CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER

DANIEL

BIBLE READING JOURNAL



TAP INTO GOD'S TRUTH





TAP INTO GOD'S TRUTH

The Bible stands apart from any other literary work—it consists of an entire collection of books, each written by a diverse group of people, spanning centuries. What makes the Bible truly extraordinary is that its varied human writers found inspiration from a singular divine author—God himself. When referring to the scriptures, the apostle Paul uses the term "inspired by God," which translates to "God-breathed" in Greek. That means the words of the Bible possess the potential to effect profound change and transformation in our lives. Paul goes on to help us understand that all of Scripture is "inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness."

In our attempt to understand who God is, discern His purposes, and grasp His truths for our lives, neglecting the Bible is not an option. In a very real sense, the Bible serves as the "instruction manual" for life. The Creator of our existence has outlined standards, plans, and purposes for us within its pages. Without studying the contents of this "instruction manual", we remain oblivious to His intentions and lack the guidance to live according to His design.

Unfortunately, many individuals don't give much effort in exploring the depths of the Bible. Sometimes, this stems from laziness or misplaced priorities, or just struggling to understand the text they are reading. Its true, the Bible can prove challenging to understand at times. And while its foundational teachings can be understood by children, numerous aspects within its pages demand additional effort and guidance.

If you want to get the most out of the Bible, you need to learn how to read and interpret it for yourself.

We hope this journal will help you do just that. This journal was created to help you get the most out of your biblical reading and study as you tap into the eternal truths God reveals to us throughout Scripture. And to help you create a plan and habit of reading the Bible on a regular basis.

KEYS FOR YOUR READING

Using the acronym **TAP,** we have created key sections in this journal to help you tap into God's truth.

Truth

In our exploration of the Bible, it's crucial to stay attuned to the main themes and essential teachings, while avoiding getting too sidetracked by secondary matters. It's like peering through a telescope to see the big picture before delving into the details with a microscope. The Bible isn't a riddle book or a coded message, so there's no need to search for intricate symbols and hidden meanings. Instead, focus on what it meant to the original readers and how those insights apply to your life today. In doing so, you unveil the timeless truths that God desires for us to grasp.

> ***As you write in this section each day, write down the eternal truth(s) that the Holy Spirit is revealing to you from your reading.***

Application

The ultimate goal of reading and studying the Bible is not to showcase theological expertise or engage in intellectual debates, but rather to apply its teachings to our everyday lives. Bible study is not about impressing others; it's about allowing God's Word to bring about a transformative impact. So, as you read the Bible, listen to the Holy Spirit attentively—and then respond with obedience. With that in mind, as we read the Scriptures, we should do it with humility and an open heart, prepared to be both challenged and changed by God's truths. An open-minded attitude is key. Let go of preconceptions, assumptions, and prior knowledge. Embrace the potential for fresh revelations each time you engage with the Bible. Its pages are a wellspring of inexhaustible truths.

> ***As you write in this section, write down how you will obey God's eternal truth(s) and apply His word to your life.***

Prayer

The Bible is a book filled with spiritual wisdom and diving into it requires a spiritual mindset. You engage in studying the Bible spiritually when your reading is partnered with prayer. This approach allows the Holy Spirit to shed light on the understanding and application of its truths in your life. So, let your reading and study be wrapped in prayer. This will let the Holy Spirit guide your exploration of the profound insights within the pages of the Bible.

> ***And as you write in this section, write a prayer asking God to help you to live out the eternal truth you have read about.***

Sabbath Days

The Sabbath is a weekly oasis in the hustle and bustle of life. It's a day set apart for rest, reflection, and connection—with both God and others. Imagine it as a divine reset button, reminding us to pause, recharge, and recalibrate our focus on what truly matters. In the rhythm of our fast-paced lives, the Sabbath acts as a steady heartbeat, offering a space for spiritual rejuvenation. It's not just a break from work but a sacred invitation to experience the richness of God's presence and delve into the truths embedded in His Word. Observing the Sabbath isn't a legalistic duty; it's a relational embrace, an intentional choice to honor God's design for our well-being and find a sanctuary of peace amidst life's demands. Embracing the Sabbath means recognizing that we're not just called to be doers but also to be dwellers in the rest God provides, ensuring our souls are nourished, inspired, and ready to obey Him in the week ahead.

> ***On these days, reflect on the past week and write down what God has taught you and how thankful you are for it.***





OVERVIEW

The book of Daniel is traditionally believed to have been written by the prophet Daniel. Scholars suggest that the events of the book occur during the Babylonian captivity of Judah, from 605 BC to 535 BC. The first half of the book is historical (chapters 1-6) and consists of stories featuring Daniel and his three friends: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The second half (chapters 7-12) contains Daniel's visions and messages received from God concerning the future.

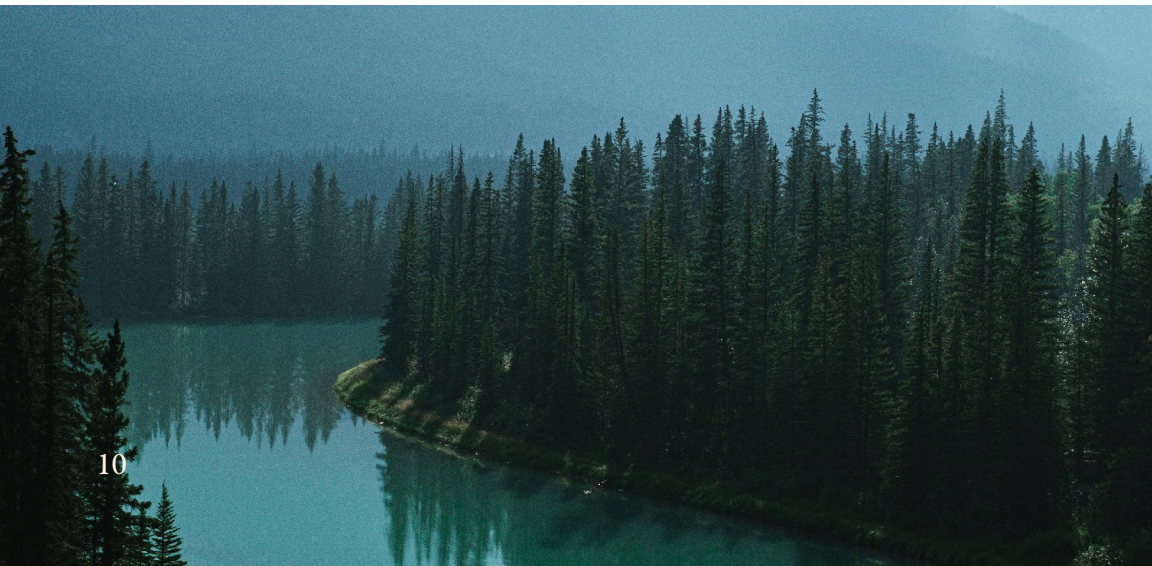
Daniel is addressed to the Jewish exiles in Babylon to remind them of God's sovereignty and to encourage them to remain faithful to Him even amid exile and difficulties. The book highlights themes of divine sovereignty, the inevitability of God's plan, and the assurance that His kingdom will triumph over all earthly powers. Through prophecy, prayer, and apocalyptic imagery, Daniel demonstrates that God is in control, even when circumstances seem chaotic, offering hope to His people in every generation. Daniel's life serves as a model of unwavering faith and obedience to God amidst a pagan culture.

DAY 1

DANIEL 1

Context

Chapter 1 opens with God allowing the nation of Judah to be taken over by Babylon and King Nebuchadnezzar. Vessels from the house of God are carried and placed into Nebuchadnezzar's treasury. More so, orders are given to his chief eunuch to bring young Israelite men from the royal family to live in exile, be taught the Babylonian ways, and be trained to serve the king in his palace. One among them, Daniel, refuses to defile himself with the king's food or wine. God grants favor and compassion to Daniel and his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego), in the sight of the chief eunuch by allowing their request to eat only vegetables and drink water for ten days. At the end of the ten days, they prove to be healthier than all the other young men, possessing knowledge and understanding in every form of literature and wisdom. Daniel also receives from God the ability to understand visions and dreams of every kind. Due to God's favor and grace, none are found more fit to serve the king than these four young men; they are found to be ten times better than all the magicians and mediums in the kingdom.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

PRAYER: Ask God to help you to live out this truth.

DAY 2

DANIEL 2:1-16

Context

Chapter 2 begins with King Nebuchadnezzar having a troubling dream that leaves him unable to sleep. Calling upon all the mediums and magicians of the land, none can meet his impossible request: Not only must they interpret the dream, but they also have to tell the king what he dreamed in the first place. When no one can meet this request, the king orders all wise men to be executed, including Daniel and his friends. When the captain of the king's guard reaches Daniel and his friends to kill them, Daniel replies with discretion and prudence and asks the king's officer about the manner of the king's decree. This enables him to ask the king to afford him some time to provide him with the interpretation of the dream.



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DAY 3

DANIEL 2:17-30

Context

Daniel informs Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the king's decree and asks them to seek God for insight so that they and the rest of the wise men of Babylon might not be destroyed. God answers Daniel's prayer by giving him a vision in the night and Daniel immediately praises and blesses God. He then goes to the king's captain, tells him not to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and asks to be taken to the king so he can share the interpretation. Daniel is then brought before the king, and the king asks if he can tell him the dream and interpretation. Daniel tells the king that it is God in heaven who reveals mysteries and has shown the king what will happen in the future.



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DAY 4

DANIEL 2:31-49

Context

Daniel begins to describe to the king, in detail, what the king had dreamt. He then shares the interpretation of the dream- the God of heaven has given the king power, strength, and glory and there will be other kingdoms that will arise after him. And during that time of those kings, the God of Heaven will set up a Kingdom that can never be destroyed and will crush all other kingdoms. King Nebuchadnezzar then falls on his face and acknowledges Daniel's God as the Lord of kings. Daniel gets promoted to ruler over all of Babylon and his friends are appointed to manage the province.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

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DAY 5

DANIEL 3

Context

In chapter 3, King Nebuchadnezzar has made and set up an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet wide. He assembles all the magistrates, governors, advisers, and officials for a dedication of the image. A herald proclaims a decree that at the sound of any kind of music, all must fall down and worship the gold image and if they do not, they will be immediately cast into a fiery furnace. The king receives a report that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego have not worshipped the golden image. In a rage, the king gives orders to summon the three men. He decides to let them have one more chance, but it comes with a warning: if they do not submit, they will immediately be thrown into a fiery furnace. They refuse to submit to his request, even if God decides not to save them from the furnace. Once thrown into the fire, the king is amazed to see there is actually a fourth man in the fire. He orders the three men to come out, and sees that they are unharmed and do not even smell like fire. The king then praises and acknowledges the power of the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, decrees no one to speak against their God, and promotes them in the province of Babylon.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

PRAYER: Ask God to help you to live out this truth.

DAY 6

DANIEL 4:1-18

Context

King Nebuchadnezzar begins the chapter with a bold proclamation regarding the majesty of the Most High God. Then, the king has another dream that troubles him of which he needs the interpretation. He has all the wise men in Babylon brought before him and no one can interpret the dream until Daniel comes to him. King Nebuchadnezzar describes his dream of a great, beautiful, and fruitful tree that reached high, providing shade for the beasts of the field and a home for the birds in its branches. He describes a holy one coming down from heaven and ordering the tree to be cut down to the stump, which would remain in the ground until seven periods of time pass over. The king then asks Daniel for the interpretation.



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DAY 7

Sabbath Day

Today marks a Rest Day. The focus is simple: rest in the presence of God. Whether it's an opportunity to catch up on the reading plan, journal reflections on your spiritual journey, or engage in concentrated prayer, the key is to spend meaningful time in God's presence. Take this day to reconnect, absorb the lessons learned, and prioritize a moment of restful communion with God.



Reflect and write about what God has taught you this past week.

DAY 8

DANIEL 4:19-37

Context

Upon hearing the dream, Daniel then explains the meaning to the king- it is a decree of the Most High coming against the king. He will be driven away and feed on grass like cattle as a beast for seven periods of time, until he learns that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms. Daniel advises him to separate himself from his sins by doing what is right and also from his injustices by showing mercy to the needy. The king does not heed his advice and the dream comes to pass. However, at the end of the days as a beast, the king regains his sanity and acknowledges God as King of the heavens. He regains his kingdom and says God humbles those who walk in pride.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

PRAYER: Ask God to help you to live out this truth.

DAY 9

DANIEL 5

Context

In Chapter 5, King Belshazzar, holds a great feast for his nobles, including wine. Under the influence of the wine, the king calls for the gold and silver vessels that were taken by Nebuchadnezzar to be used to drink from during the feast. Using these vessels, they praise the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. Immediately, the fingers of a man's hand appear and begin writing on the wall. With none of the wise men able to interpret the inscription, the queen enters and recommends Daniel who has the ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems. Daniel enters and interprets the writing, predicting Belshazzar and Babylon's defeat. He reminds the king that although he knew the history of what transpired with King Nebuchadnezzar, he failed to humble his heart and decided to exalt himself against the Lord of heaven. That same night Belshazzar was killed, and Darius the Mede received the kingdom.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

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DAY 10

DANIEL 6

Context

King Darius has appointed Daniel as one of three administrators over the kingdom. Because Daniel distinguished himself above them all, the King planned to set him over the whole realm. Jealousy amongst the other administrators and satraps ensued, and they tried to find a charge or corruption against Daniel regarding the kingdom. However, they found nothing for he proved to be trustworthy. So, they went to the king and convinced him to establish an ordinance and enforce the decree in writing that if anyone prayed to any god or man except the king, they would be thrown into the lions' den. Despite the decree, Daniel went to his house, got on his knees, and prayed three times a day, just like he had done previously. Then the satraps and administrators went to the king and reported what Daniel was doing. Despite the displeasure of King Darius, the law stated none of his ordinances could be changed. Knowing this, the king gave the order to throw Daniel into the lions' den and encouraged him that his God would rescue him. Then, the king returned to his palace and fasted all night without sleeping. By morning light, the king went to the den and called out to Daniel. Daniel calls up to King Darius and lets him know God shut the lions' mouths and saved him! The king brings Daniel up out of the den and commands the other men who accused Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den. The chapter closes with a powerful proclamation from King Darius, decreeing all people must tremble in fear before the God of Daniel.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

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DAY 11

DANIEL 7:1-14

Context

In this chapter, Daniel has a dream with visions in his mind of four beasts coming up out of the sea. The first was like a lion with eagle's wings, the second a bear, the third a leopard with four wings of a bird on its back and four heads, and the fourth unlike any earthly animal with iron teeth, ten horns, and a small horn emerging. Then, he sees a vision of the Ancient of Days and one like a Son of Man.



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APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

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DAY 12

DANIEL 7:15-28

Context

Daniel is troubled by the visions he has seen and asks one standing by for the interpretation of the vision. The vision is explained: the four beasts represent four kings who will rise from the earth, but the holy ones of the Most High will possess the kingdom and receive it forever and ever. Daniel is concerned about the fourth beast, who is very powerful, with iron teeth and ten horns. Among these horns, a little horn arises, speaking boastful words and waging war against the holy people. This horn represents a king who will oppose the Most High, but his power will be taken away, and he will be destroyed. The passage closes with the assurance that God's kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom and the saints will share in His eternal reign. Daniel remains greatly troubled by the vision but keeps the matter to himself.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

PRAYER: Ask God to help you to live out this truth.

DAY 13

DANIEL 8:1-14

Context

In Daniel 8:1-14, Daniel has a vision during the reign of King Belshazzar. He sees a ram with two horns, one longer than the other, standing near a canal. The ram charges west, north, and south, and no animal could stand against it. Then, a goat with a prominent horn appears and defeats the ram. The goat's horn is broken, and four smaller horns arise in its place. From one of these horns, a small horn emerges that exalts itself, opposes God, halts temple sacrifices, and desecrates the sanctuary. The vision concludes with the prophecy that this desecration will last for 2,300 evenings and mornings, after which the sanctuary will be restored.



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DAY 14

Sabbath Day

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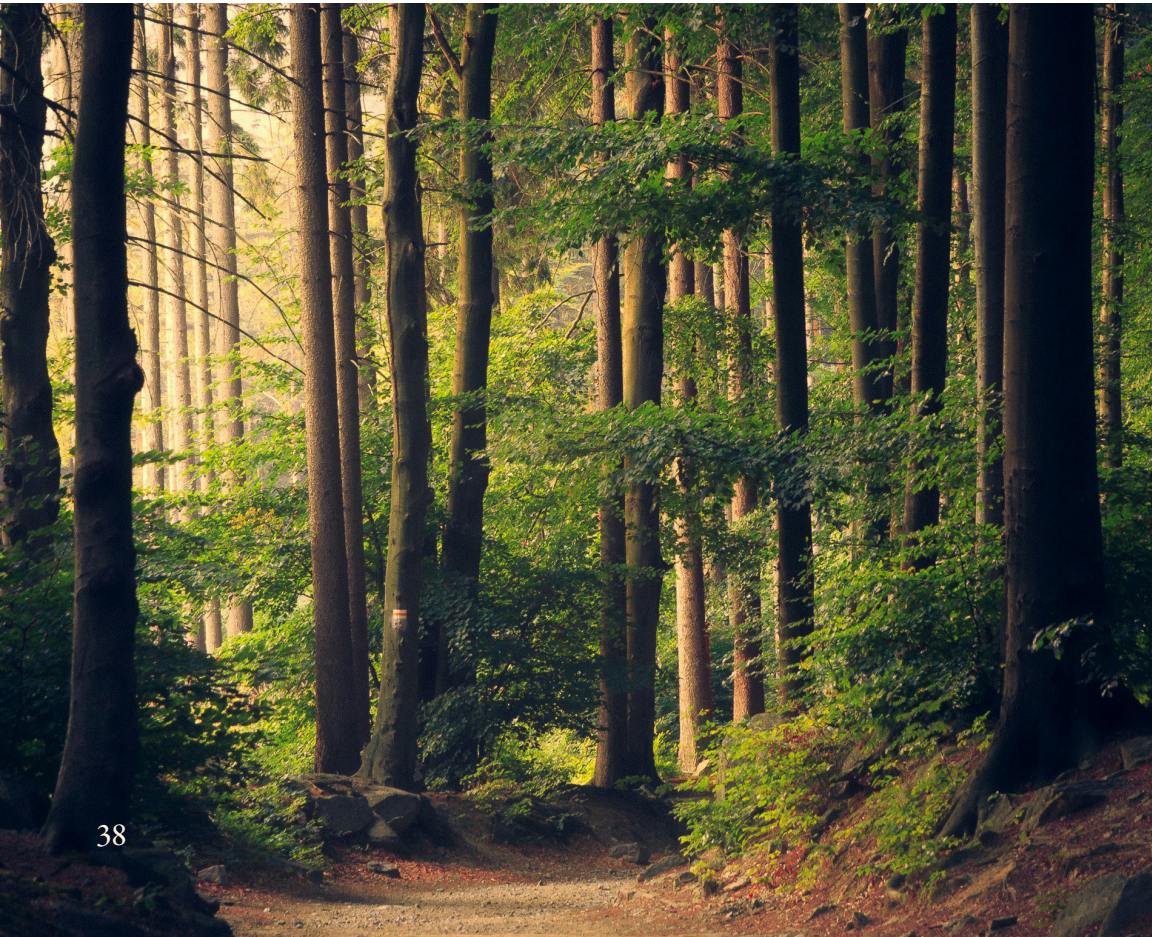
Reflect and write about what God has taught you this past week.

DAY 15

DANIEL 8:15-27

Context

Daniel seeks to understand the vision and hears a man's voice call out to the angel Gabriel to explain the vision to Daniel. He proclaims despite a ruthless king rising, he will be broken but not by human hands. He concludes to seal up the vision because it refers to many days in the future. Then Daniel was overcome and laid sick for several days before resuming his duties for the king.



TRUTH: What is the eternal truth that God is revealing to you?

APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

PRAYER: Ask God to help you to live out this truth.

DAY 16

DANIEL 9

Context

In Daniel 9, we find Daniel studying the words of the prophet Jeremiah concerning the seventy years as the number of years for the desolation of Jerusalem. Daniel begins to seek God through prayer, fasting, and confession. Daniel includes himself in the confession and the need to repent to bring forgiveness from God. While he was still speaking and presenting his petitions to God, the angel Gabriel returns to Daniel to give him understanding. Gabriel offers to Daniel a vision of 70 "weeks", or in some bible translations, "sevens". Gabriel declares encouraging truths that sin will be put to an end, iniquity will be atoned for, and everlasting righteousness will be brought in.



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APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

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DAY 17

DANIEL 10

Context

In chapter 10, Daniel has another vision; after he had been mourning for three full weeks, he looked up and saw a man on the bank of the Tigris river. Daniel was the only one to see the man, although other men were beside him and ran due to feelings of great terror. Left alone to witness the vision, Daniel became powerless, weak, and pale. When he heard the words of the man, he fell into a deep sleep. Suddenly, a hand touches him and picks him up and explains that his prayers had been heard from the very first day he humbled himself before God. He explains the prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed him for twenty-one days but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help so he could stand before Daniel to give him understanding of what will happen to his people in the last days. Daniel explains that he has no strength and no breath in him. He is then strengthened by the one with a human appearance.



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APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

PRAYER: Ask God to help you to live out this truth.

DAY 18

DANIEL 11:1-19

Context

Daniel 11:1-19 tells a prophecy detailing the rise and fall of powerful kings and empires. It opens with the messenger referencing the Persian Empire, predicting the rise of four kings, the last being wealthy and provoking Greece. Then, a mighty king will arise, but his empire will quickly be broken and divided after his death into four parts, not to his descendants. The focus then shifts to the ongoing conflicts between the King of the North and the King of the South. These two kingdoms engage in wars, alliances, and betrayals, including a failed marriage alliance. The King of the North gains significant power through victories but is eventually defeated, leading to his decline.



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APPLICATION: How will you apply this truth to your life?

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DAY 19

DANIEL 11:20-45

Context

This passage continues the prophecy and begins with a successor to the King of the North who imposes taxes but is quickly replaced. A contemptible ruler arises, seizing power through intrigue and flattery. He desecrates the temple, abolishes the daily sacrifice, sets up the "abomination of desolation," and oppresses the faithful who resist him. The text transitions to the "time of the end," describing a king exalting himself above all gods, speaking blasphemies, and honoring a foreign god. The chapter ends with this king engaging in military campaigns, including battles with the King of the South, until he comes to his end with no one to help him.



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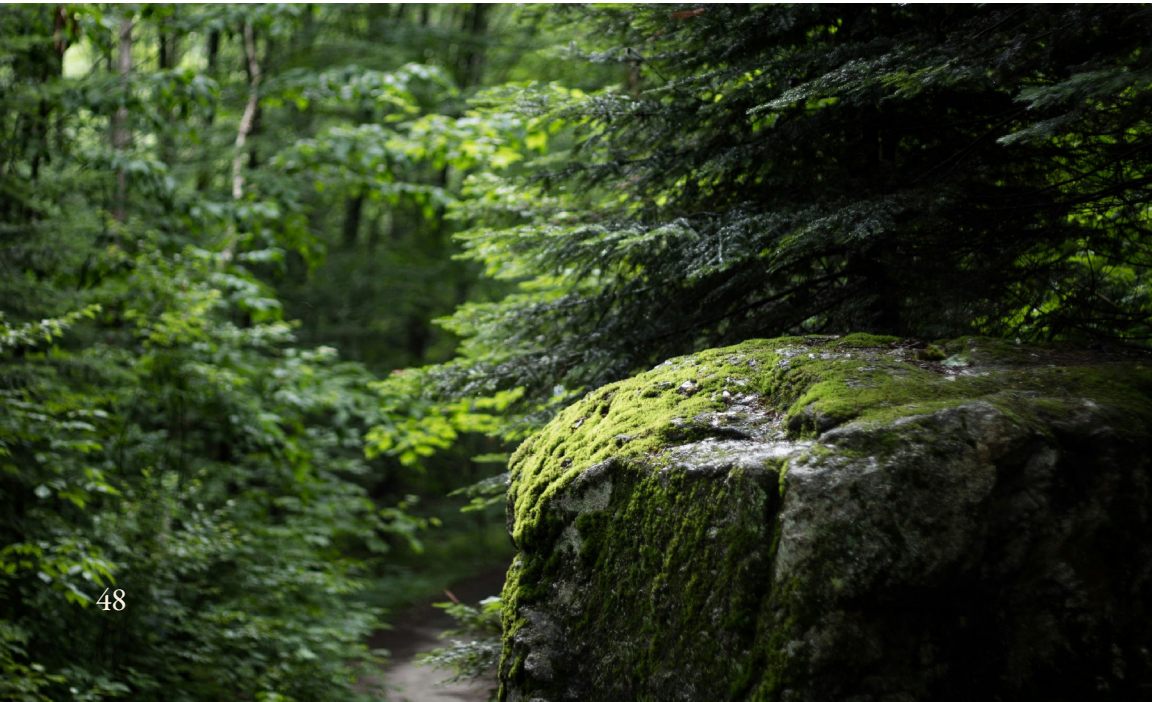
PRAYER: Ask God to help you to live out this truth.

DAY 20

DANIEL 12

Context

Daniel 12 describes the conclusion of the messenger's prophecy, focusing on the end times. It begins with a promise that the archangel Michael will arise to protect God's people during a time of great distress, such as never before. At that time, those whose names are written in the book will be delivered, and there will be a resurrection: some to everlasting life and others to shame and everlasting contempt. The wise will shine brightly, and knowledge will increase. Daniel is instructed to seal the prophecy until the time of the end. At the close, Daniel witnesses two others standing at the river discussing the timing of the end with the man dressed in linen. The man speaks of a specific time frame for the end—"a time, times, and half a time"—and references 1,290 and 1,335 days. The chapter concludes with reassurance that Daniel will rest and rise to his inheritance at the end of the days.



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DAY 21

Sabbath Day

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2699 W Commercial Blvd, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
(954) 731-5433 • info@clcftl.org • clcftl.org