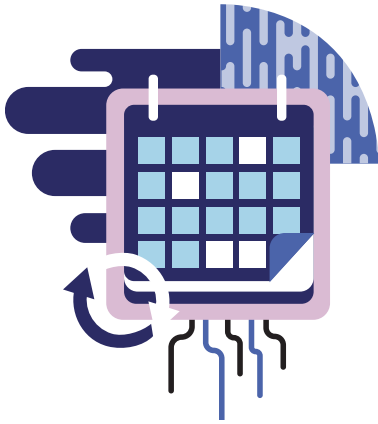


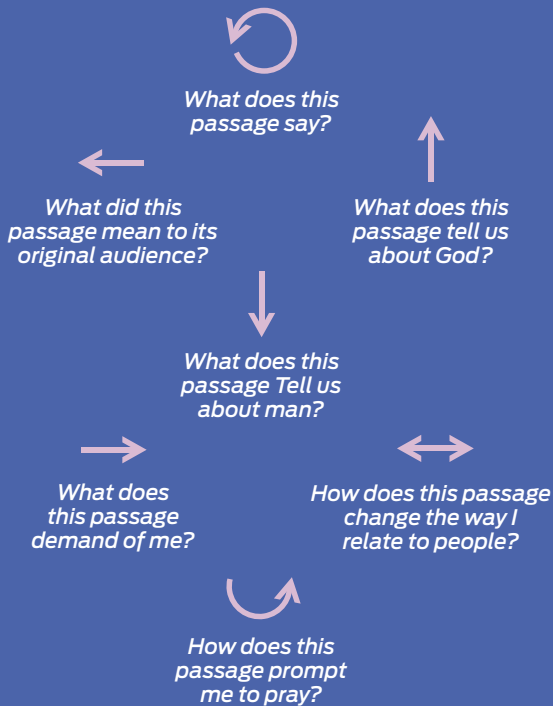
Daily Devotions



Day 1

Daniel 7:1-8

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



As we move into the prophetic material of Daniel, God's future reign over the kingdoms of the earth becomes apparent. The four beasts described in these verses represent the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Because these nations war against God's agenda for humanity, the world's hostility toward Christianity and Scripture should not surprise us. Rather than be dismayed, however, we ought to rejoice knowing that today's satanic influences are temporary. Though the whole earth is under the power of the wicked one (1 John 5:19), the Son of God gives us eternal life. The accelerated wickedness we see today is but a forerunner to God's final word of vengeance.

Until Christ comes, we must be diligent to resist the lawlessness that is already at work around us. Knowing that rebellion will increase before the Day of the Lord due to the spirit of antichrist, we should be careful to hold fast to the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Ours are not hopeless days, but we cannot afford to be careless either.

**What evidence do we see of Satan's influence in our world today?
What should be our response as Christians?**

Daniel 7:9-12

Do you ever feel weary due to the wickedness of our world? These verses remind us that, though God has a purpose for the evil around us, He will not allow it to continue forever. Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days reminds us God's reign is eternal and that He will judge the nations who rebel against Him with swift judgment. Though Satan's kingdom is extensive and damaging, the Lord will exercise His authority over His sinister enemies as He rids the earth of all unbelievers and demonic forces. Christ will rule over all creation as the King of all kings.

Daniel's message is just as encouraging today as it was to ancient Jews who lived in captivity outside of Israel. Despite the dismal forecast on the nightly news, God's victory is coming without delay. Though our world is broken, our great Savior will restore our fallen home to Himself. No matter the pain that soils your life, God will make all things new.

How should we respond to injustice of our world in light of God's future victory over it?

Daniel 7:13-28

The glory of a new heaven and earth is often lost on us. Contrary to the fallen kingdoms chronicled in Daniel's vision, the glory of our eternal dwelling place is unparalleled. With a dominion that will last forever, Jesus Christ will restore what was lost in the Garden of Eden. He will dwell among us as our God, and the wounds of our fallen past will be wiped away. With the curse removed, we will enjoy the presence of our God like never before. Through Daniel's interpretation of his vision, we learn that earthly realities will get much worse before than improve. But history is working toward the enthroning of the Lamb who died to take away our sins.

How are we to live in the meantime? What do these realities mean for us today? First, they remind us that no sacrifice is too great in order to follow our King. Second, we rest knowing that our heartaches and troubles are temporary. Finally, we devote our lives to helping others discover the hope and rescue that is ours in Christ Jesus.

How might your temporary trials strengthen your perspective about eternity?

Daniel

8:1-9:27

With a second vision regarding the demonic kingdoms of history, Daniel learned of the coming hardship that God's people were going to face. By focusing on the harsh reigns of the Medo-Persian empire and Greece, the need for God's sovereign authority over the nations once again comes into focus. Realizing the depth of Israel's sin, Daniel repented before the Lord and pleaded for mercy. Because of the interpretive guidance of Gabriel, we understand the revealed seventy weeks to be partially, though not entirely fulfilled. The period known as the Great Tribulation will mark the conclusion of these prophetic words.

How should we live in light of challenging verses like these? Despite what might be difficult for us to understand, again we observe the clear, abiding sovereignty of the Lord over the affairs of history. God disciplines His own and condemns those who reject Him. Though He uses the destructive agendas that dominate the earth, He will also bring them to a screeching halt as Jesus is exalted over all creation. We should take comfort in the fact that the God who rules the universe is also in control of the daily events in our lives.

How does the certainty of history's conclusion give you peace about your present challenges?

Daniel

10:1-12:13

This final vision in the book of Daniel again speaks vividly about future events. Because the angel speaking was initially unable to communicate with Daniel due to demonic resistance, we know that Satan aggressively opposes and resists God's agenda for His people (Dan. 10:13-14). We also learn from these verses that God sends His angels to influence the world's political realities for His kingdom (11:1). Again, the Lord reveals numerous leaders who would influence the trajectory of history toward its conclusion. The vision culminates with a description of the coming antichrist who will compete for God's glory by attempting to hinder His work. Though the timing of these events remained unclear, Daniel's vision established their certainty.

Again, we must consider how prophecies like these should shape our faith. And, just as in previous devotions, we should celebrate the assurance of our eternal victory through Jesus Christ. Living with conviction and faith requires believing in what we have yet to see (Heb. 11:1). Daniel's words urge us to remember that we will win in the end precisely because our Savior will not be denied the glory due His name.

How does the satanic resistance to God's kingdom help us frame the evil we see in the world today?