

NOVEMBER 25- TODAY'S READING FROM THE ONE YEAR BIBLE- DANIEL 1:1-2:23; 1 PETER 3:8-4:6; PSALMS 119:65-80; PROVERBS 28:14

TODAY'S READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT- DANIEL 1:1-2:23

As we dive into the Book of Daniel, it is helpful to get a general overview of the Book and how it is structured.

Daniel was taken captive to Babylon in September of 605 B.C. during the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem and made Judah his vassal state. He took Jerusalem's wisest men and most beautiful women to Babylon.

Daniel had grown up during Josiah's reign and had probably heard Jeremiah's preaching because he references it in Daniel 9:2.

REFERENCES: BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

Date	Deportation	Captives Taken
605 (first year)*	First	Nobles, Daniel (2 K. 24:1; Dan. 1:1-2)
597 (seventh year)*	Second	Jehoiachin, Ezekiel (2 K. 24:12; Jer. 52:28; Ezk. 1:1-2)
586 (nineteenth year)*	Third	Jerusalem (2 K. 25:8; Jer. 52:29)
582 (twenty-third year)*	Fourth (Minor)	Small Group of 745 Jews (Jer. 52:30)

* Years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar

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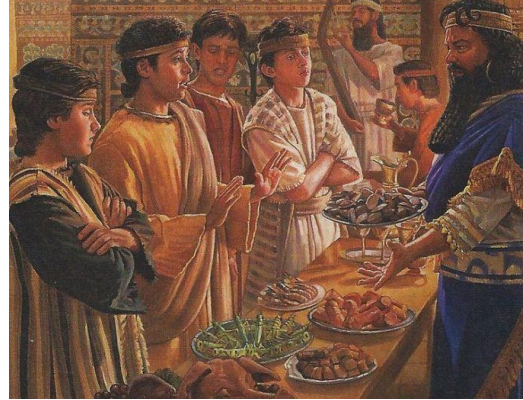
Daniel 9:2b "I, Daniel, understood from the books according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet that the number of years for the desolation of Jerusalem would be 70."

In Babylon, Daniel, and the promising young adults who came with him, were given a special reconditioning program immersing them in the ways of Babylon. This program was designed to cause them to forget their Hebrew customs and history. Daniel credits God for giving him favor when he asks that he and his three friends be excused from eating the king's choice food and wine. He asked that they be free to eat vegetables and drink water instead. We are told that at the end of ten days, Daniel and his Hebrew friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, looked better nourished than those who were eating the king's regimen.



Daniel's name means "God is my judge" in Hebrew; In Babylon it was changed to 'Belteshazzar' meaning 'Bel, protect the life of the king!' (Bel was the name of the principal Babylonian deity, also called Marduk.) Hananiah means 'the Lord shows grace'. His name was changed to 'Shadrach' which means 'under the command of Aku' (the

moon god). 'Mishael' means 'who is like God?' in Hebrew. He is given the new name, 'Meshach', probably meaning 'who is like Aku?' 'Azariah' means, "The Lord helps"; his new name, 'Abednego', means 'servant of Nego/Nebo' (or Nabu, the god of learning and writing). The Babylonian captors wanted to have these Hebrew captives forget their ancestral history and their God and adopt the Babylonian worship system.



It wasn't long before Daniel began to distinguish himself in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. He was able to meet the King's hard demand to tell him what he had been dreaming and what it meant. He was required to tell the dream as well as the interpretation. This request was a step beyond traditional dream interpretation, and it was more than what the King's magicians could handle. However, God granted Daniel the revelation.

In Daniel 2:20-23, Daniel praises God's sovereignty and acknowledges that He is the One who reveals the hidden and profound things:

Daniel 2:23 ²³ "To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For You have given me wisdom and power; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You, For You have made known to us the king's matter."

TODAY'S READING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT - 1 PETER 3:8-4:6

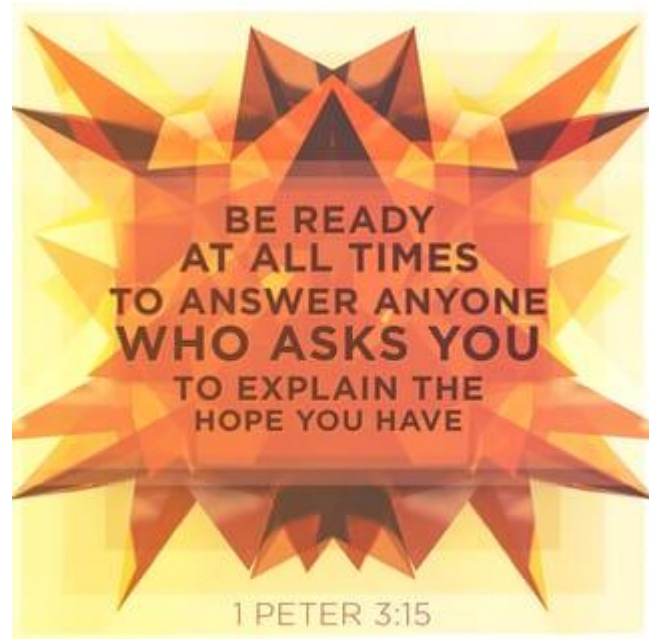
Peter emphasizes how Christians should behave when facing intimidation, controversy and persecution. Our Christlike attitude is paramount. **We are to sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts.**

1 Peter 3:8-9 ⁸ To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

He quotes Psalm 34 (verses 14-16) which encourages us to pursue peace by holding our tongues when tempted to do evil with it. Our first resort is to pray for our persecutors (1 Peter 3:12).

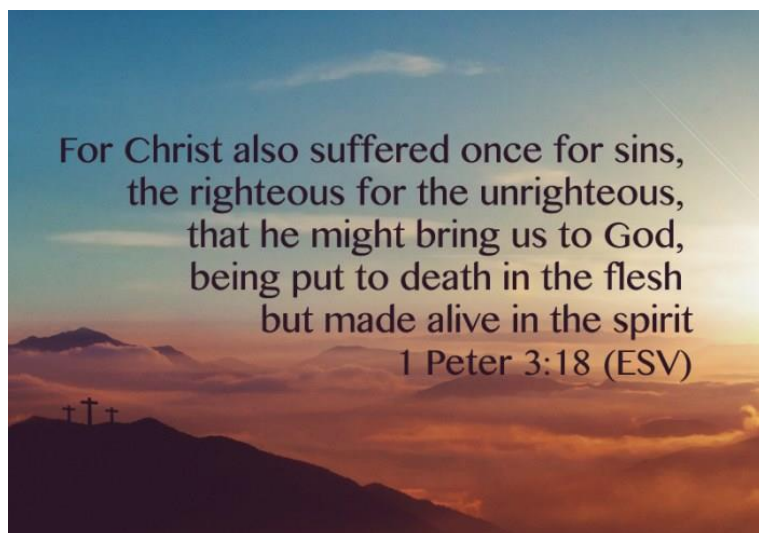
Peter gives us a great reminder of our need to have Christ on the throne of our hearts and the gospel on the tip of our tongues:

1 Peter 3:15-16 ¹⁵ but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; ¹⁶ and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.



The One Year Bible Companion has this summary of interpretations of 1 Peter 3:18-20

"The meaning of these verses is not completely clear, and commentators have explained it in different ways. The traditional interpretation is that Christ, between his death and resurrection, announced salvation to God's faithful followers who had been waiting for their salvation during the whole Old Testament era. Matthew records that when Jesus died, "the bodies of many holy people who had died previously were raised to life. They came out of their tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and



appeared to many people” (Matthew 27:52-53). A few commentators think that this passage says that the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, was in Noah as Noah preached to those imprisoned by sin (but now in Hades). Still others hold that Christ went to Hades to proclaim his victory and final condemnation to the fallen angels imprisoned there since Noah’s day (see 2 Peter 2:4)” – commentary from “The One Year Bible Companion”

TODAY’S READING FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS - PSALMS 119:65-80

Here is a relevant prayer request we all should make:

Psalm 119:66 ⁶⁶ Teach me good judgment and discernment, for I rely on Your commands.

You may remember verse 67 from our first reading of this Psalm. God is faithful to discipline us to get us back on the right path.

Psalm 119:67 ⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.

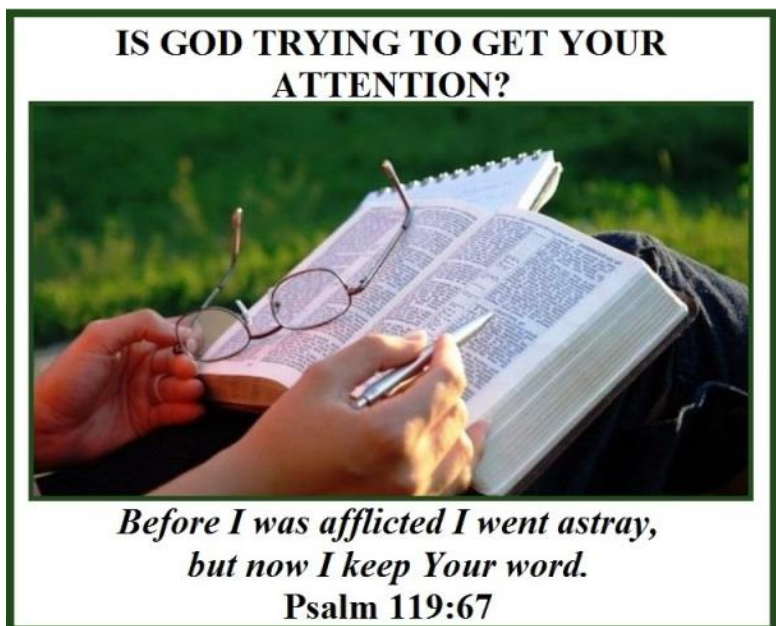
Psalm 119:71 ⁷¹ It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.

Psalm 119:75 ⁷⁵ I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are righteous, and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.

May we be known among our peers as those who wait upon the Word of God!

Psalm 119:74 ⁷⁴ May those who fear You see me and be glad, because I wait for Your word.

TODAY’S READING FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS - PROVERBS 28:14



Proverbs 28:14 ¹⁴ Happy is the one who is always reverent, but one who hardens his heart falls into trouble.

This warning is given throughout the Old and New Testaments: Harden not your heart!

PRAY FOR THE NATIONS – TURKEY

Let us pray for this country that was once the home of the famous 7 churches of Asia Minor, and churches like Ephesus and Colossae.

You can join in prayer with a brother here with this video link from Prayercast.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlk5aZUPoic>

A mix of antiquity and innovation, the nation of Turkey combines modernized industry with traditional agriculture to be the sixteenth largest economy in the world. Simultaneously one of the poorer nations of Europe yet also the most developed of the Turkic countries in Central and Western Asia, Turkey has acted as a bridge between these two worlds while remaining separate from either.



In spite of growth, the economy continues to be hindered by a high deficit and is dependent on unreliable, short-term investments. The Kurdish people, who compose nearly one fifth of the total population within Turkey, are in dispute with the Turks over ethnic recognition. Although the Kurdish language can legally be used in print and spoken in public settings, the government will often prosecute Kurd speakers and confiscate publications under the guise of prohibiting separatist propaganda. In response, the Kurds have sometimes violently demanded cultural rights, resulting in conflicts that have taken the lives of over thirty thousand people since the early 1980's. Security forces are also fighting narcotics trafficking from Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan into Europe.

Even though it was one of the earliest mission fields and home to many New Testament churches, hostility and persecution of Christians is strong in Turkey. It is culturally accepted that to be a Turk, one must be Muslim, even if nominally so, and over 98 percent claim the faith. Muslim extremists, government intimidation, and family pressure discourage many from coming to Christ and there is a deep national

resentment towards Christianity, making evangelism more difficult. Even in the midst of persecution, God still stands, and He is calling out to His people of Turkey to accept the love and peace that only comes from him.

PRAYER: Lord it is our prayer that You teach us good judgment and discernment. You heard the prayer of Daniel as he called out to you as a stranger in a strange land. Cause us to feed on that which will nourish our souls rather than on the deceitful delicacies of this world. We choose to set apart Christ as Lord in our hearts, trusting that His mind will be in us so we can readily give a reason for the hope that we have, and do it with gentleness and respect. Help us to walk in peace as we proclaim the truth. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Pastor David