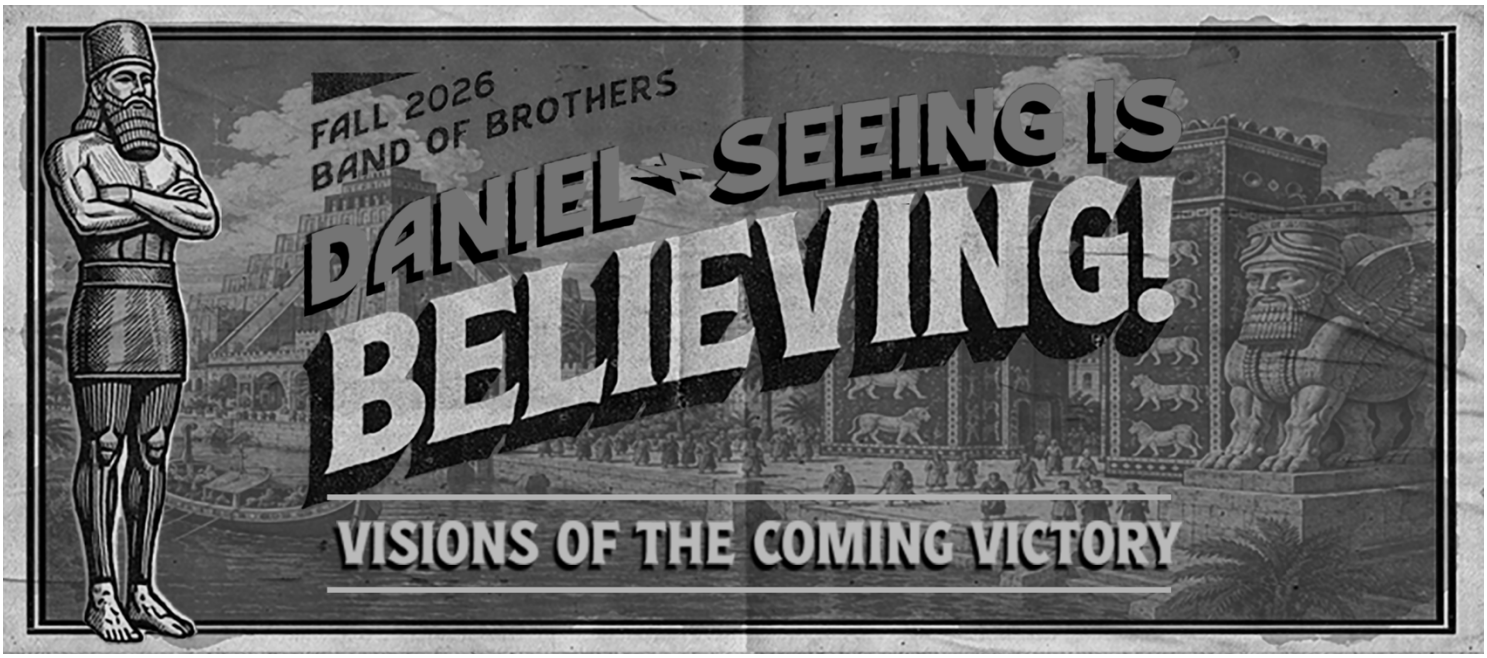


FOR YOUR SAKE, O LORD

To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. – Daniel 9:9-10 ESV

- **Promises and a prayer**
  - A year has passed
    - The year is 538 BC
    - Darius is in the first year of his reign
    - The Medo-Persians defeated Babylon
    - In keeping with Daniel's vision

    I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal [in Persia]. It had two horns, and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great. – Daniel 8:3 ESV

    "As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia." – Daniel 8:20 ESV

    - Daniel was an eye-witness to the fulfillment
      - He saw Babylon's fall, Medo-Persia's rise, …and Belshazzar's death
      - Belshazzar had just promoted him
      - And Darius retained his services

Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. – Daniel 6:3 ESV

- Daniel has found the writings of Jeremiah

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. – Daniel 9:1-2 ESV

  - He was a contemporary of Daniel's
  - He remained in Jerusalem after its fall
  - He prophesied to the remnant and exiles
  - But he ended up a refugee in Egypt
- Jeremiah had warned them

"I am bringing against you a nation from afar, O house of Israel, declares the Lord. It is an enduring nation; it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know, nor can you understand what they say." – Jeremiah 5:15 ESV

"Raise a standard toward Zion, flee for safety, stay not, for I bring disaster from the north, and great destruction. A lion has gone up from his thicket, a destroyer of nations has set out; he has gone out from his place to make your land a waste… – Jeremiah 4:6-7 ESV

"Behold, a people is coming from the north country, a great nation is stirring from the farthest parts of the earth….they are cruel and have no mercy." – Jeremiah 6:22-23 ESV

- The people of Judah failed to repent…
  …and the city was destroyed,
  …the temple was looted and leveled,
  …and the people were taken into captivity

- **But wait, there's more**
  - There was good news as well

"Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth…" – Jeremiah 19:8 ESV

"Hear the word of the Lord…and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock."' – Jeremiah 19:10 ESV

  - God had a promise, a plan, and a timeline
    - He was not done with His people

*"This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. then after **seventy years** are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation…"* – Jeremiah 25:11-12 ESV

- - Why 70 years?
  - One for each sabbatical year they violated

    "For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the Lord. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard." – Leviticus 25:3-4 ESV

    "But if…you will not listen to me…I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste. Then the land shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest, and enjoy its Sabbaths." – Leviticus 26:27, 33 ESV

    *He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, **to fulfill seventy years**.* – 2 Chronicles 36:20-21 ESV

    *Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by **prayer** and **pleas for mercy** with **fasting** and **sackcloth and ashes**. I prayed to the LORD my God and made **confession**, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, **we have sinned** and **done wrong** and **acted wickedly** and **rebelled**, **turning aside** from your commandments and rules. **We have not listened** to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us **open shame**, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, **those who are near** and **those who are far away**, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the **treachery** that they have committed against you.* – Daniel 9:3-7 ESV

- **Faith in God's faithfulness**
  - Daniel believed what God had promised

    "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you." – Jeremiah 29:11-12 ESV

  - He knew God could be trusted

"Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations…" – Deuteronomy 7:9 ESV

- But he also knew they were guilty, undeserving, unrepentant, stubborn, and helpless
- So he prayed on behalf of his people – vss 8-13
  - He confessed their corporate sins
  - He begged for mercy and forgiveness
  - He admitted the gravity of their suffering
  - But also the depth of their depravity

He [God] has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven ***there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem****.* – Daniel 9:13 ESV

- He longed to go home
  - He wanted to see Jerusalem restored…
    …and the temple rebuilt
  - He wanted to see the salvation of the Lord
  - The 70 years was almost over
    …and the future looked bright
- So he prayed fervently and faithfully

While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the LORD *my God for the holy hill of my God, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice.* – Daniel 9:20-21 ESV

- **The shortsightedness of a short-term perspective**
  - Daniel had misunderstood God's plan
    - He was fixated on the present…
      …but God was focused on the future
    - Daniel wanted full fulfillment **now**…
      …but God had **longer-term** plans

    *"****Seventy weeks*** *are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. –* Daniel 9:24 ESV

  - God is working with a different timeline
    - The Hebrew word for "weeks" is *šāḇûaʿ*
    - It literally means "sevens"
    - Better translated as "70 sevens"
    - And based on the context, refers to years
    - Or 490 years

Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. – Daniel 9:25 ESV

- Jerusalem remains a ghost town
  - No one has attempted to restore it
  - The temple remains destroyed
  - But God predicts a change coming…
    …an official decree will be given
    …to restore and rebuild Jerusalem
  - Then the "70 sevens" will begin
    …and end with the "anointed one's" coming

And for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator." – Daniel 9:25-27 ESV

- **I've got good news and bad news**
  - The good news:
    - The transgression will end
    - Sin will be no more
    - All iniquity will be atoned for
    - It will be a time of everlasting righteousness

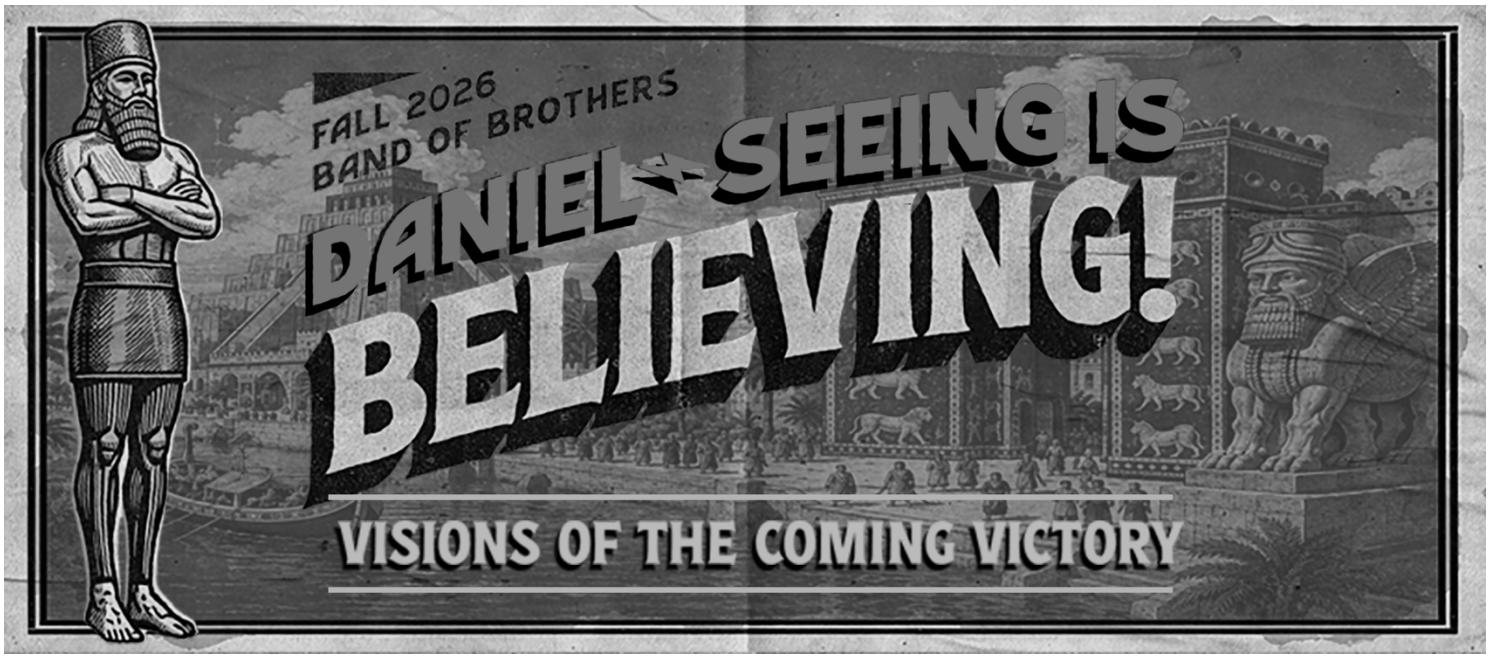
  - The bad news:
    - But first, there will troubled times
    - The anointed one will be cut off
    - Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed
    - There will be wars and desolations
    - The sacrificial system will come to an end
    - The "one who makes desolate" will rule
  - How did this news strike Daniel?

I*n the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.* – Daniel 10:1-2 ESV

- **Discussion Questions:**
  Most of us know how the story ends, but Daniel didn't. How do you think he felt after he heard all this? What's your reaction?

  Daniel had a short-term outlook. In what ways do we exhibit the same perspective and why does it matter?

  Why should the specificity of God's Word provide us with hope and peace? How should it increase our faith and trust?



WEEK 10 – DAYS YET TO COME

Daniel has yet another vision, this time during the reign of Darius. These closing chapters of the Book of Daniel contain some of the most important prophecies in the Scriptures. They tie in with the end-times visions given to the apostle John and recorded in the Book of Revelation.

Daniel was given a glimpse into the future and a fleeting and rather fuzzy view of things to come. Because we have been given the completed canon of Scripture, we know how the story ends. By combining the writings of Daniel with John's fantastic insights recorded in the Book of Revelation, we can begin to piece together God's incredible plans for Israel's future and the fate of the world.

We know that things will get worse before they get better. We know the enemy will fight until the end. But we also know that our side wins. The will of God will be accomplished, and His plan will be fulfilled. So, there is no need to be afraid. Like Daniel, we are precious to God. He has chosen us and He will protect us. We can take courage. We can be strong.

- Sometime this week, read pages 99-103 of Ken's Devotionary™ on the Book of Daniel.
- Daniel 10 is a relatively short chapter, so take a few minutes and read all of it then write down your first impressions. What jumps out at you?

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Based on verses 1-2, how would you describe Daniel's state of mind?

What contributed to it (see Chapter 9)?

- Verses 5-9 describe yet another vision Daniel received. What did he see?

  How did it impact him?

- In verses 10-14, Daniel receives comforting words from the angel Gabriel. What was it that the angel said that brought Daniel peace of mind?

  In verse 13, the angel describes an occasion of spiritual warfare. What does this reveal about what God has planned for the end of the age?

  How does the fact that Gabriel was prevented from delivering his message to Daniel reveal that the enemy does not want us to know how the story ends?

  What did Gabriel say the vision was all about and why is this important?

- Verses 15-17 describe Daniel's reaction to the angel's news. Why wasn't Daniel more encouraged by what he heard? What was he missing?

- According to verse 18, what was the message delivered to Daniel?

  Why was it important for Daniel to know that he was greatly loved, and why would that same message be important for you to hear and understand?