

Sunday 21st June, 2026

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun. (Psalm 19)*

Almighty God, you are a God who made all things, for the benefit of your glory. In the beginning you made the world around us, and made us to have a special place within your creation. "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

Lord, we live in a world where there are many distractions that draw us away from worshipping You. Thank you that even though we are disobedient you continue to love us as your children and continue to show us your mercy. We give you thanks and praise that because of your grace you have redeemed us and displayed a love to us that we cannot earn, and that is not deserved.. We give you thanks that through Christ's obedience, and His death on the cross , that the price for sin has been paid – once, for all so that what was once unclean can be made clean. Thank you Lord that through the resurrection of Christ and his defeat over death, we can be confident that those who place their faith in Jesus will also be raised to eternal life with You. Father God, we pray that as we continue to study your word in the bible today that we will have soft, teachable hearts that yearn to learn how you would have us live as your people. In Christ's name we pray, Amen

Song – The Chorus of the Saved

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilpVNCSOH8k>

1. See the radiance of God Risen Son
All the angels rejoice at his name
All creation sustained by the power of his word
And his throne will endure for now and ever

2. Perfect Son sacrificed once for all
Power of sin, fear of death now destroyed
Raised to life, raised on high,
Jesus name above all names
His acclaim will resound beyond the ages

Chorus

Come join the song
in earth and heaven voices raised
In the chorus of the saved
Come shout his name,
come lift a sacrifice of praise
With the chorus of the saved

3. Through his blood our forgiveness is sure
By his Spirit within we'll endure
Holding on to this hope
as an anchor for the soul
And our eyes fixed on Jesus
the one who saves us

Chorus

Bridge

Now let us draw near the holiest place
Our hearts full of faith,
our lips full of praise
So let us draw near
the holiest place
Now pure through his blood,
our sins washed away

Chorus

Bible Reading – Daniel 10:1-11:1 (NIV)

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision. 2 At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. 3 I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over. 4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, 5 I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. 6 His body was like topaz, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. 7 I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; those who were with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. 8 So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. 9 Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. 10 A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. 11 He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. 12 Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. 13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. 14 Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come." 15 While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. 16 Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I feel very weak. 17 How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe." 18 Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. 19 "Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength." 20 So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; 21 but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. 11 1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

Announcements

Focus for the month: Training. Spiritual gifts are important, but gifts alone are not enough. In the Bible, gifted people were trained, taught, and equipped for effective service. For training helps Christians understand God's Word, develop wisdom, strengthen character, avoid error, and use their gifts faithfully. A natural gift may give potential, but training develops that potential for God's glory. Just as an athlete train and a musician practises, Christians need training so their gifts can be used effectively in serving Christ and others.

Training Events. All invited

Public Bible Reading	TODAY	11:30am & 5pm	30 minutes
Praying in Church	28/6	11:30am & 5pm	30 minutes

Random Reno Review. Morning Tea for Charlestown. Since we have moved back into our new Church redevelopment we have adjusted our morning tea so to keep children out of the gathering space so they are not tempted to leave the front doors and go onto the street. We have put the following guidelines in place.

- Kids morning tea will be served on the veranda

- A reference list for appropriate kids' food is being developed
- We hope to regularly serve single serve food packaging for the kids.
- Hot drinks will be served through the serving window.
- There will be a separate table for milk and sugar
- There will be no table for adults' food – it will be circulated on platters

Discover Course. Jannah is forming a team to run an evangelistic course over 4 to 5 weeks in the coming months. If serving on this team is something you feel drawn to, please reach out to Audric or Jannah this week. If there is someone that you are currently (or wish to) share the gospel with then this might be a great way of helping them hear about the good news of Jesus.

Daniel sermons. Are you finding the apocalyptic passages hard in the book of Daniel? If so, why not join us at our weekly bible studies. There are men's, women's and mixed groups, day and evening groups, at Charlestown Swansea and in local homes. There should be one that would fit your needs. If you are interested, please speak to Audric or Stephen.

Hunter Presbytery met last week. One particular topic of conversation was our young people's work. Matt Crocker has put up his hand to help think through how we can continue to encourage our smaller churches to run groups and how our larger church can help facilitate this. In the last 12 months we have run a regional camp and all the youth groups combined to go down to KYCK. Please pray for those Churches that only have a small handful of teenagers.

If room

Help with Rosters. Samuel W has put out the new rosters for the next 3 months. There are still vacancies for cleaning, computer, musicians, welcoming and greeting. Training available if required. Please see Samuel if interested.

Paid SRE Positions available. Have a heart to teach high school students about Jesus? Looking for a part time job of 0.5 – 2 days a week? There are paid SRE positions vacant in some Hunter Valley High Schools and some maternity leave positions too for a term or two. Please see Stephen for more details.

Save the date – 'A Taste of Africa'. Sat 15 Aug at Charlestown Presbyterian. A night of food and entertainment brought to you by members of our church. More details to come!

Song – Be Thou My Vision

[Be thou my vision - \(with lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light | 3. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art |
| 2. Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one | 4. High King of heaven, my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all |

Pastoral Prayer Points

Pray for Iraq (Population 47 million, Christians 187,000). Christians in Iraq struggle to follow Jesus openly and freely. The Christian community faces ongoing difficulties as they continue to come to terms with the drastic **reduction** in the number of believers since the Islamic State (IS) occupied parts of the country. Converting to Christianity from Islam is dangerous. Ask God to protect converts from harm and to help them know they are not alone. Pray that God will bless those called to stay and re-establish the Church after Islamic State (IS) violence. Recently a man tied to IS attacked Christians. Pray this hatred will be changed by Jesus' overwhelming love.

Pray for our Kids Church. Thank you for the children in our Kids Church and for the opportunity to teach them about the Lord Jesus. Please help them to grow in their understanding of the gospel, trust Christ as their Saviour, and follow him all the days of their lives. Give wisdom, energy, and joy to our leaders and helpers as they faithfully teach your Word and care for the children each week.

Pray for the raising up of more gospel workers. The harvest is plentiful and the workers are few. Please raise up a new generation of pastors, missionaries, chaplains, youth workers, and faithful Christian leaders who are deeply grounded in your Word and committed to proclaiming Christ. Give churches wisdom to identify, encourage, train, and support those whom you are calling into gospel ministry, for the growth of your kingdom and the glory of your name.

Pray for Parsons.

Bible Reading – Daniel 11:2-10, 36-45 (NIV)

“Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will arise in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. 3 Then a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. 4 After he has arisen, his empire will be broken up and parceled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others. 5 “The king of the South will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power. 6 After some years, they will become allies. The daughter of the king of the South will go to the king of the North to make an alliance, but she will not retain her power, and he and his power will not last. In those days she will be betrayed, together with her royal escort and her father and the one who supported her. 7 “One from her family line will arise to take her place. He will attack the forces of the king of the North and enter his fortress; he will fight against them and be victorious. 8 He will also seize their gods, their metal images and their valuable articles of silver and gold and carry them off to Egypt. For some years he will leave the king of the North alone. 9 Then the king of the North will invade the realm of the king of the South but will retreat to his own country. 10 His sons will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will sweep on like an irresistible flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress.

36 “The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. 37 He will show no regard for the gods of his ancestors or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. 38 Instead of them, he will honour a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his ancestors he will honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. 39 He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honour those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price. 40 “At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. 41 He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. 42 He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. 43 He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites in submission. 44 But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. 45 He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

Sermon: Invisible Truth! (Stephen T)

Every day, you and I live by things you cannot see. Air. Gravity. Wi-Fi. We don't question them; we just rely on them. We take a breath and assume it will sustain us. You walk around without wondering if gravity will

fail. We send a message and trust it will arrive. And we don't need to see these things to know that they are real, because the evidence that they are real is everywhere. But Daniel 10 & 11 wants to tell us there even more things that are real and we can't see them, but yet we can still completely rely upon them. In fact, maybe the most important realities of all are still invisible to you and me today.

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Chapter 10 will talk about the spiritual world, a world that we can't see but God will tell Daniel that his message about what is going on there, is true. And chapter 11 will talk about what is coming next, what has been already written according to Daniel 10:21 in the book of truth. We can't see those things either but if God says they are going to happen, then we can trust that too. Which is why Dan 11 starts with the words *"Now then, I tell you the truth"*

Slide 3

We will see in our passage that the invisible truth of what is going on right NOW in the spiritual world all around us should drive us to **prayer**. And the invisible truth concerning what is coming next in history is being revealed to us to help us to **prepare** for what's next.

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1. Let's start with the here and **NOW (Chapter 10)**

"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision. 2 At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. 3 I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over."

We have seen over the past term that Daniel was a remarkable man of prayer. In chapter 6, his diligence in praying three times a day gets him thrown into the lions' den. In chapter 9, we get to hear Daniel pleading in prayer for the end of the Jewish exile. And here in chapter 10, we see Daniel mourning, Daniel fasting, Daniel praying, for three whole weeks.

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This is the third year of King Cyrus so the exile is over & many of the Jewish people have been released to go home and rebuild the nation of Israel and its temple. But Daniel hasn't travelled with Ezra and the exiles. Most likely because he was brought to Babylon at the beginning of the exile as a young man, probably only 15 years of age and now 70 years has passed and he is an old man, probably in his mid to late 80's. He's too old to travel home and rebuild the temple but not too old to give himself completely to the Lord in prayer.

Isn't that a challenge to those who are older than most of us in our Church? Too old for Kids Church, work days, leadership? You are never too old to pray. In fact, if you don't pray, the Church that you love and the Kingdom that you have given your life to will be in mortal danger. Which means you have still work to do, the work of prayer. And for you, younger people, don't think you can do the work of the Lord without prayer either. Daniel 10 will tell us there is a relationship between what is going on in the Spirit world and the physical world and the prayer world. Make sure what you are doing for the Lord is totally covered by prayer.

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A. Because there is **an invisible battle** going on right NOW. *"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. The understanding of the message came to him in a vision."* And what was the vision of this great war that Daniel learned about?

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Look with me at verse 12. *"Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. 13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. 14 Now I*

have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

Daniel is told there is an unseen reality where evil powers and authorities are at work trying to control and influence the kingdoms and governments of this world. Yes, there are struggles going on amongst the nations of the world, even as we speak, but what is going on here on earth, is influenced, by what is going on in the unseen spiritual world. So, the prince of Persia is wrestling with Daniel's heavenly messenger. The archangel Michael has now come and joined the battle. And central to this battle is Daniel's prayers.

"Ever since you set your mind to gain understand and humble yourself before your God, your words were heard." But it still took the heavenly messenger 3 weeks to get to Daniel. That's a deep truth, an incredibly deep truth. There is a fierce battle going on as we speak and our prayers place you and I right in the very centre of the battle. But let's continue and jump to...

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20 "So, he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia & when I go, the prince of Greece will come; 21 but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. 1 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support & protect him.)"

Friends there is more going on around us than meets the eye. Yes, we see what is going on in the news & in our homes & at work, but behind it, there is a deeper reality, a spiritual battle. Like a phone signal, there is a lot of things that have to happen to get that phone signal to your phone & occasionally things conspire against it like a storm or a power surge or some sort of cyber-attack. All this can stop this form of communication. Likewise, what is going on all around us in some way is influenced by the invisible battle that is waging in the heavens.

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Francis Schaeffer was one day witnessing to a young unbeliever as they sat together in a Church. And Schaeffer asked him, "What do you see in this room?" And the young man began to name things, "I see a baptismal fount and I see pews and carpet and I see chandeliers." "But is there anything else?" And finally, the young man said, "Well, no, I don't see anything else. I've named everything that I can find in the room." Schaeffer said, "Let me tell you what I see. I see powers and principalities. I see spiritual forces above engaged in a war for your soul." And so, he stressed to him the reality of the spiritual conflict. And here Daniel gets to see that invisible battle but at the same time he also meets

Slide 10

B. An invisible victor. *4 "On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, 5 I looked up & there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. 6 His body was like topaz, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. 7 I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; those who were with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves."*

The appearance of this heavenly messenger is absolutely stunning. Dressed like a priest in fine line. His body and face and eyes and arms and legs are completely unworldly – rich, powerful, incredibly impressive. So much so that everyone but Daniel flees. They get out of there quick smart. No one can surely stand in this person's presence and live, they think.

Slide 11

Is it an angel? It could well be. But the only heavenly being that is anything like this is described in Revelation 1. *"I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hair on*

his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire.¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters."

And that passage is describing Jesus, the second member of the Trinity. That's who I believe appears to Daniel here. Jesus. This Jesus is fighting for his people. This Jesus is responding to Daniel's prayers for his people. This Jesus has defeated the prince of Persia and has now come to help Daniel and his understanding of what is going on all around him. Amazing.

And friends we know that, don't we? We know that our representative in heaven is not some nameless angel or some heavenly messenger but God's own son who has taken on the forces of darkness and defeated them. Who has triumphed over sin, Satan and the grave. He is the one interceding for us at the right-hand side of the father. He is the one listening to our prayers. We may not physically see him but we have an invisible victor fighting for us as well, in our invisible war, and this invisible victor will give us

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C. **Invisible Strength.** Time and time again we read in Daniel 10 that Daniel is physically exhausted. He is weak. It's like the wind has been knocked out of him, the life has been sucked out of him. But God strengthens him again and again. God sustains him. God meets with him in his time of need and gives him his peace.

God loves Daniel so much that he takes his messenger away from one mission, helping the archangel Michael, to make sure that after Daniel's three weeks of prayer and fasting that he is cared for and his needs are attended to. How amazing is that? Spiritual strength is available to the believer in the midst of their spiritual battle through the person and work of Jesus. And all this is showing us the truth that there are invisible things happening right now that should drive us to prayer.

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Friends are you up for that spiritual battle? Do you realise that the apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 6:12 that *"We do not wrestle against flesh & blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."* Do you realise that the most powerful spiritual weapon you & I have is prayer? And what we do on our knees effects what goes on around the world!

This lifts prayer from the level of a humdrum religious exercise to place it as one of the most important things we will ever do. This reminds us that if we want to deal with the spiritual forces that are constantly attacking us, our family, our church family and the success of God's kingdom then we must, we must raise the priority of our prayer life.

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Listen to preacher David Strain, *"Let the example of Daniel teach you that it is often the quiet, persistent prayers of the unseen saints that make the crucial difference in the purposes of God... We need a Seal Team of men & women who will storm heaven's gates unceasingly for the sake of the Gospel cause in this place and all over the world... beloved, the ministry of prayer may yet be your great work in the service of King Jesus."* Prayer and Prepare.

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2. NOW and NEXT (chapter 11)

For the battle is not over yet & the vision that Daniel is to receive is only just about to begin. For yes there is an invisible world out there that you & I can't see but there is also an invisible future, that has already been written into God's book of truth that will surely come to pass. So, chapter 10 shows us the spiritual war and chapter 11 shows us the earthly combat zone. And it begins with the rise and fall of

A. **Future kingdoms.** Now here going through this long passage verse by verse I don't believe will be

particularly helpful. For the next 35 verses will predict for Daniel what will happen in Israel's backyard for the next 370 years. Between the years of 530 & 160 BC.

These verses describe how empires rise. Kings fall. Power shifts again and again. What feels permanent is actually temporary. And if someone says this election, this coming of AI, this war, will mean things will never be the same again. They will be wrong. Because after that event comes and goes, history will keep repeating itself. Countries will rise. Leaders will fall. Power will shift again. But God's rule will remain. God's kingdom will continue to grow.

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So let me briefly sketch for you what is going on Daniel 11. Verse 2 *"Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will arise in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece."* That's 150 years of history where Persia dominates in just one verse.

3 *"Then a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. 4 After he has arisen, his empire will be broken up & parcelled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others."* That's the rise and fall of Alexander the Great & Greek empire. A journalist or historian could write books on him & have done so but it's all done & dusted in 2 verses. Because the Lord wants to zero in on the fate of his own people in Israel.

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Which are what verses 6 to 20 do. After Alexander the Great, his kingdom is divided up into four smaller kingdoms and for God's people it is the King of the South, the Ptolemies of Egypt and the king of the North the Seleucid Empire of Syria and the kings mainly named Antiochus (because of their capital Antioch), that take centre stage.

And over the next 180 years we see a series of interactions, alliances and wars between the kings of the north and the kings of the south. In such a way that you can't help but notice that human nature hasn't changed much over the years. The ancient world, like our modern equivalent is filled with violence, greed, ego, deception and war. People will go to any length to get what they want. And caught up in the middle of all of this is God's people.

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But then it goes from bad to worse in verses 21-35 with the arrival of Antiochus Epiphanes. 21 *"He will be succeeded by a contemptible person who has not been given the honour of royalty. He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue. 22 Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed."*

Here comes the ultimate in despicable rulers. Someone not particularly well known or important in the history of the world but incredibly important to the history of Israel. In fact, much of the Apocrypha, the part of the Bible that the Catholics believe is the inspired word of God but Protestants reject as God's word, is about this time in history. And so, Daniel's prophesy zeroes in how this terrible ruler will badly treat God's people. More on that later.

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All of Daniel's vision in this chapter can easily be linked with history until we get to verses 36 to 45. Where either Daniel gets it wrong or it is history that is yet to happen. And that's what I think we see here, the picture being painted becomes a bit blurred. The evil of Antiochus Epiphanes ramps up even further and we see someone even worse. Much worse. It is like Antiochus morphs into the Antichrist. We find a man setting himself up as the final authority, demanding all worship him and completely taking over the land of God's people.

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Think of being at a spectacular lookout and seeing a massive mountain range at a distance, they often look like one single ridge. But in reality, there are multiple ranges, separated by valley which are spread out over great distances. So, Antiochus is like the near mountain & the Antichrist is like the distant mountain. From Daniel's perspective, they appear together. But from history's perspective, we see the distance between them. A distance at last count of around 2,200 years! And these future kingdoms will lead to

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B. Future suffering for God's people. Israel is continually caught up in the crossfire as kingdoms flex their muscles at the expense of other less powerful countries. Listen to these verses. Verse 16. *"The invader will do as he pleases; no one will be able to stand against him. He will establish himself in the Beautiful Land and will have the power to destroy it."* Verse 22. *"Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed."* Verse 28. *"The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant."* Finally, Verse 30. *"Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant."*

You get it? These kingdoms will bring untold suffering to God's people into the future. God may be in complete control but that doesn't mean his people avoid the implications of living in such a messed-up world. And then something even worse happens.

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31 "His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. 32 With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him. 33 "Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or lundered... 35 Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end"

This all happens in 168 BC. There is absolute carnage amongst the faithful. Antiochus Epiphanes seeks to exterminate God's people. And seeks to eliminate the worship of the true God completely from the whole earth. And just as the suffering in that times was bad, really bad, so that is what it will be for the true believer at the end of the world. When the rule of the Antichrist seeks to do something similar. But in the midst of all this carnage, Daniel 11 also tells us that the

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C. Future is Certain. Verse 45, *"Yet he will come to his end and no one will help him."*

The Antichrist hasn't the power of the Christ. He will not rule over God's Kingdom. Just as Jesus and his angels can defeat the demons of Persia and Greece in the spiritual world, so the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation tell us that the world is going toward a certain end. Where Jesus will return. He will defeat the antichrist in a battle that is all over even before it is started. And then history will end and the new heavens and earth will begin.

So, Daniel 11 ends with quiet confidence. Not chaos. Not uncertainty. But certainty. God's plan is not fragile. History is not drifting. Like watching a game when you already know the result. The tension is real—but the ending is secure. God wins. God's kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven.

Slide 24

Now if this is true, if kingdoms will fall, suffering will come, and the future is certain. Then what should we do? Prepare. Not panic. Not withdraw. But prepare. And what does that sort of preparation look like? Well, it starts with prayer, doesn't it? Trying to understand what our place in this world is. Putting out trust in the King of all creation. It then leads to building habits that will sustain you when the hard times come. Reading God's word, fellowship with God's people. Self-control. Discipline. Faithfulness. You don't prepare in the moment the pressure comes, you prepare before it comes so you will be ready when it comes.

Let's face it. As a nation we are getting soft. As a Church we are pretty comfortable. We have been carried along by the tide of materialism and thought of conflict or persecution even of economic disaster scares

us. But we don't need to be scared. The one *"dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. 6 His body was like topaz, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude."* This one, this Jesus is with us. And if God is with us who can be against us?

Daniel 10–11 shows us that the things that are happening now might be invisible but they are true. An invisible battle. An invisible victor who gives us an invisible strength. And the things that we can't see about the future they will truly happen as well. Kingdoms will rise & fall. Suffering will come to his people. But there is a Certain End. And the call from this passage is to PRAY now & PREPARE for what's next.

Remember the greatest invisible truth is this: At the cross, it looked like a defeat. It looked like chaos. It looked like God had lost. But in that moment, God was accomplishing his greatest victory. So, if God was in control, then, he is in control now. And he will be in control of whatever happens next. So, remember: The things you cannot see are the things you can trust most. So, stand firm. Keep praying. Keep trusting. Because there is more going on than you can see. And the God you cannot see is the one who holds it all.

Song – God is for us <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPZnFLhltzQ>

1. We won't fear the battle, we won't fear the night
We will walk the valley with You by our side
You will go before us, You will lead the way
We have found a refuge, only You can save

Chorus

Sing with joy now, our God is for us
The Father's love is a strong and mighty fortress
Raise your voice now, no love is greater
Who can stand against us if our God is for us

2. Even when I stumble, even when I fall
Even when I turn back, still Your love is sure
You will not abandon, You will not forsake
You will cheer me onward with never-ending grace

Chorus

Bridge

Neither height nor depth can separate us
Hell and death will not defeat us
He who gave His son to free us
Holds me in His love

Repeat Bridge

Chorus x2

Benediction. *"12 Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them." (Daniel 10:12)*