CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
SEPTEMBER212024

Scripture Story: Daniel 8; 9.

God is in control



© 2008 Jupiterimages Corporation/digital photocompositing by Trent Truman

keytext

"Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name."

(Daniel 9:19, NIV)

flashlight

"Through another vision further light was thrown upon the events of the future; and it was at the close of this vision that Daniel heard 'one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision?' Daniel 8:13. The answer that was given, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed' (verse 14), filled him with perplexity" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 554).

what do you think?

Daniel received a vision from God about things to come in the last days. It told about beasts, horns, and the future actions of the powers they symbolize.

In addition to these beasts and horns that symbolize kingdoms and powers, Daniel was told in vision that at the end of a period of 2300 prophetic days "the sanctuary shall be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14, NKJV). This is the hopeful message of the prophecy that presents Jesus' work as our Great High Priest and Intercessor. He began the work of investigative judgment, the second phase of His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, at the end of the prophetic time of 2300 days.

What does it mean to you that Jesus is your Advocate, Mediator, and Intercessor before the Father? What is your response to Him?

_____

_____

_____

did you know?

The 2300-day prophecy is the longest time prophecy in the Bible. One day in prophecy is equal to a year (Ezekiel 4:6), so this prophecy is actually 2,300 years long! Daniel 9:25 tells us this prophecy would begin when the decree went out to rebuild Jerusalem. This happened with Artaxerxes's decree in 457 B.C. Twenty-three hundred years later takes us to 1844. Remarkably, God gave Daniel this prophecy 90 years before it would begin. When the predicted time came for its fulfillment, it happened just as He said.

INTO THE STORY

"In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one that had already appeared to me. . . .

"As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground. . . . The goat became very great, but at the height of its power the large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven.

"Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. It set itself up to be as great as the commander of the army of the LORD; it took away the daily sacrifice from the LORD, and his sanctuary was thrown down. Because of rebellion, the LORD's people and the daily sacrifice were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground.

"Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, 'How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the LORD's people?'

"He said to me, 'It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated.' . . .

". . . And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, 'Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision.' . . .

"[Gabriel] said: '. . . The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. . . .

"In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people. He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.' . . .

"I, Daniel, was worn out. I lay exhausted for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding."

(Daniel 8, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

What symbols did Daniel see in the vision of chapter 8? (See verses 3-14.)

_____
_____
_____

What do these prophetic symbols represent? (See verses 20-26; read also the *What Do You Think?* and the *Did You Know?* sections of the lesson to find answers for interpretation.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

God promised that the little horn would be destroyed. What role did the little horn play in history?

_____
_____
_____
_____

What does this passage teach us about God?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Daniel's vision reveals the great conflict between good and evil, between Jesus' sacrificial and High Priestly ministry for the salvation of our souls on one hand, and the boastful actions of the little horn that seeks to undermine Christ's ministry on the other hand. How does this prophecy help you distinguish between these conflicting forces? Will you allow Jesus full control in your life?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered" **(Daniel 12:1, NIV).**

"God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?" **(Numbers 23:19, NIV).**

"Not one of all the LORD'S good promises to Israel failed; every one was fulfilled" **(Joshua 21:45, NIV).**

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" **(John 16:33, NIV).**

"For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock" **(Psalm 27:5, NIV).**

further insight

"Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master Worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory. And that character which expresses the glory—character—of Christ will be received into the Paradise of God."—Ellen G. White, *The Faith I Live By*, p. 367

Sabbath

Read Numbers 23:19.

Why do you think God showed Daniel what would happen in the future?

God is never caught off guard about things that happen. He has told us about some future events, through Daniel and other prophets, so we can also know and be prepared. The great controversy is happening all around us. The work Jesus is doing right now as our High Priest and Intercessor is of great importance to us. This tells us that He is coming soon and that we should be preparing and helping others to prepare as well. Our text today tells us that God does not lie and what He has said will happen. Are you ready? What can help you be prepared and ready for whatever the future brings your way?

Sunday

Read Psalm 27:5.

Read the *Into the Story* and then answer the questions in the *Out of the Story* section of your lesson. God shared His plan for cleansing the sanctuary. The sanctuary pointed to Jesus' sacrifice, which would take away the sins of the world. God warned that the enemy would come with a counterfeit plan for salvation. No human being can deliver us from sin or a guilty conscience. Jesus alone can save us from our sins and can offer forgiveness and peace. There are no shortcuts that can substitute for earnest prayer to our heavenly Father. Jesus' sacrifice for cleansing our sins allows us direct access to the Father through prayer. God shared this prophecy to warn His people of *what lies* ahead, and to warn of *the deceptions and lies* ahead.

The enemy often uses counterfeits to distract us from God's plan for our life. What kind of counterfeits have you encountered? How did you recognize them to be counterfeits? How did you resist them?

Monday

Read Daniel 9:19.

When we find Daniel, he is in Babylon with the rest of Israel in captivity. Daniel was hoping they would be freed soon, but God kept giving him these disturbing visions. As a result, Daniel was not sure when all of this trouble would end!

Read this week's *Key Text.* On the lines below, rewrite it in your own words.

_____

_____

_____

What does this prayer reveal about Daniel's faith? What does it reveal about Daniel's relationship with God?

_____

_____

_____

Tuesday

Read Daniel 12:1.

In this week's *Flashlight*, Ellen White talks about God's solution to the problem the little horn was causing. He was defiling the sanctuary and trying to take away the sacrifices. God would cleanse the sanctuary and reconsecrate it. God would bring restoration. God would do this through judgment. What things come to your mind when you think of judgment?

In a competition, the judging is the most exciting part, because someone is declared a winner. God has declared that all who love Him and keep His commandments would be victorious. Even though we had to fight hard, when judgment comes we will be vindicated and declared winners!

Wednesday

Read John 16:33.

We have pondered why God would share such a distressing prophecy with Daniel. In the *Punch Lines* section, Jesus gives us a possible answer: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace" (John 16:33, NIV).

How can we have peace when we know that our future will be filled with trouble? Because we have the assurance that God knew about our trouble in advance and has a way for us to either get out of it or get through it. Are you willing to trust God with your future?

Thursday

Read Psalm 119:105.

One of the strongest themes of Daniel is that God is in control, no matter how bad things get. No matter how dark the storm, God promises to guide us through it. God not only predicted dark times, but He promised deliverance. His Word is sure. Just as we can depend on His prophecies, we must lean on His promises.

When times get dark, we must hold on to the light of God's Word. Choose a promise or two that reminds you of God's power and His plan to get you through tough times. Commit it to memory. Write it on an index card and put it in a prominent place so you can see it every day.

Friday

Read Matthew 10:30.

Nothing, big or small, catches God by surprise. He knows all and has a plan to make it work out in the end. What situations have tempted you to believe God has forgotten about you?

_____

_____

_____

God has solutions for problems you have not even had yet. Write out a prayer of thanksgiving that God has charted out your future.

_____

_____

_____