CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
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Scripture Story: Daniel 10–12.

A glorious end!



Photo by Alden Ho

keytext

"The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place."

(Daniel 11:36, NIV)

flashlight

"In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance. . . . The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. Though the griefs and pains and temptations of earth are ended and the cause removed, the people of God will ever have a distinct, intelligent knowledge of what their salvation has cost" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 651).

what do you think?

If you thought this lesson would be an easy one, think again! Ask yourself a few tough questions:

1. What is the purpose of prophecy?
2. How can it make a difference in my life today?
3. Why do you think Daniel wrote these visions down?
4. What do you think they meant to the children of Israel, especially while they were in the midst of the Babylonian captivity?
5. Why is this so important to the Adventist Church?

did you know?

As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures. Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood. But the promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies. 'The wise shall understand' (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days; and of the revelation that Christ gave to His servant John for the guidance of God's people all through the centuries, the promise is, 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.' Revelation 1:3" (Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 547).

INTO THE STORY

"I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; those who were with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

"A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, 'Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.' And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

"Then he continued, 'Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.'

"While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, 'I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I feel very weak. How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.'

"Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. 'Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed,' he said. 'Peace! Be strong now; be strong.'

"When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, 'Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.'

"So he said, 'Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth.' "

(Daniel 10:7-21, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

Who is the person who "looks like a man"?

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What is the "Book of Truth"?

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Why was Daniel the only one who saw the vision?

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What is God's response to Daniel's prayer of faith?

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Who is Michael? (See Daniel 12:1-4; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7.)

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At a closer look at the Bible it becomes clear that Michael is Jesus Himself. Why is it important that Michael is the central figure of Daniel's vision? How does this hopeful message help you trust God to give you victory through Jesus over every area of your life?

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punch lines

"If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing" **(1 Corinthians 13:2, NIV).**

"For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" **(2 Peter 1:21, NIV).**

"Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near" **(Revelation 1:3, NIV).**

further insight

"We need to study the working out of God's purpose in the history of nations and in the revelation of things to come, that we may estimate at their true value things seen and things unseen; that we may learn what is the true aim of life; that, viewing the things of time in the light of eternity, we may put them to their truest and noblest use."—Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 184

"There are many who do not understand the prophecies relating to these days, and they must be enlightened."—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 194

Sabbath

Read Revelation 1:3.

The language of prophecy is sometimes hard to understand. However, there is always a point to prophecy. In it we get to see that God is a God who loves us and who always wins. It is exciting to know that there is a God who understands what this world is all about and can make a difference from the past to the future.

What is the purpose of prophecy? Prophecy reveals God and His character to us. As today's Bible reading tells us: "Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy" (NIV).

List at least two ways that you have been blessed this week by studying prophecy.

Sunday

Read 2 Peter 1:21.

The quote and the questions in the *Into the Story* and *Out of the Story* sections are specific for a reason. We are beginning to see the background information that is coming along with the prophecy.

What is Michael's role in this vision?

What does the vision hold for us today?

How is God revealed through this vision?

Monday

Read Daniel 10:13, 21; Daniel 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7.

In today's Bible passages Michael is called "one of the chief princes," "your prince," and "the great prince who protects your people" (NIV). Who is Michael in all of these passages? What is the hope-filled message to you about Michael who wins the victory in every battle?

Tuesday

Read Revelation 19:9; Isaiah 25:6-9.

In *Flashlight* we begin to see that redemption and salvation are such huge things that we will not fully understand them until we find ourselves sitting at the table with Jesus Christ. It will be a wonderful day when Jesus sits beside us and explains to us all those things we barely were able to understand in texts such as these. What a glorious moment that will be when we will sit with Jesus at that banquet table!

Wednesday

Read 1 Corinthians 13:2.

Today's Bible passage puts into the right perspective the role of prophecies. Their study and interpretation needs to be permeated by a spirit of Christlike love. The prophecies can bring us to a place of greater love and appreciation for what Christ has done for us, and a desire to share them with others. God said and did all of this for love; we have to read and study with the same object in mind: to love God and others and to live according to His plan for our lives.

Thursday

Read Isaiah 46:9, 10.

Have you spent time studying the prophecies in the Bible? Determine in your heart to make the study of the prophecies an enjoyable exercise as part of your personal devotional time. Don't be afraid to ask the tough questions and seek the answers with a fervent and loving heart!

Friday

Read Daniel 2:20-22, 28, 47.

What do the Bible prophecies tell you about God?

What application do they have for your life?

How can you surrender your will to God today and allow Him to develop in you the character of Jesus?

These are important questions that only you can answer for yourself.