

THE BOOK OF DANIEL



Week 10: Aug 17th -Aug 21st

Theme: Timing (Chapter 10)

Weekly Memory Verse

“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.’”

– Daniel 10:12

Day 1: Sober-Minded

Prayer of Illumination

Great and awesome God, we want to be people of sober hearts and minds. Give us eyes to see the world as you see it, ears to hear your voice above the others, and hearts that break for what breaks yours. Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 10 entirely, then focus on Daniel 10:1-3.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 10:1-3?

What do these verses say about God’s character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

In 539 BC, King Cyrus appointed Darius the Mede to help him rule over Babylon. In 538 BC, Cyrus decreed the Jews could return to Jerusalem to rebuild; however, there were many that stayed behind, including Daniel. Verse 2 says Daniel, “had been in mourning.” Scholars are not in total agreement on why, but perhaps he felt some dread watching the prophecy from Chapter 9 start to unfold. Perhaps he was feeling torn between two worlds. His place of captivity had

become his home and mission. But while Babylon may have become his home, his Jewish identity was still rooted in Jerusalem.

Like Daniel, we are also caught between two worlds. We are citizens of Heaven, created to enjoy the fullness of God, which spills over into our earthly mission. We were created with a spirit that speaks the language of Heaven and also with flesh that feels the pull of worldly gratification. Daniel teaches us how to walk the line between the Kingdom of Heaven and earth. In order to navigate Babylonian culture successfully and maintain steadfast devotion to God, Daniel had to have resolve, integrity, humility, courage, and obedience at all costs. Daniel's love for God resulted in his favor with God and the Babylonian king.

When the weight of the world rested on Daniel's shoulders, he turned to the practices that reoriented his spirit to God. He avoided numbing behaviors and fully allowed himself to feel the exhaustion and heaviness of grief. Daniel became a man of sober heart and mind, which allowed him to clearly understand what was coming next and to be entrusted with the mission at hand.

Reflection

How do you navigate the tension between the supernatural and natural? Are you in tune with the happenings of both?

How has the life of Daniel inspired you to live out your earthly mission well?

Commit to practicing one new spiritual discipline everyday for three weeks to reorient yourself to the voice of God.

Day 2: Listen

Prayer of Illumination

Eternal God, your Spirit inspired those who wrote the Bible and enlightens us to hear your Word fresh each day. Help us to rely always on your promises in Scripture. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 10 entirely, then focus on Daniel 10:4-9.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 10:4-9?

What do these verses say about the human condition?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

We find ourselves in a collective season of darkness. Uncertainty looms and injustice persists. When we survey 2020, it's hard to not be overcome with fear or grief. Daniel is alone, assessing the vision that's before him. A vision that he doesn't understand. A vision that fills him with terror. Like Daniel, you may come across moments or seasons where you have "no strength left" and feel helpless.

"Then [Daniel] heard him speaking." (Daniel 10:9)

The narrative of Daniel's vision seems to shift at these very words. He keenly listens to the voice that brings about a deep sleep. Perhaps we can experience a similar shift.

In the midst of terror, may God tune our hearts to hear His voice. May we listen intently to the One who is singing songs of deliverance over us. May we be overcome by His peace that passes all understanding. May we find rest as we lay attentive in His presence.

Reflection

What voices have you been listening to?

What is the Father saying to you today?

Weekly Memory Verse

"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.'"

– Daniel 10:12

Day 3: Trustworthy

Prayer of Illumination

Calm us now, O Lord, into a quietness that heals and listens. Open wounded hearts to the balm of your Word. Speak to us in clear tones so that we might feel our spirits leap for joy and skip with hope as your resurrection witnesses. Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 10 entirely, then focus on Daniel 10:10-14.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 10:10-14?

What do these verses say about God's character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

In today's passage, we see Daniel continue to persist in prayer.

He prayed, waiting on the Lord, for three weeks - the time it took the angel to reach him (v.13). Right before, verse 12 tells us that God responded right away to Daniel's request. He heard his prayer. The answer was on its way to Daniel the minute he, "set [his] heart to understand and humbled [himself] before God".

God heard Daniel's words and responded immediately, yet it took 21 days for His response to reach Daniel. Daniel not only waited on the Lord but continued to pray through that season of waiting. He persisted.

When the answer to his prayer finally made it to him, Daniel didn't receive a loud booming voice. Daniel received a gentle touch followed by the words, "O Daniel, man greatly loved" (v.11 ESV). Daniel had persisted in prayer for revelation, and the first thing God wanted him to know was that he was beloved!

There are seasons when prayer seems difficult and God seems silent. God sees you. God hears you. He acknowledges your pain, your fear, your exhaustion, and He calls you beloved. Your answer is coming.

Reflection

What is it you are asking God for in this season?

What areas is God asking you to persist in?

Sit in His presence. Feel His loving touch. Know that you are beloved.

Day 4: Proximity

Prayer of Illumination

God of all comfort, show us how to find that comfort today. God of all victory, show us where to find your victory today. God of all peace, show us how to access the peace that passes our understanding. We believe that one touch from you changes everything. Help us to have the strength to stay in proximity of Your touch. Amen.

Reading

Read Chapter 10 entirely, then focus on Daniel 10:15-21.

Meditation

What is the Lord revealing to you today through Daniel 10:15-21?

What do these verses say about God's character?

How does this apply to us today?

Contemplation

Christians speak regularly about the power that comes to us from God. We love to quote Scripture that proclaims God's strength made perfect in our weakness. I have done and still do this, and it encourages me in many moments.

But in other moments it makes me feel weak. I wonder if I'm doing something wrong if these words of truth don't make me invincible as soon as they're spoken. I wonder if my faith is lacking because I feel defeated at times even when my heart holds on deeply to the promises of God.

I rarely stop and meditate on the fact that if we need the power of the very Creator Himself in order to muster up any sense of bravery, faith and hope, then I am not giving enough credit to myself for still staying in the battle.

Daniel couldn't speak until that mighty angel touched him. He couldn't find his strength that was buried underneath his fear and weakness until he was touched again.

In so many ways this brings me the greatest comfort I could hope for: the acknowledgement that this is a battle that only the King of all Kings can be victorious over. We need Him desperately because the fight really is that hard, and the temptation to lay down and quit really is that real. That is okay though because the power and strength and love for us that come from our God really is that significant.

May we give ourselves the grace that is deserved today as we remember that this struggle is not against flesh and blood, and it's okay to feel tired. Continue to place yourself within reach of the One who gives us strength.

Reflection

Where might you need to give yourself grace today? Where are you trying to muster up your faith by your own strength?

Day 5: Pause & Reflect

Ask the Lord, journal, and pray through the following questions ...

God, what are some of the takeaways from Chapter 10 that you want to highlight in my life?

Spend time today posturing yourself to listen and reflect on each day's theme:

- Sober-Minded
- Listen
- Trustworthy
- Proximity

What is one thing you are going to do in response to this week's message and reading plan, and who is going to hold you accountable?

Write down one takeaway and one action step in a journal to commit to it.

Weekly Memory Verse

"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.'"

– Daniel 10:12