

READ The BIBLE Together



Daniel 7-12
12th August – 22nd September 2012

SHALOM CHURCH, SINGAPORE
(Upholding the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith)

Introduction to DANIEL 7-12

The genre of DANIEL 7-12 is *apocalyptic*. This is a distinct type of Jewish literature that is written to encourage the faithful in times of persecution. The main themes are: (a) the growth of evil, (b) God's care for His people, (c) the assurance that evil will not finally prevail because the kingdom of God is the only thing that will endure forever.

In *apocalyptic* literature, we will encounter dreams and visions, and many symbolisms (such as numbers, beasts and horns) that outline the future. The imageries are often mysterious, even bizarre. One thing is for sure: *future events are outlined before they occur!*

"We come, then, to chapters which predict trouble ahead for the godly. They will always live in a hostile and persecuting world. But they should not die of discouragement. History is in God's hands. All events are steadily bringing His purposes to pass. In His own time He will end the rule of evil and bring in His everlasting kingdom." (Stuart Olyott)

While DANIEL 1-6 taught us *how to stand alone for God*, DANIEL 7-12 will explain to us *why it is worthwhile to do that!* While DANIEL 1-6 showed us things that happened in the physical world, DANIEL 7-12 will reveal to us what goes on behind the physical world, in the spiritual realm!

Introduction to DANIEL 7

The structure of DANIEL 7 is simple:

7:1	Prologue
7:2-14	The Visions
7:15-27	Their Interpretations
7:28	Epilogue

The purpose of DANIEL 7 (the visions) is straightforward: *To encourage the believers and to build them up in the faith.*

Hence, *"we must not be discouraged if we cannot decipher every detail of what follows, for we shall find that the broad sweep of the chapter is as clear as crystal and that its main lesson is too obvious to be missed. Chapter 7 is a faith-building chapter. No Christian can fail to be strengthened by studying it, and most believers find it thoroughly exciting."* (Stuart Olyott).

Day 1 Read the Introduction and DANIEL 7:1

1. Write down one thing you have learnt from the Introduction.

2. When did *Daniel* have this dream?

In the _____ year of _____ king of Babylon, Daniel had ...

Note (1): This would be the year 553 B.C.

Note (2): We've met King Belshazzar in DANIEL 5. That was the last day of his life and the last day of the Babylonian empire. That would be the year 536 B.C. This means that *Daniel's* dream in DANIEL 7 took place before *Daniel's* appearance before Belshazzar in DANIEL 5.

Day 2 Read DANIEL 7:2-4, 15-18

1. (a) What did *Daniel* see in verse 2?

(b) What did *Daniel* see in verse 3?

(c) What did the sea represent? (Hint: verse 17)
2. (a) How was the first beast described?

(b) What happened to it?

Note: This first beast corresponds to the golden head of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in DANIEL 2. Hence, it represents the Babylonian empire.

Day 3 Read DANIEL 7:5-6, 15-18

1. (a) How was the second beast described?

(b) Focus on these two phrases: "*three ribs in its mouth between its teeth*" and "*devour much flesh*". What sort of pictures come to mind and how would you describe them?

2. How was the third beast described?

Note (1): The second beast corresponds to the silver chest and arms of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in DANIEL 2. Hence, it represents the Medo-Persian empire.

Note (2): The third beast corresponds to the bronze belly and thighs of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in DANIEL 2. Hence, it represents the Greek empire. A leopard moves swiftly. Having four wings will make it move even more swiftly! That would be a very accurate picture of the rapid expansion of the Greek empire under Alexander the Great!

Note (3): Remember that *Daniel* had this dream in the first year of Belshazzar. The Babylonian empire was still the world power then, yet *Daniel* was told of its end, then the rise and fall of the Medo-Persian empire, followed by the rise and fall of the Greek empire! In other words, God was telling *Daniel* what was to come for the next 390 years (36 B.C. - 146 B.C.)!

Note (4): What said concerning the third beast ("*dominion was given to it*" – verse 6) would equally apply to the other beasts and horns mentioned in this chapter! In simple words, they have power and authority only by the permission of Almighty God!!

3 (a) How would this 'glimpse-into-the-future' build up the faith of *Daniel* and the faithful of his days?

(b) How can it build up *your* faith?

Day 4 Read DANIEL 7:7, 19-20, 23-24

1. How was the fourth beast described?

Verse 7:

Verse 19:

Verse 23:

Note: This fourth beast corresponds to the iron legs and iron-clay feet of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in DANIEL 2. Hence, it represents the Roman empire.

2. The fourth beast has ten horns (verse 7). What can we say about these ten horns based on verse 24?

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"These ten horns represent a later stage in the history of this empire. We know that because verse 24 specifically tells us that these ten horns came out of this kingdom. In the Bible the horn is a symbol of power. Ten is almost certainly a symbolic number.

As I understand it, the vision is predicting that in direct succession to the Roman Empire, and springing out of it, will be a multiplicity of kingdoms. None of these could have arisen without Rome, and yet none of them is Rome.

The vision teaches that a multiplicity of dominions will spring out of Rome. Ten stands simply for completeness, and should not be pressed. It is a round number."

Stuart Olyott

Day 5 Read DANIEL 7:8, 19-20, 24-26

1. How was the eleventh horn described?

Verse 8

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| (a) | (b) |
| (c) | (d) |

Verse 20

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| (a) | (b) |
| (c) | (d) |

Verse 24

- He 'shall rise _____ them'

- He shall be _____ from the first ones
- He 'shall _____ three kings'

2. What will the eleventh horn also do? (Verse 25)

3. What will be the end of the eleventh horn? (Verse 26)

"I am convinced in my own mind that this little horn is the same individual as is referred to in 2 Thessalonians 2, verses 3 and 4. He is 'the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God'.

What we have in Daniel 7 is a survey of human history from the time of Daniel to the very end of the world. Four great kingdoms will arise, one after the other. These will be followed by a multiplicity of kingdoms springing from the fourth. At the end, power will be concentrated in a single blasphemous individual. Although only a man, he will appear to be supernatural, and will be the enemy of God and what is godly."

Stuart Olyott

Day 6 Read DANIEL 7:9-12

1. In sharp contrast to the chaos depicted in first part of his dream (verses 1-8), *Daniel* now sees calm and order in verses 9-12, where the central figure is the Ancient of Days.

(a) How was the Ancient of Days described?

(b) Who is this Ancient of Days?

(c) "*Ancient of Days*" – what does this mean?

2. We read in verses 11-12 of the defeat and destruction of the beasts and horns. How did this happen? (You can find the answer in verses 11-12; you can also look at verse 22)

Day 7 Read DANIEL 7:13-14, 26-27

1. (a) One like the Son of Man is the central figure here. How was He described?

(b) What was given to Him? Who would serve Him? What was said about His kingdom?
2. (a) Read verse 18 and verse 27. Who would receive the everlasting kingdom?

(b) How can we reconcile this with verse 14 where it was said that the everlasting kingdom would be given to the Son of Man?
3. How would this portrayal of the Ancient of Days, the Son of Man and the saints of the Most High build up the faith of *Daniel* and the faithful of his days?

How would it build up your faith?

Week 8

[19th – 25th August 2012]

Day 1 Review of Daniel 7

1. Take time to review Daniel 7. Write down the most important lesson you have learnt from it.
2. Take time to read the Summary Notes of Daniel 7 below:

Summary Notes of Daniel 7

Daniel was taken to Babylon as a captive in the year 605 B.C. at the age of around 13-14 years old. Hence the *Daniel* of DANIEL 7 (553 B.C.) would be an old man of around 65-66 years old! Although he was advanced in years, the vision he saw still left him grieved and troubled (verses 15 & 28)!

The first part of his dream (vision) has 4 beasts, 10 horns and a little horn. This is an outline of human history spanning from his days till the end of this world – the Babylonian Empire, Medo-Persian Empire, Greek Empire, Roman Empire, the kingdoms and nations that follow and finally the Anti-Christ! The fact that God could tell him what would take place in the future shows that God is in control of the future! That's meant to encourage *Daniel* and the faithful!!

Why use beasts to symbolize the empires? That's their true nature! *Human empires usually represent humanity at its worst – bestial and dominant, full of raw power and savage fury, making advancements by consuming others!*

Living under the rule of beasts must be hard, especially if you are a faithful believer in God! Hence it is no surprise that the believers (also known as saints of the Most High) will be severely persecuted, especially during the time when the little horn holds sway!

We can lose heart and become despondent, even cynical, unless we lift our eyes to see heaven! Standing in sharp contrast to this world's universal chaos, depicted in verses 2-8, is the calm and order of heaven (verses 9-12). We see God depicted as Ancient of Days sitting on His throne as the Great King (surrounded by other thrones), His purity symbolized by the white-as-snow garment, His eternity and wisdom symbolized by the pure wool hair. The fiery flame and wheel probably convey His omnipotence and omnipresence, while His majesty and glory is depicted by the great multitude standing before Him and serving Him. Besides being the Great King who rules over all, He is also the Judge of all.

The most comforting picture to a saint suffering and undergoing persecutions would be verses 11-12! Just a word from the Ancient of Days, or even a decision made without uttering a single word – that was sufficient to defeat the beasts and the horns, including the little horn!! What a Mighty God we serve!! No wonder Daniel could be so brave as to tell Belshazzar his sins and to announce the end of the Babylonian Empire (DANIEL 5), and to not flinch in the face of danger (DANIEL 6)!

The encouragement for God's saints does not stop in verse 12. From verse 13, we are introduced to One like the Son of Man. We know from the New Testament that this is Jesus Christ our Lord, God's Son! His glory is seen in Him coming in the clouds, and His triumph is so powerfully depicted in verse 14! Surely the message must be this: *How blessed you must be if you belong to Him!!*

And this is indeed so, as verse 18 as well as verse 27 tell us that the everlasting kingdom shall be the possession of the saints of God. The kingdom is ours because the kingdom is Christ's and we are His people!!

Yes, we are suffering now as God's people. In fact, the suffering could become worse! But the suffering will end! Evil will be defeated! We will triumph because

Christ has triumphed! The only thing that will endure is the kingdom of God! Hence, it makes perfect sense to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness, to follow Christ wherever He leads us, for our God reigns!!!

What have you learnt from the Summary Notes above?

3. Share your answers to Questions 1 and 2 with someone.

Day 2 Read the Introduction to DANIEL 8 below and DANIEL 8:1-2

Introduction to DANIEL 8

The structure of DANIEL 8 is simple:

8:1-2	Prologue
8:3-14	The Vision
8:15-26	The Interpretation
8:27	Epilogue

"Like the vision in Daniel 7, this vision describes a series of kingdoms in the form of animals that exalt themselves, with one kingdom rising after another, aspiring to greatness and achieving it, but then being shattered. The ram seems invincible until the goat arises, but then he is swiftly destroyed. The first horn of the goat throws the ram to the ground and no one can rescue the ram from the horn's power, but at the height of his power, the large horn too is shattered.

In other words, no matter how great and menacing an empire may appear to be, it is simply an actor in a play written by someone else. It plays out the role assigned to it by God on the revolving stage of world history, and then, when its lines are over, it slinks off ignominiously into the wings. The rise and fall of these real historical nations, predicted so accurately centuries ahead of time by the Lord through his prophets, remind us clearly who is directing the course of history. Earthly thrones and dominions come and go in a ceaseless round; only the kingdom of God is forever.

The message of the visions was thus good news to generations of saints who suffer at the hands of earthly kingdoms, whether the Babylonians, or the subsequent Persians or Greeks, or present-day persecutors. These empires that to human eyes looked so powerful, that seemed to have no weakness or chinks in their armor, were actually merely sheep and goats whose destiny laid in the hands of the divine shepherd, the Lord himself. They weren't even the cosmically frightening monsters of Daniel 7, but only overgrown domestic animals. Like any good shepherd, the Lord is easily able to judge mere sheep and goats who step out of line and to put them back in their place." (Iain M. Duguid)

1. Write down one thing you have learnt from reading the Introduction.
2. (a) When did *Daniel* have this vision? (Verse 1)

(b) Where was *Daniel* in this vision? (Verse 2)

Note: Remember that DANIEL 7 happened in 553 B.C. (1st year of Belshazzar's reign).

Our chapter for this week -- DANIEL 8 took place in 551 B.C. (3rd year of Belshazzar's reign)

Recall that DANIEL 5 took place in 539 B.C. (14th and final year of Belshazzar's reign).

Day 3 Read DANIEL 8:3-4, 18-20

1. The first animal that *Daniel* saw in this vision was a ram.

(a) How was the ram described? (Verse 3)

(b) What was the ram doing? (Verse 4a)

(c) How successful was it? (Verse 4b-d)

2. According to verse 20, the ram stands for: _____.

Note (1): The Medo-Persian Empire lasted some 200 years, from 539 B.C. to 330 B.C. It was the superpower of its day. Its conquest was all embracing and irresistible. It spread to Babylonia, Syria and Asia Minor in the west, to Armenia and the area of the Caspian Sea in the north, and into Africa in the south. Shushan (mentioned in verse 2) was its capital.

Note (2): *Daniel* received this vision from God in 551 B.C. (more than a decade before the actual rise of the Medo-Persian Empire). What others saw only after the event, *Daniel* saw in prophetic vision beforehand.

3. (a) How would this vision (thus far) build up the faith of *Daniel* and the faithful of his days?

(b) How could it build up your faith?

Day 4 Read DANIEL 7:5-8, 21-22

1. The second animal that *Daniel* saw in this vision was a male goat.

(a) How was the male goat described? (Verse 5)

(b) What did the male goat do? (Verse 6-7)

(c) After trampling the ram, what happened to the male goat?

Verse 8a:

Verse 8b-c:

Verse 8d:

2. According to verse 21, the male goat stands for: _____.

According to verse 21, the large horn between the eyes of the male goat stands for:

_____.

According to verse 22, the four horns stand for: _____.

Note (1): The Greek Empire lasted more than 260 years, from 330 B.C. to 63 B.C. Its first king was Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) With lightning speed, Alexander defeated the Persians and established the Greek empire that spanned from Europe to India.

Note (2): When Alexander died in 323 B.C., the kingdom was divided among his four generals: Cassander (Macedonia and Greece), Lysimachus (Thrace

and much of Asia Minor), Seleucus (Syria and other regions in the east), and Ptolemy (Egypt).

Note (3): *Daniel* received this vision from God in 551 B.C. (more than 200 years before the actual rise of the Greek Empire). Once more, what others saw only after the event, *Daniel* saw in prophetic vision beforehand.

- 3 (a) How would this vision (thus far) build up the faith of *Daniel* and the faithful of his days?

(b) How could it build up your faith?

Day 5 Read DANIEL 8:9-14, 23-26

1. These verses talk about the little horn.

(a) How was it (he) described?

(b) What would it (he) do? Would it (he) succeed? (See verses 9, 24-25)

(c) How would it be like to live under its (his) reign?

(d) What would be its (his) end?

2. In verses 13-14, we hear the conversation between two holy ones (angels).

(a) What was the question?

(b) What was the answer?

(c) If you were present to hear this conversation then, what would be your reaction upon hearing the answer?

Day 6 Read DANIEL 8:15-17, 27

1. It was not sufficient for *Daniel* to see the vision.
 - (a) What else did *Daniel* need?
 - (b) Who was given the task to help *Daniel* achieve that?
2. How did *Daniel* respond to the vision he saw and the interpretation he received? (Verse 27)

“How great God is! How is it that He can reveal future history to His prophets, centuries before it happens? It is because He is the God of history, and because all events everywhere serve His sovereign will. What a comfort to know that no evil power can arise without His express decree! How consoling to be aware that He who rules history has guaranteed that His Son shall finally triumph over all rule and authority, and that every display of evil at last will be put down! What folly it is to fight against such a God! What wisdom it is to walk with Him! What convincing power is in the argument: ‘If God be for us, who can be against us?’ (Romans 8:31)”

Stuart Olyott

Day 7 Summary Notes for DANIEL 8:1-27

The vision *Daniel* saw in DANIEL 8 concerned the next 400 years of world history, from the time of the Medo-Persian empire to the Greek empire. In other words, this vision provided further information on the second and third beasts that had appeared in *Daniel's* dream in DANIEL 7.

Daniel would not have known anything about the coming 400 years (539 B.C. – 63 B.C.) if God had not given him this revelation. Also, *Daniel* would not have been able to understand what he had seen in the vision if God had not send Gabriel (an angel) to explain the vision to him (v15-17). Clearly, *Daniel* was utterly dependent on God for any knowledge of the future. The same would be true of us.

The ram, male goat and their clashes formed the backdrop for the main focus of this vision: *the little horn*. Considerably more time and space were devoted to this little horn in the vision. We note that he came out from one of the 4 kingdoms, grew exceedingly powerful, was a morally depraved person, was very determined to wipe out the people of God and ascribed to himself divine attributes. From the two angels' conversation, it was clear that this little horn would lord over God's people for quite some time, pointing to a period of great tribulation for them. But comfort could be found in the last

line of verse 25: *He shall be broken without human means.* No matter how powerful he was (or appeared to be), he would finally be defeated . . . by God!

The history books identified this little horn as Antiochus Epiphanes. He emerged from the Seleucid dynasty, came to power in 175 B.C and gave himself the title – “Theo Antiochus Epiphanes”, meaning “The Illustrious God”!

“Power hungry, Antiochus sought to expand his dominion to include Palestine. This brought him into conflict with the Ptolematic dynasty in Egypt. While in Jerusalem, Antiochus replaced the high priest with a man of his own choosing. He then invaded Egypt, and while there, a rumor of his death circulated among the Jews (much to their joy). Efforts were made to reinstate the genuine high priest. Antiochus accused the people of rebellion, savagely attacked and sacked Jerusalem, and executed tens of thousands of its inhabitants – forty thousand apparently dying within the space of three days – while others were taken captive. He entered the holy of holies in the temple, sacrificed a pig on the altar of burnt offering, defiled the temple precincts, took the sacred furniture, and established a traitor, Menelaus, as high priest.

In 168 B.C., when Antiochus’ efforts to take Egypt were foiled by the Romans, he again vented his revenge on the Jews. More than twenty thousand of his soldiers massacred the Jews assembled for worship on a Sabbath day and committed further atrocities and vandalism. The temple was left without the daily sacrifices, religious practices were nonexistent, and a statue of Zeus was placed in the temple and human sacrifices were made on the altar. Circumcision was forbidden, unclean meat was mandatory fare, and the Sabbath and other feasts were profaned.” (Sinclair Ferguson)

In December 164 B.C., Judas Maccabeus led a successful revolt against Antiochus and re-dedicated the temple. Today, the Jews would remember this re-dedication of the temple through the observance of the Hanukkah. As for Antiochus, he soon contracted an exceedingly painful disease and died.

What have you learnt from the Summary Notes?

Share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name)

Week 9

[26th August – 1st September 2012]

Day 1 Read DANIEL 9:1-3

1. (a) When did the event mentioned in this chapter take place? (This would be 539/8 B.C.)

(b) *Daniel* was taken to Babylon in 605 B.C. around the age of 14 years old. How old would *Daniel* be in 539/8 B.C.?

2. What was *Daniel* doing in verse 2?

It is likely that *Daniel* would have read these passages:

Jeremiah 25:8-11 *Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the Lord, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.'*

Jeremiah 29:10-14 *For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.*

3. What was *Daniel* doing in verse 3? Why did he do it?

4. Write down one lesson you've learnt from reading this portion of Daniel 9.

Two quotes from Matthew Henry worth pondering:

(1) *"Though Daniel was himself a great prophet, and one that was well acquainted with the visions of God, yet he was a diligent student in the scripture, and thought it no disparagement to him to consult Jeremiah's prophecies. He was a great politician, and prime minister of state to one of the greatest monarchs upon earth, and yet could find both heart and time to converse with the word of God. The greatest and best men in the world must not think themselves above their Bibles."*

- (2) “*God’s promises are intended, not to supersede, but to excite and encourage, our prayers; and, when we see the day of the performance of them approaching, we should the more earnestly plead them with God and put them in suit.*”

Day 2 Read DANIEL 9:4-19

These 16 verses record *Daniel’s* prayer to the LORD his God.

1. (a) How did he address God?

(b) How do you address God in your prayer?

Have you ever addressed God in the way *Daniel* did here?

2. Verse 4 states that Daniel made a confession in his prayer. What did *Daniel* confess?

Verse 7:

Verse 8:

Verse 9:

Verse 10-11:

Verse 14:

Verse 15:

3. (a) Is ‘confession of sins’ a regular item in your prayers?

(b) Have you ever used any of the words/phrases *Daniel* used in your confession?

Day 3 Read DANIEL 9:4-19 again

1. *Daniel* acknowledged that Israel's troubles and exile were the fruit of their sins. Where can we find him saying this in his prayer?
2. *Daniel* further acknowledged that God acted righteously in punishing them. Where can we find him saying this in his prayer?
3. In verses 11-14, *Daniel* admitted that all that has happened was what God through Moses promised would happen if Israel turned her back on God (Read Deuteronomy 28:15, 47-51, 64-67, if you can).

Seeing that God was faithful in carrying out His threat, how would this encourage *Daniel* when he came before God to ask Him to end the exile as He had promised?

Day 4 Read DANIEL 9:4-19 once more

1. Besides confession, there was also supplication in *Daniel's* prayer. What did he supplicate for?

Verse 16:

Verse 17:

Verse 19:

2. According to verse 18, why should God hear his request?
3. Did God answer *Daniel's* prayer? [Read 2 Chronicles 36:22-23]

Day 5 Read Summary Notes for DANIEL 9:1-19 and DANIEL 9:20-24

Summary Notes for DANIEL 9:1-19

In the year 605 B.C. *Daniel* was brought to Babylon as an exile at the young age of 13/14 years old. 66/67 years later in 539/8 B.C., the Babylonian empire had collapsed and was replaced by the Medo-Persian empire. *Daniel* would be 80/81 years old then.

At such a ripe old age, we find *Daniel* still reading his Bible! From Jeremiah 25 & 29 he learnt that God had made a promise --- the Babylonian exile would only last for 70 years! In 539/8 B.C., *Daniel* could see with his own eyes that the Babylonian empire was gone. Why then were the Jews still in exile? Hence *Daniel* set his heart to seek the LORD with fasting, sackcloth and ashes, to plead with God to fulfill His promise to end the exile!

In his prayer, *Daniel* started with worship -- *O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments* (verse 4).

Then he moved to confessions, where he fully identified himself with Israel and confessed their unfaithfulness, rebellion, wickedness, iniquities, transgression, sins and disobedience. He freely admitted that the desolations they have suffered were fully deserved! God was righteous in punishing them. He had indeed warned them centuries ago through Moses in Deuteronomy 28 that if they turned their backs on Him, these disasters would come upon them. And indeed they had!

Seeing how faithful God was in carrying out His threat to punish, *Daniel* moved next to supplicate, asking God to be faithful also in carrying out His promise to end the exile after 70 years! Hence he asked God to turn away His anger from Jerusalem, to cause His face to shine on His sanctuary, to forgive them and to restore them. We know from 2 Chronicles 26 and Ezra 1 that God had indeed heard Daniel's prayer!!

Pastor Stuart Olyott called this '*a great prayer*'. He added, "*When did you last pray like that? It is the sort of prayer that God hears. If we would see God at work, we must find out what He has promised and pray for it like that. We do not need to wait until we are joined by others before we begin. It is when the remnant prays in this way that history is changed.*"

What have you learnt from the Summary Notes above concerning Prayer? How have your prayers changed as a result of what you have learnt? What needs to be changed in your prayers after what you have just learnt?

Share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name)

DANIEL 9:20-24

1. Who appeared to *Daniel* and why did he come?

2. What did he tell *Daniel*?

Verse 23:

Verse 24:

3. (a) How was his coming an encouragement to *Daniel*?

(b) How is these 4 verses an encouragement to you?

Day 6 Read DANIEL 9:24-27

These 4 verses contain the message that Gabriel was charged to convey to *Daniel*. It was a response to *Daniel's* prayer for God to fulfill His promise to end Israel's exile. The 'seventy weeks' of verse 24 is literally 'seventy sevens'.

According to verse 24, six things will take place at the end of this period of 'seventy sevens'. What are they?

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-
-
-
-
-

From the New Testament perspective, we have to say that these six things point to the coming of Jesus Christ the Saviour and the salvation He will accomplish! Hence, "*on hearing all this Daniel must have been filled with immeasurable excitement. For the greater part of his life he had been grieving over Jerusalem and longing for its restoration. Now he was hearing that seventy sevens from then it was going to have a future far exceeding all his expectations. The promised Christ would come, sin would be dealt with, and there would be a way by which sinners could be everlastingly right with God. The time of predicting Him would be over. He will have come – to Jerusalem!*" (Stuart Olyott).

Take time to ponder this: *Daniel was praying to God to end Israel's seventy years of exile. God's answer was to tell Daniel about a period of seventy sevens after which Israel would be restored and the Messiah would come!*

In His answer to *Daniel's* prayer, God has certainly done exceedingly abundantly above all that Daniel could ask or think!! Can you think of a New Testament verse that says something about this? Write it down below.

Day 7 Read DANIEL 9:24-27 again

The period of seventy sevens was divided into three sections:

- Seven sevens (verse 25)
 - Sixty-two sevens (verse 25)
 - After the sixty-two sevens (verse 26) [That is, the 70th sevens]
1. According to verse 25, what will take place during the seven sevens and the sixty-two sevens?
 2. According to verse 26, after the sixty-two sevens, what will happen?
 -
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Note: God told *Daniel* in the year 539/8 B.C. about the events that would happen in AD 33 (the death of Christ) and AD 70 (the destruction of Jerusalem)! Hear what **Isaiah 48:3-5** said concerning God:

"I have declared the former things from the beginning; they went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did them, and they came to pass.

Because I knew that you were obstinate, and your neck was an iron sinew, and your brow bronze,

Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you, lest you should say, 'My idol has done them, and my carved image and my molded image have commanded them.'

Focus on the part of the verse that is underlined (see above) and then take time to worship your God! *What a God!!*

Day 1 Summary Notes for DANIEL 9:20-27

Verses 20-23

When *Daniel* started to pray, God started to hear! That's the message of verse 23. When God hears, He acts! Hence Gabriel the angel was dispatched to bring the answer to *Daniel*. The phrase "being caused to fly swiftly" (verse 21) conveys just how eager our Lord was to give *Daniel* the answer! From *Daniel's* perspective, the "swiftness" of the answer was equally impactful. We can see this from his twice repeated "*while I was speaking*" (verse 20, 21). What an encouragement to him, and to us, to pray unceasingly!

Further encouragements to *Daniel* can be seen in the following two things:

- [i] He was called 'greatly beloved'! Remember that he was confessing sins in verse 3-19, and now he was assured of God's great love to him!
- [ii] He was not only given the answer (vision), he would also be given the skill to understand the vision!

Verses 24-27

While *Daniel* was thinking and praying over the 70 years of exile, God talked to him about the 70 sevens when salvation will be accomplished! The 70 sevens will start when the 70 years of exile ended (verse 25). The 70 sevens will be divided into three sections: The 1st 7 sevens, the next 62 sevens and the last sevens.

From the time the command goes forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, 7 sevens and 62 sevens (altogether 69 sevens) will pass. During this period of 69 sevens, "*the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times*". This would cover the times and events narrated in the book of Ezra and Nehemiah, as well as the 400 years of silence, bringing us to the times of Jesus! Jerusalem was indeed an inhabited city by the time our Lord walked its streets in AD 30!!

After the 62 sevens, meaning during the last sevens (70th sevens), the Messiah would be cut off but not for Himself! This is clearly talking about the death of Jesus on the cross for the sins of His people. In shedding His blood, Jesus has inaugurated the New Covenant. From then onwards, all the Old Testament sacrifices would no longer be needed. This is how we should read the first part of verse 27.

In rejecting the Messiah and nailing Him to the cross, the Jews were sealing the doom and destruction of Jerusalem. "*The destruction of Jerusalem did not immediately follow Calvary, but it was an event which was determined by the fact that the Jews rejected Christ. It did not happen in the seventieth 'week', but was determined in the seventieth 'week'. Our Lord made it clear, both in His Olivet discourse and as He walked to the cross, that His rejection by the Jews would mean the destruction of their city and temple (Matthew 23:34-24:38; Luke 23:27-31).*" (Stuart Olyott). This is how we should read the second part of verse 26 and the second part of verse 27.

It is interesting to note that the angel Gabriel who brought God's message to *Daniel* here in Daniel 9 – telling him that the Messiah would come and then be cut off, is the same Gabriel who announced the birth of the Messiah's forerunner (Luke 1:19) as well as the birth of the Messiah Himself (Luke 1:26)!

What have you learnt from reading the Summary Notes?

Share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name)

Day 2 Read DANIEL 10:1-4

"This wonderful chapter is full of powerful lessons for us, especially as far as our prayer life is concerned. All the previous chapters of Daniel have been self-contained units. Each one stood on its own. Chapter 10 is not like that at all. Its task is to introduce a vision, the details of which are found in chapters 11 and 12. It tells us the circumstances in which the final vision of the book was given, but we must wait to read the two following chapters to see exactly what that vision was." (Stuart Olyott)

1. (a) When did this vision take place? (Verse 1, 4)

(b) Where did this vision take place? (Verse 4)
2. What was *Daniel* doing for the three full weeks before he had this vision? (Verses 2-3)

Note (1): Cyrus gave the permission for the Jews to return to their homeland in the 1st year of his reign (Ezra 1). Since DANIEL 10 brings us to the 3rd year of Cyrus' reign, the first group of returnees under the leadership of Zerubbabel (Ezra 2) would have already reached Judea and settled in.

Note (2): From Ezra 3, we know that by the 2nd year of this return, the Jews have already laid the foundation of the temple. However, their work met with much opposition. Ezra 4:4-5 reported the situation back in Judea in this way: *Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building, and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

Note (3): The small number of people who joined Zerubbabel in the 1st return (Ezra 2) and the intense opposition that the returnees faced while back in

Judea (Ezra 4) could be the reason why *Daniel* did what he did in verse 2-3: *In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.*

“Good men cannot but mourn to see how slowly the work of God goes on in the world and what opposition it meets with, how weak its friends are and how active its enemies.” (Matthew Henry)

Day 3 Read DANIEL 10:5-6

1. On the 24th day of the 1st month, *Daniel* had a vision. In the vision, he saw a man. How was the man described?

His clothing:

His body:

His face:

His eyes:

His arms and feet:

His voice:

2. Read Revelation 1:13-17. Here *John* met one like the Son of Man. How was He described?

His clothing:

His head and hair:

His eyes:

His feet:

His voice:

3. Do you find the descriptions in Q1 and Q2 similar?

Who, do you think, is the man *Daniel* saw in his vision?

Day 4 Read DANIEL 10:7-11

1. What were *Daniel's* immediate reactions to the vision?

Verse 8:

Verse 9:

2. How did *Daniel* recover his consciousness and strength?

3. (a) What did the man say to *Daniel*? (Verse 11)

(b) How would his words be an encouragement to *Daniel*?

Day 5 Read DANIEL 10:12-19

1. Verses 12-14 record the words of the man to *Daniel*.

(a) Note what was said in verse 12. How would this be an encouragement to *Daniel*?

(b) Note what was said in verse 14. How would this be an encouragement to *Daniel*?

2. (a) How did *Daniel* react to the words of this man? (Verse 15, 17)

(b) How did Daniel recover his strength and speech?

Verse 16:

Verse 18:

Verse 19b:

Day 6 Read DANIEL 10:13, 20-21, 11:1

1. Several characters (beings) were mentioned in these verses. Who were they?
 - The man in the vision
 -
 -
 -
 - Michael (one of the chief princes)
2. What, do you think, were their real identities?
3. “... *I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him*” (11:1)

Who do you think is the ‘*I*’ mentioned here?

Who do you think is the ‘*him*’ mentioned here?

Note: We are here given a glimpse into the warfare that goes on in the spiritual realm! The prince of Persia (fallen angel) was influencing the kings of Persia to make life difficult for the Jews in Judea, and the man in the vision together with Michael were fighting that prince. Later on, the man in the vision will battle the prince of Greece!

Day 7 Summary Notes for DANIEL 10:1-21 (I)

The chapter begins with *Daniel* spending three weeks in prayer and fasting in the 3rd year of the Persian king, Cyrus. This immediately alerts us to the fact that though *Daniel* had prayed for the exile to end and the Jews to return to Judea, he himself (for some reason) was not able to join the returnees. Hence, he remained in Persia.

Though *Daniel* was physically in Persia, his heart was back in Judea! This explained why he was fasting and praying for 3 weeks. We know from verse 14 that his prayer had to do with the wellbeing and future of Israel!

It was very likely that *Daniel* was very troubled by what he had seen and known. Although a group of Jews had returned to Judea, the fact was that a huge majority of them had remained behind in Persia. Most of the Jews appeared not to be interested in going back to Judea! His prayer in DANIEL 9 was answered – Cyrus had issued the decree for their return. However very few Jews had taken up that offer to go back! In addition, news from Judea wasn't very encouraging either. Yes, the group under

Zerubbabel did arrive back in Judea safely, and yes they did lay the foundations of the temple. But things soon took a turn for the worse! Oppositions to the Jews and their rebuilding project were many, intense and malicious. The people were soon very discouraged. In fact, life back in Judea was one huge struggle! Would any Jews in Persia, upon hearing such news, eagerly sign up for the 2nd return party?

In the face of such bleak and discouraging circumstances, *Daniel* gave himself to seek God in prayer. The rest of the chapter tells us about God's answer to his prayer. But before we look at God's answer to his prayer, we should note what verse 12 says – *From the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.* This is almost identical with DANIEL 9:23!

Do we doubt if God hears us when we pray? Do we wonder if our words could ever go beyond the ceilings of our houses? Even if God hears us, will He bother to respond? DANIEL 9:23 and DANIEL 10:12 must bury all our doubts forever! God hears, God hears straightaway, and God will give an answer!

What have you learnt from reading Summary Notes (I)?

How have they changed you?

Week 11

[9th September – 15th September 2012]

Day 1 Summary Notes for DANIEL 10:1-21 (II)

Who was the man *Daniel* saw in his vision? We could arrive at a reasonable answer by first observing how *Daniel* responded to him and the vision. He lost all strength and became unconscious (verse 8-9). Though some angelic beings came to strengthen him (v10, 16, 18), *Daniel* did not fully recover his strength. When the man spoke to him in verse 12-14, *Daniel* again lost his strength and even his speech. *Daniel* only fully recovered his strength and speech when that man spoke to him and strengthened him (verse 19b).

This prolonged experience of being overwhelmed was unusual, especially when we compare it with *Daniel's* experience when Gabriel came to him to explain his vision in DANIEL 8. There he did lose his strength and consciousness, but once Gabriel touched him, he regained his strength immediately. However, this was not the case here in DANIEL 10, implying that the man in this vision is far more glorious and majestic than Gabriel! We must also note that *Daniel* addressed this person as 'my lord' (verse 16, 17, 19). And from 11:1, we know that this person confirmed and strengthened Michael, implying that he must be far more powerful and glorious than Michael!

We are not able to fully comprehend the meaning of verse 13, how the prince of Persia

can oppose this glorious and majestic person for 21 days. But we need to note that the prince of Persia (verse 13 & 19) and the prince of Greece (verse 19) were not humans! In the same way, Michael (called one of the chief princes and your prince) was not human. The first two characters were likely to be fallen angels while Michael was the archangel (Jude 9). However, the kings of Persia (verse 13) were humans.

Put simply, we are given a glimpse into the warfare that goes on in the spiritual realm! The prince of Persia (fallen angel) was influencing the kings of Persia to make life difficult for the Jews in Judea, and the man in the vision together with Michael were fighting that prince. Later on, the man in the vision will battle the prince of Greece!

“This chapter shows us who are the real enemies of the work of God. Zerubbabel had gone back to Jerusalem. The whole work which he and his few companions hoped to undertake had been held up. Who is to be held responsible? Should we blame the discouraged band itself? Are we to say to them, ‘It is all your fault. It is your discouragement which is holding things up. Discouraged people are the real enemies of the work of God’?

Or should we blame the Samaritans? They had been living in Palestine throughout the whole time of the Jewish exile in Babylon. They were more than upset by the return of the Jews and their plan to rebuild the temple. It was the last thing they wanted, and they therefore set about trying to stop it. Should we then say that the real enemies of God’s work are its critics and physical opponents?

Or is it the Persians who should carry the blame? It was the Persian authorities who first gave permission for the Jews to return and then ordered the work to stop when the Samaritans complained. Surely they are the real rogues.

None of these are the real enemies of the work of God. The real enemies are revealed in verse 13 and 20: ‘The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me.’ ‘I will return to fight with the prince of Persia.’ It is the clear teaching of the Word of God that evil men on earth are directed by evil powers. It is the evil spiritual personalities, which influence and penetrate human minds, that are the real enemies of God’s work.

The warfare in which we are engaged is not primarily a warfare with our own discouragements or with visible enemies. It is not primarily a warfare with critics, or with authorities who constantly frustrate the things we want to do. Our warfare is a spiritual warfare with spiritual enemies. This is clear from the chapter we have just studied, and is a fact underlined by the apostle Paul when he wrote, ‘For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness (or wicked spirits) in high places’ (Ephesians 6:12)”

Stuart Olyott

What have you learnt from reading the Summary Notes (II)?

As a result of what you've learnt, what areas of your life must change?

Day 2 Read DANIEL 10:21-11:4

Remember that DANIEL 10-12 belong together. DANIEL 10 showed us *Daniel* praying and the man clothed in linen coming to give *Daniel* the answers to his prayer. In DANIEL 11 we shall read of what the man clothed in linen told *Daniel*. DANIEL 11 is the longest, most complex, most detailed and precise prophecy in the book of DANIEL, indeed in the whole of Scripture!

Remember that DANIEL 10-12 took place during the 3rd year of Cyrus' reign (DANIEL 10:1).

1. Read 11:2 again.

(a) How many kings are mentioned here?

(b) From the history books, we know the Persian kings who reigned in the 6th century B.C. are:

Cyrus	(539-530 B.C.)
Cambyses	(530-522 B.C.)
Pseudo-Smerdis	(522 B.C.)
Darius I	(522-486 B.C.)
Xerxes	(486-465 B.C.)

Who was "*the fourth who shall be richer than them all*" mentioned in 11:3?

He was also known as Ahasuerus (husband of Esther). Under his reign, Persian power reached its pinnacle. He invaded Greece but was defeated at the battle of Salamis.

2. Read 11:3-4 again.

(a) What was said about the "mighty king" who shall arise (v3)?

(b) What would happen to his kingdom afterwards (v4)?

This "mighty king" is Alexander the Great. After his death, his extensive kingdom was finally divided up among his four generals.

3. Remember that DANIEL 11 was God's answer to *Daniel's* prayer in chapter 10. He fasted and prayed for 3 full weeks because he was very troubled over the sad state of the Jews back in Judea and also how the majority of the Jews still remained in exile. DANIEL 11:2-4 was conveyed to *Daniel* to encourage him.

How would it encourage him?

Day 3 Summary Notes for DANIEL 10:21-11:4

DANIEL 10:1 informed us that this event took place in 537 B.C. (the 3rd year of Cyrus' reign). DANIEL 11:2-4 revealed to *Daniel* in broad strokes what would take place from 537 B.C. to 323 B.C. How could history be told before history actually happens?

In DANIEL 10:21, we read of 'Scripture of Truth' (NKJV) or 'book of truth' (ESV). From this book, the man clothed in linen would tell *Daniel* what would come to pass in the coming decades and centuries. *Daniel* then wrote down what he had heard in the book of DANIEL. Finally, after these events have come to pass, a third book would be written – history books!

We have three books in this order: Book of Truth → Book of DANIEL → History books

"Chapter 11 consists of history which was written before it took place! It had been written eternally in the divine books (10:21), but was even to be written in Daniel's book a considerable time before it happened." (Stuart Olyott)

So DANIEL 11:2-4 reveals to us events in history (the 3 Persian kings after Cyrus, rise of Xerxes, fall of Persian Empire, rise of Alexander the Great, division of his kingdom into four) before they actually take place!

This is meant to be an encouragement to *Daniel* at that time of sorrow and grief. How? God can tell him the future because God has the future in His hands, and this God who holds the future in His hands is *Daniel's* God!!

Have you learnt any lesson(s) from the Summary Notes of DANIEL 10:21-11:4? If you have, write it down in the space below and then share it with one other person:

Day 4 Read DANIEL 11:5-20

After the death of Alexander the Great, his empire was finally divided among his 4 generals. Here in DANIEL 11:5-20, two of the kingdoms came into focus: The Seleucid dynasty based in Syria & Babylon, and the Ptolemy dynasty based in Egypt. The centre of the compass was the Glorious Kingdom (v20) – Palestine, where the Jews lived.

Hence, the king of the North would be the Seleucid dynasty in Syria while the king of the South would be the Ptolemy dynasty in Egypt.

DANIEL 11:5-20 records a very detailed prophecy of what will take place in the history of these two dynasties. This is known as the inter-testament period in the history books. Copy out the relevant verses from DANIEL 11:5-20 in the spaces provided:

<i>Daniel's book</i>	<i>History Book</i>
V5: <i>Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.</i>	In 322 B.C. Ptolemy Soter rose to power and ruled Egypt till 305 B.C. He took a prince named Seleucus under his wing. In 312 B.C. this young man left to form the Seleucid empire, exceeding the Ptolemies both in size and power.
V6: <i>And at the end of some years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times.</i>	Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus (Southern Kingdom) became the wife of Antiochus II (Northern Kingdom). This led to a marriage alliance between both countries. But this alliance did not last as Antiochus II, Berenice and their child were all murdered not long afterwards!
V7-8:	Ptolemy Euergetes, brother of Berenice, became king of Egypt and he successfully avenged the death of his sister by invading the North Kingdom and putting the murderers to death. His armies spoiled the north and carried its protective gods back to Egypt. For a while, the Ptolemies dominated the Seleucids.
V9:	Seleucus Callinicius of the Northern Kingdom marched against the Ptolemies in 204 B.C., thoroughly defeated them and returned home victorious.
V10:	Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great, both princes of the Northern kingdom, combined their military strength to conquer the surrounding areas. Seleucus died in a battle. Antiochus the Great continued to battle alone, till he reached the very edge of Egypt.

V11: <i>And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy.</i>	The army of Antiochus the Great far outnumbered that of Ptolemy Philopator, the king of the South; but surprising, Antiochus the Great was defeated!
V12:	The unexpected victory filled Ptolemy Philopator with pride, and he began to inflict more defeats on the Northern Kingdom.

We will continue from verse 13 tomorrow. For now, just look at the table above. Can you see anything significant? What is it?

How would this encourage *Daniel* in the 6th century B.C. and us today in AD 2012?

Day 5 Read DANIEL 11:5-20 again

Continue to copy out the relevant verses from DANIEL 11:5-20 in the space provided:

<i>Daniel's book</i>	History Book
V13-14:	The superiority of the Southern Kingdom did not last. After Ptolemy Philopator died, the Northern Kingdom became dominant again. During that time, rebels appeared within the Egyptian borders. The days of the Southern Kingdom appeared to be numbered!
V15-16:	The Northern Kingdom achieved a decisive victory at Sidon. During those days, Antiochus the Great looked invincible. He even took over Palestine and the Jews then suffered greatly.
V17: <i>He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand with him, or be for him.</i>	Antiochus the Great changed his tactics. He decided to defeat the Southern Kingdom through subtlety. He gave his daughter, Cleopatra, in marriage to the Ptolemaic king in the hope that he would then be able to control the Southern Kingdom using her as a proxy. But Cleopatra sided with her husband instead of her father!

V18:	Antiochus turned his attention to Asia Minor but he was defeated by the Roman, Lucius Scipio Asiaticus. He was utterly humiliated.
V19: <i>Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.</i>	He returned home to concentrate on his domestic affairs and soon disappeared from the political scene.
V20:	Seleucus Philipator replaced him. He wanted to seize the funds from the temple in Jerusalem but failed. Not long afterwards, he also disappeared from the pages of history.

Once again, can you see just how detailed and accurate the prophecy given to *Daniel* was? How would this encourage *Daniel* in the 6th century B.C., and us today in AD 2012?

Day 6 Summary Notes for DANIEL 11:5-20

Some of us may find DANIEL 11:5-20 quite boring! However, we need to remember that DANIEL 11:5-20 is Scripture, and hence it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). So how is this passage of Scripture profitable for us?

First of all, recall that from 11:2-4, we see that God knows the big picture! He told *Daniel* in broad strokes what would come to pass for the next 200 years! Now from 11:5-20, God told *Daniel* in very specific details what would take place in the following 200 years, from 323 B.C. to 175 B.C.! God knows the big picture and God knows the minute details, hence God knows everything about the future!! *What a God Daniel had! What a God we have!*

Read 11:5-20 and what confronts us is a catalogue of wars, alliances, marriages, battles and a confusing pattern of comings and goings. It was all about man, or so it seems. The one who was strongest at the moment called the shots. There was no mention of God in these 16 verses, none whatsoever! Yet if we ponder over the passage a bit more deeply, we realized that God was everywhere, for He was the One who was telling *Daniel* all these details!! “*God is still God – even when He is nowhere to be seen,*” says Pastor Stuart Olyott.

This is true, not just at the level of international history but also true at the level of personal history! Your life right now may look as if God is nowhere to be found. The truth is, He is there, right there!

DANIEL 11:5-20 also demonstrates the truth of these other verses from the Bible:

Romans 13:1 *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*

Isaiah 40:23-24 *He brings the princes to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth useless. Scarcely shall they be planted, scarcely shall they be sown, scarcely shall their stock take root in the earth, when He will also blow on them, and they will wither, and the whirlwind will take them away like stubble.*

1. (a) What have you learnt from your own reading/study of DANIEL 11:5-20?

(b) What have you learnt from reading the Summary Notes?
2. Take time to ponder the words of this hymn by Matbie Babcock, and sing it to your Lord in worship:

*This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
His hand the wonders wrought.*

*This is my Father's world, the birds their carols raise,
The morning light, the lily white, declare their Maker's praise.
This is my Father's world: He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass;
He speaks to me everywhere.*

*This is my Father's world. O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world: the battle is not done:
Jesus Who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and Heav'n be one.*

Day 7 Read DANIEL 11:21-35

These 14 verses zero in on one particular individual: the Seleucid king, *Antiochus Epiphanes*. We have met him previously in DANIEL 8 (the little horn).

1. Verses 21-24 give us a sketch of the kind of person he was:

Verse 21a:

Verse 21d:

Verse 23a:

Verse 24:

2. Verses 25-30 give us a few glimpses of the kind of things he did:

Verse 25-26:

Verse 27:

Verse 28:

Verse 30:

3. Imagine that you were a Jew living during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and you have personally experienced many of the evil deeds he committed against the inhabitants of Judea. You have in your possession DANIEL 11 and have read it. How would DANIEL 11 be a help and encouragement to you during such a grave period of darkness?

Week 12

[16th September – 22nd September 2012]

Day 1 Read DANIEL 11:21-35 again

Today, we shall focus on the worst deed *Antiochus Epiphanes* committed against the Jews (verse 31-35). This came about after the Romans humiliated him when he tried to invade Egypt. He turned to the Jews to vent his anger!

1. What did he do?

Verse 31b:

Verse 31c:

Verse 31d:

2. A group of people who resisted *Antiochus Epiphanes* was mentioned in verses 32-33.

(a) How were they described? (Verse 32b, 33a, 35)

(b) What did they do? (Verse 32b, 33a)

(c) What would they undergo and suffer? (Verse 33b, 34b, 35a)

Day 2 Read DANIEL 11:36-45

These 10 verses talk about a *Antiochus-Epiphanes-like* figure. “*The Lord causes Daniel to look through Antiochus Epiphanes to the person of whom he is a prefigurement – the man of sin. From verse 36 Daniel is still, in a way, talking about Antiochus. But he is most certainly talking most about the Antichrist, for things are said here which cannot in any way apply to Antiochus.*” (Stuart Olyott).

1. What would this person be like? (Verse 36-39)

2. Verses 40-45 tell us what he would do.

(a) Who would he wage war against? Who would be exempted?

(b) What does ‘*he also shall enter the Glorious Land*’ mean?

3. What would be his end?

Day 3 Summary Notes for DANIEL 11:21-35 and DANIEL 11:36-45

DANIEL 11:21-35

The focus of these 15 verses is a historical person: *Antiochus Epiphanes*. Morally, he was corrupt – *vile person* (v21), *seizes the kingdom by intrigue* (v21), *acts deceitfully* (V23), *speaks lies at the table* (v27). He was also a violent and aggressive man, as can be seen in the many wars he waged and the massacres he committed (v22, 25, 28). Although he called himself ‘*Epiphanes*’ meaning ‘*the illustrious*’, his contemporaries referred to him as ‘*Epimanes*’ meaning ‘*the madman*’!

His worst and most infamous deed was committed against Jerusalem and the Temple (v31-35). What he did, as the history books tell us, was that he attacked Jerusalem, took the women and children as prisoners and began to systematically blot out every trace of Jewish religion, replacing it with Greek thought and culture. He removed the temple's altar for burnt offerings and erected a pagan altar in its place.

During that time, the faithful Jews resisted him. They continued to teach the people God's Word, at the risk of losing their lives. Some took up arms to fight *Antiochus Epiphanes*. Many died, sometimes betrayed by fellow Jews. This time of persecution under *Antiochus Epiphanes* cause some who professed God's name to fall. For others, it was a purifying and pruning experience, and therefore a time of spiritual strengthening.

As a faithful Jew living in those dark times, one would be encouraged to read these words: *but only for a time* (v24), *but he shall not stand* (v25), *but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time* (v27), *at the appointed time* (v29), *until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time* (v35). It tells him that despite the apparent sway *Antiochus Epiphanes* had over all things, God was ultimately still in control, working out His purposes with each succeeding year. And, for the faithful Jew, this God is his God!

DANIEL 11:36-45

The focus of these 10 verses is on a coming person: the *Antichrist*. *Antiochus Epiphanes* was but a prefigurement of him. He would make his appearance at the end of this world. 2 Thessalonians 2 calls him a man of sin, the son of perdition. During his time, there shall be a falling away of those who professed to be Christians. He himself would '*oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*' Compare this with DANIEL 11:36-39.

Coming back to DANIEL 11, we find this person fighting against everyone, symbolized by the Northern Kingdom, Southern Kingdom, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia and many countries. Only Edom, Moab and Ammon were spared (verse 41) because they symbolized the traditional enemies of Israel. Things start to be clearer now, as we see that his main and final objective is to wipe out God's people, symbolized by Israel (the Glorious Land).

As a faithful Christian living at that time, what comfort can this passage give? God knows and is in full control, for He is able to tell us the rise of this person and the evils he will do. In addition, we read that his end shall come: *yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him* (v45)! Evil might have its day but God shall have the final say!!

What have you learnt from reading the Summary Notes?

Share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name)

Day 4 Read DANIEL 12:1-4

The first four verses of DANIEL 12 continue from the vision in DANIEL 11. DANIEL 11:45 informs us that the *Antiochus-Epiphanes-like* figure (the Antichrist) shall come to his end and no one will help him.

DANIEL 12:1 brings us back to the time before the end of the Antichrist. We are told that life then would be '*a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.*' In other words, unprecedented troubles!

Yet God's people shall be delivered and the Antichrist shall be defeated! How? '*At that time Michael shall stand up . . .*' is how verse 1 begins. The deliverance of God's people and the defeat of the Antichrist have much to do with Michael.

1. Who was Michael, according to verse 1?
2. Michael was also mentioned in other parts of the Bible. Read the verses listed below and copy them out:

DANIEL 10:13 ~

DANIEL 10:21-11:1 ~

Jude 1:9 ~

Revelation 12:7 ~

Note: Michael was the archangel who guarded the people of God. From the Bible references, we know that he was a fighting archangel! And standing behind him was our Lord Himself (man clothed with linen), strengthening him to guard His people!

Day 5 Read DANIEL 12:1-4 again

1. Verse 1 says that God's people shall be delivered. How shall they be delivered? (Verse 2)
2. (a) Who would shine like the brightness of the firmament? (Verse 3a)

(b) Who would shine like the stars? (Verse 3b)

(c) What do you think is the purpose of verse 3?

Note: To seal up the book does not mean that the things revealed to *Daniel* were to remain a secret. The ancient Persian custom was that once a book had been copied and publicly circulated, one copy was sealed and placed in the library. This is so that future generations could read it. Hence, what *Daniel* was told to do was to ensure that what was revealed to him would be known to all the generations to come. In simple words, what God had revealed, He wanted all men to know!

Day 6 Read DANIEL 12:5-13

1. In verses 5-8, we read of two angelic beings. One of them asked the man clothed in linen a question.

(a) What was his question?

(b) What was the answer given by the man clothed in linen?

(c) What do you think is the meaning of the answer?

2. In verses 8-13, *Daniel* was speaking to the man clothed in linen.

(a) What was *Daniel's* question?

(b) What was the answer given to him?

(c) What was *Daniel* told to do instead? (V13)

(d) How was verse 13 an encouragement to *Daniel*?

Day 7 Summary Notes for DANIEL 12:1-13

We are told in the New Testament that angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14). DANIEL 12 is one such example. We have Michael the archangel standing up to fight for God's people to deliver them. We know from DANIEL 11:1 that Michael was able to do this because his Lord and our Lord was behind him, confirming and strengthening him. What a great encouragement to know that *"those who are with us are more than those who are with them."* (2 Kings 6:16).

The mode of deliverance for God's people is not what we expect! The Antichrist and his wicked followers may actually triumph and kill believers. But they will not triumph ultimately for there is more to come beyond the grave! A day of resurrection will come. The righteous will experience the resurrection of everlasting life while the wicked will have the resurrection of shame and everlasting contempt. Hence, deliverance for God's people may not be from death but through death!

During such unprecedented dark times, God's people are encouraged to remain faithful to Him and to serve Him steadfastly, like the faithful Jews did during the times of *Antiochus Epiphanes*. Faithful believers will shine like the firmament while faithful servants of the Lord will shine like the stars!

The two angelic beings didn't understand everything that was revealed in DANIEL 11. (Is that somewhat of a comfort to you?) So one of them asked, *"How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?"* The answer given was a time, times and half a time. What does this mean? It probably means that the Antichrist will hold sway for a time, and when we think his time is up, he will hold sway for double the time. At this point, we will think that he will never be defeated, and yet at the height of his power, he shall be cut off (half a time)! *"Evil will not be broken when it is at a low ebb, but when it is at its height!"* (Stuart Olyott).

There were some things about the revelation that *Daniel* couldn't comprehend. (Is that a comfort to you as well?) He was told that he does not need to understand the details of the revelation. Rather, those who live during that time will be able to understand. Instead, *Daniel* was told to go on living for the Lord (*go your way till the end*), he was assured that he shall rest and then arise to his inheritance! And with that, we see and hear the last of *Daniel*, assured that we shall see him again in heaven, with his and our glorious Lord!

What have you learnt from reading the Summary Notes?

Share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name)

Acknowledgement

Whatever the weaknesses of this Read-The-Bible-Together guide, they would have been far greater without the kind help of brother Paul PHUA and sister Sarah SOH.

They have very kindly given their time and energy to review the entire guide, asking questions all the way and giving many valuable suggestions. Thank you, fellow Shalomites!

Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another! (Proverbs 27:17, ESV)