



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

DANIEL &
REVELATION

Week 1

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Before You Begin Your Journey...

The books of Daniel and Revelation hold special interest for many Christians. With their strange, many-headed monsters and mystifying symbols, these two books have been the raw material for a myriad of equally strange and mystifying interpretations and predictions through the centuries.

But these books are not in the Bible to give us some mysterious, Nostradamus-style window into the details of end-time personalities and events. The path of Christian history is littered with the failed predictions and interpretations of those who have misused Daniel and Revelation in this way.

The books of Daniel and Revelation are first and foremost books of encouragement. They were written during times of great crisis and suffering for God's people, and served to remind them of God's gracious presence despite their persecution and pain. The books assure the faithful that God is fully aware of what they are going through, that he is very much with them, and that a new day is surely coming when they will reign with him and their evil oppressors will face judgment.

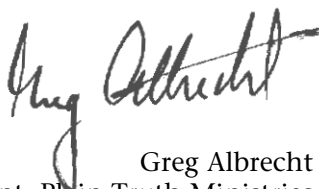
The name of the book of Revelation is taken from its first verse. John wrote, "The revelation of Jesus Christ..." (1:1). The word *revelation* is translated from the Greek word *apokalupsis*, which means "unveiling," or "revealing." In English, *apocalypse* has come to mean disaster or appalling destruction. Yet the original word simply referred to an unfolding, or revealing, of things that were not yet generally known.

The encouraging messages of Daniel and Revelation are fully consistent with the rest of Scripture—they declare the

everlasting gospel. Their central figure is Jesus Christ. Their central theme is the salvation of the saints. In Daniel, Jesus Christ is the mysterious "Son of Man," who comes "on the clouds" with blessings for the faithful and in judgment against the enemies of God and the destroyers of his people. In Revelation, Jesus is the slaughtered and raised Lamb of God, whose victory over everything that destroys humanity is overwhelming and whose grace and loving kindness extends unconditionally to every repentant heart.

Far from some "prophetic roadmap" of historical events and personalities, or some "book of clues" to reveal to us the time of Christ's return, these books are grand, gospel-focused declarations of God's faithfulness and gracious mercy and the certainty of his coming vindication and blessing of his people despite all the injustice, persecution and pain they may have to experience as they wait. Wickedness and injustice will not survive and thrive forever.

The Lamb and the great I-AM of the Gospels is the great I-AM and the Lamb of the book of Revelation and it is his atoning work that allows these books to be written. We must learn to read them accordingly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Albrecht". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

How to Use the CWR Bible Survey...

1—Read and study at your own pace. This is a devotional. It is designed to help you consider and ponder the great truths of God's written revelation. It is designed to help you worship and come to know God. We plan to cover the entire Bible in 43 volumes, and while that sounds like a long time, don't be in a hurry. Take your time! Even though each volume is divided into bite-size daily lessons, you may want to take two days on each "daily" lesson.

2—We suggest you set aside a special time for the *CWR Bible Survey* every day. We recommend allowing 30-45 minutes, but even if you can only spare 15 minutes, try to make it part of your regular schedule. You will find that the *CWR Bible Survey* will be an invaluable resource for facing your daily challenges.

3—You will need a good Bible. This might be an excellent time for you to consider purchasing a study Bible. Plain Truth Ministries has reviewed many of the study Bibles that are available, and in cooperation with Thomas Nelson and Zondervan, we are pleased to be able to offer two superb study Bibles that will be an excellent resource and help to you. Please see the back pages of this book for more details.

4—Always read the assigned passage of the daily lesson in your Bible first. Each daily lesson builds upon the portion of the Bible being covered that day. You may want to begin by praying about what God has in store for you as you read, and then look at the questions and background information.

5—Consider the format of each daily lesson. Almost every daily lesson will include:

- **Opening Up to the Word** —a section designed to help you open your mind to the teaching God has inspired.
- **Digging Into the Word**—this section will encourage you to get your nose into the Bible and think deeply about what it says.
- **Living Out the Word**—here you will be challenged to consider the practical implications for your life. How does this passage help you live?

• **Window On the Word**—will offer key insights to help you more clearly understand the daily Bible passage.

6—After you finish the daily lesson, take some quiet time. You may simply think, look out the window, take a walk, or even get down on your knees. But use this time to let this daily lesson sink in. Ask God to show you what he wants you to understand from your reading and study.

7—Consider the *CWR Bible Survey* for small groups in which you may be involved. Tell your friends about it. If you are involved in a small group that meets for prayer and Bible study, introduce your group to it. Many are seeking an easy-to-read guide to help them understand the Bible and to help them know God. The *CWR Bible Survey* can do that!

• **Abbreviations Used in the *CWR Bible Survey***—

Genesis	Ge	Nahum	Na
Exodus	Ex	Habakkuk	Hab
Leviticus	Lev	Zephaniah	Zep
Numbers	Nu	Haggai	Hag
Deuteronomy	Dt	Zechariah	Zec
Joshua	Jos	Malachi	Mal
Judges	Jdg	Matthew	Mt
Ruth	Ru	Mark	Mk
1 Samuel	1Sa	Luke	Lk
2 Samuel	2Sa	John	Jn
1 Kings	1Ki	Acts	Ac
2 Kings	2Ki	Romans	Ro
1 Chronicles	1Ch	1 Corinthians	1Co
2 Chronicles	2Ch	2 Corinthians	2Co
Ezra	Ezr	Galatians	Gal
Nehemiah	Ne	Ephesians	Eph
Esther	Est	Philippians	Php
Job	Job	Colossians	Col
Psalms	Ps	1 Thessalonians	1Th
Proverbs	Pr	2 Thessalonians	2Th
Ecclesiastes	Ecc	1 Timothy	1Ti
Song of Songs	SS	2 Timothy	2Ti
Isaiah	Isa	Titus	Tit
Jeremiah	Jer	Philemon	Phm
Lamentations	La	Hebrews	Heb
Ezekiel	Eze	James	Jas
Daniel	Da	1 Peter	1Pe
Hosea	Hos	2 Peter	2Pe
Joel	Joel	1 John	1Jn
Amos	Am	2 John	2Jn
Obadiah	Ob	3 John	3Jn
Jonah	Jnh	Jude	Jude
Micah	Mic	Revelation	Rev

DANIEL & REVELATION

The Everlasting
Gospel

Introduction to Daniel

Authorship: Conservative scholars believe Daniel was written by the prophet of the same name. Other scholars, however, suggest that it may have been compiled or written much later by an anonymous Jewish writer.

Date: Again, there is debate over the date of the book. Some scholars hold that the book was written by Daniel at the time of the events described, in the sixth century B.C. Others maintain that it was written during the second century B.C. near the end of the notoriously wicked and sacrilegious reign of the Seleucid king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164).

Setting and purpose: Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the message is framed in the specialized form of Jewish literature known as *apocalyptic*. The term comes from the Greek word, *apokalupsis*, which means “unveiling.” Originally the term referred to the unveiling of divine revelation in the form of a vision, and later it came to refer to the books in which these visions were recorded. Such books are highly symbolic as they depict in stark terms and startling images the ultimate victory of God and his Messiah over the evil oppressors of his people. The emphasis is continually on the inevitable judgment of the wicked and the ultimate vindication of the faithful.

Examples of apocalyptic writing in the Bible include Daniel, parts of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel and Zechariah, the Olivet prophecies in Matthew, Mark and Luke, 1Th 4:13-5:11 and 2Th 2:1-12 and the book of Revelation. It is important to note, however, that the biblical examples of apocalyptic literature tend to exercise a good deal of freedom in their use of the apocalyptic style, adapting it to convey the divinely inspired message.

The book of Daniel is written against the backdrop of the sixth century B.C., during the empires of Babylonia, Media, Persia, and Greece. The book of Daniel was and is a message of encouragement to people whose traditions and laws are being systematically attacked by the culture around them—people who are being cruelly and viciously persecuted because of their

faithfulness to God. The book reflects devotion, trust and loyalty to God through every crisis, patiently relying on his supreme authority and faithfulness, which will result in the ultimate judgment of the wicked and the vindication and blessing of his people.

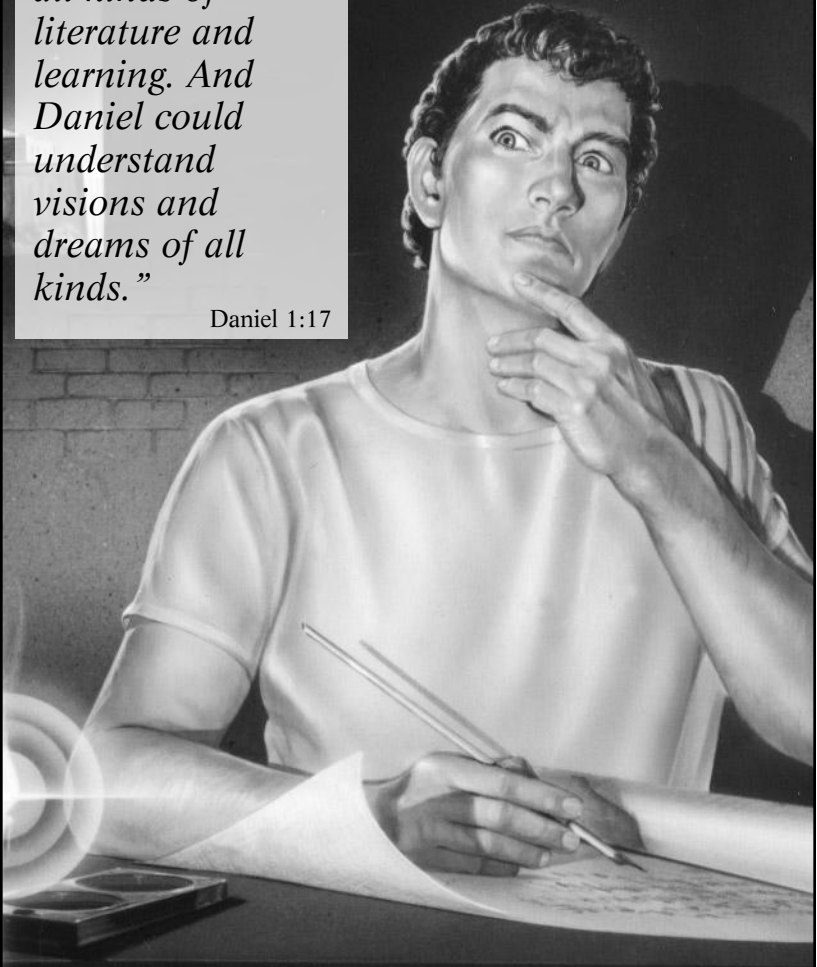
Like the book of Revelation, which is included in this volume of *CWR Bible Survey*, the book of Daniel offers God's truth, encouragement and hope to its original readers in the midst of their immediate crisis. But in addition, these books are also able to convey that same truth and hope to God's people in all crises throughout the ages—down to and including our own time.

Reading Outline:

Day	Text	Theme
1	Daniel 1	Change of Culture, Not of Character
2	Daniel 2	Mysteries Revealed
3	Daniel 3	Trial by Fire
4	Daniel 4	Open Letter
5	Daniel 5	Like Father, Like Son
6	Daniel 6	Green With Envy
7	Daniel 7	Court is Now in Session
8	Daniel 8	King for a Day
9	Daniel 9	Pride Comes Before the Fall
10	Daniel 10–11	A Tale of Two Kings
11	Daniel 12	The Wise and the Wicked

*“To these four
young men God
gave knowledge
and
understanding of
all kinds of
literature and
learning. And
Daniel could
understand
visions and
dreams of all
kinds.”*

Daniel 1:17



Change of Culture, Not of Character

DAY 1

Daniel 1

What would you do if you were suddenly given riches and prestige? Would your character change, or would you keep your integrity?

1. Why was Daniel brought to Babylonia (vs. 1-6)? Who was brought with him (vs. 6-7)?

2. How long was Daniel's training to last (v. 5)? What was he to learn (vs. 4, 17)? What else did God give Daniel the ability to do (v. 17)?

3. Why did Daniel prefer vegetables and water over the royal food and wine (v. 8)?

4. Why did Ashpenaz, chief of the king's court officials, show favor and sympathy to Daniel (v. 9)?

5. What test did Daniel ask the guard to give him and his friends (vs. 11-13)? What was the result (v. 15)?

6. How did the wisdom and understanding of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah compare to the magicians and enchanter in the kingdom (v. 20)?

1. How would you feel about being forced to serve your nation's conquerors? How do you think Daniel felt?

2. Do you think Daniel was diligent in his duties, or was he a slacker?

3. Has God given you favor with someone who has authority over you?

*Responding to the fall of Judah to Babylonia, the prophet Jeremiah had encouraged the exiled Jews to settle in Babylon, **build houses, plant gardens and raise families** because God wanted them to "seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile" (Jer 29:7). Daniel and his friends were faithful to God's instructions.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

DAY 2

Mysteries Revealed

Daniel 2

OPENING
up to the Word

Can you remember an especially vivid dream?
What do you think caused it?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Was it reasonable for Nebuchadnezzar to expect his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to be able to tell him both the dream and the interpretation (vs. 5-6)?
2. What was Nebuchadnezzar's reason for demanding they know the dream (v. 9)? How did the astrologers reply to the king (v. 10)? What was the king's reaction (v. 12)?
3. How did Daniel speak to the king's officer (v. 14)? Why do you think the king gave Daniel time when he did not give the astrologers time (vs. 8, 16)?
4. What did Daniel do first (vs. 17-18)? How did Daniel learn the answer to the mystery (vs. 18, 27-28)?
5. What kingdom would bring the other four kingdoms to an end, and then last forever (vs. 44-45)?
6. What was Nebuchadnezzar's reaction to the interpretation (v. 47)? What did he do to Daniel and his friends (vs. 48-49)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Who or what do you credit for whatever successes you have had?
2. Where do you turn when you are facing serious trouble?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Although only the feet of the figure are struck, the **entire statue is destroyed** (vs. 34-35). The kingdom of God—a past, present and future reality in Jesus Christ—portends judgment on all earthly kingdoms through all time (compare Mk 1:9-11; Lk 11:20; 13:29; 16:16; 17:20-21).*

*“You looked,
O king, and
there before
you stood a
large statue—
an enormous,
dazzling
statue,
awesome in
appearance.
The head of
the statue was
made of pure
gold, its chest
and arms of
silver, its belly
and thighs of
bronze, its legs
of iron, its feet
partly of iron
and partly of
baked clay.”*

Daniel 2:31-33



DAY 3

Trial by Fire

Daniel 3

OPENING
up to the Word

Who in your life can “blow up” at the drop of a hat? If you are such a person, have you thought about the long-term consequences of your outbursts?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. After the events of chapter 2, why do you think Nebuchadnezzar decided to build this idol (vs. 1-3)?
2. Why do you think Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were so calm in their response to the king (vs. 16-18)?
3. Why did Nebuchadnezzar have the furnace heated seven times hotter (v. 19)?
4. Why was the king amazed when he looked into the furnace (vs. 24-25)?
5. How did Nebuchadnezzar sum up what had happened (v. 28)? What was his decree (v. 29)? What became of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (v. 30)?

LIVING
out the Word

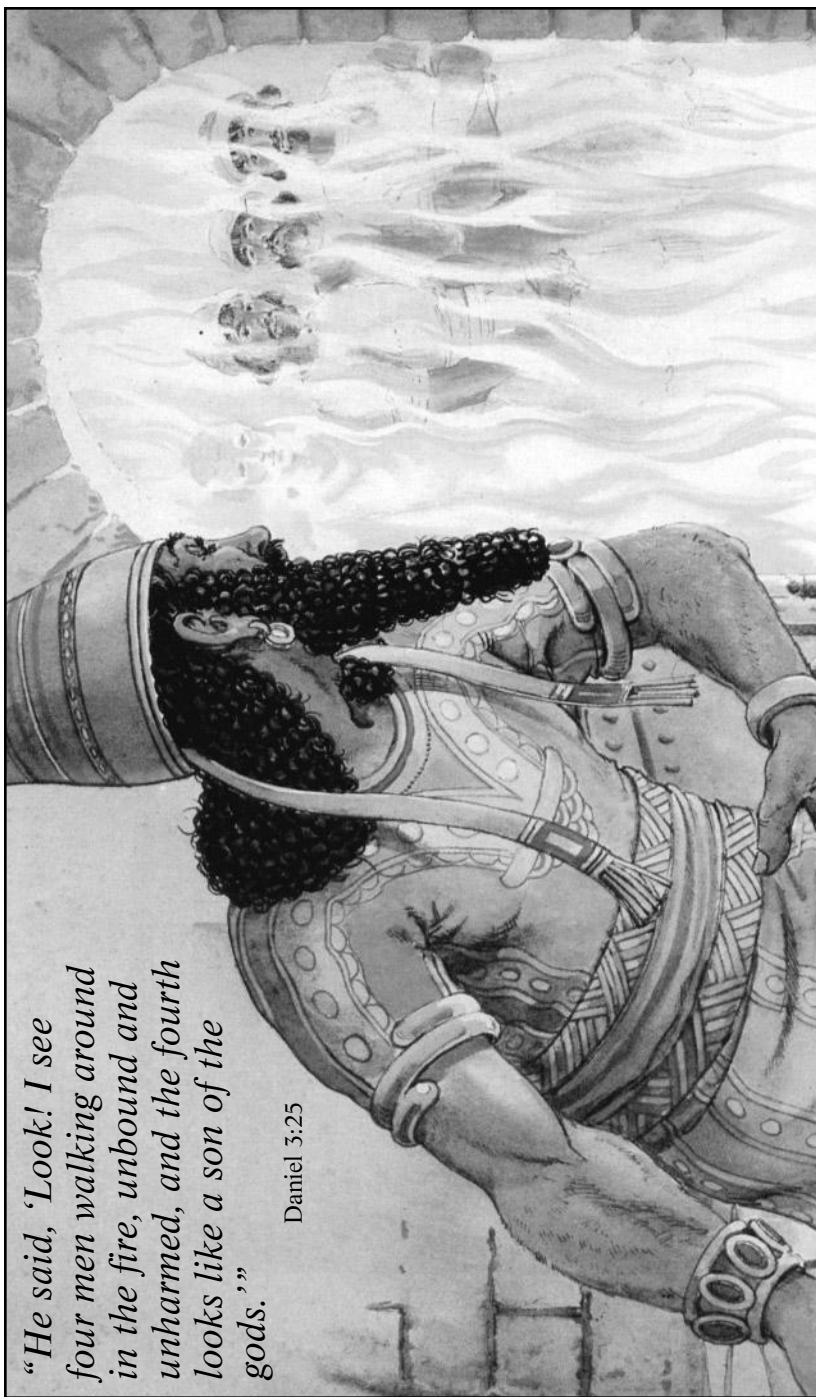
1. Have you ever worked for an unreasonable boss? How did you respond to him? Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego responded to their king?
2. Have you ever been saved from a potential disaster? If so, how did it affect your trust in God?
3. Have you ever prayed for deliverance from something but had to endure it anyway? How did that experience affect your faith?

WINDOW
on the Word

*This story uses a **mocking tone**, repeating the high-sounding titles of the dignitaries and the pomposity of the musical fanfare to emphasize the glory of God's incomparable power over puny false gods and idols. No sin is more thoroughly condemned in the Bible than **idolatry**, which amounts to a betrayal of the true God, whether through setting up images in his place or demeaning him through false ideas about him. The New Testament tells us that Jesus Christ “is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being” (Heb 1:3). Paul wrote that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God” (Col 1:15). **If we want an accurate understanding of God, we have only to look into the face of Jesus Christ.***

*“He said, ‘Look! I see
four men walking around
in the fire, unbound and
unharméd, and the fourth
looks like a son of the
gods.’”*

Daniel 3:25



DAY 4

Open Letter

Daniel 4

OPENING
up to the Word

Has a humbling experience caused you to change your life? Would you have made the change without that experience?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. This chapter is written in whose words (v. 1)?
 2. How does this international “open letter” begin and end (vs. 2-3, 34-35, 37)?
 3. What did Nebuchadnezzar dream (vs. 10-17)? Who made the declaration to cut down the tree (vs. 13-14)?
 4. Was the tree uprooted (v. 15)? How was the stump protected (v. 15)?
 5. How did Daniel show respect to the king in giving him the bad news of the interpretation (v. 19)?
 6. What was to happen to the king (vs. 25-26)? Why (see v. 30)?
 7. What was Daniel’s advice (v. 27)?
 8. What was the result of the king’s experience (vs. 36-37)?
-

LIVING
out the Word

1. Do you give all the glory to God for the worthwhile things you have done?
2. Are you able to be respectful yet honest with your superiors? Where did Daniel get help to do so (see 2:23; 6:10)?

WINDOW
on the Word

*In Jewish apocalyptic literature, of which the book of Daniel is an example, **messengers** (vs. 13, 17, 23) are heavenly beings who serve God and intercede on behalf of humans. In Daniel, they are angels who form a heavenly council that listens to God’s word and goes forth to carry it out. The decision they announce (v. 17) is God’s decision.*

“When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me. Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream.”

Daniel 4:7-8



DAY 5

Like Father, Like Son

Daniel 5

OPENING
up to the Word

Do you find yourself making some of the same mistakes as your parents? Do your children also repeat some of your mistakes?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What goblets did King Belshazzar provide his noble guests for their wine (v. 2)?
2. To whom did the king and his guests give praise (v. 4)?
3. What did the king see on the wall near the lamp (v. 5)? What was his reaction (v. 6)?
4. What did the king promise to anyone who could read and interpret the writing (v. 7)? Did the incentives work (v. 8)?
5. Who suggested that Daniel be called in (vs. 10-11)?
6. How did Daniel respond to the promise of gifts (v. 17)?
7. What had Belshazzar learned from his father's experience (vs. 22-23)?
8. How did Daniel describe God in verse 23?
9. What was the interpretation of the writing on the wall (v. 25)?
10. What happened to Daniel (v. 29)? What happened to Belshazzar (v. 30)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Why do you think Daniel turned down the king's offer of gifts (vs. 16-17)? Would you turn down such an offer? Why do you think Daniel later accepted the offer (v. 29)?
2. Do you have a parent who has suffered because of certain behaviors? Do you behave the same way? Have you thought of getting help to break the cycle?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Belshazzar and his nobles assumed the common wisdom that the gods of vanquished nations were weak and discredited. But they soon learned that the **God of Israel is on the side of the defeated, the oppressed and the lowly.** Jesus died for us while we were still sinners (Ro 5:8). God helps us in our weakness (Ro 8:26) and his power is made perfect in our weakness (2Co 12:9).*



*“Suddenly
the fingers of
a human
hand
appeared
and wrote on
the plaster of
the wall,
near the
lampstand in
the royal
palace. The
king watched
the hand as
it wrote.”*

Daniel 5:5

DAY 6

Green With Envy

Daniel 6

OPENING
up to the Word

Has anyone tried to discredit you with your superiors? How did you respond? What was the outcome?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How did Daniel fare with the conquering Median king (vs. 1-2)? Was this new position comparable to the one Daniel had under the Babylonians (2:48)?
2. What did the satraps do when they learned that Daniel might be promoted (vs. 3-4)?
3. Why were their plans to ruin Daniel frustrated (v. 4)? What was their new plan (v. 5)? How did they deceive King Darius into going along with them (vs. 6-7)?
4. How did Daniel react to the decree (v. 10)?
5. What was the king's reaction to the report (v. 14)? Why couldn't the king change the decree (vs. 12, 15)?
6. How did the king spend the night while Daniel was in the lion's den (v. 18)?
7. Why was Daniel spared from the lions (vs. 21-23)?
8. What did Darius do to the men who had plotted against Daniel (v. 24)? What new decree did Darius issue (vs. 25-27)?

LIVING
out the Word

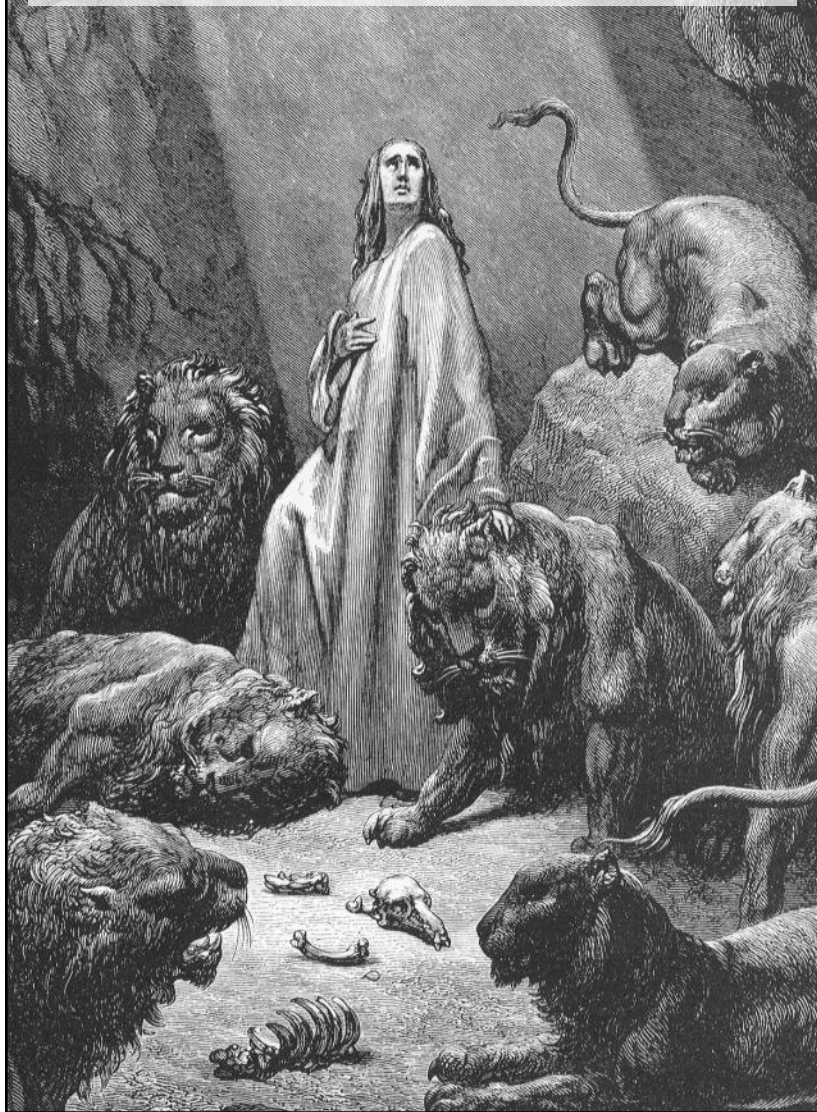
1. Daniel was neither defiant nor cringing in the face of the decree. He simply continued his regular private devotions. Have you asked God for peace and courage in the face of personal trials?
2. Have you ever felt like you were in "the lion's den"? How did your experience affect your relationship with God?

WINDOW
on the Word

***The story of Daniel in the lion's den** (v. 16) is reminiscent of Psalm 91:11-13: "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent."*

“Daniel answered, ‘O king, live forever! My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king.’”

Daniel 6:21-22



Artwork by Gustav Doré

DAY 7

Court Is Now in Session

Daniel 7

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever thought everything was going wrong, only to find out later that things had always been under control the whole time?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. When did Daniel have this dream (v. 1)? How did the vision begin (v. 2)?
2. Where did the beasts come from (v. 3)?
3. What was given to the first beast (v. 4)?
4. What did the second beast have in its mouth (v. 5)? What was it told to do?
5. What was the third beast given (v. 6)?
6. What was different about the fourth beast (vs. 7-8)? What was to come from it (vs. 7, 24)? What would come from it after that (vs. 8, 24-25)? What was to happen to this beast and its arrogant horn (vs. 11, 26)?
7. Who was holding court (vs. 9-10)?
8. Who approached the Ancient of Days (v. 13)? How did he approach? What was he given (v. 14)? How long will his kingdom last?

LIVING
out the Word

Do you thank God that he will, in some presently unknown and unseen way, be with you and among those who endure suffering and pain?

WINDOW
on the Word

*In Daniel 1-6, Daniel is presented as the **interpreter of other people's dreams**, whereas in chapters 7-12, he is the dreamer himself. All the dreams are given as divine revelation and are presented according to a pattern common to apocalyptic writing. The message is plain—the evil, brutish kingdoms of this world are under God's judgment (v. 22) and will at last be destroyed, after which the kingdom of God will prevail over the whole earth. It is generally accepted that the **four beasts** (v. 3) correspond to the four parts of the metal statue in chapter 2 and represent successively Babylonia, Media, Persia and Greece. The **little horn** (v. 8) is generally believed to symbolize Antiochus Epiphanes. **Jesus Christ** fulfilled in himself the three originally distinct concepts of Son of Man (v. 13-14), Suffering Servant (see Isa 53) and Messiah.*

*“Daniel said:
‘In my vision
at night I
looked, and
there before
me were the
four winds of
heaven
churning up
the great sea.
Four great
beasts, each
different from
the others,
came up out
of the sea.’”*

Daniel 7:2-3

