

I Got You

Daniel 12: Standing Firm with God

by Chris Famisaran

Let's pray. Father in heaven, thank you for the opportunity to gather together. Lord, as we go through and close out our Daniel series, be with us in Jesus' name. Amen.

All right. Well, as become our custom, got it. Last set of questions for this series. All right. Remember, if you're new today or you're not quite sure, I'm gonna ask you roughly four or five questions. If you agree, wave your hand. If you disagree, shake as if in anger. Don't really be angry. And if you're unsure, just eh, wave your hand, okay?

Number one. I am more of a details-oriented person compared to those sitting around me, okay? I am more of a details-oriented person compared to the people around me.

Hey, hey, how many of you, for instance, you want to go on a trip, you look at the big picture, what are some of the things that you want to accomplish before you write down booking hotels and looking at restaurants, all that? Or how many of you prefer to see the big picture and then tackle the details? Okay. All right. Very good. All right.

Number three. Does God want us to know the nitty gritty details of prophecy? Oh, it got quiet. Okay. All right.

Is it possible God still has not shared all the important details regarding the afterlife? Ooh. Okay, interesting.

God is more interested in sharing prophetic details about other kings than himself. Interesting. All right.

Eugene Peterson wrote in a book, he has two sons who are both rock climbers. And as he listens to their climbs, their ascents, he recognized that they spent a lot of time in details in terms of the route plan. In fact, it sometimes seemed like they spent more time planning than actually

climbing. They didn't want to onsite the climb. They see a climb and then they climb it, okay? They took details, they read climbing books, they maybe looked up at YouTube to see people who have tried to climb the same route so they could have a visual idea of what they were preparing themselves for. And of course, along the way, they would also carry pitons or cams attached to carabiners, which would then also be attached to rope so that if, for instance, their hands become slippery and if... does not attach to the rock anymore, they may fall, but they're not going to fall to the bottom. And you know, pitons or cams, short for cam, cam-watts, they are protection, protection from not, of course, falling all the way to the ground.

And as they were sharing this, he was thinking about the fact of when... all of God's faithfulness throughout our whole lives. Even though it seems like we're climbing, in a sense, towards heaven, God has placed pitons or cams in our life. Even when we slip and we may fall a little bit, we may take a little bit of a whipper, for instance, that's where you fall. And you could fall as well, depending on how long the rope is, anywhere from five feet to 30 feet. The more you fall, of course, the more it's gonna hurt a little bit more too. But we grow, we are stable to get back up, and still ascend forward. Every piton in our life is an example of God's faithfulness to us. As we ascend into the kingdom of God, we realize that each experience, each victory is only a piton or a stepping stone toward our ultimate goal of finishing the race and receiving the crown of glory.

Now, as we are about to close out the series, some of you are wondering, Pastor, we're studying Chapter 12, what about Chapter 11? Good question. Actually, so as we talked about in Chapter 10, Chapter 11 is basically the follow-on to Chapter 10 and basically explains the rest of the dream in detail. Okay, and I'm just going to summarize it basically in that the messenger tells Daniel that there will be three kings from Persia. Okay, and then it will be followed by a fourth king, one who will be the richest one of all and will provoke essentially the Greeks. Now, at this time, Cyrus was king. Okay, and after Cyrus, there are three different kings, Canvases, Phalus, Samaritus, and Darius. And the fourth king is Xerxes. Is Xerxes, anybody recognize where Xerxes is in the Old Testament? He may have gone by another different name called Ahasuerus, king of... when Esther was around. He was a wealthy king.

He in fact he had marshals, he had a big army, he tried to invade Greece but he was repelled by very strong Greek soldiers. And of course we recognize when Greece takes over we see that Alexander the Great, we talked a little bit about this before, has a short rise but then he dies young. Anybody know how old he was when he died? 32ish, 33. Okay. Allegedly, so they say that he had no son, but he may have had a son who was born after him. Either way, the son didn't take over. The kingdom was spread out to other rulers. So far, Seleucus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, and Cassander. Eventually, another mentioned as well in chapter 11.

Okay, so that's kind of the highlight of chapter 11. And as we go into chapter 12, let's go to verse 1. Okay, Daniel chapter 12 verse 1. All right, and it says, at that time, Michael, the great prince who protects your people will arise. There will be a time of distress such as not has 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. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake some to everlasting life, others to shame of an everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase."

And you know, at first glance, if you maybe read the first, especially the first chapter, okay? It kind of seems a little threatening. Anonymous. OK, there will be a time of distress. Such has not happened from the very beginning of nations until then. Now, we also see to... Did you realize... I didn't realize this until this last week. Every chapter in the Book of Daniel starts with what? The mention of who? Some form of king. Okay? Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, Cyrus. And it's not until the end of the Book of Daniel that who is first mentioned? Michael. This theme that we've been talking about is standing firm in God and the recognition that God is what? Starts with an S, God is sovereign. At the very end, who takes over and who is promised to see that God will ensure that God's people finish? Michael. Now, it also says here that again, there will be a time of distress such as not have been happened from the beginning of nations until then.

And yet there's also after this a sense of hope because the second half of verse one says But at that time, your people, everyone whose name is found and written in the book will be delivered. And we did talk about a book earlier, right? In chapter seven, I think it's verse 10, where there's a king and there's a court, the books will be opened. We talked about the books being opened. What would that signify? Those who are essentially in the book of life, but also God was, what was he doing to himself? since he was putting himself up on judgment to see that not only the decisions that have been made are just and right, and we will be able to see God's goodness, God's decisions, and the reasons why things have happened thus far. But in verse two, it also says, multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Now what's interesting about this Part here too though is the faithful believers at that time did not really have a very good strong understanding of even the resurrection. It doesn't really come into strong. It would take several hundred years. By the time Daniel's around the 6th to 4th BC and really especially around the Maccabean revolt is where they have a stronger idea of what does it mean?

Is there something We think about Exodus chapter 20 verse 12, where people are thinking about, may you live a good long life? Or like Gideon, Judges 8:32, he was to live and die in a good old age. And it's again, not until this emphasis, well, is there something beyond? And so 2 Maccabean 7.9, even though I know it's part of the Apocrypha. It's not necessarily inspired, but we see historically that's when things start to turn and their belief that, well, is there something beyond? And so here there's a promise that those who are faithful, that those who are in the Book of Life, there is a promise of being gathered together with God. Amen? So what a blessing.

It also says, at that time, what does it mean in at that time in verse 1? It's actually referencing the previous chapter, chapter 11, verse 40. where it says, at that time of the end, the king of the south will engage him in battle and the king of the north will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and the great fleet of ships. Now, if you read chapters 10 through 11 and 12 all through, you realize why did they break up the chapters and verses like this? It doesn't necessarily flow like, it seems like the first four verses of chapter 12 should really be long in chapter 11. As the Bible was being written, Did they

have everything broken down in chapters and verses? When do you think the chapters and verses got included? much later, roughly around the 12th century. And that's why sometimes when you read it's like, that doesn't make sense. It seems like this verse or this chapter should all be, these chapters should all be one story. And really 10 through 12 of Daniel is one continuous story. And then the last five through 13 verses is more of kind of like an epilogue, okay? So regardless, it's his continuous story.

And so we see here too now at the very end, the messenger says something. He says, but you Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge. And so Daniel's thinking, well, but what about my people? I'm concerned for them. Daniel's emphasis in his viewpoint is his concern for the people. Had he been praying for the people? If we read chapters nine and 10, absolutely. In fact, again, you know, Bill mentioned that he highlighted the prayer that Daniel prays and it's a beautiful prayer. I think maybe next year we'll actually, let's spend a day or two just on that prayer alone. But chapter 10, he's been praying for the people. His heart is burdened for the people. Now. I think verse 4 is actually more of just a seal up the seal up the seal up the Seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Take it easy, relax. Daniel has a rough go when he deals with messengers from the Lord because earlier he recognizes that he's, again, he's not gonna be able to go home. The time of the end, it's not gonna be fulfilled in his time. And he's much older as well. He's probably about 85 or 90 years old.

Now, Earlier as well, going back to verse one, the angel mentions that there's a time of trouble unlike any other time in history. What does this mean perhaps? What does this mean for humanity? When we look around the world, we've mentioned this already, does it seem like the world is a peachy, wonderful place to live in at times? No, it's not. Sometimes it can be very challenging. Maybe sometimes we might think that it's the worst it's ever been. And yes, there are horrible things that happen. There is unrest, there is unsettling things. When I think about this though, what did the people who were living in France and Belgium and in England in the 1940s when the Blitzkrieg takes place, right? The Holocaust, those who lived in Rwanda during the genocide. There are many times in the world where horrible things have happened. Living in Russia under Stalin. Statistically, they say that actually this is one of

the safest times to actually be alive and live. The challenge with that though is guess what we have now? We have documentation. We have cell phones. It's harder to get away with stuff nowadays. Amen? I think back, what if I was 16, 17, 18 and had a cell phone back then? What kind of trouble could I get in then? What could I write in post that maybe somebody could see and... Maybe they don't like me and they can say, well, this person said something. When you're 16, 17, 18 years old, has your brain fully formed? No, it's not. All right. They say your brain doesn't really form until around 26, 27 years old. Right. So there's still room for maturity. Now, people obviously grow as they make mistakes and hopefully they learn from them and they make better decisions in the future. but such as a time that it's going to be a challenging time.

And just like Daniel though, did he always live an easy life? No, his life was literally threatened. He stood firm in his convictions when he tells Nebuchadnezzar's servants, we're not going to eat that stuff because we don't want to defile ourselves. We do not want to disrespect and dishonor our God who we have pledged our life to. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they had a choice to make. Were they going to bow and consider Nebuchadnezzar sovereign or were they going to truly follow their heart and stand there at ground and say, no, our God is sovereign, even if it costs our life. Life can be scary. Life can be uncertain. But if we have the same faith as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, or live like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, wonderful things can be done in our life. Amen. If we trust God in all aspects of life, when the challenging times do come, we can still stand with in in faith and courage in God. And so, as we do so, may we find ourselves in our names written in the Book of Life. In reference to this, you can look at Exodus 32, or Luke 10:20, Psalm 69:28, or even Philippians 4:3, or Revelation 17, verse 8.

Now let's continue on. Let's go to verse 5. Then I, Daniel, looked and there before me stood two others, one on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank. One of them said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river. Every time I read this now, I didn't realize it just sounds like the matrix, right? He's standing above the river. How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled? The man clothed in linen who was

above the waters of the river lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, It will be for a time, times, and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all things will be completed. I heard, but I didn't understand. So I asked, My Lord, what will the outcome of all of this be? Verse 90 says, Go your way, Daniel, because the words are scrolled up and sealed until the time of the end. 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. From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days. And as for you, go your way, you will rest. And then at the end of the days, you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.

So what we see here is a question that Daniel has and many of us have. The verse, how long? How long is the concern for Daniel and many of us today? Lord, how long? I was talking to Erlinda about this earlier today. How long, Lord? When, Lord, are you going to come? And does the messenger tell Daniel specifically when God's going to come? He gives a list of dates, of days, okay, and by which over the years we've applied the year day principle, meaning 1,290 days or years, but he's not very specific. Let me ask you this. If you knew exactly everything that was to happen to the day, would we need faith? Hmm. It's a hard question, right? Because we know intuitively, yeah, we wouldn't need faith, but at the same time too, you know, well, do we want to know everything ahead of time? Is it because we live by faith that we actually can draw closer to God? Because if we knew everything, do we need God? We know what to expect. And I think there's a parallel for us here in that, again, we're just like Daniel, we're concerned for our families, we're concerned for our spouse, we're concerned for our kids, we're concerned for our neighbors, we're concerned for our loved ones. How many of you have parents are praying for your kids daily? And it's your heart, in your heart you pray, Lord, may they please come back to the church, even as hard as you have tried to prepare them to make good choices, to make great choices, and as well to bring them into the church. We learn when they become adults, they have the ability to make their own decisions. Amen. And those decisions can

sometimes they can make great decisions and sometimes they will test your faith at times too.

On the flip side though, a faithful parent can also be rewarded and see eventually when their children gain some maturity will realize just maybe what my mom and dad were trying to teach me is good. And maybe they do come back to the church and maybe when they get older they'll realize, I'm sorry I did not see things the way that you did at the time because I knew You were only looking out for me. I still was not ready to see the bigger picture. Can any of you relate to that?

How long though? Like Daniel, I think everybody would want to know the nitty-gritty details. And yet God says, be patient. Because He gives details, but not as much as Daniel would want. And so at the very end, he says, as for you, go your way till the end. Hold on. You will rest. And then at the end of the days, you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance. Daniel's promised something, right? He's promised an inheritance of everlasting life. And although God shows, shares a vision for the future. It's hard for Daniel sometimes perhaps to accept. Are there dreams and desires in your heart that you have wanted to accomplish in your life? And as you've gotten older, you realize those dreams and desires sometimes are harder to you realize, perhaps I don't have enough time. Perhaps I don't have enough money. Perhaps I don't have this. I don't have that. And yet we also have to ask ourselves, is this what I want? Or is this what God wants? And sometimes God does plant things on our hearts to accomplish. Amen. But sometimes, too, we have to reflect, is this for me or how am I honoring God in this?

Now, what is the big picture here? OK, we know that God is sovereign. In this past, in this book of Daniel, many of the visions refer to a future, a future king or kingdom and oftentimes there's sometimes a tyrant. Was Nebuchadnezzar a tyrant at times? And as you read the kings, the rest of the kings who were Persians and Greeks, did they just come in and say, we're going to take over or did they fight their way and assert their dominance being tyrants to take over? And all through this time, God's people are there. And yet we also see that God's people have flowed through time. God will protect them. God will lead them. God will help them. Not just them, but now those same, those same,

uh, well, God desires to lead and to guide us just as he did Daniel and all those throughout history.

So, My friends, life can be challenging. Much like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego experienced, you will be challenged. And there will be difficult times ahead. But those who are faithful know that they can trust God throughout all things. May we rejoice in the good things of God's blessings. May we rejoice in the hard times. and take the lessons that we can learn. If you were to ask me in a nutshell, what is the takeaway of Daniel?

Sorry, missed that.

Kingdoms come and go. And God reigns supreme. Amen. Kingdoms come, kingdoms go. Every king or kingdom that Daniel interacted with or was shown eventually ends. Some kings were gracious and some were difficult. The majority of them were forceful and maybe tyrannical. And it's not until the last chapter of Daniel that we see that Michael who ultimately represents the one who is our protector and savior has redeemed us. Amen. So go forth. Take courage as Daniel Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did so. Life will present challenges and questions that we sometimes have to ask ourselves. How do I be faithful? Lord, help me to have courage to stand for you just like Daniel.

As you Last two and a half months. What new lessons have I learned from our study about the character of God in the book of Daniel? What new lessons have I learned from our study about the character of God in the book of Daniel? How have you seen God differently? How many of you can relate to Daniel much more than you ever could have?

And the last thing, I want you to write down these new lessons. How do they apply to your life? Share them with your family or friends. or fellow church member, even later today, okay? Share these new lessons and how you want to apply them and actually apply them.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, thank you, Lord, for your opportunity to come together as a church family. Lord, we've had a long series and a lot of lessons, a lot of golden nuggets have been presented. We pray God help us to take these lessons and not only just apply them to our lives, but share them with

others. Help us to be the faithful representatives for you, leading guidance until we meet again next week. In Jesus' name, amen.

Grace and peace, everybody.