

DANIEL DECODED

4. THE BIG PICTURE

10/11/20, Daniel 10-12

Can you remember Harold Camping's prediction that Jesus would return on May 21, 2011? Do you remember what you felt as the day approached?

Were you taught a particular view of the end times? What was it?

How have your views shifted – if at all - since the beginning of this series?

Daniel 10:1-2 (NIV84)

*In the **third year of Cyrus** king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was **true** and it concerned a **great war**. The understanding of the message came to him in a **vision**.*

*At that time I, Daniel, **mourned** for three weeks.*

Why do you think verse 1 is in the third person and verse 2 is in the first person? What does that tell you?

Have you ever mourned for three weeks? What was it like?

Daniel 10:3-6 (NIV84)

*I ate no **choice food**; no **meat** or **wine** touched my lips; and I used no **lotions** at all until the three weeks were over. On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.*

When have you resolved to intentionally and actively seek God for your life?

How does being by this great river prepare Daniel for the vision he is about to receive?

How does the description of the man compare to:

Ezekiel 1:26–28 (NLT)

Above this surface was something that looked like a throne made of blue lapis lazuli. And on this throne high above was a figure whose appearance resembled a man. From what appeared to be his waist up, he looked like gleaming amber, flickering like a fire. And from his waist down, he looked like a burning flame, shining with splendor. All around him was a glowing halo, like a rainbow shining in the clouds on a rainy day. This is what the glory of the LORD looked like to me. When I saw it, I fell face down on the ground, and I heard someone's voice speaking to me.

Revelation 1:12–16 (NLT)

When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. And standing in the middle of the

lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire. His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was like the sun in all its brilliance.

Daniel 10:7-8 (NIV84)

I, Daniel, was the only one who SAW the vision; the men 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.

If the men with Daniel did not see the vision, why do you think they fled in terror?

Why do you think it was just Daniel who saw the vision?

Daniel 10:9-11 (NIV84)

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.

Why do you think Daniel couldn't stop trembling?
What was he afraid of?

How hard is it for you to find this account to be plausible? What makes it hard to accept?

What did you think of the fact that some founders of BLM are communicating with spirits? Have you ever been part of that occult world?

Daniel 10:12-13 (NIV84)

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.

Why should this be an encouragement to us?

Next time your prayer seems unanswered, what might be a possible explanation?

Daniel 10:20 (NIV84)

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;

How does this verse alter the way you look at world events?

What kind of encouragement can we draw from it?

Daniel 11:2-4 (NIV84)

*“Now then, I tell you the truth: **Three more kings** will appear in Persia, and then a **fourth**, who will be **far richer** than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.*

*Then a **mighty king** will appear, who will rule with **great power** and do as he pleases.*

*After he has appeared, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the **four** winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others.*

What comes to mind when you hear that this entire chapter is remarkably specific in its predictions about history in the years before Christ?

Daniel 11:21, 30-31, 36-37 (NIV84)

*“He will be succeeded by a contemptible person who has not been given the honor of royalty. He will **invade** the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will **seize it through intrigue**...Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn*

*back and vent his fury against the **holy covenant**. He will return and show favor to those who forsake the holy covenant. “His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation...*

“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. He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all.

This is an accurate account of the history of Antiochus Euphianes who forbade Jews the Sabbath, circumcision and religious festivals. He even put a statue of Zeus in the temple in Jerusalem. Prostitutes actually worked out of the temple! What would it be like for something similar to happen to us today? What would be hardest for you to accept?

What are some trends that you see in our society that come from this same “antichrist” spirit (cf. 1 Jn. 4:3)?

Daniel 11:32-33, 35 (NIV84)

*With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him. “Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered... **Some** of the wise will **stumble**, so that they*

*may be refined, purified and made spotless until **the time of the end**, for it will still come at the appointed time.*

It real persecution came to our society, do you think you would be among those who “*firmly resist*”? What would be encouraging to you? What would you imagine to be the hardest thing about it?

(NOTE: 11:40-45 do NOT conform to what we know about the end of Antiochus’s life. Most commentators believe it is about the Anti-Christ.)

Daniel 12:1 (NIV84)

*“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**.”*

What do you find most frightening about this statement? What sounds encouraging or exciting?

Do you think your name is in that book? Why? What do you think might be written next to your name?!

Daniel 12:2 (NIV84)

*Multitudes who **sleep** in the dust of the earth will **awake**: some to ***everlasting life***, others to ***shame and everlasting contempt***.”*

What do you think it will be like to rise from *the dust of the earth* at the end of history?

Daniel describes death as “sleep.” How is our daily cycle of sleeping & waking a sign of what’s to come?

Daniel 12:3 (NIV84)

*Those who are **wise** will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and **those who lead many to righteousness**, like the stars for ever and ever.*

What do you think it means to *shine like the brightness of the heavens* and be *like the stars for ever and ever*?

Daniel 12:4 (NIV84)

*But you, Daniel, close up and **seal** the words of **the scroll** until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.”*

In what ways do you see people seeking to “increase knowledge” in our time?

What kind of knowledge do you think this means?

Daniel 12:9 (NIV84)

*He replied, “**Go your way**, Daniel, because the words are **closed up** and **sealed until the time of the end**.”*

How do you think Daniel felt when he heard this?

Daniel 12:10 (NIV84)

Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. *None* of the **wicked will understand, but those who are **wise** will understand.**

What do you think it is that the wise understand and the wicked do not?

1 Corinthians 15:16–19 (NLT)

And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

Why is the doctrine of the resurrection so important to our faith?

Daniel 12:13 (NIV84)

“As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.”

What does *go your way* mean for Daniel? For you/us? What makes it hard to do this?

Did Daniel have all his questions answered? What are some unanswered questions that you have to live with as you *go your way* in life?

What do you think it means for us to *teach others* (vv. 11:33, 12:3)? What do people need to know or be taught?

What do you find encouraging or discouraging about the fact that evil is intractable until the end?

If you had been a Jew in Daniel’s day, how would these visions have encouraged you?

What is the worst thing you see that Christ will have to conquer when he returns in triumph?

How will knowing that the ultimate triumph is ours through Christ help you this week?