

EXILE AND RETURN Lesson 8

FIRST DAY

Read Lesson 7 Notes

SECOND DAY:

Read Daniel 10:1-11:1

Daniel's Vision of a Man

[10:1] 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.

[2] At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks.

[3] 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.

[4] On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, [5] I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. [6] 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.

[7] 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.

[8] So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. [9] Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.

[10] A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. [11] 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.

[12] 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. [13] 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. [14] Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

[15] While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. [16] Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. [17] How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe."

[18] Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. [19] "Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong."

When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength."

[20] 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; [21] but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. [11:1] And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

Question 3a

Ezra 1:1; 3:1-2; 3:1; 4:1-4

Cyrus Helps the Exiles to Return

[Ezr 1:1] In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing:

The List of the Exiles Who Returned

[2:1] Now these are the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exiles, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken captive to Babylon (they returned to Jerusalem and Judah,

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each to his own town, [2] in company with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum and Baanah):

The list of the men of the people of Israel:

Rebuilding the Altar

[3:1] When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled as one man in Jerusalem.

Opposition to the Rebuilding

[4:1] When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel, [2] they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, "Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here."

[3] But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, "You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, commanded us."

[4] Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building.

have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others.

[5] "The king of the South will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power. [6] After some years, they will become allies. The daughter of the king of the South will go to the king of the North to make an alliance, but she will not retain her power, and he and his power will not last. In those days she will be handed over, together with her royal escort and her father and the one who supported her.

[7] "One from her family line will arise to take her place. He will attack the forces of the king of the North and enter his fortress; he will fight against them and be victorious. [8] He will also seize their gods, their metal images and their valuable articles of silver and gold and carry them off to Egypt. For some years he will leave the king of the North alone. [9] Then the king of the North will invade the realm of the king of the South but will retreat to his own country. [10] His sons will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will sweep on like an irresistible flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress.

[11] "Then the king of the South will march out in a rage and fight against the king of the North, who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated. [12] When the army is carried off, the king of the South will be filled with pride and will slaughter many thousands, yet he will not remain triumphant. [13] For the king of the North will muster another army, larger than the first; and after several years, he will advance with a huge army fully equipped.

[14] "In those times many will rise against the king of the South. The violent men among your own people will rebel in fulfillment of the vision, but without success. [15] Then the king of the North will come and build up siege ramps and will capture a fortified city. The forces of the South will be powerless to resist; even their best troops will not have the strength to stand. [16] The invader will do as he pleases; no one will be able to stand against him. He will establish himself in the Beautiful Land and will have the power to destroy it. [17] He will determine to come with the might of his entire kingdom and will make an alliance with the king of the South. And he will give him a daughter in marriage in order to overthrow the kingdom, but his plans will not succeed or help him. [18] Then he will turn his attention to the coastlands and will take many

THIRD Day:

Read Daniel 11:2-20

The Kings of the South and the North

[2] "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. [3] Then a mighty king will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. [4] 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

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of them, but a commander will put an end to his insolence and will turn his insolence back upon him. [19] After this, he will turn back toward the fortresses of his own country but will stumble and fall, to be seen no more.

[20] “His successor will send out a tax collector to maintain the royal splendor. In a few years, however, he will be destroyed, yet not in anger or in battle.

Question 7a

Job 12:23; [23] He makes nations great, and destroys them; he enlarges nations, and disperses them.

Psalms 145:13; [13] Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made.

Daniel 2:44; [44] “In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

FOURTH DAY:

Read Daniel 11:21-45

[21] “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. [22] Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed. [23] After coming to an agreement with him, he will act deceitfully, and with only a few people he will rise to power. [24] When the richest provinces feel secure, he will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did. He will distribute plunder, loot and wealth among his followers. He will plot the overthrow of fortresses—but only for a time.

[25] “With a large army he will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South. The king of the South will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against him. [26] Those who eat from the king's provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle. [27] The two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time. [28] The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it and then return to his own country.

[29] “At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. [30] 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.

[31] “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. [32] With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him.

[33] “Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. [34] When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. [35] 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.

The King Who Exalts Himself

[36] “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. [37] 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. [38] Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his fathers he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. [39] He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who

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acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price.

[40] “At the 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 a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. [41] He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. [42] He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. [43] He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Nubians in submission. [44] But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. [45] He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

Question 10c

1 Corinthians 15:58; [58] Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

James 1:12; [12] Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

FIFTH DAY

Read Daniel 12

The End Times

[12:1] “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. [2] Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. [3] 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. [4] 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.”

[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. [6] One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?”

[7] 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 these things will be completed.”

[8] I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, “My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?”

[9] He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. [10] 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.

[11] “From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. [12] Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days.

[13] “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. ”

Question 12b

John 3:16-21, 36; [16] “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. [17] For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. [18] Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. [19] This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. [20] Everyone who does evil hates the light, and

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will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. [21] But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”

[36] Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.”

SIXTH DAY:

Review Daniel 10-12
(See above)

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