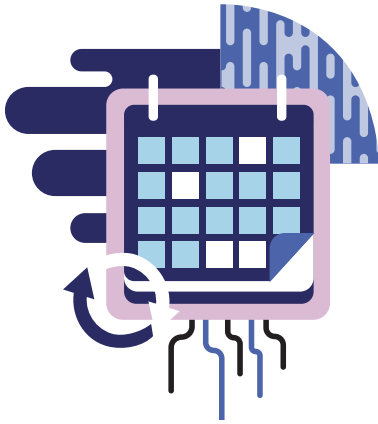


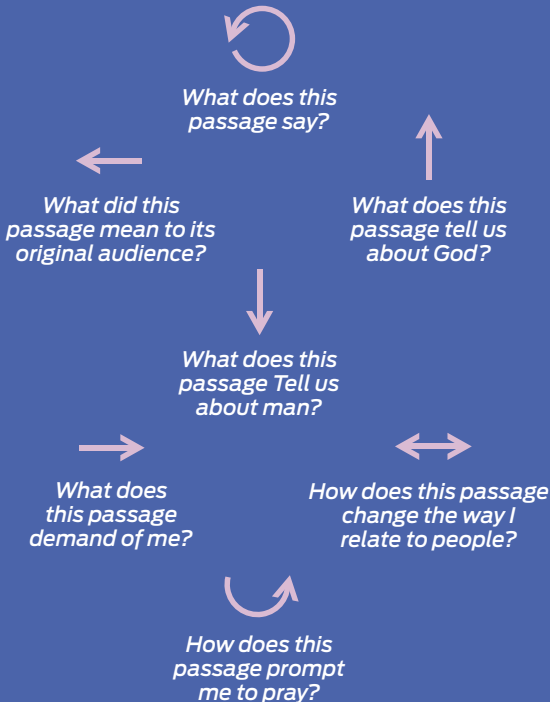
# Daily Devotions



Day 1

## Daniel 1:1-21

### The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



The opening verses of Daniel set the stage for the theme of God’s sovereignty throughout the book. While we are prone to doubt the goodness of God when our circumstances take a turn for the worst, the mundane weariness of a fallen world can also take a toll on our faith. When the Lord dramatically intervenes in our lives, as is often the case in the book of Daniel, it is easy to acknowledge His control over our circumstances. Navigating sustained difficulties or hardships, however, might leave us wondering if God is involved in our day-to-day lives. That is why the first chapter of Daniel is so encouraging.

During the traumatic exile of God’s people into Babylonian captivity, we see God protecting His people, honoring their obedience, and giving them favor with a pagan king. By refusing to eat the food given to them, Daniel and his friends took a great risk. Yet, the Lord blessed their righteousness and took care of them in a hostile situation. Long before three of these young Jews faced a fiery furnace, they watched God piece the small details of their lives together for good. Their willingness to trust Him when the pressure was on was largely a result of their faith through the ordinary happenings of their routine.

**How can you better rest in God’s sovereignty over the daily frustrations you face?**

# Daniel

## 2:1-49

The prophetic impact of Daniel 2 is just as significant today as it was originally because we are still looking for the final kingdom revealed—the messianic kingdom. With Babylon (head of gold), Medo-Persia (chest/arms of silver), Greece (legs of bronze), and Rome (feet of iron and clay) in our rearview mirror, we long for the coming of a new heaven and earth where our Savior King will reign forever and ever. Until then, Daniel modeled how we should live in a fallen world.

With his life in jeopardy due to the king's decree, Daniel sought the Lord faithfully in order to report and interpret the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Ultimately, his ability to do so was the direct result of God's mercy and goodness toward him and his friends (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah). Realizing this, Daniel refused to boast or promote himself while speaking God's words. In fact, he celebrated God's power and glory so much that the king also declared that Daniel's God was God of gods and Lord of kings (2:46). The faith of a faithful prophet revealed the glory of Lord over all.

**How can you better reveal God's glory with the gifts He has given to you?**

# Daniel

## 3:1-18

Despite witnessing the glory of Daniel's God firsthand, wicked Nebuchadnezzar chose to build a monument made of gold and commanded his people to bow and worship it. Though we cannot be sure whether the statue represented the king or one of his gods, it does seem clear that Nebuchadnezzar was declaring, contrary to his dream, that his kingdom would never end. Despite the submission of those around them, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to insult the true God by kneeling before the idol. The logic behind their counter-cultural stand is still instructive today. These committed Hebrews were content to let God choose the course of their lives, knowing that He is good and trustworthy.

Why is it so difficult for us to do the same? Though God is able to prevent all things in our lives, we must learn to trust Him even if He chooses not to. Harsh circumstances should not limit our willingness to obey the Lord. If He, for reasons we cannot understand, allows our worst-case scenario to unfold, we must continue to believe that He is working for our ultimate good and for His divine glory.

**What are some personal hardships you have seen or are seeing God work through?**

# Daniel

## 3:19-27

God is always present with His people. The incredible deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego illustrates this encouraging truth as vividly as any biblical passage. Through the worst possible reality, the Lord Himself walked around in a fire with three of His devoted servants. The comprehensive protection of God not only prevented their clothes from burning, but also prevented the stench of smoke from following them out of the furnace.

Even when our outcomes are not so favorable, the abiding presence of God is just as certain. God is with us in the fire even if He does not allow us to come out. He comforts and cares for us when nothing about our lives makes sense. He will not forsake us even though the world does. He is there even though we cannot always see or even feel His presence. We look forward to the day when God makes all things new and wipes away every tear from our eyes (Rev. 21:4). But, until then, He remains faithfully by our side.

**Why should you be confident of God's presence in your life when you face great difficulties?**

# Daniel

## 3:28-30

For the second time, we observe Nebuchadnezzar exalting the God of Israel with elaborate praise. Through the lips of unbelievers, exclusive declarations magnified Yahweh as the only God worthy of worship. What caused these remarkable confessions? In a word, faith. Because Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego displayed faith under pressure, God's beauty and majesty was clear to all. In addition, their salvation from the fire made His strength and power undebatable.

Our lives have the same potential. Remaining faithful while suffering will inspire others to follow our God. And oftentimes, the miraculous intervention of God in our lives while we hurt compels others to praise Him. Likewise, the transforming effect of salvation magnifies the reality that God has rescued us from the flames of hell. When it is obvious that God is at work, His name will be exalted among believers and unbelievers alike.

**In what ways can your life compel unbelievers to see God's worth and glory?**