

For this question we highlight the element of grace. We are able to be saved only because God in His mercy forgives.

Reflect

If every person is guilty, how is it possible for anyone to be saved on the day of judgment? Does the belief that all are guilty have any consequences for the way a Christian views humanity in relation to discrimination, race, gender or social issues?

4. Justified Through Faith



Read

- Ephesians 2:8-10

Background

Like Romans 3:21-24 these verses contain in a concentrated form a number of the important elements of salvation. Here faith is highlighted.

Reflect

How should faith be understood in these verses? Is it the opposite of reality, "it is by faith, so it is not real"? Or is faith part of a personal relationship whereby humans receive the blessings of God?

5. Redeemed by the Sacrifice of Christ



Read

- Romans 3:23-25



Comment

Expressions like "redemption" and "propitiation" highlight the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary. The death of Jesus has made justification and forgiveness possible. You are counted among the saints if you are represented by Him (cf Daniel 7:13, 14).

6. At Peace With God



Read

- Romans 5:1 and 8:1

Reflect

How is it possible for the future verdict of the court to become your personal experience now?



Comment

In the proclamation of the gospel—the good news—Jesus comes near to everyone who believes in Him. He shares His gifts of forgiveness and righteousness, and the believer is treated as if the final day of reckoning is already past. I am assured of His love, and there is no condemnation.

7. Living in the Atmosphere of Forgiveness and Mercy



Read

- Matthew 6:12, 14, 15

Reflect

Will a person genuinely forgiven by God change their attitude and lifestyle in relation to other people? Is that person then saved by his or her acts of forgiveness?

Produced by the Field Secretary, South Pacific Division.



Number 10. For How Long?

ClearView

Bible study guide

The vision in Daniel 8 expands Daniel 2 and 7. Rich in detail, not all can be covered in these studies. It describes human kingdoms and a judgment phase at the end of history. This lesson will focus on this phase, which runs parallel with the crushing of the statue by the stone in chapter 2 and the heavenly court scene before the second coming of Jesus in chapter 7.

1. Another Angle on History



Read

- Daniel 8:1-8 and 20-22



Comment

The vision proper occupies verses 2-14, and the angelic explanation follows in verses 15-26. The animals are different from chapter 7. They are no longer strange beasts of prey, but familiar animals of sacrifice. This time some of the kingdoms are explicitly identified.

2. Until When?



Read

- Daniel 8:9-14 and Psalm 13:1-2

Background

From verses 9-12, the activities of the little horn introduced in chapter 7 are further explained. These verses are difficult to translate, but the description resembles a well-known pattern in the Old Testament where apostasy within the people of God leads to tribulation by an enemy. The cry for God's intervention is the typical "how long?" (literally "until when?") of the psalms of lament.

Reflect

What are the areas in your life or in the world you live where you long for God's intervention, crying "how long?" Is there any difference between crying "why" and crying "how long?"

3. To the End of Days



Read

- Daniel 8:15-19



Comment

The perspective of this vision is the end of days. The theme of the wrath of God is well known from the Old Testament (as in Isaiah 10:5, 24, 25, cf Romans 1:17). It denotes God's activities to chastise and purify His people and finally to crush their enemies. In Daniel 8:19, this is naturally linked to the pattern of apostasy leading to destruction and tribulation.