on the first day, Daniel was thrown in the pit of hungry lions. But the king still tried to take control. He knew now that the evil leaders could not be trusted. He put a stone over the opening so no one could throw rocks at Daniel or pull him out of the pit. Then he sealed the stone with his ring. Under the law, the seal of the king could not be broken. He even made

the other leaders seal the stone with their rings, too. Those who thought they were in control were now under the control of the law.

Pleasure or Peace? (Daniel 6:18-23)

We all want to enjoy life. There is nothing wrong with a little pleasure in life. But pleasure had become the goal of the king's life. He spent his evenings seeking pleasure. He ate rich food. He enjoyed music and fun. He looked for things to make him happy. He slept in a good bed. But this night the king found no pleasure and no rest. He spent the night worrying about Daniel.

While the king tossed and turned all night, Daniel rested under God's control and in His peace. Daniel was safe because God was in control. He was not hurt by the fall into the pit. The lions could not open their mouths or attack him. God sent an angel to comfort and guard him. Daniel knew what the Lord could do, but he was at peace with whatever the Lord chose to do.

Things to Think About

1. How aware are you of the dangers around you? What dangers are you aware of?
2. When have you trusted God's control over your life? What have you learned from trusting God?
3. How can you have a close heart-to-heart relationship with God?
4. How much time, money, and effort do you spend seeking pleasures that cannot bring you peace?

Early in the morning, the king rushed to the lion's pit. His voice was full of worry as he called out to Daniel. He knew that Daniel never stopped serving the only living God. He wanted to know if God had saved Daniel. The king's worry turned to gladness when he heard Daniel's strong voice.

Darius understood more of what God is like because of Daniel. The king knew that prestige, control, and pleasure had not brought peace into his life. Peace is a gift that comes from a relationship with the true and living God.

Things to Remember

We live in a world of danger. We will never be able to do battle against evil alone. We are safe when we live under God's control. The way we live makes a difference in how clearly the people around us see God. God's plan will go forward with or without us. But our lives can have lasting importance when we are faithful to God. We cannot control events, but we can point to God. He has everything under control. We may not be able to change our culture. But our faithfulness will show the world around us what God is like. God does not promise us pleasures. But He freely gives us joy and peace even in the middle of trouble.

Daniel 6:1-10, 13-27

1 It pleased Darius to choose 120 captains to rule over the people. They would rule over the whole nation.

2 And three leaders were to rule over them, and Daniel was one. The captains were to answer to them, so that the king might suffer no loss.

3 Then Daniel showed that he could do better work than the other leaders and captains because a special spirit was in him. So the king planned to give him power over the whole nation.

4 Then the leaders and captains tried to find a reason to complain against Daniel about his duties over the nation. But they could not find any reason to complain or anything to blame him for, because he was faithful and honest and did not do anything wrong.

5 Then these men said, “We will not find anything to say against Daniel unless it has to do with the Law of his God.”

6 So these leaders and captains came as a group to the king and said, “King Darius, live forever!

7 All the leaders of the nation, the captains, the important men and the rulers have spoken with each other and have agreed that a new law should be made. The king should make a law that must be obeyed, saying that anyone who asks something of any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, must be thrown to the lions.

8 O king, make this law now and write your name on it so that it may not be changed. It will be by the law of the Medes and Persians, and cannot be changed.”

9 So King Darius made the law and wrote his name on it.

10 When Daniel knew that the king had written his name on this law, he went into his house where, in his upper room, he had windows open toward Jerusalem. There he got down on his knees three times each day, praying and giving thanks to his God, as he had done before.

....

13 Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the people brought from Judah, does not listen to you, O king. He is not obeying the law that you wrote your name on. He is still asking things of his God three times a day.”

14 When the king heard this, he was very troubled and tried to think of a way to save Daniel. Even until sunset he was trying to find a way to save him.

15 Then these men came as a group to the king and said, “Understand, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that any law the king makes cannot be changed.”

16 So the king had Daniel brought in and thrown into the place where lions were kept.

The king said to Daniel, “May your God, Whom you are faithful to serve, save you.”

17 And a stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the hole. The king marked it with his own special ring and with the rings of his important men, so that no one could save Daniel.

18 Then the king went to his beautiful house and spent the night without food and sleep. And nothing was brought to make him feel better.

19 The king got up at sunrise and went in a hurry to the place where lions were kept.

20 When he came to the hole in the ground where Daniel was, he called to him with a troubled voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, Whom you always serve, been able to save you from the lions?”

21 Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever!

22 My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths. They have not hurt me, because He knows that I am not guilty, and because I have done nothing wrong to you, O king.”

23 Then the king was very pleased and had Daniel taken up out of the hole in the ground. So they took Daniel out of the hole and saw that he had not been hurt at all, because he had trusted in his God.

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: *When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 8: By Faith, Daniel Sees God

Bible Text

Daniel 7:2-18, 23, 25-27

Memory Verse

“And He [Christ] was given power and shining-greatness, and was made King, so that all the people of every nation and language would serve Him. His rule lasts forever. It will never pass away. And His nation will never be destroyed.”
(Daniel 7:14)

Word List

deformed: not having the normal or expected shape

reality: a real event or situation

Redeemer: the One who brings goodness and honor, who buys us back from sin and death

senseless: done or happening for no reason

violence: force used to harm or damage

Have you ever had a bad dream? Have you ever wondered why you would dream about things that made you afraid? Have you ever thought that something you ate gave you bad dreams?

Daniel had a dream that scared him. It was not caused by something he ate. God sent

this dream to Daniel when he was about 60 years old. He had seen how faithful God was even in hard times. A new evil king had taken over. He did not respect the God of Daniel. Maybe Daniel was worried about the nation.

That night God gave Daniel the gift of seeing into the future through this dream. His dream troubled him, but Daniel saw God as Judge and **Redeemer**. He understood that God’s rule never ends. God is in control of all that happens. Evil rulers come and go, but God never changes. His love and mercy endure forever. God’s right and wrong do not change with the times. His rule will never end or be destroyed.

Frightening Animals (Daniel 7:2-8)

Daniel saw four animals coming up out of a dark and stormy sea. Each animal was very different from any animal that God had made. Each was **deformed** and ugly. The first was like a lion, but it had wings. Daniel saw someone pull the wings off this lion. The lion stood up like a man and even had the heart of a man.

The bear was not the beautiful animal that God made either. He was deformed so that one side was larger than the other side. Someone told this bear to stand up and eat much meat.

Then an even more frightening animal came. It looked like a leopard, but it had four

heads and four wings. This ugly animal was given the power to rule.

The lion, bear, and leopard are animals that kill to eat. But the fourth animal killed to destroy. It was so strange that Daniel could not describe it. It made him very afraid. It was strong and had iron teeth. It ate, and then it crushed whatever was left with its teeth and feet. This angry **violence** was **senseless**. There were ten horns on its head, but one of the horns grew bigger than the others. The horn had eyes and a mouth like a man. It pulled three of its own horns up by the roots. Very proud words came from its mouth.

But these animals were not made up by Daniel. These were pictures of pride, selfishness, and senseless violence. This dream helped Daniel understand that this world has fallen from God's perfect plan.

The One Who Has Lived Forever (Daniel 7:9-14)

Suddenly, the ugly dream changed to a beautiful one. Daniel was afraid of the animals. He did not understand what they were. Then he saw thrones being set up, and God sat on the throne. God's white clothing and hair showed how pure and holy He is. God's purity power was displayed as fire. But people were not afraid of God's power. Millions of people were serving God around His throne.

But Daniel kept hearing the prideful words of that horn. He kept looking to see what God would do about that evil one. Then God the Judge took His throne and opened a book to judge the world. He killed that ugly fourth animal and threw him into the fire. The other animals were allowed to live, but God took away their power.

Then He showed Daniel the most precious picture of hope. One like a Son of Man was coming in the clouds. Jesus called Himself the Son of Man. Jesus took on the form of a man to be like one of us. He will one day come and set things right. God has given Jesus power and glory. He is the King who rules every nation. People of every language will worship Jesus. We can trust that God has a beautiful plan in Jesus, no matter how bad things look here. The rule of Jesus lasts forever. Nothing can destroy the kingdom of God in Christ Jesus.

Truth that Lasts Forever (Daniel 7:15-18, 23, 25-27)

Daniel was afraid of these things that he did not understand. Then someone near the throne of God told Daniel the meaning of his dream. The four animals stood for four evil kings who would come and rule on earth.

Today, as believers, we can remember the time when Jesus came to earth as a baby. We look forward to the day when He returns

because we know the **reality** of Jesus' life here among us. He came to earth and died on the cross for our sins. God has a plan to redeem us from sin and death. Christ is our Redeemer, and His rule will never end.

The fourth animal will speak against God and work against God's people. There will be times when it seems like he is winning, but God has limited his time to rule. In the end, those who stand with God will win! All the nations of the earth will be full of God's people. All rulers on earth will serve and obey God.

Things to Remember

Daniel's dream shows us the power of evil. Jesus said in John 10:10a, "The robber comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy." Does that sound like those ugly animals who kill to eat and to destroy? The devil uses nations to steal, kill, and destroy.

But the power of evil fades when compared to the greatness of God. Jesus

Things to Think About

1. Does it help you to know that God is in control even when life seems dark and stormy?
2. Why should you think about things that have not happened yet? Is it important for you to know how God will win in the future?
3. Does the picture of God as judge make you want to worship Him?
4. How can you be prepared to share the Good News that God wins, and that those who love Him will win with Him?

finished the story in John 10:10b: "I came so they might have life, a great full life." The great full life in Christ lasts forever.

What should believers today do with this information about the end of time? Is the Good News about how hard things are going to get when evil rules? Or is the Good News that Jesus has come to give us a great full life? Jesus will return and the end of the story is that God wins.

We do not need not be afraid and look around for the lion, the bear, the leopard. We should not to worry about when and where that fourth animal will appear. The Good News, the hope of the world is this: Jesus has come to buy us back from the hold of sin. He is coming again. He will set everything right. We have no need to be afraid. When God wins, those who follow Him will win too!

Daniel 7:2-18, 23, 25-27

2 Daniel said, "In my dream at night I looked and saw the four winds of heaven causing waves in the great sea.

3 And four large animals were coming up from the sea, different from one another.

4 The first was like a lion and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were pulled off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man. A man's heart was given to it also.

5 Then I saw a second animal, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth.

And it was told, 'Get up, and eat much meat!'
 6 Then I looked and saw another animal, which looked like a leopard. It had four wings of a bird on its back, and four heads. And it was given the power to rule.

7 After this I looked in my dream in the night and saw a fourth animal. It filled me with a very great fear. It was very strong and it had large, iron teeth. It ate and crushed, and whatever was left, it crushed with its feet. It was different from all the animals that were before it, and it had ten horns.

8 While I was thinking about the horns, I saw another horn, a little one, come up among them. And three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots in front of it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth which spoke in pride.

9 "As I kept looking, thrones were set up and the One Who has lived forever took His seat. His clothing was as white as snow and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne and its wheels were a burning fire.

10 A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him. Many thousands were serving Him, and many millions were standing before Him. The Judge was seated, and The Books were opened.

11 I kept looking because of the sound of the proud words which the horn was speaking. I watched until the fourth animal was killed, and its body was destroyed and thrown into the burning fire.

12 The other three animals had their power taken away, but they were allowed to live for a time.

13 "I kept looking in the night dream and saw One like a Son of Man coming with the clouds

of heaven. He came to the One Who has lived forever, and was brought before Him.

14 And He was given power and shining-greatness, and was made King, so that all the people of every nation and language would serve Him. His rule lasts forever. It will never pass away. And His nation will never be destroyed.

15 "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me. The things I saw in my dream made me afraid.

16 I went to one of those who were standing near and asked him the true meaning of all this. So he told me what these things meant.

17 'These four large animals are four kings who will rise from the earth.

18 But the holy ones of the Most High will receive the nation and keep it forever and ever.'

....

23 "He told me, 'The fourth animal will be a fourth nation on the earth. It will be different from all the other nations. It will destroy the whole earth. And it will crush under foot whatever is left.

....

25 He will speak against the Most High and make it hard for His holy ones. And he will try to make changes in times and in law. The holy ones will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time (three and a half years).

26 But the Judge will decide against him. And his ruling power will be taken away and destroyed forever.

27 Then the ruling power and greatness of all the nations under the whole heaven will be given to the holy people of the Most High. His nation will last forever, and all rulers will serve and obey Him."

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: When Faith Is Attacked

Lesson 9: Faith Faces the Future

Bible Text

Daniel 8:3-11, 15-17, 20-27

Memory Verse

“In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice. In the morning I will lay my prayers before You and will look up.” (Psalm 5:3)

Word List

condemn: to make someone or something certain to fail

generation: a group of people born and living during the same period of time.

They say that history repeats itself. Some things happen again and again. One war follows another. One nation takes over another nation. Some kings and rulers are cruel in every **generation**. They take power into their own hands. They are filled with pride. There have been slaves in every generation, too. A law was made over 150 years ago to end slavery in the U.S. But today, there are still people who makes slaves of other people. There are slaves in almost every country.

They say that people who do not know history are **condemned** to repeat it. Daniel was given a special dream to see into the future. He was afraid of what he saw. It makes us afraid, too, when we read it today. But this special dream is a warning to us. History will repeat itself. We have an enemy who wants to steal, kill, and destroy us (John 10:10). God’s people will have hard times until Jesus comes again. Our only hope is in God, who is in control of all of history. Every generation must choose to trust God’s power in hard times. We must remember again and again that He never leaves us to fight evil on our own.

A Battle for Power (Daniel 8:3-11)

This lesson has two animals we all know. Daniel had a dream of a male sheep called a ram and a male goat. This ram had one horn that was much larger than the other. The ram pushed to the west, north, and south. It seemed to have power that no one could stop. He did whatever he wanted to do without thinking of others.

Then came a male goat with only one horn between his eyes. He moved very quickly across the ground. He was so angry that no one could stop him. The goat killed the ram and then crushed him with his feet. The goat was more evil than the ram. He took over many lands very quickly but died young.

Four horns grew up out of him after he died. They divided the ram's power. Then one little horn grew up out of these four horns. That little horn was more evil than the ram or the goat. He took over the land of God's people. He fought against God and His people. He tricked some of them into following him. He thought he was as great as God. He stopped the people from giving gifts to the one true God. Finally, he destroyed God's house.

A Search for Understanding (Daniel 8:15-17, 20-22)

Daniel could not understand what this dream meant. So God sent someone to explain things. Only God can tell angels what to do. He told Gabriel to go and help Daniel understand. This is the same angel who announced the coming of John the Baptist and of Jesus over 1,000 years later. Almost every time an angel appears, he says, "Do not be afraid." Daniel was so afraid that he fell to the ground when Gabriel came near.

Gabriel called Daniel "Son of Man." To be a son of man is to be human. In chapter 7, Daniel saw someone "like a Son of Man" coming in the clouds. The only one *like* a Son of Man is Jesus. Jesus is God who came to live with us and be *like* us. So Gabriel was talking to Daniel as a man.

He said that this dream was about the

end of time. He explained that the ram and his two horns were the future kings of Media and Persia. One horn was bigger than the other because Persia would grow stronger and take over Media.

The goat was the future king of Greece who would very quickly take over all the land of the Persians and more. We can see that this must be Alexander the Great. He very quickly took control of a very large part of the world. He was only 33 years old when he died. Those four horns were the four kings who divided Alexander's lands among themselves.

A Look at the End of Time (Daniel 8:23-27)

One evil ruler followed another again and again. The more powerful the ruler became, the more evil he grew. History was repeating itself. But the rulers were growing from bad to worse. Surely Daniel wondered why God did not stop the ram, the goat, or those horns. When we cannot see God's hand, we wonder how long evil will continue.

Then a little king took power. He was not as powerful, but he was even more evil. He gave himself the name "Splendid." He thought that he was better than God. He tricked many of God's people. He stopped them from giving gifts to God. Then he killed unclean animals in the Temple. Finally, he destroyed the Temple of God. Another war or

king did not end his rule. God ended his life. He lost his life by the hand of God.

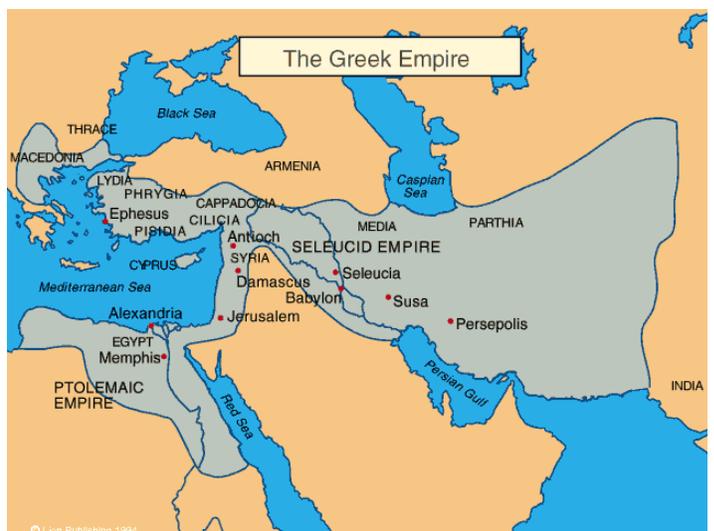
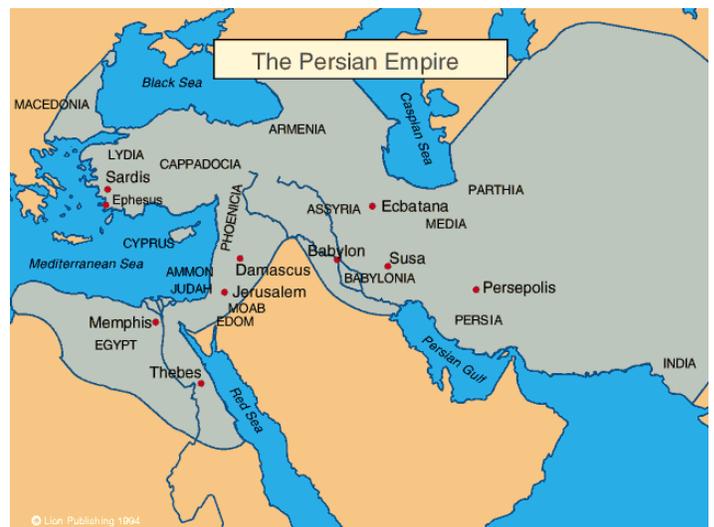
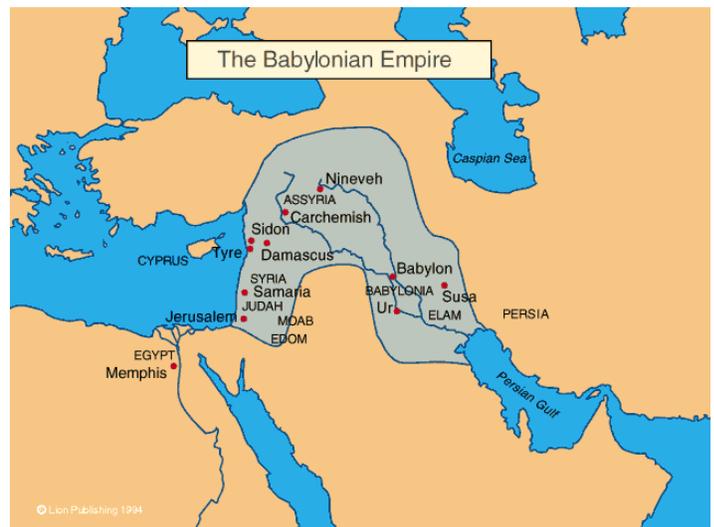
Daniel was so troubled by this dream that he was sick on his bed for days. But then Daniel got up and got to work. He knew that God had placed him in a special time and place so that he could serve.

Things to Remember

God wanted Daniel and us to know that evil rulers will come one after another to the very end of time. Some rulers will fight against God's people. And they will seem to win. But evil powers will be broken by the hand of God Himself.

We can resist the evil that tempts us if we are aware of it. We are not condemned to repeat history. We will not be so easily tricked into following evil leaders when we know that God is in control. Believers have looked up to God and continued to do the work God has given them to do all throughout history, even in evil times. God

has put each of us in a time and place so that we can be His servants. Look up, child. Take heart and keep busy for His kingdom.



Things to Think About

1. Have you seen how history repeats itself in your own experience?
2. What are some ways that God's work can go on even when rulers make it hard on believers?
3. How should we ask God for understanding? How can we expect Him to show us His hand at work?
4. Some of us are not being pressured by our rulers. What can we do to help believers who are living in hard places?

Map source: <http://gods-word-first.org/bible-maps.html>

Daniel 8:3-11, 15-17, 20-27

3 Then I looked up and saw a ram with two horns standing by the river. The two horns were long, but one was longer than the other. And the longer one came up last.

4 I saw the ram pushing to the west, to the north, and to the south. No other animals could stop him or be saved from his power. He did as he pleased and made himself great.

5 While I was watching, a male goat came from the west across the whole earth without touching the ground. And the goat had a horn between his eyes that was very easy to see.

6 He came up to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing by the river, and rushed at him in his strong anger.

7 I saw him come at the ram in his anger. He hit the ram and broke his two horns to pieces. The ram was not strong enough to fight against him. So the goat threw him to the ground and crushed him under foot. And there was no one to save the ram from his power.

8 Then the male goat became very great. But as soon as he was powerful, the large horn was broken. And four large horns came up in its place, toward the four winds of heaven.

9 Out of them came a little horn which grew in power toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land.

10 It grew to be as great as the army of heaven and made some of them fall to the earth, and it crushed them into the ground.

11 It thought itself to be as great as the Ruler of the army of heaven. It took away the burnt gifts which were given to Him each day, and destroyed His holy place.

....

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the special dream, I tried to understand it. Then I saw one standing in front of me who looked like a man.

16 And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai River. He called out and said, "Gabriel, help this man to understand the special dream."

17 When he came near the place where I was standing, I was afraid and fell on my face to the ground. But he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the special dream is about the time of the end."

....

20 The ram you saw had two horns which are the kings of Media and Persia.

21 The male goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king.

22 The broken horn and the four horns that grew in its place are the four nations which will come from his nation. But they will not be as powerful.

23 In the later part of their rule, when they have become as sinful as they can be, a king will rise to power. This king will be very proud and will understand secret things.

24 He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will destroy much, and do well in whatever he wants done. He will destroy powerful men and the holy people.

25 He will do well by using his false ways and lies, and will think of himself as great. He will destroy many who are taking it easy. He will even go against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by a human hand.

26 The special dream of the evenings and mornings that has been given to you is true. But keep the dream secret, for it has to do with things far into the future."

27 I, Daniel, was tired and sick for days. Then I got up again and did the work that the king had given me. But I was filled with wonder because of the special dream, and did not understand it.

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: *When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 10: Faith to Face Changing Times

Bible Text

Daniel 9:2-19

Memory Verse

“O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! For Your own good, O my God, do not wait, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” (Daniel 9:19)

Word List

attract: to cause someone or something to move toward something or someone

blame: to say or think that someone or something caused something bad to happen

confess: to admit that you did something wrong

society: people living together in communities

wasted: not used or spent in a good way

My husband received a special wooden box for Christmas. A lid opens to a small space. It looks like space is **wasted**. But the box has a hidden drawer. The drawer seems to be locked with no way to open it. There is a secret to opening the drawer. The lock is a magnet. When another magnet passes the right place, the drawer opens! There is never a time when that drawer cannot be opened.

There is a secret that opens God’s blessings. Faithful lives and honest prayer can unlock the great, full life that God gives us. Sin **attracts** God’s judgment. Living for God and praying honestly to Him attracts His love and mercy. There is never a time when God’s mercy and forgiveness cannot be opened.

Daniel Understood the Time (Daniel 9:2-4)

Daniel had been in Babylon almost 70 years when he read Jeremiah’s words again. Suddenly, Daniel understood something in God’s Word. He understood God’s promise that the people could go home after 70 years. Seventy years? The time had almost come! It was time to get ready to return home.

Daniel also understood the people who would return to rebuild God’s city and temple. Most of them had been born in Babylon. Only the old people like Daniel could remember Jerusalem. Maybe they **blamed** God for their trouble. They had built homes and made a new life in Babylon. They did not think about God. Daniel knew that they were sinful. But Daniel also understood that he was part of the problem.

Daniel fell to his knees in prayer. This was not his usual prayer time. He did not eat anything, so he had more time to pray. He wore itchy clothes and sat in cold ashes because he was sorry! He was sorry for his own sins and for the sins of his people. But

Daniel also knew that God keeps His promises because of those who love Him and keep His laws. Even if many people fall into sin, a few people always stay faithful. Daniel understood that those faithful ones attract God's love and mercy.

Daniel Understood Sin (Daniel 9:5-11)

But God's blessing is not cheap. It costs us something. We must **confess** our sins, turn away from that life, and obey and love God. But it cost God even more. God's gift of forgiveness cost Him the life of His Son, Jesus. And now God uses every good and bad experience in our lives to call us to Himself. God wastes nothing.

Daniel pointed out several ways that we all sin. We allow sin to enter our lives. We enjoy what God hates. We act on evil thoughts. We rebel against God and say that we don't need Him. We refuse to obey God's Laws. We refuse to listen to God's message through His Word and His messengers.

We earn shame because of our sin. But God never turns away from us. He is full of mercy, love, and forgiveness. God wants to bless faithful ones.

Daniel Understood the Cost of Sin (Daniel 9:12-14)

Daniel understood the high cost of sin. God gives us a choice. We choose between

life and death. We can choose a blessed life. Or we can choose a cursed one. Romans 6:23 agrees: "You get what is coming to you when you sin. It is death! But God's free gift is life that lasts forever. It is given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ." God always gives what He promises. Death comes to us in many ways. Life comes to us through faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

- Our spirits die because of sin. Our spirits are the parts of us that relate to God. When we sin, our spirits grow cold. They no longer respond when God calls us to Himself.

- Our relationships die because of sin. Families and friendships are broken. God can heal broken relationships, but sin keeps us from seeking God's ways.

- Our **society** dies because of sin, too. People cannot live together in peace when sin rules. Crime, war, and hatred are signs of sin. Every place on earth suffers.

- Our bodies die because of sin. The cost of sin is a body that will not keep living. Our sin cost the life of God's own Son. Jesus died because of our sin, not because of His own.

- Finally, our souls die because of sin. Our souls are the parts of us that God created to live forever. People who choose to live in a relationship with God live on and on forever, even after their bodies die. Those who choose to be separated from God, die over and over again forever.

Daniel Understood God's Mercy

(Daniel 9:15-19)

Daniel understood that praises belong to our God, who is full of mercy. He openly confessed his own sin and the sin of the people. He expected God to respond. God's great mercy cannot be stopped. He does not count our sin against us forever. He forgets our sin and remembers that we belong to Him.

Daniel gave God reasons why He should forgive His people. God had done it before when he brought them out of Egypt. He always does what is right and good. He is always kind. He suffers when His people suffer. His city and His temple were empty because of His judgment on the people. And finally, Daniel knew that people see God's power when He acts to rescue His people. Daniel did not ask for mercy because the people were good. He asked for mercy because it is God's nature to be merciful.

Things to Think About

1. When you read God's Word, do you understand the world and His ways better? If not, why not?
2. Are you willing to pray an honest, open prayer like Daniel prayed?
3. Have you let your past sin keep you from turning to God for forgiveness?
4. What would it take for God to get your attention? His Word? His servants? Or hardship and suffering?
5. How does it make you feel to know that God's blessing on your family, your friends, and your world depends on your faithfulness to Him?

Things to Remember

We live in an exciting time. We have never been closer to the coming of Christ to set things right. But when we look around, we see a broken world. We look at our world and wonder how God could ever love us. Maybe we look at our own past sin and think that God could never forgive us. Do not let a sinful world keep you from praying. And do not let your own past sin keep you from returning to God.

When we face hardship, we need to ask God to show us the reason for it. He may want us to learn something we could not learn any other way. Maybe He wants us to give up our pride. Maybe He wants us to know how much sin costs us. Surely, He wants us to come to Him, to confess our sin, and to live by His Word.

God responds when we pray honestly, confess our sin, and obey His Word. Like that magnet in the box, our faithful lives attract the blessings of God. He gives life to our bodies, souls, spirits, relationships, and society when we are faithful to Him. A great full life is ours in Christ Jesus. We have a choice. Choose life.

Daniel 9:2-19

2 In the first year of his rule, I, Daniel, understood the books which were given by the Lord through Jeremiah that Jerusalem would lie waste for seventy years.

3 So I turned to the Lord God in prayer and did not eat. I dressed in cloth made from hair, and threw ashes on myself.

4 I prayed to the Lord my God and told him the sins of my people, saying, “O Lord, You are great and we fear You. You keep Your agreement and show loving-kindness to those who love You and keep Your Laws.

5 “But we have sinned. We have done wrong and have acted in sin. We have turned against You and against Your Laws.

6 We have not listened to Your servants who spoke for You, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our leaders, our fathers, and all the people of the land.

7 You are right and good, O Lord. But we are all covered with shame, all the men of Judah, the people of Jerusalem, and all Israel. The people both near and far away in all the countries where You have driven us are covered with shame because they have not been faithful to You.

8 We, our kings, our leaders and our fathers are all covered with shame, O Lord, because we have sinned against You.

9 O Lord our God, You are kind and forgiving, even when we would not obey You.

10 We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by following the Laws He gave us through His servants who spoke for Him.

11 All Israel has sinned against Your Law and turned away, not obeying Your voice. So the curses and punishments have been poured out on us, which were written about in the Law of

God’s servant Moses. For we have sinned against Him.

12 He has done what He said He would do against us and our leaders, and has brought much trouble upon us. For under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem.

13 All this trouble has come upon us just as it is written in the Law of Moses. Yet we have not looked for the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sin and following Your truth.

14 So the Lord brought trouble upon us. For the Lord our God is right and good in all He does, but we have not obeyed His voice.

15 “O Lord our God, You have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a powerful hand. And You have made a name for Yourself that is known to this day. Now we have sinned. We have done sinful things.

16 O Lord, because You are right and good in what You do, do not be angry any longer with Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain. For because of our sins and the sins of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have been put to shame by everyone around us.

17 So now, our God, listen to Your servant’s prayer and what he is asking. And for Your good, O Lord, look with favor upon the House of God which now lies waste.

18 O my God, turn Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our trouble and the city that is called by Your name. We are not asking this of You because we are right or good, but because of Your great loving-pity.

19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! For Your own good, O my God, do not wait, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Daniel:
When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 11: The Beginning of the End

Bible Text
Daniel 9:23-27

Memory Verse

“Our sins are washed away and we are made clean because Christ gave His own body as a gift to God. He did this once for all time.” (Hebrews 10:10)

Word List

control: to have power over or to cause to happen in a special way

events: something important that happens

opposite: not the same, as different as possible, such as light and dark

“Understand this first: No part of the Holy Writings was ever made up by any man. No part of the Holy Writings came long ago because of what man wanted to write. But holy men who belonged to God spoke what the Holy Spirit told them” (2 Peter 1:20-21). This is important to remember as we study what the angel Gabriel told Daniel about the people of Israel. Daniel wrote what he heard and what the Holy Spirit told him to write.

The part of Daniel’s writing we are looking at today is not easy to understand. Bible experts have different ideas about what it means. So, we are not going to try to understand all that Daniel has written. We will start by looking at the things we know are true because they have happened in history. Also, we will look at some truths we see in this part of Daniel that have always been true and will always be true.

The Chosen One (v. 25) that Daniel talks about is Jesus. Jesus came to earth to put an end to the punishment for sin. Jesus paid for sins when He died on the cross and rose again. Jesus is the truth of what Daniel wrote about. Jesus’ coming is the beginning of the end times. Daniel wrote about this about 500 years before Jesus was born. He also wrote about how all things on earth will end.

The Chosen One Will Forgive All Sin (Daniel 9:23-24a)

Daniel prayed (9:4-20) and told God his own sins and the sins of his people. He told God how they had disobeyed and done wrong. As he was praying, he asked God to show favor to him and his people. Then the angel Gabriel came to him to give him the answer to his prayers. Gabriel came to give Daniel wisdom and understanding (9:21-22).

First, Gabriel wanted Daniel to know that God loves him very much. Daniel had

been praying for so long to hear from God. So, God sent Gabriel to tell Daniel how much he was loved. Gabriel brought God's answer and would help Daniel understand that answer.

Second, God showed Daniel that all kinds of sin would end when the Chosen One comes. Hebrews 10:1-18 tells us that Jesus did this. Jesus came to pay for our sin. People did not stop sinning. But Jesus ended the power of sin to **control** those who believe in Him. Jesus ended the power of death that sin brought into the world. Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave so our sins could be forgiven. Jesus ended sin just as Daniel wrote that the Chosen One would do.

The Chosen One Will Win (Daniel 9:24b)

When God gives a message about the future, it is possible to understand it as something for then and also for the far future. That is true about this message. It reads like something Gabriel is telling Daniel and his people to do, but it is also about what the Chosen One will do in the future.

The second part of verse 24 tells about the **opposite** of the first part. The opposite of sin is doing what is right; the opposite of death is life. In the future that Gabriel is telling Daniel about, the Chosen One will win by doing these three important things.

First, He will win when He brings what

is right and good. He will give "what is right and good" (which is the opposite of sin) to every one of His followers. What is right and good? Micah 6:8 gives us the answer: "O man, He has told you what is good. What does the Lord ask of you but to do what is fair and to love kindness, and to walk without pride with your God?" The power to do this comes from God through Jesus by the Holy Spirit. This power is given to all who believe.

Second, Jesus will win because the right and good will last forever. When Jesus left the earth after rising from the dead, He went to heaven where what is right and good never ends. This place called heaven is promised to all those who believe and trust in Jesus as the Chosen One. Jesus takes away their sin and gives them the power to do what is right and good. Right and good will go on forever. Because there is no sin in heaven, Jesus wins!

Third, Jesus will win because Gabriel's words and Daniel's dream will happen. Many of these things have already happened. Some of them are happening now. Some of them will happen in the future.

The 70 Weeks (Daniel 9:25-27)

This part of Gabriel's message from God to Daniel is very hard to understand. It is about time and **events**. If we look closely at time and events, we will understand more.

First, the message is about time, but not as we understand time. “Week” does not mean a set of seven days. “Week” means a set of seven years. So, 70 weeks is 490 years. There are three times given in parts:

- 7 weeks = 49 years (This was the number of years until the Old Testament was finished.)
- 62 weeks = 434 years (This was the time between the end of the Old Testament and the coming of Jesus.)
- the last week = 7 years (This time has not happened yet.)

Second, the message is about events.

There are seven events:

1. Jerusalem is built again.
2. The Chosen One comes.
3. The Chosen One is killed.
4. Jerusalem is destroyed.
5. There are more wars.
6. A bad ruler makes an agreement.

Things to Think About

1. What do you think of when you read the word “sin”? How would you tell someone what it is?
2. How does Jesus, the Chosen One, win? What are the three ways that He wins?
3. Who is in control of all things? Does this give you a feeling of peace and calm when you think about the future? How?
4. How do you know God loves you and hears your prayers?
5. Now that you know many things have happened as God said they would, does this give you hope for the future?

7. A bad false god is put in the holy place until the bad ruler is destroyed. The first four events are now a part of history. The last three events will happen in the future.

Things to Remember

The first and most important thing for all of us to know is that God loves us very much. God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus so that whoever believes in Him will have life that lasts forever (John 3:16). God hears us when we pray. God answers our prayers in His way and His time. These are truths that we can know have always been true and always will be true. Gabriel told Daniel that he was loved. Jesus told us about God’s love. Believers will know and experience God’s love forever in heaven.

Next is that most of the things Daniel saw and Gabriel told him have happened; in time, all will happen. Some things like Jerusalem being built again has happened, then it was destroyed and it was built again. The holy place in Jerusalem will be built again in the future. We can know that these things will happen because they happened in Daniel’s future and in our past. How do we know that anything that has not yet happened will happen? Because God said it. Because we have proof in these verses that God told Daniel what would happen — and it did. God

sees far into future. We can trust God with the future.

It is also very important to remember that God is in control. God knows the beginning from the end. We know from the book of Daniel that when the Chosen One came, it was the beginning of the end of time. We also know that Jesus wins. Those who believe in Jesus also win. Followers of Jesus will live with Him in heaven forever where there is no sin and where right and good always happen. Have you given your life to Jesus? Have you chosen the Chosen One to give you life that lasts forever? Will you do that today?

Daniel 9:23-27

23 Gabriel: “As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you. For you are loved very much. So listen to what I say and understand the special dream.

24 “Seventy weeks are given for your people and your holy city to finish the wrong-doing and put an end to sin. By the end of this time, you must pay for your sins and follow what is right and good forever. You must finish what was shown in the special dream and what has been spoken in My name, and set apart the most holy place.

25 Know and understand that seven weeks and sixty-two weeks will pass from the time

the people are told to build Jerusalem again until the Chosen One comes. It will be built again, with streets and with a ditch of water around it. But that will be a troubled time.
26 After the sixty-two weeks, the Chosen One will be killed and have nothing. And the people of the ruler who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end will come like a flood. Even to the end there will be war. For the Lord has said that much will be destroyed.

27 That ruler will make a strong agreement with many for one week. But when half that time is past, he will put a stop to burnt gifts and grain gifts. And a very sinful man-made god will be put there. It will stay there until the one who put it there is destroyed.”

Hebrews 10:1-18

1 The Law is like a picture of the good things to come. The Jewish religious leaders gave gifts on the altar in worship to God all the time year after year. Those gifts could not make the people who came to worship perfect.

2 If those gifts given to God could take away sins, the people who came to worship would no longer feel guilty of sin. They would have given no more gifts.

3 When they gave the gifts year after year, it made them remember that they still had their sins.

4 The blood of animals cannot take away the sins of men.

5 When Christ came to the world, He said to God, “You do not want animals killed or gifts given in worship. You have made My body ready to give as a gift.

6 You are not pleased with animals that have been killed or burned and given as gifts on the altar to take away sin.

7 Then I said, ‘I have come to do what You want, O God. It is written in the Law that I would.’”

8 Then Christ said, “You do not want animals killed or gifts given in worship to you for sin. You are not pleased with them.”

These things are done because the Law says they should be done. 9 Then He said, “I have come to do what You want Me to do.” And this is what He did when He died on a cross. God did away with the Old Way of Worship and made a New Way of Worship.

10 Our sins are washed away and we are made clean because Christ gave His own body as a gift to God. He did this once for all time.

11 All Jewish religious leaders stand every day killing animals and giving gifts on the altar. They give the same gifts over and over again. These gifts cannot take away sins.

12 But Christ gave Himself once for sins and that is good forever. After that He sat down at the right side of God.

13 He is waiting there for God to make of those who have hated Him a place to rest His feet. 14 And by one gift He has made perfect forever all those who are being set apart for God-like living.

15 The Holy Spirit tells us this: First He says, 16 “This is the New Way of Worship that I will give them. When that day comes, says the Lord, I will put My Laws in their hearts. And I will write them in their minds.” Then He says,

17 “I will not remember their sins and wrong-doings anymore.”

18 No more gifts on the altar in worship are needed when our sins are forgiven.

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: *When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 12: The Power of Prayer

Bible Text

Daniel 10:1-21

Memory Verse

“Then the one who looked like a man touched me again and gave me strength.” Daniel 10:18

Word List

amazed: feeling and showing great surprise

message: words from one person given to another person

Angels are real. My mother saw and spoke to one. My young son saw and spoke to one. That same son and I may have met two. Hebrews 13:2 says, “Do not forget to be kind to strangers Some people have had angels in their homes without knowing it.” This tells us that angels sometimes look like people.

Angels are not people, but sometimes they choose to look like people. An angel came to my son when he was five years old and in a lot of pain. I had gone to the kitchen to get a warm towel for his stomach because he was screaming and crying. The angel told

him that he was not going to die and his pain would be gone. He suddenly stopped crying.

I ran back quickly with the towel to see what had made him stop crying. He told me he had seen an angel. He told me what the angel said. His pain had stopped. When I asked what the angel looked like, he had to think for a while.

Finally, he told me the angel looked like his great grandfather. His great grandfather had died about a month before this. I told him that his great grandfather had not become an angel. He looked at me and said: “I know, Mom, that was not great grandpa; the angel just looked like him.” I helped him understand that the angel looked like someone he knew so he would not be scared. We were both **amazed!**

In today’s lesson, we will read how something like this happened to Daniel. He saw angels that looked like men. Sometimes he was dreaming and sometimes he saw them while he was awake. It was always the power of prayer that brought these angels to him.

Understanding Came Through Prayer (Daniel 10:1, 4-6)

Daniel gives an idea of when this happened by telling the name of the king who was ruling in Persia. Because he gave us this information, we know that Daniel was 80-90 years old at this time.

We know from Lesson 7 that Daniel prayed three times a day (Daniel 6:10). He prayed often when there was trouble and when he needed to hear from God. He showed us how to pray when we want to hear from God.

Angels came to give Daniel an answer to his prayers. He had a dream while he was awake. The dream is hard to understand. First, he saw an angel who looked like a man. This angel had special clothes. His body was very shiny. His voice was loud like the sound of many people. He was not like a normal man.

Daniel Got Ready for Prayer (Daniel 10:2-3)

Before we look at the rest of the waking dream, we should see how Daniel prayed. He got ready for his time of prayer. He got ready to hear the answer to his prayers. For three weeks, he prayed because he was deeply sad.

How did he get ready? He did not eat the good food of the king. He did not eat meat, drink wine, or use oil on his skin. He lived in a very dry place. It would have been difficult to not have oil on his skin. But he did not want to think of himself or take time to care about himself. Instead of doing these things, he prayed for three weeks.

Not eating food is a special way to pray deeply. Jesus did not eat food for 40 days and 40 nights. He was praying deeply to know God's will and obey it. Many who believe in

God have gone without food while they are praying deeply for a special reason. Many who are followers of Jesus have followed His example of not eating but praying.

Daniel wanted to have time to think only about God while he prayed deeply to understand what God was showing him.

Daniel's Strong Feeling in Prayer (Daniel 10:7-9, 15-17)

Daniel had some difficult things happen because of his deep prayers: he had no strength left; his skin color turned white as if dead; he fell into a deep sleep with his face to the ground; he turned his face toward the ground and could not speak; he had pain come to him because of the special dream; and he had no breath left in him. Daniel would soon learn what happened because of his hard work in prayer.

James 5:16b says, "The prayer from the heart of a man right with God has much power." Daniel's prayers were from his heart. Daniel gave himself to God in prayer. Daniel's prayers were powerful. This is an important example of prayer for us today.

Daniel Was Comforted from His Prayer (Daniel 10:10-19)

The angel that God sent to Daniel started answering him by touching him. Daniel did not know who or what was touching him so he shook with fear. He knew

he was not alone. The angel told Daniel the best words anyone could hear: “you ... are very much loved.” Such beautiful words! Those words were sent by God. This gave Daniel comfort and courage, too.

The angel touched Daniel a second time. That touch made Daniel able to speak. Sometimes it takes a second touch to make a person calm enough to get over their fear.

The reason the angel came with a **message** was to give Daniel what he asked for — understanding. That understanding will be studied in the next two lessons. The angel told Daniel not to be afraid.

Before he was ready to hear the message, Daniel needed one more touch.

The third touch from the angel gave Daniel strength. He needed to be strong to hear and understand the message. This touch also brought peace to Daniel. Many times when angels appear, they tell people not to be afraid, and they speak peace.

Things to Think About

1. Have you or someone you know ever seen and talked to an angel? Tell your story.
2. How does prayer help us to understand what God wants for us and for our world?
3. Have you every prayed deeply about something? What happened?
4. How has God given you comfort in your times of deep sadness or need? Tell your story.

Daniel Heard About War Around His Prayer (Daniel 10:13-14, 20-21)

There is a world of angels that we do not see. The angel who spoke to Daniel told him that the words of his prayers were heard. The angel started to come to Daniel as soon as Daniel started deeply praying. But the angel was not able to get to Daniel for 21 days because the ruler of Persia fought against him. The angel was able to leave and come to Daniel only after Michael (another angel) came to help him.

His words help us to see just a little of what is happening in the world of angels. There are good angels, and there are bad angels (called demons). These two groups fight against each other. There is a war that we cannot see, a war of bad against good. We know that, in the end, good wins. Good won this time, too. The angel was able to come to Daniel with Michael’s help.

Things to Remember

The angel brought Daniel a message of love. He brought a message of strength. He brought a message of peace. He brought a message of understanding. Daniel had been very sad and alone. Now he was not alone. He learned that God loved him very much. He learned that God heard and answered his prayers as soon as he prayed them. He wanted to learn more.

We should all pray for understanding either for the first time to know God's love or to know more about what God is doing in our lives and in our world. We are loved, given strength and understanding. Our prayers are heard and answered. Good angels are fighting for us. Let's pray deeply for the good that God wants in our lives and in our world! You will be amazed at what God will do!

Daniel 10:1-21

1 In the third year that Cyrus was the king of Persia, some news was made known to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). The news was true and it was about a battle. He received understanding of the news in a special dream.
 2 In those days, I, Daniel, had been full of sorrow for three weeks.
 3 I did not eat any fine food, and no meat or wine came into my mouth. And I did not use any oil at all, until the three weeks were finished.
 4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, I was standing by the side of the wide Tigris River.
 5 I looked up and saw a certain man dressed in linen. Around him was a belt of fine gold.
 6 His body was like shining stone. His face looked like lightning. His eyes were like fire. His arms and feet were like shining brass. And his voice was like the noise of many people.
 7 I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the special dream. The men who were with me did not see it. But they were filled with much fear, and ran away to hide themselves.
 8 So I was left alone and saw this special dream. I had no strength left. My skin color turned white as if I were dead, and there was no strength left in me.
 9 Then I heard the sound of his words. And as soon as I heard him speak, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground.

10 Then a hand touched me and I shook with fear on my hands and knees.
 11 And he said to me, "O Daniel, you who are loved very much, understand what I am about to tell you, and stand up. For I have now been sent to you." When he said this to me, I stood up shaking in fear.
 12 Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind on understanding and getting rid of your pride before your God, your words were heard. And I have come because of your words.
 13 But the ruler of Persia stood against me for twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the leading princes of honor, came to help me, because I had been left there with the king of Persia.
 14 Now I have come to help you understand what will happen to your people in the last days. For the special dream is about the days yet to come."
 15 When he had said this to me, I turned my face toward the ground and could not speak.
 16 Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who was standing in front of me, "O my lord, pain has come to me because of the special dream, and I have no strength left.
 17 How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and no breath is left in me."
 18 Then the one who looked like a man touched me again and gave me strength.
 19 He said, "O man who is loved very much, do not be afraid. May peace be with you. Be strong and have strength of heart." And when he had spoken to me, I received strength, and said, "May my lord speak, for you have given me strength."
 20 He said, "Do you understand why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the ruler of Persia. And when I go, the ruler of Greece will come.
 21 But first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one helps me against these rulers except Michael, your leading angel).

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: *When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 13: History in the Making

Bible Text

Daniel 11:2-15, 21-27, 36-45

Memory Verse

“But nothing will come of it, for the end will still come at the chosen time.” (Daniel 11:27b)

Word List

empire: a group of countries or areas that are controlled by one ruler

exactly: true in every way

History is important. It was never my favorite thing to study in school but I knew it was important. God knows the past, present, and the future. The angel helped Daniel to understand the future. Daniel wrote down what he understood. Everything Daniel wrote in verses 2-35 happened **exactly** the way he wrote it. These things happened from the time of Daniel until the time of Jesus.

People who study the history of that time cannot believe that Daniel wrote these things *before* they happened. He did. And it is truly amazing. God sent the angel to answer

Daniel’s prayer and give him understanding of exactly what was going to happen. Everything happened the way the angel said it would. This makes Daniel 11 one of the most important chapters in the Bible.

The rest of the chapter tells about things that have not yet happened. These are events that are still going to happen in the future. We can trust that these things will happened exactly as Daniel wrote them because everything he wrote before has happened.

What does this chapter show us? God is real. God tells the truth. God knows all of human history and He knows all of the future. God gave this message to the angel. The angel gave this message to Daniel. It is amazing to know that even those who do not believe in God can read this and see history being told with many facts before it happened. Every event happened exactly as Daniel wrote it. It is not possible to tell everything, but here is some of what we know that has happened.

In the Simplified English study, we usually put the Bible verses at the end of each lesson. But for this lesson, we are showing you the Bible verses right before you read the comments. We hope this will help you to understand these verses more easily.

Persia and Greece (Daniel 11:2-4)

2 I tell you the truth. Three more kings will rule over Persia. Then a fourth will become much richer than all of them. As soon as he becomes

strong because of his riches, he will move everyone against the nation of Greece.

3 Then a powerful king will rise up, and he will rule with power and do as he pleases.

4 But as soon as he has risen to power, his nation will be broken and divided to the four winds of heaven. It will not be divided among his own children, or because of his own power. For his power will be taken and given to others besides these.”

This part of what Daniel wrote before it happened came true in the countries of Persia and Greece. The “three more kings” that will rule over Persia have the names Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius 1 Hystaspes. The fourth greater one is Xerxes 1. Xerxes was the richest and most powerful of all. Before it happened, Daniel wrote about these kings and how the riches and power would become greater until someone greater would come.

Alexander the Great is well known in history. He is the powerful king that Daniel wrote about (11:3). Alexander died without having children. The lands he had taken were divided and ruled by four generals from his army: Lysimachus ruled Asia Minor, Cassander ruled Greece and Macedonia, Seleucus ruled Syria and Persia, and Ptolemy ruled Egypt and Israel (11:4).

Daniel saw these Persian kings and Alexander the Great. He saw their riches and power. He saw what would happen to them. He wrote about it as he understood it. These events happened just as God said they would.

Seleucids and Ptolemies (Daniel 11:5-9)

5 “Then the king of the South will become strong. But one of his leaders will become stronger than he and will rule with much power.

6 After some years they will join together. The daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to make an agreement. But she will not keep her power, and he will not keep his. She will be killed, together with those who brought her, and her father, and the one who helped her.

7 But one of her family will become king in his place. He will fight against the army and go into the strong city of the king of the North. He will fight against them and win.

8 And he will carry their false gods and objects of silver and gold away to Egypt. For some years he will leave the king of the North alone.

9 Then the king of the North will go to fight against the king of the South, but will return to his own land.”

Daniel’s understanding continues with the king of the South who will become strong. We know from history that this king’s name is Ptolemy. He became the ruler of the Ptolemaic **Empire**. Seleucus was the king of the North and ruled over the Seleucid Empire.

In history books, we find the interesting story of the daughter of Ptolemy, her marriage, and the murders that Daniel tells about. Ptolemy’s daughter’s name was Berenice. Berenice married Antiochus 2. This marriage was supposed to bring the two empires together, but it did not. Power went from one empire to the other and then to the other again. (The story is so interesting it could be made into a movie!)

Daniel saw these kings and their empires. He saw their agreements and power changes. He saw what would happen to them. He wrote about it as he understood it. These events happened just as God said they would.

Antiochus 3 the Great (Daniel 11:10-15)

10 “His sons will get ready for war and gather together a very large army. They will come like a flood and pass through, and fight in battle as far as his strong city.

11 The king of the South will be very angry and will go and fight with the king of the North, who will have a very large army. But his army will be given over to the king of the South.

12 When the army is taken away, the king of the South will become very proud, and he will kill tens of thousands. But his strength will not last.

13 For the king of the North will gather together a larger army than before. And after some years he will come with a large army ready to do battle.

14 In those times many will fight against the king of the South. Angry men among your people will also go against the king to do what was shown in the special dream, but they will not win.

15 Then the king of the North will come and build a battle-wall, and take a very strong city. The army of the South will not be able to stand against him, not even their best soldiers. They will not have enough strength.”

Next are the events of 222 B.C. when Antiochus 3 came to power. He made the Seleucid Empire bigger than the Persian Empire had been. He took Israel and some of Greece. He won the war with Ptolemy, the king of the south. He was kind to the Jewish people. His empire was amazing. It was the biggest of all from the time Daniel wrote until the Roman Empire overpowered him.

Daniel saw these kings and their battles. He saw their lands and people. He saw what would happen to them. He wrote about it as he understood it. These events happened just as God said they would.

Antiochus 4 Epiphanes (Daniel 11:21-27)

21 “A very sinful person will rise to power in his place. He will not be given the honor of being king, but he will come in a time of peace and take over the nation using smooth sounding words and false ways.

22 Armies will be driven away and destroyed in front of him, and also the ruler of the agreement.

23 And after a peace agreement is made with him, he will use false ways and become strong with a small army.

24 In a time of peace he will go into the richest parts of the land, and do what his fathers and his fathers’ fathers never did. He will divide the things taken in war and things of worth among them, and make plans against strong cities, but only for a time.

25 He will gather all his strength against the king of the South with a large army. So the king of the

Things to Think About

1. Do all the facts that Daniel wrote and that became history amaze you? What does it mean to you?
2. What is the most important message that Daniel’s understanding of the angel’s message gives us?
3. What do you know about the end times? Share with the class your thoughts about the future.
4. Who is in control of the past, present, and future? Does this give you hope? Will you share your hope with others?

South will gather together a very large and powerful army for war, but he will not win the battle. Secret plans will be made against him.
 26 Those who eat his best food will destroy him. And his army will be driven away and many will be killed.
 27 The hearts of both kings will be sinful. They will lie to each other at the same table. But nothing will come of it, for the end will still come at the chosen time.”

Daniel wrote about a very sinful ruler. This ruler wanted to be seen as god. The name he gave himself (Epiphanes or epiphany means *god being seen as a man*). He did more terrible things than even bad rulers did not do!

Daniel saw this sinful ruler and his sinful ways. He saw his pride and desire to be seen as a god. He saw what would happen to him and his enemies. He wrote about it as he understood it. These events happened just as God said they would.

The Antichrist (Daniel 11:36-45)

36 “Then the king will do as he pleases. He will honor himself more than every god, and will say very bad things against the God of gods. Everything will go well for him until the time of anger is finished. For what has been planned will be done.
 37 He will not care about the gods of his fathers or for the one that women like. He will not care about any other god, for he will honor himself more than any of them.
 38 Instead he will honor a god of strong cities, a god his fathers did not know. He will honor him with gold, silver, stones of much worth, and riches.
 39 And he will fight against the strongest cities with the help of a strange god. He will give great honor to those who follow him, and will let them

rule over many people. And he will divide the land for a price.

40 At the time of the end the king of the South will go against him. And the king of the North will fight against him with war-wagons, horsemen, and many ships. He will come into countries like a flood and pass through.

41 He will also come into the Beautiful Land and many countries will be taken. But Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be saved from his power.

42 Then he will fight against other countries, and Egypt will be taken.

43 He will get the hidden riches of gold and silver and all the things of great worth in Egypt. And the people of Libya and Ethiopia will follow behind him.

44 But news from the East and from the North will trouble him, and he will go with much anger to kill and destroy many people.

45 He will set up his tents made for kings between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.”

Daniel’s dream and understanding did not end with the coming of Jesus. There was more that has not yet happened in history, but one day, it will happen. We do not know the name of the very sinful person who is coming but we call that person Antichrist.

Like Antiochus Epiphanes, this person will think of himself as a god or the God. He will also say bad things about the One True God. He will kill many people who believe in God. Many of the things said about the earlier ruler will also be true about this one. He will take many lands. He will be the ruler during what is called the end times. He is not God,

and he will come to an end. God will win. God is always in control.

Daniel saw this sinful person who wants to be God. He saw what would happen to him and those who do not follow him. He wrote about it as he understood it. These events will happen just as God said they will.

Things to Remember

Because God knows everything from the beginning to the end, the first part of His message to Daniel through the angel happened and became part of world history. All who know history can see the truth of this part of the message.

When Daniel wrote of these events, none of them had happened. Now, many parts of the message have come true. And one day, all of the events in Daniel's message will come true. Daniel's message covered many thousands of years of human history.

History proves that the Word of God is true. The last part of the message about the Antichrist will one day happen, too.

The truth is that Jesus will return during the end times. The end times will be a terrible time because of the Antichrist will bring much sadness. but His followers will be saved. The followers of Jesus need to be ready for His return. Everyone needs to hear about the end times so they can be ready. Everyone needs to hear that Jesus has died for

their sins and offers them forgiveness. Who will tell them? Are you ready?

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Daniel: *When Faith Is Attacked*

Lesson 14: Shine Like the Stars

Bible Text
Daniel 12:1-13

Memory Verse

“And those who lead many to do what is right and good will shine like the stars forever and ever.”
(Daniel 12:3)

Word List

blessing: something from God that helps or brings happiness

similar: close to the same but not exactly the same

I remember when I was a young girl, the pastor of my church would talk about the future events told about in the Bible — sometimes called “the end times.” He would tell us about the things written in the Bible’s last book — Revelation. This book was written by John, one of the special followers of Jesus. John wrote several books in our Bible:

- The Gospel of John is about Jesus’ life.
- 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John are three letters he wrote to groups of Jesus’ followers.

- The book of Revelation was a vision or dream John had about the end times.

Like Daniel, John had dreams about the future. He wrote down what God helped him to understand about these events. Many of these end-times events are the same in both Daniel and Revelation. This is because they are truths from God about what will happen in the future. They are not always easy to understand but we can trust that they are true.

A Time of Trouble Is Coming.

Who Will Be Taken Out of the Trouble? (Daniel 12:1-4)

Daniel and John both wrote about a terrible time of trouble during the end times. The bad news is: it is coming — some day. But the good news is when Jesus returns, He will take His followers to heaven, away from it all. Now, we do not know whether Jesus will come back before, during, or after the days of trouble. But even though we do not know exactly when Jesus is coming back, we can trust it will happen just as God has said.

Another part of what Daniel saw was God’s special book (12:1). Daniel writes that it has names in it. The names are the people who will be taken away. Daniel’s writing is not the only place we read about God’s book of names. God told the same thing to other Bible writers: King David, John, and Luke.

King David wrote most of the book of Psalms, which are songs of faith. He wrote,

“Your eyes saw me before I was put together. And all the days of my life were written in Your book before any of them came to be” (Psalm 139:16).

In the last book of the Bible, John gave this book a name, “I saw all the dead people standing before God. There were great people and small people. The books were opened. Then another book was opened. It was the *book of life*” (Revelation 20:12a).

Luke was another follower of Jesus who wrote, “... but be happy because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20b). It is a very good thing to have your name written in God’s book of life! Those who have their names in God’s book of life will be taken out of the terrible times when Jesus returns.

Sadly, some people do not have their names in this book. Those people will not be taken away during the troubling times. After they die, they will be sent away from God forever. Daniel talks about those who will not be with God as the “others will have shame and will suffer much forever” (12:2b). These people will be in hell. Hell is talked about in the Bible. Those who are there will be sad and in terrible pain forever. But most of all, they will be separated from God forever.

Before they die, these people need to know and put their trust in Jesus. Then their names will be written in God’s book of life, and Jesus will take them out of the end times.

Do you wonder what will happen to those followers who die before Jesus comes back? Daniel wrote about those who “sleep in the dust.” This means to be dead and buried. Many years after Daniel wrote, Paul also wrote about these followers in his first letter to the Thessalonians. (Read 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 on page 66.) These followers will be raised from the dead first. They will have life that lasts forever with God. Sadly, those who died without faith in God do not get another chance to believe. They will have shame and suffer forever because they did not choose to follow God while they were alive.

There will be rewards for the first group who are raised to life. Daniel gives a beautiful picture of them shining like stars in the bright heavens. This reward is for those who are wise and who “lead many to do what is right and good” (12:3). This is a **blessing** spoken by the angel, and it was the end of the angel’s message. Daniel was told to “keep these words hidden and lock up the Book until the end of time” (12:4). It was important for Daniel to keep the message safe until people in the end times could understand it better.

What Will the End Be Like?

(Daniel 12:5-13)

Next, Daniel saw two other angels who looked like men. One talked to the first angel. He asked a question that would help Daniel

know more about the end times. Then Daniel asked a second question.

The first question was about time: How long would it be before these events ended? The other angel answered by raising two hands. This meant God’s promise was that it would be three and a half years. This is half of the seven years of trouble (11:36-45). This was good news because Daniel’s people would only suffer for the last half of the seven years of trouble.

The second question was about how the end times would come. Daniel wanted to know more, so he asked, “How will it all end?” But the angel did not answer this question. Some things were to be kept hidden, even from Daniel.

Jesus’ special followers asked Jesus a **similar** question many centuries later. They asked, “Tell us, when will this happen? What can we look for to show us of Your coming and of the end of the world?” (Matthew 24:3). Jesus gave them this answer, “But no

one knows the day or the hour. No! Not even the angels in heaven know. The Son does not know. Only the Father knows” (Matthew 24:36).

Jesus gave His followers some events to look for to know when the end times were coming. The angel did something similar with Daniel: Many will turn to God and be made pure. These wise people who listen to God will understand. But sinners will sin more and more. They will not understand.

The angel gave some days between the events he told Daniel about earlier. But these are hard to understand. Days could mean years. Daniel was told he will rest (die) and rise again to be with all those who will meet Jesus when He returns.

Things to Remember

About 20 years ago, there were popular books and movies called *Left Behind*. They tell about a family where the mother and son are followers of Jesus but the father and daughter are not. The father and daughter get “left behind” when Jesus comes back. The mother and son are taken to heaven with Jesus. The father and daughter live through the hard days of the end times.

Remember that Daniel says those “whose names are written in the Book will be taken out of trouble” (12:1). Matthew wrote what Jesus said: “It will be like this when the

Things to Think About

1. How does knowing about the end times and all the trouble make you feel? Why?
2. What is the book of life? Why are people’s names written in the book?
3. Who will have the blessing of shining like the stars forever? How can we lead others to do what is right and good?
4. Are we now in the end times? Why or why not?

Son of Man comes. Two men will be working in a field. One will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding grain. One will be taken and the other will be left. Because of this, watch! You do not know on what day your Lord is coming” (Matthew 24:39b-42).

“I Wish We’d All Been Ready” is part of the *Left Behind* song. The time of trouble will be very terrible. But if you have put your faith and trust in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you will be taken out of that trouble when Jesus returns. Are you ready? Is your family ready? Are your friends ready?

Jesus is coming! Everyone needs to be ready. Those who help others be ready by leading them to Jesus will have the blessing of shining like the stars forever!

Daniel 12:1-13

1 “At that time the great angel Michael, who watches over your people, will rise up. And there will be a time of trouble, the worst since there was a nation. But at that time, every one whose name is written in the Book will be taken out of the trouble.

2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will wake up. Some will have life that lasts forever, but others will have shame and will suffer much forever.

3 Those who are wise will shine like the bright heavens. And those who lead many to do what is right and good will shine like the stars forever and ever.

4 But as for you, Daniel, keep these words hidden and lock up the Book until the end of time. Many will travel here and there and knowledge will be

more and more.”

5 Then I, Daniel, looked and saw two others. One was standing on this side of the river, and the other was standing on that side.

6 And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be until the end of these wonders?”

7 The man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven. And I heard him promise by Him Who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and a half a time (three and a half years). As soon as the power of the holy people is broken, all these things will be completed.

8 I heard, but I did not understand. So I said, “My lord, how will it all end?”

9 And he said, “Go your way, Daniel. For these words are hidden and locked up until the end of time.

10 Many will be made pure and made white and tried, but the sinners will be very sinful. None of the sinful will understand, but those who are wise will understand.

11 From the time the burnt gifts are stopped and the very sinful manmade god is set up, there will be 1,290 days.

12 How happy is he who waits and comes to the end of the 1,335 days!

13 But go your way until the end. Then you will have rest, and will rise again to take your place at the end of time.”

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

15 We tell you this as it came from the Lord. Those of us who are alive when the Lord comes again will not go ahead of those who have died.

16 For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud call. The head angel will speak with a loud voice. God’s horn will give its sounds. First, those who belong to Christ will come out of their graves to meet the Lord.

17 Then, those of us who are still living here on earth will be gathered together with them in the clouds. We will meet the Lord in the sky and be with Him forever.

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

Easter Lesson: Because He Lives

Bible Text

Matthew 28:1-10

Memory Verse

“He is not here! He has risen from the dead as He said He would.” (Matthew 28:6)

Word List

announce: to make something known in a public or formal way

crucifixion: killing someone by nailing or tying his or her hands and feet to a cross

disciples: one of a group of 12 men who were sent out to spread the teachings of Jesus Christ

preparation: making something ready

resurrection: to cause something that had ended or died to exist again

After several years of marriage, my husband and I learned that we were going to have a baby. It was an exciting time for us. We made **preparations** for our child and dreamed about the future.

Mostly, we went about our daily lives. We worked during the weekdays. Then we did chores, relaxed, and went to church on the weekends.

On July 1, 1988, our lives changed forever. A little boy had come into our lives. Now, almost everything we did or thought was about him. Our lives were much fuller and more challenging.

A few years later, we had a daughter. She made our lives even fuller and richer. But her birth was not as life-changing as our first child’s birth.

For Christian believers, Christmas and Easter are a little like expecting and then having a baby. Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus. This time brings us the hope of the promise of Emmanuel—“God With Us.”

Easter is when we celebrate the **resurrection** of Jesus. It made real and true the promise of “God With Us.” His resurrection changed everything.

Fearful Meeting (Matthew 28:1-4)

The last chapters of the Gospel of Matthew are about the events of Jesus’ **crucifixion**, burial, and resurrection. Matthew writes as an eyewitness to the events. The stories are told through the eyes of Jesus’ 11 **disciples** and other followers.

After the horrors of the trial and the crucifixion, Jesus’ body was quickly placed in a stone grave. There was not much time to prepare His body for burial. The men and women who followed Jesus were faithful

Jews who stopped work on the Day of Rest. The Day of Rest started at sundown on Friday. No one could work, not even to prepare a body for burial. They had to wait.

Sunday morning was the first time they could go back to the grave. So the women who loved Jesus got up early to finish the work of preparing His body. Even before the sun was up, they hurried to the grave. They carried cloths and water to wash the body. They had good-smelling spices and oils to rub on it. They must have been very sad. Maybe they were even a little bit worried to enter a graveyard.

Their sadness and worry came to a quick end. The earth shook with a strong earthquake. A bright, shining angel came down from heaven and moved the heavy stone away from the grave. This all was so scary that the Roman soldiers fainted from fear (v. 4).

Amazing News (Matthew 28:5-7)

The angel told the women not to be afraid. When angels **announced** the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, they also told them not to be afraid (Luke 2:10).

This angel knew that the women were looking for the dead body of Jesus. The Gospel of John tells that Jesus' friend, Mary Magdalene, cried because she thought someone had taken the body (John 20:13).

But the angel had amazing, good news for them. "He is not here!" said the angel. "He has risen from the dead as He said He would. Come and see the place where the Lord lay."

We can only imagine their surprise about the empty grave and the words of this bright, shining angel. Then the angel had something important for them to do. He said, "Run fast and tell His followers that He is risen from the dead. He is going before you to the country of Galilee. You will see Him there as I have told you."

Full Reality (Matthew 28:8-10)

The women did what the angel told them. They ran to tell the other friends of Jesus. On the way, they met Jesus Himself.

At that moment, their fear and sadness went away, never to return. Jesus was alive! He was real. They fell down at His feet and worshiped Him.

What do you think they said to Jesus as they worshiped? What do you think He said to them? They were full of joy! Their Lord was alive! They were also completely amazed at the miracle of His resurrection.

Christian believers today can have the same joy and amazement as the women at the grave. It was a miracle that Jesus came back to life. He had overcome death. God had shown His power over death. God still has that power and always will.

Jesus had more for the women to do. The angel had told them to hurry to the other followers. Jesus told them the same thing. But He also told them to not be afraid. He added that the other disciples should go to Galilee and they would see Him there.

Galilee was where Jesus grew up and where most of His disciples came from. It was where He began His ministry. It was home.

The Gospels of Luke and John say more about what happened next. Jesus appeared to two of the followers later that day. They were walking from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32). He came to a group of them that night as they were together in a house in Jerusalem. Later, the other followers went north to Galilee and met with Jesus there (John 21).

Jesus showed His followers that He was truly alive. He spoke with them. He walked with them. He ate meals with them.

Still, some people just did not believe

that Jesus had come back from being dead.

They had questions (Matthew 28:17).

But many people did believe. The Bible tells us that Jesus was seen by many people after He came back to life. Bible teachers have counted the groups of people who saw Jesus. About 500 people saw Him! For them, nothing was ever the same.

The 11 disciples of Jesus believed. The women who went to grave believed. Many other people believed, too. They lived the rest of their lives joyfully telling everyone about Jesus. They told others what Jesus told them. They told people that Jesus had more power than death.

It can be hard for people today to believe the miracle that Jesus rose from the dead. It happened almost 2,000 years ago. We do not have all the answers about how Jesus came back to life. But many teachers and writers have studied the Bible and other writings from long ago. They agree that Jesus did come back to life.

Believing that Jesus came back from death takes faith. It takes putting your trust in God when you do not understand everything. But it is that faith and that belief that changes everything.

Here's why. The Bible says that whoever believes in Jesus and that He rose from the dead will have life that lasts forever (John 3:16). This promise gives us hope. No

Things to Think About

1. How does knowing that Jesus is alive even now make a difference in your life?
2. When have you felt the need to have Jesus with you?
3. Who do you know that needs the hope of the living Jesus?
4. Why is the Resurrection the most important day in history?

matter what happens, we will live Jesus forever after we die. Jesus came back to life from death, proving that it is possible. Just as God gave Jesus life after death, He gives life after death to those who believe in Him.

Things to Remember

Many great and famous people have made a difference in the world. We often remember their birthdays: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., are a few of them. They were born, they lived, and they died.

Only one person in history was born, lived, died, and came back to live forever: Jesus. Jesus is risen! Jesus is alive! Jesus is with the Father in heaven, praying for us (Romans 8:34). And Jesus is still “God With Us” (Matthew 28:20). When we are afraid, worried, sick, or broken-hearted, Jesus is with us. As we whisper His name or seek Him in prayer, we can know His comfort and peace. Because He lives!

No matter what you are facing now or in the future, Jesus is with you. His resurrection makes you sure of it. Be joyful in the resurrection that changes everything. And go and share the Good News.

Matthew 28:1-10

1 The Day of Rest was over. The sun was coming up on the first day of the week. Mary

Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the grave.

2 At once the earth shook and an angel of the Lord came down from heaven. He came and pushed back the stone from the door and sat on it.

3 His face was bright like lightning. His clothes were white as snow.

4 The soldiers were shaking with fear and became as dead men.

5 The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus Who was nailed to the cross.

6 He is not here! He has risen from the dead as He said He would. Come and see the place where the Lord lay.

7 Run fast and tell His followers that He is risen from the dead. He is going before you to the country of Galilee. You will see Him there as I have told you.”

8 They went away from the grave in a hurry. They were afraid and yet had much joy. They ran to tell the news to His followers.

9 As they went to tell the followers, Jesus met them and said hello to them. They came and held His feet and worshiped Him.

10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell My followers to go to Galilee. They will see Me there.”