

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For December 1:

Daniel 8:1-27:

With 8:1 the book returns to the use of Hebrew. From 2:4-7:28 the book had been in Aramaic, thus spanning from the court narratives into the first part of the visions of Daniel. It may be that this was intended to communicate to the original readers that though the people of God are to be in a foreign land for a time (represented by the Aramaic), nevertheless, they will be restored (represented by the return to the language of the Hebrews).

In 8:1-14 we find out that in 554 B.C. (two years after the chapter 7 vision) Daniel receives a vision of a goat, a ram and a little horn. In verses 15-26 we read of the interpretation, which left Daniel overcome and sick for days (27). Commentators Ian Duguid and Paul Wegner provide a helpful overview of this chapter when they write: “In this vision, Daniel sees what is to come of the Medo-Persian Empire, Alexander the Great's empire, and the Hellenistic empires that succeed it. The upheavals to come will mean terrible times for the people of God, but they must endure, knowing that God rules over it all.”

Though there are many details in the visions found in Daniel 7-12 about which people through the history of the Church have disagreed, the central message is very clear: The LORD God is sovereign over all kingdoms of man and events of the world. He will bring to completion his work of redemption and will thus bring His people into their eternal reward. Do you view God and His work in this way? Do you view your present sufferings and hardship in light of your future glory which is certain in the hands of our God and King?

1 John 2:1-17:

In 2:1 John reveals why he is writing this epistle. In addition to it being for his own joy (1:4), it is also that the readers might not continue in a life characterized by sin. At the same time, if a Christian does sin, Jesus Christ is the one who goes before the Father to plead her case, to affirm they are forgiven because of His death and resurrection, and to affirm that because of His life, death and resurrection, He is the agent whereby God's favor is turned toward them and His wrath turned away (2). The way a person knows he is truly forgiven is that they seek to keep the commandments of God (3-6), which are summarized in loving one another (7-14) and loving God, not the world (15-17).

Do you understand your forgiveness is based upon Jesus Christ and Him alone? Do you love fellow believers? Do you love the Father instead of the world? Or, do you love the world? These are all questions we should ask our self after today's reading.

Psalm 120:1-7:

This psalm is the first of a larger group of psalms sometimes called the Great *Hallel* Psalms (120-136), in other words, the larger group of psalms of praise. Within this larger group is a cluster of psalms sometimes called the Psalms of Ascent (120-134) since Jewish tradition suggests that they were often sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

Psalm 120 is written by someone who is away from the sanctuary of God and among pagan people who are seeking to hurt him (3-7). As such, he calls out to the LORD to deliver him (1-2). This short psalm, then, reminds us that in the midst of our trouble, our great gift is the presence of God who will never leave us nor forsake us (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5) and our hope is in God alone! Remember this and call to Him in the day of trouble (Psalm 50:15)!

Proverbs 28:25-26:

In verse 25 we learn that a person who is always living to secure provision for himself and to protect his own things (rather than trusting in God to do that), is a man who gets angry when he fears losing things or has lost things and, as such, he stirs up strife often with others. Those who trust in the LORD, tend to be less anxious and angry and experience blessing in their relationships. Verse 26 expresses the main point in all the Proverbs: We must not trust in our own common sense or what we think will work in family, work, relationships, in all we do. Instead, we must seek for skill and insight from God. This tends to deliver us from unnecessary pains.