

2019 Through the Bible Reading: Bible Study Support

The Book of Daniel	
Background (Who, what, why, when)	<p>The story of Daniel is set right after Babylon’s first attack on Jerusalem in 605 B.C. Daniel and his countrymen have been deported to a foreign land after Judah was conquered by an egocentric despot, Nabuchadnezzar. Daniel and his three friends from the royal family of David; Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) were given high positions within the Babylonian government. Daniel, in particular, held such a high position because of his ability to interpret the king’s dreams that tell of God’s unfolding plan. Sandwiched between the dreams is the account of Daniel’s three friends and the fiery furnace. The three men refused to bow down to an image of gold, so were condemned to a burning death. But God intervened and spared their lives. In chapter 5, Daniel predicts Babylon’s fall under King Belshazzar (Nabuchadnezzar’s son) to the Medes and Persians by interpreting God’s message written on a wall. This prediction came true that very night when Darius the Mede conquered the Babylonian kingdom. Daniel became one of Darius’ most trusted advisers. Darius’ other administrators and officers grew jealous of Daniel’s privileged position. They plotted his death by convincing the king to outlaw prayer. Despite the new law, Daniel continued to pray to his sovereign Lord. As a result, Daniel was condemned to die in a den of hungry lions. Again God intervened, saving Daniel. The book concludes with a series of visions that Daniel had during the reigns of Belshazzar (Ch 7-8), Darius (Ch 9), and Cyrus (Ch 10-12). These dreams dramatically outlined God’s plans starting with Babylon and continuing to the end of the age.</p> <p>Date of Writing is approximately 536 B.C.</p>
Interesting Facts in the book of Daniel	<p>Daniel’s apocalyptic visions (Ch 7-12) give a glimpse of God’s plan for the ages, including a direct prediction of the Messiah.</p> <p>An interesting design feature is the book’s language. Chapter 1 begins in Hebrew, while Chapters 2-7 is written in Aramaic (a cousin language to Hebrew). Chapters 8-12 go back to Hebrew again.</p>
Reasonable Defense for the faith in book of Daniel	<p>The book of Daniel has two key parts: Daniel’s Life (Daniel 1:1- 6:28) Daniel’s Visions (Daniel 7:1- 12:13)</p> <p>The book of Daniel gives a historical account of the people of Judah held captive in a strange land. Though many felt hopeless, a select few remained faithful and content to serve God wherever He placed them. Daniel’s visions gave the captives added confidence that God is in control. They were to wait patiently in faith, and not worship the gods of Babylon or accept that society’s way of life. The stories and characters highlighted in these two parts underline that God rules over heaven and earth, directing the forces of nature, the destiny of nations, and the care of His people. God is sovereign over all human history, past, present and future.</p>
Memory Verse	<p><i>“And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him” (Daniel 2:21-22 NKJV).</i></p>
Practical Application to memory verse	<p>As growing believers we should pursue a heart that worships God passionately like Daniel. In order to fulfill God’s purpose for our life, we need to stand firm against the pressing of this world. Our Christian distinctness cannot become blurred when tested in unfamiliar/uncomfortable places. Daniel 6:10 says <i>“But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He</i></p>

	<p><i>prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.</i> ” Daniel did not flinch at the threat of being thrown into the Lion’s den, he continued his practice to honor and worship God proudly and publicly.</p>
<p>Life Application from Biblical Themes in Daniel</p>	<p><u>God’s Sovereignty Over Human Affairs</u> God is all-knowing and He is in charge of world events. God overrules and removes rebellious leaders who defy him. God will overcome evil. No one is exempt. But He delivers the faithful who follow Him. Our faith is sure because our future is secure in Christ. We must have courage and put our faith in God, who controls everything.</p> <p><u>Purpose in Life</u> Daniel and his three friends are examples of dedication and commitment. They were determined to serve God regardless of the consequences. They did not give into the pressures of an ungodly society because they had a clear purpose in life. Trusting and obeying God is our true purpose. This will give us peace in spite of our circumstances or consequences.</p> <p><u>Perserverance</u> Daniel served for seventy years in a foreign land that was hostile to God, yet he did not compromise his faith. He was truthful, persistent in prayer, and disinterested in power for personal glory.</p> <p><u>God’s Faithfulness</u> God was faithful in Daniel’s life. He delivered him from execution, from a den of lions, and from enemies who hated him. God cares deeply for His people. We can trust God to be with us through any trial. Because He has been faithful to us, we should remain faithful to Him.</p>