

3. Into the Heavenly World



Read

• Revelation 1:9, 10 and 4:1

Background

Revelation is the New Testament apocalyptic book, like the book of Daniel in the Old Testament. Its first vision (1:9, 10) takes place on earth, but in 4:1 the apostle John is led into heaven, behind the scenes. The subsequent visions all move between worship in heaven and historical events on earth, told in symbols.

Reflect

Reflect

Throughout history many have criticised Christians for dreaming of heaven instead of helping on earth. Do you think this accusation contains some truth? How can Christians today maintain their belief in a heavenly world and yet avoid trying to escape the challenges of living in society here on earth?

4. God Intervenes on Earth



Read

• Daniel 6:25-28

Background

Daniel 6 tells the well-known story about Daniel in the lions' den. It parallels chapter 3, which recounts the deliverance of Daniel's three friends from the fiery furnace. In life, not everyone is always rescued. Yet, biblical stories such as these from the book of Daniel affirm that in the end God will provide deliverance. Furthermore, they assure us that in the midst of the lions' den or the fiery furnace, whatever the outcome, God will share His presence and come near to us.

Reflect

Reflect

Have you experienced God's intervention in your life? Why do we not always see it? Do you trust that God is present in the midst of your hardship?

5. The Heavenly Court Presides



Read

• Daniel 7:9-12

Comment

Lesson 7 will take a closer look at the prophetic vision in Daniel 7. Note how the heavenly court toward the end of time is set for judgment. This notion of a final end-time judgment is core to the New Testament and expressed in the major creeds of the early Christian church.

6. The Son of Man—Our Heavenly Representative



Read

• Daniel 7:13, 14

Reflect

Reflect

The vision describes a human being as our representative in heaven. Who do you think it is? Christians often find comfort in the promise that God will be present in the trials and sorrows here on earth. Our Heavenly Representative is very human, having experienced the realities of life, and yet He overcame. What does it mean for you **today** to have a human **being** present at the throne of heaven?



Number 5. God Explains History

ClearView

Bible study guide

A previous lesson quoted from Daniel 2. The chapter shows how God's prophecies highlight the big picture. It contains a remarkable prophecy about the ancient world empires from Babylon to Rome, the confusion that would follow and the final establishment of the kingdom of God. But the chapter also reveals why empire follows empire, power replaces power. It presents a philosophy of history.

This lesson looks at passages from Daniel 2. It would be good as an introduction just to read through the whole chapter.

1. Dreaming About the Future



Read

• Daniel 2:26-30



Comment

The phrase translated "in the latter days" (KJV) or "in days to come" (NIV) simply means "in the future" (cf Genesis 49:1).

Reflect

Reflect

Obviously this dream was a unique dream. Pause a moment to think of our own dreams for the future. What are your visions, personally, for your family, for your nation or for the world? What will it take to make them come true? Why do you think that King Nebuchadnezzar was so afraid of his dream?

2. The God Who Reveals



Read

• Daniel 2:18, 19 and 11

Reflect

Reflect

How would you characterise the difference between Daniel and the (un-) wise men and their relationship to God/gods? What is unique about Daniel's God?

3. The God Who Delegates His Power



Read

• Daniel 2:36-38

Reflect

Reflect

Do you think Nebuchadnezzar liked hearing that he was "the head of gold"? Would he be flattered by being told of all his power, or would he rather object to the thought that he had it only because someone else had given it to him?